



MMMagazine™

Official Newsletter of the North American MMM Register

Celebrating Pre-War Cars of the MG Car Company

Fall 2021





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Celebrating Pre-War Cars of the MG Car Company

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United Kingdom
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The Pre-war M.G. Register of Australia
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MMMagazine, the NAMMM Register Newsletter, is published quarterly on the 1st of March, June, September, and December.

Deadline for contribution submissions is the 15th of the prior month.

Please submit all contributions to the Newsletter Editor, Tom Wilson. His contact information is above.



The Editor's Desk

Tom Wilson MGTCTom@gmail.com

Lots of MG stuff going on, and I could probably write a book on the things I'm now working on. Wait - I already have a book in progress, and someday I'll make enough desk time to finish it enough for editing. I know many of you are waiting for it, considering how often I get asked about it. But right now the focus is on building the 2 TCs and 11 MMMs.

TC tubs are complete, and in late August I made two sets of adjustable chassis stands to build the TCs on. They are adjustable, so I can set the chassis up to waist height. I'm right at the cusp of building the chassis' as the components are almost all complete, save for the engines. Manley Ford recommended a shop he's had great success with in getting XPAG cylinder heads properly ported and modified; I think I'll give them a try.



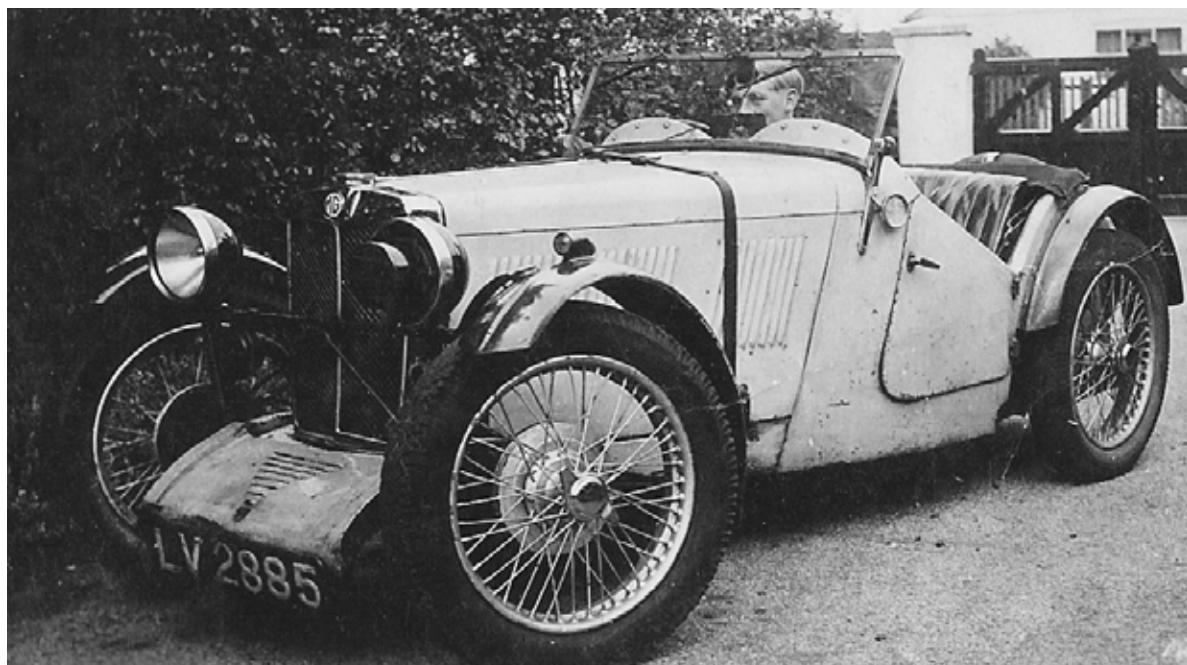
As Jack notes in his column (following page), I leave for the U.K. August 29th for two weeks. With me will be a 5 page list of MMM parts I'm needing for the cars. Since work is speeding up it is important to have everything ready, or in the queue for delivery. It'll be fun to walk into Auto Sparks and order 13 wiring harnesses. S&V, Andy King, Rich Hardy, Jones Springs - I'll be meeting with many of our key suppliers. There's also time for visiting MG friends, which makes these trips all the more enjoyable.

The EN plating (electroless nickel) I wrote about in the last issue turned out to be a great thing to do for the hardware. Very period looking, simpler process, and not near as expensive as bright nickel. Last week I disassembled 32 sets of leaf springs for the MMMs - mostly originals, many repaired, some repros. I just picked them up from the parts cleaners (they blasted rather than chemical cleaning), and sorted through to figure out what is usable. I don't want to lose originality but will only use the leafs to make sets that can work well. There is a spring company in Detroit that might be able to help me with this, though they said they haven't worked on old MG springs before. We'll see ...

Meanwhile I'm setting up to do a small production run of the metal tray that fits on the bottom of the gearbox remote (I need 6, we may run 50), housings to hold a modern seal to modify the front differential cap, and the chassis mount support brackets. It dawned on me last week that I can CNC a lot of parts out of brass with my CNC setup, so I'll need to make time this fall to learn how to do that. I think I can even make the windscreen stanchions for a PA!

My VA saloon, which was slated to be restored after I complete the 11 MMMs, is headed to From the Frame Up in October. Doug Pelton (friend and owner of From the Frame Up) and I talked at length about it, and I think it's good to have his shop handle the restoration. There was more than just a bit of his logic in "do it now so you can enjoy it before you are old." Guess I'll be making frequent trips between Indy and Phoenix to stay involved in that project!

Here's a photo taken during WWII of my J2 J3498. At this stage in its life the paint was bright yellow. The driver is Gordon McKenzie who acquired the J2 from his brother's estate (who was killed when the RAF Hurricane he was flying crashed at sea). Mr. McKenzie kept the car until 2014, when he gave up on the restoration he started in 1989. I'm starting over, though his work was good. It won't be yellow this time ...





Chairman's Corner

Jack Kahler MGJack@aol.com



The five day drive in June from Denver to Atlantic City for MG International was a tough one. The volume of passenger cars and eighteen wheelers provided a very strenuous experience for this old guy! However, Rick Ingram and Tony Burgess did an outstanding job providing a well organized and interesting event in a very difficult environment. Good going Rick and Tony.

July 19-23, 2022 our Register will join GOF Central for our National Meet in Winona, Minnesota! GOF Central always rolls out the red carpet for us when we join them for an event. Hopefully the Covid sickness will be under control and we will have a huge turnout for our four day National Meet. Winona is in southern Minnesota with true Midwest

hospitality and beauty. Come on members - let's make it one of the best. Alan Magnuson, our Director of Register Events, is already busy working with the GOF Central committee to make the 2022 Meet one you must attend.

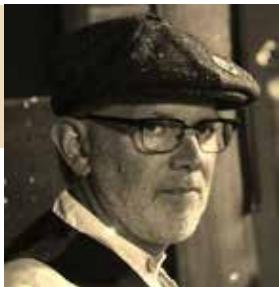
Tom Wilson and I are off to England the 1st of September for the Beaulieu Autojumble, so we'll have some stories to tell in the next newsletter. If you have never experienced Beaulieu it is worth the journey to beautiful England to find all those precious MMM "BITS", and experience the camaraderie of MMM MG enthusiasts.

Cheers,

Jack



Though it was quite a trek and effort to make the trip to Atlantic City from Colorado, Jack was happy that he drove his large rig for the trip instead of his Midget!



Treasurer's Report

Jack Schneider

britjack@comcast.net



August 2021

There is not much to report on the treasury. I am pretty much onto maintenance mode for the balance of the year. There is ample bank balance to cover the remaining expenses for 2021, and everything to date has been paid. We are current on our Register liability coverage, website domain, hosting & meeting services, 2021 membership expenses and general operating expenses. Our dedicated advertisers have assisted greatly in bolstering our income. This has helped us immensely!

The final known large expense for the year will be Reinout's efforts as he again rolls out our membership renewal packages for 2022. The years just fly right on by! Our Register continues to be financially stable.

Thanks for your continued participation,
Jack

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MG International 2021 News

Atlantic City, NJ June 14-17



Though not as well attended as previous MG International events, the MGs by the Sea in June at Atlantic City was quite an enjoyable affair. Though some may start questioning the extracurricular hobbies of these MG enthusiasts, as two of the past three meets have been in major gambling meccas of the USA.

There was the usual balance of MGs – both in model types and condition. A TF that was mostly just a shell, recently inherited by a young Walker Eaton from his dad & grandfather had to be the best rough jewel of the show, and Walker was more than excited to be embarking on its restoration. MGAs and MGBs galore, in all stages of wear, including fresh accurate restorations and well patinated drivers (cars and people!).

Harrah's turned out to be a pretty good facility for the event, and they had just reopened after the long COVID closure. The facility was hopping busy, and the size of it made for regular exercise getting to all the different activities. We commandeered half a floor of the parking garage as a safe haven for all our MGs. This made for a nice "pre-show show," as one could leisurely stroll the aisles and peruse the MG candy. There was more than one pizza party in that area by various local clubs.

All Registers had their own banquet, and the MMM's Bibulous Gallimaufry was quite a feast in food and comradeship. Tech sessions were good – especially the presentation by Lew Palmer and Tom Metcalf on the Airline Coupe. Two Airline Coupes were on hand in the room – Tom & Roy Crowninshields in process NA Airline, along with Curtis Beck's gorgeous red PA Airline.

Reed and Jan Tarwater's Funkhana – build and drive a J2 – was entertaining and fun. If attendees had realized what a blast it was there would've been a line out the door. Leave it to Tom Wilson and Mike Jansen to devise an assembly process before trying it. Technically, they cheated, and had a great time doing it. Against their wishes, their time was recorded, and at awards Tom Metcalf duly and pleasantly chastised them for their chicanery.

MMMs were represented by six cars, five of which presented at the car show.

Lew Palmer's report adds some flavor:

Darlene, granddaughter Abby and I had perhaps one of the more difficult trips to the event, coming from Minnesota. Towing our trailer containing our PA behind the Jeep, following directions from our GPS ("Our Lady of Misdirection"), we found ourselves going through the labyrinth of Chicago highways, we hit one of the worst rainstorms we've driven in. 20MPH from northern Chicago to the Indiana border is never fun, but once we made it to the Indiana border things cleared up. Ohio met us with hotel and food challenges – perhaps someday it would be smart to make reservations in advance? We did find a place to stay (a noisy wedding party ran to the

wee hours) and gorged ourselves on gas station convenience food.

Saturday's drive through Ohio went by without further incident, as did MOST of Pennsylvania. However, Pennsylvania is very hilly and a big Jeep hauling a trailer consumes gas at an alarming rate. So about every other service plaza became a habit. More traffic tie-ups – accidents and heavy traffic – were the norm for the eastern part of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, but we finally arrived.

Monday morning was set up time for the vendors to set up. The rest of the day was spent meeting old friends and selling our wares. Tuesday was Tech Session day; Tom Metcalf and I did the presentation about MG Airline Coupes. In the evening, we traveled over to Caesar's Palace for all registers meet-and-greet, followed by individual register dinners.

Wednesday we got an opportunity to take a bus trip into Philadelphia to visit the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum. Dr. Fred Simeone, prior to his retirement, as a world renown neurosurgeon. From an early age he had a passion for classic race cars. Since his retirement he has amassed approximately 200 such cars and has placed them in a museum which is open to the public. All the cars are kept in the condition they were in when they were last raced. They all run and do so regularly. The MG K3 (K3027) that was raced by Nuvolari was brought out along with two classic Aston Martins and were run in the lot behind the museum. We all were able to get up close to the cars, so it was quite an experience.

Later that evening, Heather Rippert along with a number of other people, did a photo tribute to her father, the late Hank Rippert. Several people followed up with personal stories of Hank. Some sad, some funny.



Thursday was car show day. We traveled about 20 miles north of Atlantic City to the county 4H fairgrounds. It was an ideal setting with plenty of room with the hundreds of cars and numerous trailers. Food vendors were on site, although at peak times the wait for food was excessive.

Each Register had its own display area with the Triple-M Register comfortably parked in the shade under some trees. We had 5 cars on display: Jack Kahler's supercharged PA, our PA, Reed Tarwater's J2, Lou Louchios' PA Airline Coupe, and Tom Metcalf's NA Airline Coupe. We were lucky enough to take a second place with the PA. But there was also an award for the best original tool kit, so I had laid out the tools from the PA, along with the jack, air pump, side screens, period driving helmet and goggles, all displayed on the only MG 96 blanket ever produced. It won the prize.

Thursday evening was the awards banquet. second and lower awards were present in individual register receptions prior to the main banquet, so the award presentations moved quickly, although the sheer number of award classes filled the evening.

Friday was departure day. It took the three of us to bring all our baggage down 28 floors and out to the trailer parking area, and load everything before hitting the road by 8:00 AM. The return trip was mostly uneventful, a nice cap for the adventure.

Would we do it again? Absolutely yes. We have only missed one all-register meet, taking a pass on Reno in 2011. But I absolutely encourage all members to join us on the next one in 2026.



Tom Metcalf *really* enjoys presenting a 1st place award to Reed and Jan Tarwater for their J2.



Jack Kahler gladly presents Lew Palmer his 2nd place award for his PA.



Event News - 2022

Alan Magnuson alanmg1978@gmail.com



NAMMMR 2022 North American Meet

NAMMMR members, Please **SAVE the DATE** for our 2022 North American Meet!

The 2022 North American MMM Register Meet will be held July 18-22, 2022 in Winona, Minnesota..

Winona is located on the Mississippi River in southeastern Minnesota's picturesque bluff country. We will be hosted by the Minnesota MG T Register and joining GOF Central 2022.

Tentative Schedule

- 18th Monday - (½ day activity) Arrival, Hotel check in, Registration
- 19th Tuesday - Tech sessions, Driving tours, 1st Timer's Show
- 20th Wednesday - Car Show in morning, Funkhana afternoon, Mississippi River Sternwheeler rides, **MMM BG dinner**, GOF Auction for all attendees
- 21st Thursday - Rallye, possible additional Sternwheeler rides, Awards banquet
- 22nd Friday - Departure

The host hotel is the Plaza Hotel, Winona, MN with room rates for either a single king bed or two queen beds for \$130 per night. We are avoiding the increased rate of \$150 for Friday nights. Backup hotel is a Holiday Inn Express (same ownership) just across the parking lot.

Please look at the Winona Convention & Visitors Bureau website:<https://visitwinona.com>

Additional event details will be shared via the NAMMMR website, MMMagazine, and Register communications.

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Alan Magnuson
NAMMMR
Director of Register Events
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Registrar's Ramblings

Reinout Vogt

reinoutvogt@gmail.com



Summer time is easy for the Registrar of the North American MMM Register. Not too much going on with the printed directory completed, and not quite time yet for the annual renewal drive that will soon be coming up again. Since my last column, in the really excellent Summer issue of this publication, we have only a few new members and car updates.

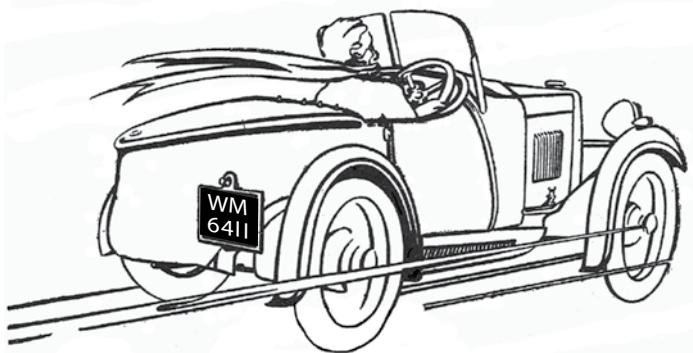
Ron and Dawn Burton joined the Register. Ron doesn't have a MMM car yet but is looking for one that he can take on drives on the local back roads around Palm Coast, Florida, where they live.

Mark Gaier from Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania joined the Register with J3356, a beautiful two tone grey J2 restored by Safety Fast! Restoration. Mark previously restored J3033, which he believes to reside in Florida now. However, it is not known to our register. Shortly after joining, Mark sold the J2 to Russel Hertzog from Georgetown, Texas. It now shares space in the garage with Russel's red J2 J3596. (pictures on facing page).

John and Hilary Orrell moved to: 2703 Detenbeck Rd., Niagara Falls, Ontario, L2G 0K7, Canada.

Their phone number and email address are unchanged.

That's it for the Register member & car updates this issue.



It continues to amaze me how many MMM cars there are out there, of which the Register hasn't heard and/or whose owners have not joined yet. Just yesterday, at a summer picnic of the Peachtree MG Registry, our local MG club in Atlanta, I met somebody who told me about two of his friends, with J2s. I asked for their names and checked our records. One of them isn't in there at all, and the other had his membership expire in 1997! Of course, I will contact them and invite them to join our club, like I have done in the past when I learned about MMM cars. However, many a time, the outreach goes unanswered. Why is that, I often wonder. What can we, as the Register, and what can I, as its Registrar, do to make the Register more inviting to join, more enticing to enjoy, and more attractive to renew every Fall? If you have any ideas, opinions, suggestions, or advice, I look forward to hearing from you. You can always reach me by emailing reinoutvogt@gmail.com or calling 847 342 9804.

See you next at renewal time, around November, or the Winter issue of MMMagazine.

MGreetings,

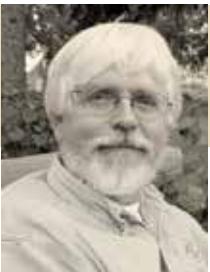
Reinout





J3356, restored by Safety Fast Restorations for Mark Gaier, now in the care of Russel Herzog in Texas. Pictured with his J2 J3596





When I Was Your Age

Phil Anderson PAnderson@northpark.edu



Register Life Fifteen Years Ago

To many of us, 2006 does not seem that long ago, yet considering today's pandemic-related challenges to our "normal" way of life, it is easy to look back to a time of large MG gatherings that now appear somewhat distant in the rear-view mirror. MG 2006, the large five-year gathering of the North American registers in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, stands in some contrast to the recent successful event in Atlantic City. In the interval, we and our cars have all aged a bit; we have lost members and friends of the Register; and we continue to gain new ones—along with their exchanged-hands, newly-discovered, or restored (or in-process!) Triple-M gems.

Despite the near hundred-degree temperatures in late June of 2006 (not unlike the summer of 2021), Gatlinburg was an enormous success with 26 Triple-M cars (among a total of more than 1,100 registered MGs) and no less than 80 in attendance at the Bibulous Gallimaufry. MGs and their owners, with a total of about 3,000 enthusiasts, packed the already crowded tourist town. The drives in the surrounding hills (including the famous "Tail of the Dragon"), and to the show-field some twenty miles distant, were fantastic. Brian Kelly, the only one to drive his car to and from the event, did more than 1,600 miles in his PA. Newsletter editor, Larry Long, covered the gathering in the Summer 2006 issue—accompanied by 34 color photos—along with a detailed recap by treasurer, Tom Metcalf.

In addition, more than two-dozen register members were there without their cars. Among the 26 Triple-M cars were: 7 M-Types, 3 J2's, a J3/4, 7 PA's (including

George Shelley's "Dancing Daughter" PA/B), 2 PA and 2 PB Airlines (a first), and one each of the F1/2, L1, L1/2, and L2 types. It was thought at the time to be the largest number ever at a gathering, perhaps a record that still stands.

What stands out in this list, which the reader may have already noticed, is the unusual absence of N-Types on the field. According to the 2021 Membership Directory, there are currently 22 NAs and NBs among a total of 196 cars (through the years, 475 have been known to the register, so many more N-Types are out there), representing about 11 percent. These include a half-dozen specials, plus the rarities of an NA Airline under restoration and an historic NE racer. It is worth revisiting a contemporary account from the 24 July 1934 issue of *The Motor*, reprinted in the Fall 2006 issue of the Newsletter, describing the contemporary experience of driving a works N-Type at "great speed" over many miles. That article follows my notes.

Finally, it is worth noting that the cover story by Peter Ross in the Winter 2006 issue of the Newsletter recounted the "British MMM Tour of New England," which capped an eventful year. Recalling the successful 1991 "Raid" (hosted by the NEMGTR), when several members of the Triple-M Register in England shipped their cars to the US, 10 cars (including a 14/40 and an 18/80) and their owners had an eventful early October tour throughout New England, aided by the planning, support, ingenuity, and hospitality of NAMMMR friends. But that is another story.



NORTH AMERICAN MMM NEWSLETTER

North American MMM
Register
Midget, Magna, Magnette

Fall, 2006

"Once in a great while someone makes an automobile that is a thing apart from all others, an impersonal machine possessing a definite personality.....many a man competent to know will argue that the most completely appealing and unforgettable personality ever built into a car was put into the smallest of them all: the MG Midget."

Ken W. Purdy, *The Kings of the Road*

"Grande Vitesse" on The N-Type M. G. Magnette

An account based on covering 6,000 miles in three months with a Light Car capable of 80 m.p.h.

Reprinted from "The MOTOR", July 24, 1934 issue

There are some cars that you never like, there are some that you grow to like, and there are others that you like the moment you take the wheel-- the N-type M.G. Magnette is of the last-named type.

Its most outstanding characteristic is its great smoothness. Everything the car does is done in a most gentlemanly manner. The exhaust note is subdued, the six-cylinder 1,286 c.c. engine is silky in its silence.



In ideal surroundings: the M.G. Magnette cruising along a typical French Route Nationale at an easy mile a minute—a road speed which represents a comfortable and effortless 4,000 r.p.m.

Now the first thing that will be asked on reading this account of the car, and the first thing that is always asked by those who gather round the machine when it is left for a moment, is, of course, "How fast will it go?" I had better settle that matter right away. After the car had covered 6,404 miles, when nothing whatever had been done

(Continued on page 2)



(Continued from page 1)

in the way of tuning save to drain the sump at the correct interval, when the tappets were still unchecked, the plugs uncleared, the carburetters in the same setting as when the car was taken over at Abingdon, it was taken down to Brooklands, and treated unmercifully. Indeed, the things we did to that car would give the ordinary motorist a very sinking feeling.



Jack Simpson's NB

The average speed for a lap was 76.62 m.p.h., the speed for a half-mile on the flat was 82.30 m.p.h.

Now all this was with full touring equipment, two up, hood furled and windscreens flat---and on a road with fewer bumps and with little less wind these speeds might even be improved. As they stand, they are sufficient evidence of the capability to set up unusually gratifying averages on the road and to give most other cars a run for their money.

A Delight to Drive

The Magnette is sufficiently related to its racing prototype to rely on r.p.m. for b.h.p. to the extent that the engine is far happier at 4,404 r.p.m than at 2,000 r.p.m. and

in consequence things begin comparatively slowly, until at something about 4,000 r.p.m. or 4,500 r.p.m. the squab of the bucket seat suddenly hits you in the back---and away flies the car up to 6,000 rpm in a very short space of time indeed.

To appreciate the Magnette to the full, therefore, it is necessary to make good use of the neat little remote-control gear-lever. The change is a delight ---wump! third, wump top again. But in order to produce that kick in the back at 4,500 rpm it is best to "wump" into second from top if you have been cruising at anything much below its normal main road gait of 60-65 m.p.h. (4,000-4,500 r.p.m.).

Once this characteristic is appreciated, the car is sheer fun. The engine turns over so smoothly with its four-bearing crankshaft, that there need be no hesitation to rev things a little, and, indeed, the harder the engine works, the better it appears to be running.

During the course of piling up the first 6,000 miles with the car, the occasion arose to take it over to Le Mans in connection with the job of "covering" that race for *The Motor* and we took the car on the course after dark during the practising, to see how it handled.



The NB of Reed Yates

As a matter of fact, there was so much to see, so many cars to be watched at so many corners, that when the time had come to go home to bed, we had not cov-

ered a single lap of the circuit flat out all the way round. Suffice it to say, then, that the Magnette went very well indeed, and handled very nicely.

The Magnette is rather sensitive to shock absorber tension and tyre pressures. But before this joyous rush round the Sarthe circuit on that still, hot, hay-scented night, these things were practically dead right, and the machine handled beautifully. In fact, on the home leg round Arnage and so to the pits, we comfortably held a practising competitor in front, and overtook him on the acceleration out of the Pontlieue hairpin. We did time the car once, going down past the Cafe de l'Hippodrome and clocked 76 m.p.h. over the kilometre, with the revs mounting steadily as we clicked the watch at the end.

The steering is a joy, much higher geared than I have met before from the Abingdon factory, but withal very light and steady. It may be personal whim, but I do like steering which

needs only the flexing of wrists on fast, main road bends instead of definite movement of the arms. The N-type Magnette requires only half a turn of the wheel from straight-ahead to full lock in either direction.



No Body Roll

One can corner as fast as one likes without body roll or that nasty swaying feeling which some cars seem to have, and at no speed do the front wheels shimmy or tramp. The whole car feels rock steady, even when enthusiasm prompts a little cornering with the tyres shrieking that the limit of safety has been more or less reached on four wheels.

Of course, it is on those long, dead straight, tree-lined Continental roads that the N-type Magnette really comes into its own. The little car will drone steadily along, hour after hour, at between 60 and 65 m.p.h. with occasional bursts of 70-75 m.p.h. down the gradients on the same

throttle opening. As a matter of fact it was not a very steep decline which sent the needle quivering up to the 5,800 rpm mark.

So much for the really outstanding performance of this genuine 80 m.p.h. car. Now to the bodywork. The two front seats are of the bucket type, fitting snugly and giving the driver a nice, fairly high seating position so that without towering above the screen, one can see both front wings. There is no doubt that to sit well out of the car, instead of having one's eyes almost level with the top of the bonnet, definitely makes for faster and safer motoring by producing that one essential—control.

Multum in Parvo

There is plenty of leg room in front (I am myself 6 ft. 3 ins. long) and the seats are fully adjustable.

The rear seat is little short of a triumph. How on earth Mr. Kimber has produced so much room in the space I can't imagine. The rear seat is of the bench type, pneumatic, and with the cushion shaped to the human form. Nor do the passengers (for four people can ride in the Magnette in

real comfort) at the back have their heads high above those in front.

The hood goes up easily, and the side curtains are made to clip up all round their edges to the rest of the hood, so that the all-weather equipment is really stable. Inside there is room for a tall man to wear a soft, felt hat under the hood.

A point which will appeal to the keen owner-driver is ease of maintenance and the general accessibility of everything. Three grease nipples on each side under the bonnet look after the brake cables, the rear springs, the brake cross shaft, the steering column and the steering

box. All that is left are two nipples on the front springs, the steering joints and the ordinary points on the front hubs--all of which can be reached without any difficulty at all.

Accessibility at the Rear

The twin batteries are carried just in front of the back axle. The rear seat comes out in two minutes, a steel shield is lifted, and there you have the back axle (which has a dipper stick in the filler cap--just one of those things . . .), the hydraulic rear shock absorbers, the two 6-volt batteries which together produce the required 12 volts, and the rear of the chassis in general.

The foot-brake adjustment is by means of a thumb screw above the cockpit floor, the handbrake (a very workmanlike device which can be reached without stretching and which is of the racing "spring-off" variety) is similarly equipped.

Under the bonnet things are just as easy to get at. The oil-filler orifice is an enormous affair on top of the cam-shaft cover and you can pour in a pint of oil as fast as it will go--no need to gauge a thin trickle. A special tool is provided for the rapid withdrawal of the 14 mm. plugs (although I haven't had to use it yet).

Items Which Please

There are several little items, like that dip stick in the

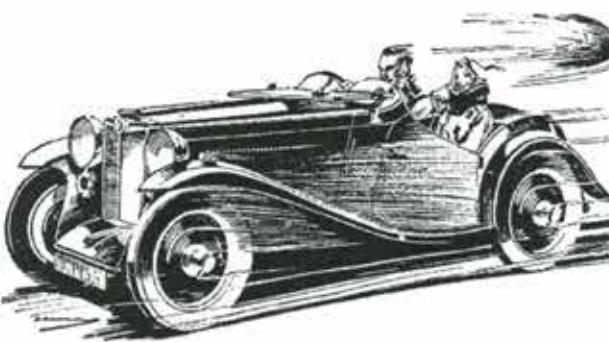
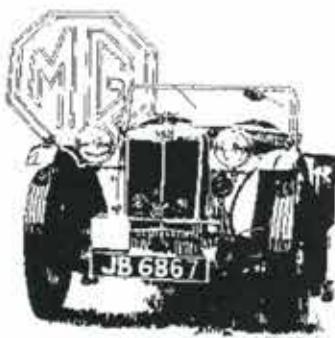
back axle, which one notes down as being good ideas. For instance, the petrol cap with control of the 2-gallon reserve protrudes through the facia board. The two instrument lamps are green coloured, there is a Tecalemit oil filter which makes for great peace of mind, the felt-lined tool box stretches right across the bonnet in front of the dash, there is a neat holder for six spare plugs, the starting handle can be used without detaching the front apron--just a few items which make for good-tempered motoring.

Herewith a few mechanical details. The engine is a - six-cylinder bore and stroke 57 mm. and 84 mm., capacity 1,287 c.c., taxed at £12. The engine design closely follows the racing Magnettes and great attention has been paid to the shape of the head and of the induction system. The inlet and exhaust ports are on opposite sides of the engine.

The clutch is new for this model, and is well designed. The gear ratios are 5.125, 6.98, 11.9 and 21.5 to 1 (reverse 21.5 also). Cooling is by pump and a fan can be fitted as an extra if desired.

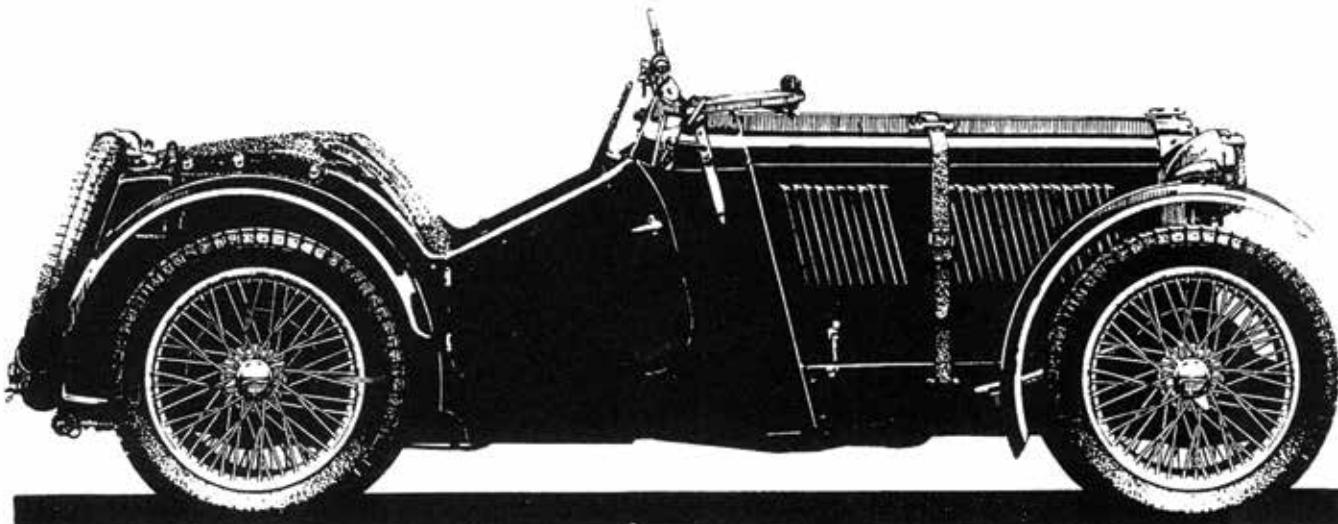
The track is 3 ft. 9 ins., wheelbase 8ft., overall length 12 ft. 4 ins., overall width 4 ft. 6 ins.

When I collected the car, Mr. Cecil Kimber - managing director, said, "I think you'll like this car." After 6,000 miles with it, I completely agree.



Page 4

NAMMM REGISTER NEWSLETTER Volume 14, Number 3



SOMETHING FOR THE SUMMER...SIR?



1934 MG K3 replica chassis KN
One of the well built early K3 reps. on a factory K chassis with K axles, high ratio diff., twin lever brakes, and the big pre-select gearbox able to take the power. Original KN engine with fully counterbalanced crank & rods, and blown through a Marshall 85 s/ccharger. A fine example qualifying for all VSCC & MGCC events and having the advantage of the more practical slab-tank body giving luggage room for long distance tours & rallying.
£165,500



A TRULY MAGNIFICENT WOLSELEY HORNET SPECIAL
Known as a Shelsley Special, being built by Samuel Holbrook Ltd, this unique car is in close to concours condition. Straight 6cyl crossflow engine fully rebuilt in 2015. All original bodywork now fitted. Four forward gears with synchro on 3rd & 4th. 12" hydraulics, twin carbs and extremely quick. History back to 1934. Restored by professional engineer to the highest standard throughout, and is a VERY valuable Wolseley.
£49,500



1933 CYCLE WING MG J2 SPORTS.
Just a lovely all original motor car, recently overhauled and ready for the road. Excellent engine, correct dash, Collingbum interior and quality double-duck weather equipment. Correct lamps and very nice paintwork in two-tone blue. Comes with a mass of history, DVLA paperwork and orig. Reg. No.
£36,500



1934 SWEPT WING MG J2 SPORTS.
A very handsome J2 finished in deep Claret with a counterbalanced crank & rods. A quality rebuild with original engine, Collingbum deep red interior and virtually unused very high quality weather equipment, a truly lovely car for this coming summer's events. Huge invoice and history files and correct DVLA paperwork, MMM registered.
£37,950

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(Thoroughly worth getting your wish/wants list to us. No obligation – any quote. Over 1000 kgs.)



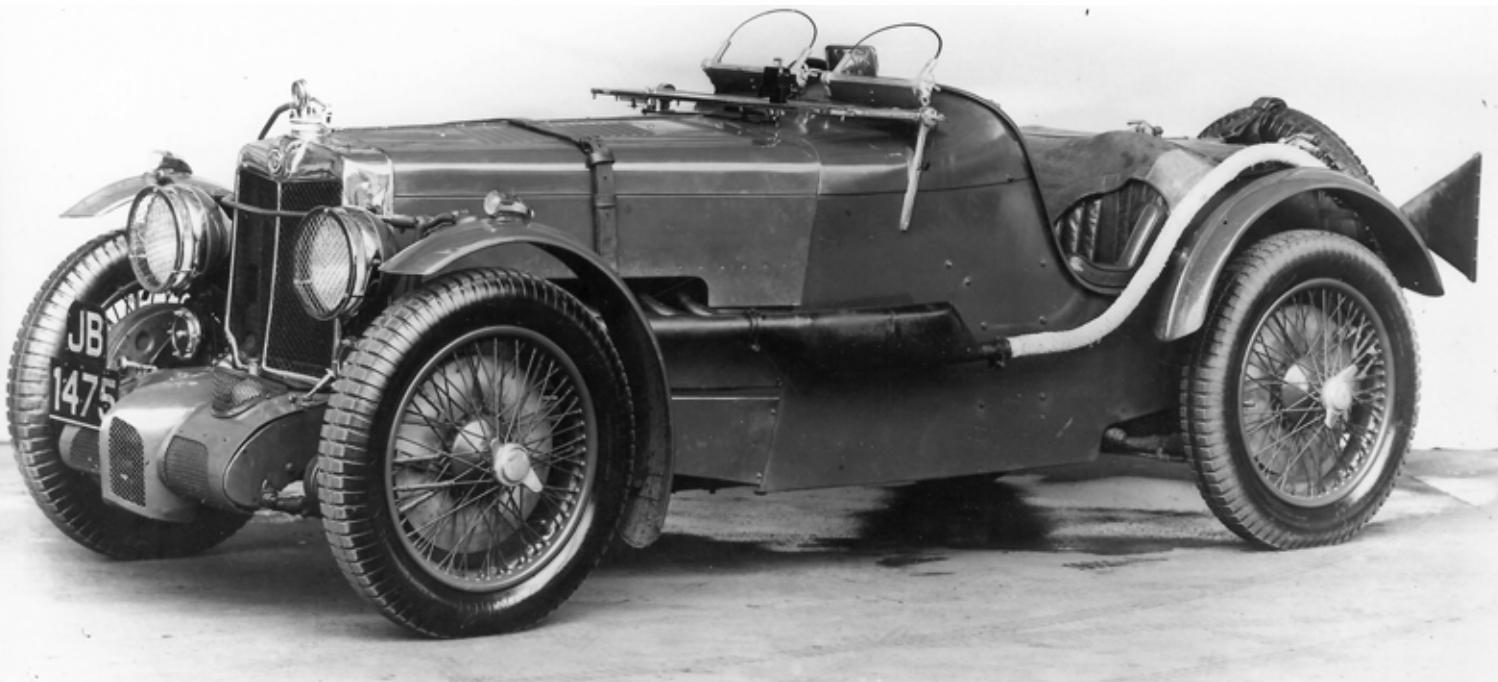
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....for the very best in vintage MGs....



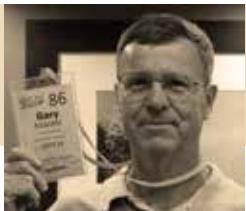
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please phone before calling in

Email: barry@barrywalker.com Web: www.barrywalker.com



From Mike Allison's article on page 25: Mike related Reg Jackson's comment: "The K3 which was sold to the German, Theodor Fork. Jacko told me that this car was a new one built with the identity of the ex-Eyston K3, which had been converted to the car which Nuvolari drove in the TT."



Technical Topics

Gary Krukoski GaryKrukoski@yahoo.com



Wheel Stand

This is a very handy homemade fixture. It was originally made for checking wire wheel runout and truing the rim. It was constructed out of a wire wheel front assembly. The attaching bracket is welded onto the assembly. The assembly was then attached to a small stand. It works well for truing the wheel.

Its second usage is a holder for painting the wire wheels. As you know, this is a tricky task to get an even coat of single stage paint on the rim. By having the wheel at a good height and spinning it, your paint will turn out great. The only problem is having one fixture and five rims. By adding a small cable with a small extra loop you can remove the rim from the fixture; then set it on a peg to let it dry. The loop is marked in orange in the photo.





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Working inside the Octagon

Memories of Stewart Daniels, an MG Draughtsman through 1935



I came across an interesting article in the 1994 SVW review, the third annual publication of the SVW register. This is a recording of some reminiscences by Stewart Daniels who as a draughtsman had much to do with the Midgets, Magnas, and Magnettes up to 1935 as well as the 2-litre and experimental projects. So far I have not uncovered anymore information about Stewart Daniels – anyone know of him?

Tom Wilson, Editor

It has only been within the last year or so that Stewart has seriously tried to cast his mind back to those early days so forgive a little disarrangement of the memories. Hopefully more will be recorded when he has time to think away from the day-to-day problems of keeping Rolls and Bentleys on the road at his workshop near Blandford in Dorset.

"In the Abingdon works' garage in the early thirties, we had quite a selection of hack cars; in the care of, I think, a character named Nelson King. He often used CK's (Cecil Kimber) Corsica Magnette as his dinner wagon, (in other words he went home to lunch in it.) There were one or two P-types with experimental mods, such as Centric blowers, and these could prove to be surprise packets to motorists who had expected to out accelerate what they thought was a standard P-type. Of course, the 0-60 mph acceleration figures of an ordinary P type look quite pathetic today. Even then it was done in no great comfort. I think that killed the DHC models more than anything was the fact that a Ford V-8 Saloon, at about the same price (£240), would carry four people in comfort and would out-accelerate a P-type in virtual silence. After 1935, the so-called Midget, with Morris Engines' push-rod lumps and the logical but mis-named "Grand Prix" hydraulic brakes, took over following, wisely enough, W O Bentley's dictum: "There's no substitute for litres."

This seems to lead up to the underlying cult in the Club for 6-cylinder models. Well why not? There is nothing quite like a good K3 to appeal to all one's senses – and don't forget young fella that I can recall the great day when Nuvolari won the 1933 T.T. in a K3 with Alec Hounslow as riding mechanic. This epic, being followed by Charlie Dodson winning the 1934 event in the unblown NE-type, in pouring rain, proves my contention that it takes a motorcyclist to drive a winning car, especially under adverse conditions.

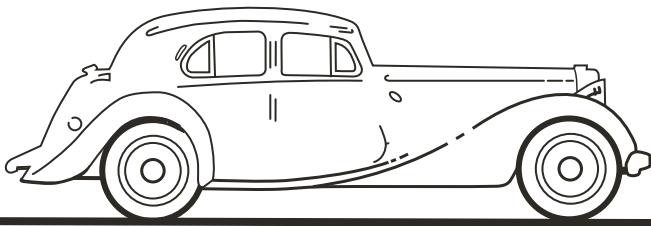
Next to CK, my actual boss at Abingdon was H.N. Charles, a very clever engineer, who had been a flyer in WWI. He would go to the enormous trouble to explain technical points to anyone, like me, who showed a genuine interest in some aspect of design – although he was one of the least attentive listeners I've ever met. If I ventured some comment on something he was saying, a glazed look would come over his eyes and he would obviously not be the least bit interested in what I was saying. Hardly surprising, I suppose, as he knew it all, and I had just about everything to learn.

The only time he really took in what I had to say was when he suddenly decided that he wanted to do the crawl. Although no Mark Spitz I did happen to be able to swim moderately well. So, after getting me to explain one or two of the basic points of technique, some of which registered fairly convincingly on his highly technical brain, he took me to a well-known bathing venue near Oxford known as Parson's Pleasure. Quite incidentally there was a secluded backwater, and I got a lot of innocent amusement in observing that nudity is not a great leveler class-wise, but that the teacher/pupil relationship in our case was now reversed and although he might have had the superior brain-power he had to concede that my vital statistics placed him at some disadvantage.

I mention all this as an example of what a very happy place MG at Abingdon was to work in at that time. Subsequently, whenever anybody at some other firm suggested that what we wanted was teamwork, I reminded myself I'd once worked for what was possibly the greatest team that had ever existed.

My immediate superior in the Design Department was a larger-than-life character named Bill Renwick. By 1935 Bill had obviously seen better days. But he was a superb technician, and he taught me a lot about such things as stressing when applied to motor-car design. Whilst not intolerant of suggestions from a junior designer, he was a master of the gentle put-down. He had been at the car design game for many years, so when I would suggest some ingenious method of doing something he would give me a kindly but dismissive look and say something like "we tried that at Packards in 1913 – and it was no bloody good!"

Bill always smoked cigarettes through a long black holder, and was certainly not averse to a few sherbets at one of the local pubs. I was driving him home one night in a P-type and must admit I did slightly misjudge a sharpish



corner, involving a certain amount of tyre squeal but no actual departure from the intended route. Bill uttered not a word, but a flurry of sparks on the floor indicated that his cigarette holder had landed there. In fact, he had bitten the end off of it!

I didn't stay at the Abingdon factory after the Racing Department was disbanded around May 1935. Four of us were sent over to Cowley to "design" the 2-litre Saloon. What happened was that we were told to make an MG out of the 18/80 Wolseley. This involved the production of an enlarged MG style radiator, a new chassis frame, topping three inches off the front and rear track (from 4ft 8ins to 4ft 5ins, I think it was), a traditional MG type handbrake and two short silencers instead of one long one (this was just to get the silencer systems into the new frame). We nearly vomited when Cowley insisted on bolt-on wheels instead of Rudge type with knock-on eared nuts, but the prototype went on the 1935 Motor Show stand with touring car wheels (thankfully Rudge wheels were adopted later, though). The "2-litre" engine was an unmodified 18/80 Wolseley – which wasn't a bad unit, in fact.

For the bodywork ideas we were given a Charlesworth catalogue which had illustrations of some quite pretty bodies for their day on the Speed Twenty Alvis. I don't know if Charlesworth pioneered it, but a feature of these bodies was the leading edge of the rear wing followed the radius of the rear wheel until it pointed slightly rearwards, where it joined the rear end of the running board. This was regarded as rather dashing, and we copied it faithfully. The finished article didn't look too bad, although the traditional MG radiator made the front end look rather a cabin-trunk affair compared with the rest of the body. As soon as this Kimber Masterpiece was assembled, we four MG survivors were given the elbow, and subsequent MG Saloons and Midgets were "designed" by the Cowley staff. About the only really enjoyable task I had to do during this Cowley period was to look after the famous Max Miller of "The Autocar," whose freehand cut-away drawings were the envy of us ordinary draughtsmen. I had looked after him before at Abingdon where he used to come and do his drawings of new models, almost invariably a long time before we could show him anything like a complete chassis. What he sketched from was more likely to be a frame, with maybe the axles in position, and with the engine propped upon a box in about the right position. As a matter of fact,

he told me that he often drew the engine slightly larger than it should be in relation to the rest of the car, as in those days of small engines in British cars the engine had a habit of looking rather lost if drawn truly to scale.

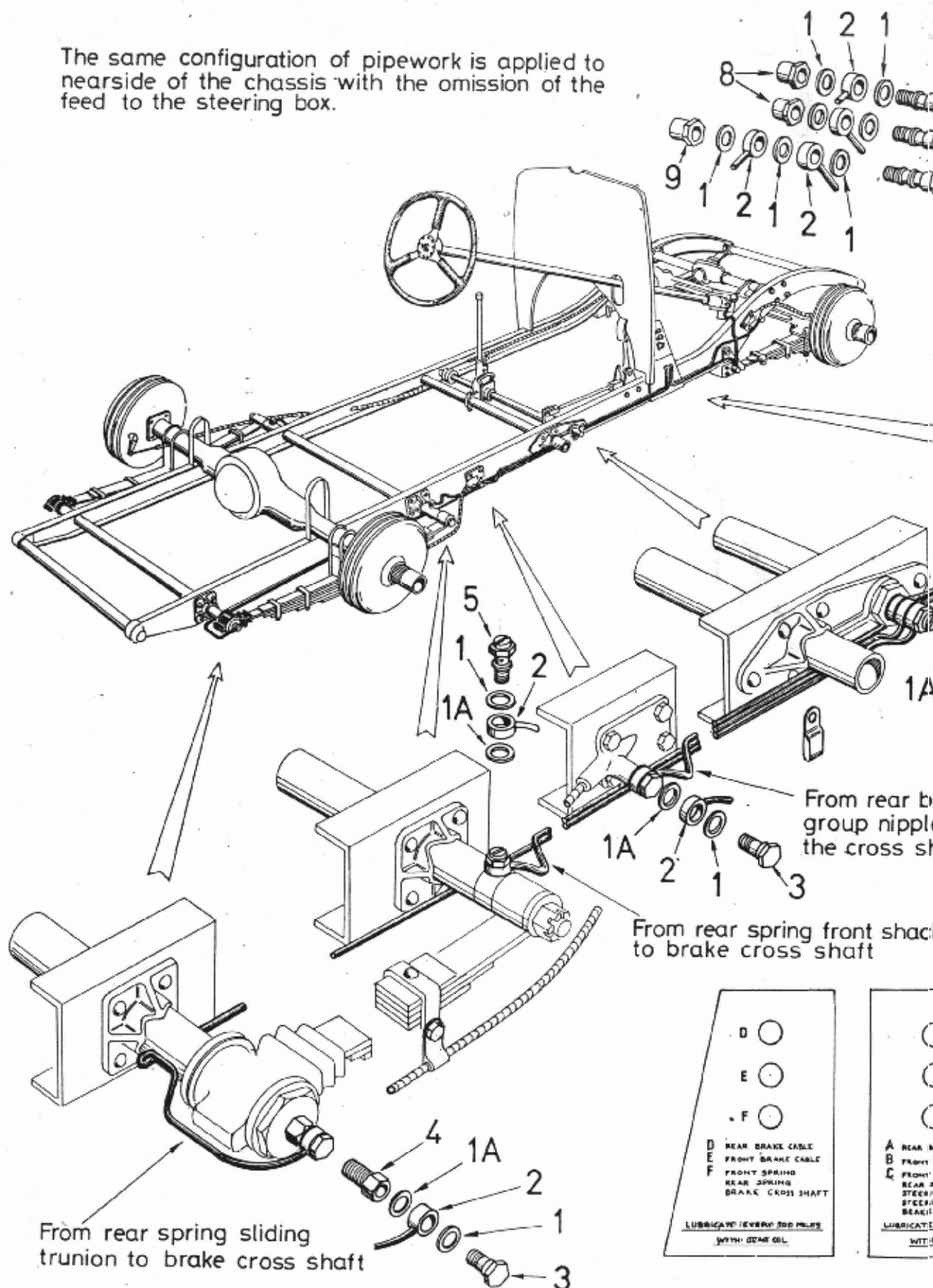
What was particularly fascinating with Max Miller was to watch him fill in details of new models from the working drawings of the missing parts. Having sketched in some bracket or other, probably from what was to us an impossible angle, he'd make a few quick squiggles with his pencil and there would be a group of hexagon nuts holding it onto the chassis. Accustomed as we were to drawing circles with a pair of compasses, it was near miraculous to watch him draw, say, a wheel and brake drum assembly, with a series of ellipses, all executed freehand, and with every spoke in its proper place. Except for a Longitudinal centre line, and possibly the centrelines of the two axles, I never recall seeing him use a ruler – and he usually made the long edge of a large set-square do for this purpose. He insisted that lines drawn freehand had more "life" than lines drawn with instruments.

I can remember Kimber's personal Corsica drophead with supercharger (the paintwork was black) but can't recall details of any other Kimber cars. I do clearly remember CK borrowing a 3½ Litre Bentley for a week or two, and we all took the opportunity of having a close look at this as we were busy with the design of a 3½-litre MG Saloon a sort of giant R-type, with Y-shaped box section frame and torsion-bar suspension, early in that fateful year of 1935. Before we could get this monster assembled the axe fell and we were switched to Cowley to work on the aforementioned 2-litre Saloon. As a matter of fact, most of the components which had come through had proved to be horribly overweight and much ruthless paring would have been needed in order to get this chassis down to an overall weight which the proposed 3½-litre Wolseley engine could have propelled.

The Continental Coupe Magnettes (we used a rude nickname for this L type) were indeed white elephants and I believe the price had to be drastically reduced in order to get rid of them. What I remember most about them was a large squarish trunk on the back (which probably had a tendency to drop off later in life). There was a rather pretty little P-type Midget, known if I'm not mistaken, as the Airline Coupe; but a limited number of these were produced."

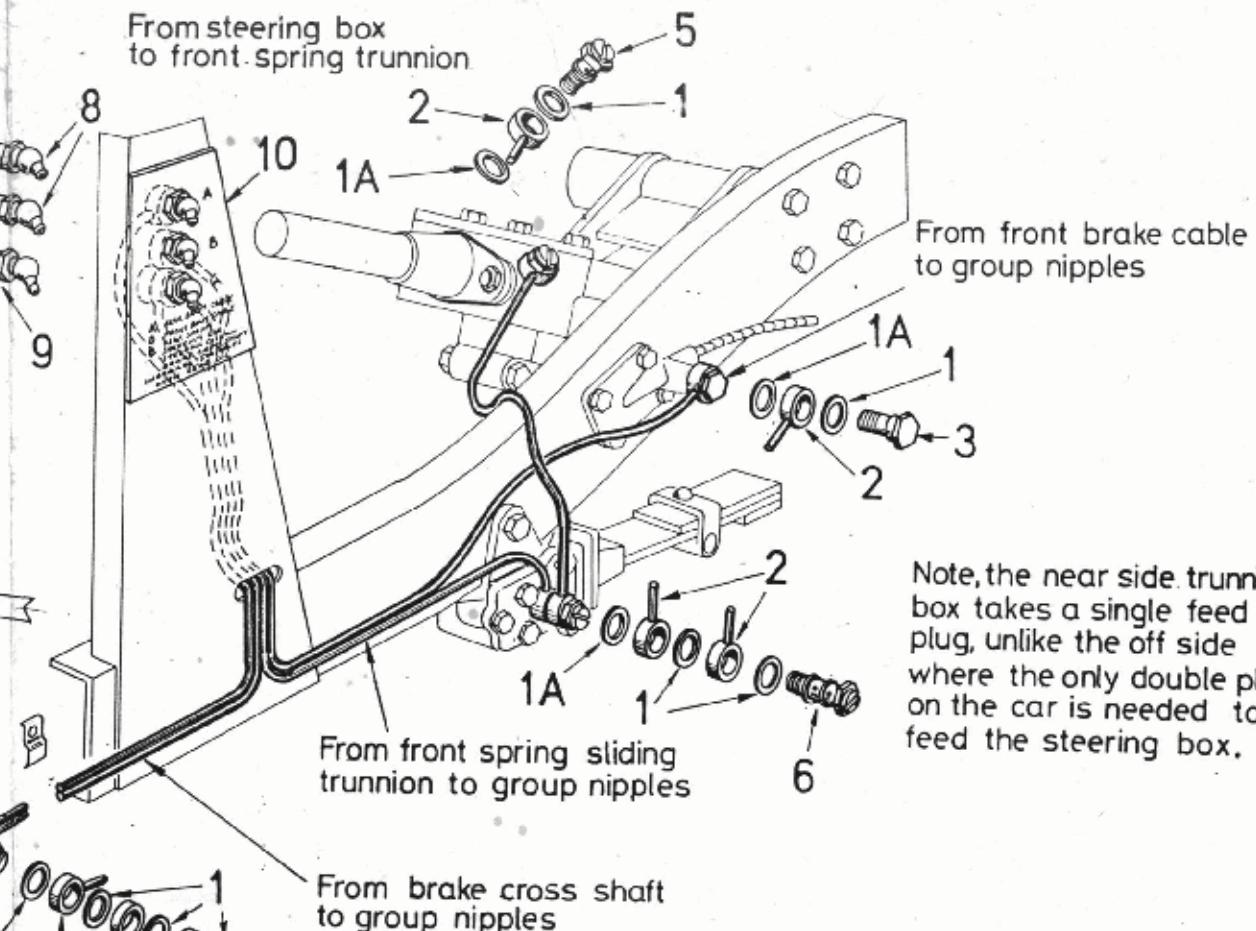


The same configuration of pipework is applied to nearside of the chassis with the omission of the feed to the steering box.



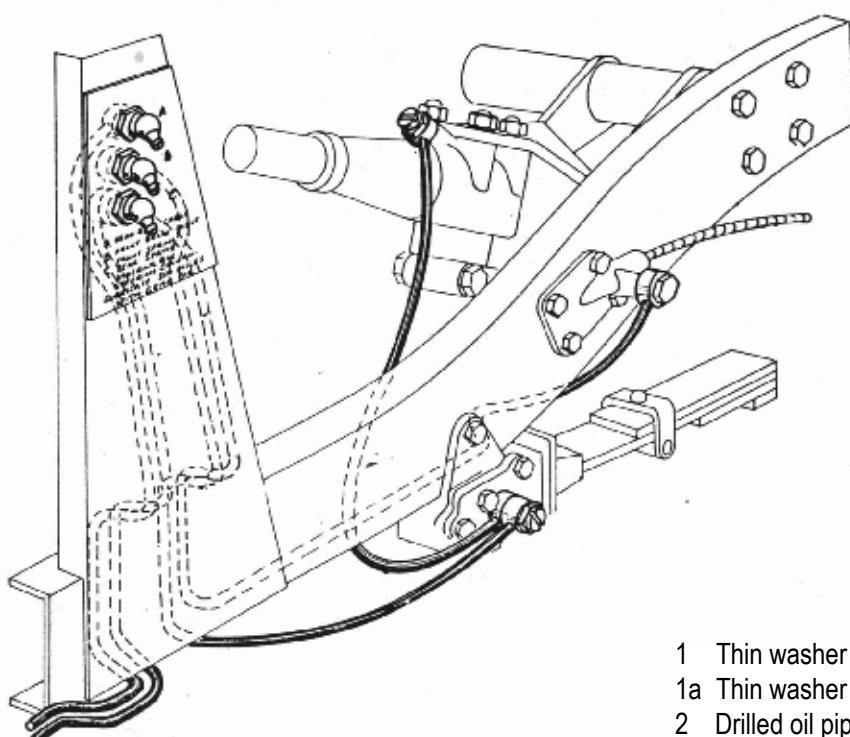
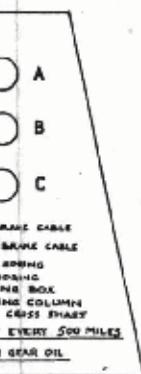
MMM Automatic Lubrication System





Brake cable to
lines by-passing
shaft oiler

Brake cable



This drawing shows how the pipe-runs from the group nipples on the F, J & L models differ from those of the N & P models shown on the main drawing

- 1 Thin washer $\frac{3}{8}$ " inside diameter
- 1a Thin washer $\frac{5}{16}$ " inside diameter
- 2 Drilled oil pipe ends
- 3 Open feed plug
- 4 Greaser/set screw for trunnion cap
- 5 Single adjustable feed plug
- 6 Double adjustable feed plug
- 7 Treble adjustable feed plug
- 8 One-way oiler and cap
- 9 Two-way oiler and cap

Working inside the Octagon

Reprinted with permission from Safety Fast, the magazine of the MG Car Club.



Reminiscences of Jacko Jackson

As recorded by Mike Allison at various times, 1964/68

Between 1964 and 1968, when he retired, I was on the staff of Mr R.C. Jackson, Chief Inspector when I was at the Factory, but chief mechanic of the racing shop in the period 1931 to 1935, when the Department was decommissioned on the instruction of Leonard Lord, Managing Director of the Nuffield Corporation, which had become effective owner of the MG Car Company in 1935. Actually, he told me his official title was Foreman, Development and Experimental department, and that he was responsible directly to H.N. Charles.

Work at MG was still formal in 1965, when I joined his staff, and Christian names were not used as they are today in the workplace. To me he was "Mr Jackson", or "Chief", although as we worked together, he eventually allowed me to call him "Jacko". It wasn't until after he retired that I was allowed to call him "Reg". He was a man of mild temperament, proud of his achievements for the MG Car Company, and of those of the MG Car Company itself. He was a modest man, and not given to boasting, or, unlike some of the other old-stagers, given to trying to claim that he and Kimber alone built the Company from nothing.

He was not given to a regular discussion about the past. One of his favourite answers to the question, "Which was the best model MG produced?" was to take the inquisitor to a sight of the production line and point to the car at the end and say "That one!"



A portrait of R. C. Jackson taken shortly before he retired in 1968.

Most of the stories were told during morning coffee break, usually when there was not too much by way of production problems to discuss. The stories were invariably concluded with something like: "All memories, let's make some more cars, they pay the wages!" I would then rush back to my lair and jot down what I could remember. What follows is this record, from these notes, copied verbatim. There were probably many more which I didn't write down at the time; his story of EX120 and the first 100mph are well recorded, almost as he told them, in the Barre Lyndon Trilogy of the 30s. Lyndon had obviously paid Jacko something for his recall, as Jacko always spoke well of him, even naming his son after him.

How Reginald C. Jackson started work at MG

"My formal training had been at GWK, who made a friction drive car in the mid-20s in Maidenhead, where I was apprenticed, serving five years before being deemed to worthy of the title 'mechanic'. I passed various exams, but, just after I completed my apprenticeship, GWK went under in 1928, so I needed a job. I had a motor bike as transport, I think at that time I had progressed to a 350cc Matchless, which was quite a good machine. I realised Morris Motors was a big firm, not too far away in Oxford, and went there on the off-chance they were hiring, but they weren't. The personnel bloke there told me about this MG Car Company down the road a mile or so at Edmund Road, and said they were looking for someone like me. I went down there and met Cec Cousins, who was in charge of hiring, and he told me they were developing a new model and wanted someone with experience and limited drawing ability to develop and draw the special parts they needed. So I was co-opted onto the 18/80 development, initially working dizzvzor Cous, but later under H.N. Charles, when he officially joined the firm. I think they offered me 17/6 for a 48 hour week, with extra

for overtime, and a promise of a full 5d an hour after a month's trial, and that raised me to a full £1 per week, and a bit more with the frequent overtime. Digs in Oxford cost me 2/6, Bed and Breakfast with evening meal, so I had quite a bit of spare money, by the standards of 1928!

"The main product when I joined was the Mark IV, a modified Morris Oxford in all but name, but quite a nice car, with a decent ability to steer and cover ground without fuss. On the stocks was what we then called the 'Six,' the engine looked lovely, and it was my job to get all the detailing sorted. This was done in collaboration with Cowley Drawing Office, and I had to prepare sketches of all the special components we added to make the car more sporting. The original chassis and running gear was still basically Morris Oxford, but Kimber's idea was that a sports car was produced by putting on a stylish bodywork and giving it the ability to cruise effortlessly, and this had worked on the Mark IV; but he wanted to make something better, which to him meant bigger, and hence the work on the 'Six' as it was called pre-production, and

which was my main concern. I also had a hand in drawing and detailing an H.N. Charles new chassis frame and running gear, which became the Mark Two in due course.

"One day I had to go to Cowley, and spotted the Minor. Cous and I were always talking about the Austin Seven racing achievements, and I was soon taken on a flight of fancy about a small MG, and Cous and I talked it over. He took the idea to Kimber, who pooh-poohed it, but I also chatted to HN about our ideas, and he took it to Kimber, who said he might get a chassis up for development work... but we had to concentrate on getting the Six ready for the Motor Show... I think it was in late 28. *Actually it was August.*

"We cobbled together a body with a pointed tail, Harry Herring made the framework, and we stretched Rexene over it as a covering... The Six was to be fabric covered, and so were some of the old 14HP jobs, so this was a natural thing for us to do. I made up a smaller version of the 18/80, as the Six had become known, radiator shell in German silver, and polished it and fitted it over the Morris radiator. It looked OK but a bit amateurish, but Kimber got Carbodies to make a couple of proper bodies up quickly, which looked a lot better. When Kimber tried it, he was pleased.

Cecil Cousins had told me a very similar story, implying that he was also 'in' on the prototype work, which was probably true, as he was Works Superintendent at the time.

"The prototype caused a tremendous

impression at the Motor Show, and Kimber told me that he had taken 250 orders for the Midget, which caused him a little heartache as he was trying to sell the idea of a luxury sports car to Billy Morris and the press! Anyway, the Midget went into production and more and more effort went into that car, as we were selling five or seven of those to every 18/80.

"I can't say that I was ever enthusiastic about the 18/80, which was a ponderous brute of a thing really. It handled nicely, but we could never make its outright performance a match for the Talbot which was built in London and was a much simpler car all round, and only two litres, I think, although they did increase the engine capacity eventually to three. Funny thing about cars then, they all got heavier the longer they were in production... and that applied to MG too! The Mark II was a better proposition, but was heavier, and although it handled better than the Mark I, the engine was difficult to tune-up, and try as we might we couldn't make it go any faster... the Mark III racing car was a total disaster.

"The Midget had proved a success, and early in 1929 Cous, Frankie Tayler and I were to take three cars to Brooklands and run them in a High Speed Trial, with 'named' drivers, of course, we three as riding mechanics. This was CK's idea, to show the cars could stand up to one hour at maximum speed. I think we all three did 60 miles in the hour, which made good advertising copy at a time when neither the Morris Minor nor the Austin

Seven could do much over 40 in standard tune.

"HN got me to have a look at the engine, and when I checked the valve timing I found there was no overlap at TDC, which I knew wasn't much cop, and I asked Wolseley Motors to send me an unground camshaft over. HN did some calculations, so I worked on grinding the blank on the workshop lathe, and had it hardened at Birmingham to a different profile which gave us a little overlap, and the car went much better! We could get it up to around 73mph, but was running weak, so I said we then needed a bit of polish and port alignment carried out. I did all this myself, and the result was a Midget which would just nudge 80, and knew we were on to something good. This car was called "Shinio" because of all the elbow grease I had used on the internals. I had balanced the bottom end up, equalised the combustion chambers, lined up the manifolds and so forth, and it really did scurry along then.

"The camshaft was put into production, production examples being ground on a proper machine, but I think that was a bit later, as they had to be slipped in between batches of Minor cams.

"We were by then moving the Factory to Abingdon, and the Essex 'market gardeners' got onto Kimber for a team of Midgets to run in the Double-Twelve Race at Brooklands. We prepared half a dozen cars for that, and won the Team Prize, while CK's 'baby,' the Tigress, blew up. After that it was Midgets all the way, and the 18/80 died off."



The Mark 1 chassis (18/80) which was Jacko's first responsibility with the MG Car Co.

Sydney Enever

These notes were made not long after I started working with Reg, when I had found it difficult to talk with Syd about emission problems, for which I was supposed to be responsible in production.

"Syd is blessed with a poor recall of his early days. He certainly was not one of the first people to work for Kimber, so far as I know they were Cous and Frank Stevens. Syd and I first met when he was working at Morris Motors and I was at Edmund Road. He had worked up from tea-boy to become a mechanical fitter, and we talked the same sort of language.

"When we started with racing, Syd was dead keen to be involved, and I suppose he came over to MG when the C-types were being prepared for the Double-Twelve, so we were at Abingdon then.

He fitted into things well, and was always known as "Squeak", from his high pitched voice, and the way he always interjected conversations with a "Well!!" Anyway, after a time he became a permanent fixture, and was eventually taken under HN's wing when we were developing the R-type chassis. The way Syd works to this day was HN's... everything worked from first principles, but he does tend to get fixated with some ideas!

"Syd was brilliant at solving problems on the hoof, at race meetings and the like, and we were a team when working on Goldie's and George's record breaking... although not so much with George's pre-war stuff. At the start Fred Kindell and Frank Tayler were my right hand men, with Syd one of the 'boys', dragged in when required. After 1934 he worked more closely with HN, and I saw less of him in the workshop.

"When we got started after the War, Syd came back to the Factory, and JWT set him

up as Chief Engineer, and he brought in Roy Brocklehurst, who had just finished his apprenticeship, and was a really bright boy. Most of Syd's work is finished off and put into engineering terms by Roy. His office is run by Isla Watts, someone you will need to get friendly with if you ever want to talk to Syd. I suppose Terry Mitchell is the man to talk to regarding day to day emission problems, although really these should all go back to Eddie Maher for Coventry built engines, and Charlie Smith for Longbridge jobs. On reflection your best contact is Dancocks, whom you already know!"

Eddie Maher was chief engine wizard at Coventry engines, from where the Midget engine was built up, while Charles Smith was his counterpart at Longbridge, where the MGB engine was built. Howard Dancocks was head of Emissions under Bill Appleby at Longbridge R&D Department.



A line of 18/80 chassis about to go from Edmund Road to Carbodies Ltd. in Coventry for body mounting. "Tom" Viner is the driver in the first car, who was Jacko's deputy when I first joined the Inspection Department; at that time he was the only inspector for the Company.

One of the problems we had on the production line, when I was transferring interests to overall car build quality, was that some front hubs on Midgets were fitted on the 'wrong side'. I investigated, and found it to have been caused but a wrongly labelled tray of hubs arriving from T&T (the old Wolseley Factory, known in my time as Tractors and Transmissions). It had also resulted in a front wheel coming off one car on road-test, which in turn resulted in an enquiry, which I chaired. There was a certain amount of comment about the Rudge hubs used on wire wheels being 'unsafe,' and this led to a wonderful story from Jacko, when we were reviewing my report to him of the meeting.

"Those Rudge hubs were one of the safest fittings made to MGs, and contributed to the overall safety of the Midget model. Quite a few of the early Midgets had wheels come off, but after the adoption of Rudge hubs it really couldn't happen. The hub nuts are self-tightening!

"It was Nuvolari who showed me the way to fit them properly. When he was looking at the car before practice for the TT, he got me to take all the wheels off the car. He then made me clean the hubs and the wheels with petrol, and get them dry. He then personally smeared the hub splines with grease, just thinly, on both wheel and hub itself. Then he smeared a thickish layer on the male and female cone at each end of the hub and hub-

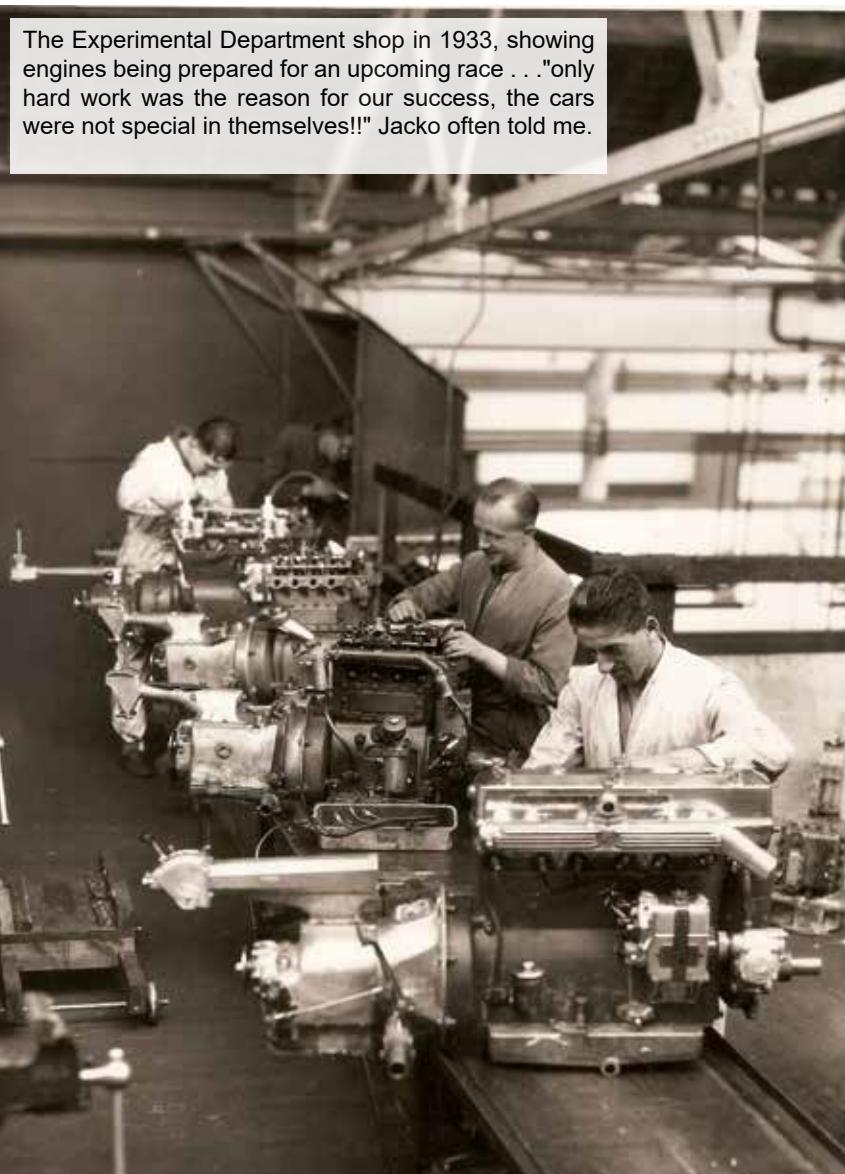
spinner. He re-fitted the wheels, spinning the eared nut on by hand until it was tight, and then pushed it tight onto the wheel. He rocked the wheel, and then let it onto the road, and gave all four hub nuts ONE biff with the hide end of the hammer, and indicated that that was tight enough. The nuts certainly needed a hard knock or two to loosen after the race, but he insisted that we do that whenever a wheel was removed.

"That worked for him, and was the method I used ever after."

It is the method I have used since, and it still works! I claim the method comes from Nuvolari, so it must be good, and cringe now when I see amateur mechanics knocking seven bells out of the eared spinners!

Not long after, I was walking along the production line with Jacko, and we watched an operator on the line putting wheels onto dry hubs. Jacko went up to the man, and explained the correct method of greasing hubs, and stressing its importance, which had never been taught to the operator but actually made his job easier... the foreman of the line was also told this, and he appeared grateful. In all this no-one's nose was put out of joint, and we all (me included) learned something: just an example of how Jacko was good with men doing the job, and probably why he was so universally liked by his staff.

The Experimental Department shop in 1933, showing engines being prepared for an upcoming race . . ."only hard work was the reason for our success, the cars were not special in themselves!!" Jacko often told me.



K3s in general

"These were built in the Experimental Shop to order. The first one had a pointed tail, like an overgrown C-type, and ran in the Monte Carlo Rally, driven by 'mouth-full-of-initials' (G.W.J.H. Wright) Wright. We decided that with the J2 being so popular, a slab tank body would be better, and look like the 'family'. I didn't have much influence on all that, and bodies came from Carbodies and were trimmed here at Abingdon.

"We had about ten bodies (actually 12), but they were quickly superseded by shell bodies which we knocked up in Experimental. Most of the racing cars were fitted with these, which we called 'Skimpy bodies': they were very light, and only stood up because the edges were wired! They were fixed to the bulkhead with about ten 2BA screws, and had a panel at the rear to clamp the tank to, which bolted to a turned edge at the rear of the tonneau.

"So far as I remember the wings and lights were an extra to the £750 price, and not many of the cars were fitted with these, so far as I remember.

"At that time, there was not an awful lot which could beat a K3 on the road, and you had to keep a good watch out for traffic, much of which was horse drawn then. We used to use the Besselsleigh Road to Wantage for testing the Road equipped cars, and the police didn't really care if we didn't have lights or mudguards fitted, so we often tested cars pre-race on the road!"



We had been talking about K3s and Q-types, and the reasons for their successes:

"You know, all you people think that the racing cars were something special. The races they won did bring the Company a lot of kudos, but at the time, I don't think any of us thought they were any more than a job of work. What they did, they did because they were as well prepared as we could do the job, and the drivers drove as fast as they could.

"What I did was because it was my job, and at the time, I thought I was well paid for doing something for the Company, of which I was, and still, am, intensely proud. My pay as foreman was 1/4d an hour, and while a 60 hour week was the norm then, I frequently worked longer than that.

"Most parts came from the production stock parts bin, except for valves and

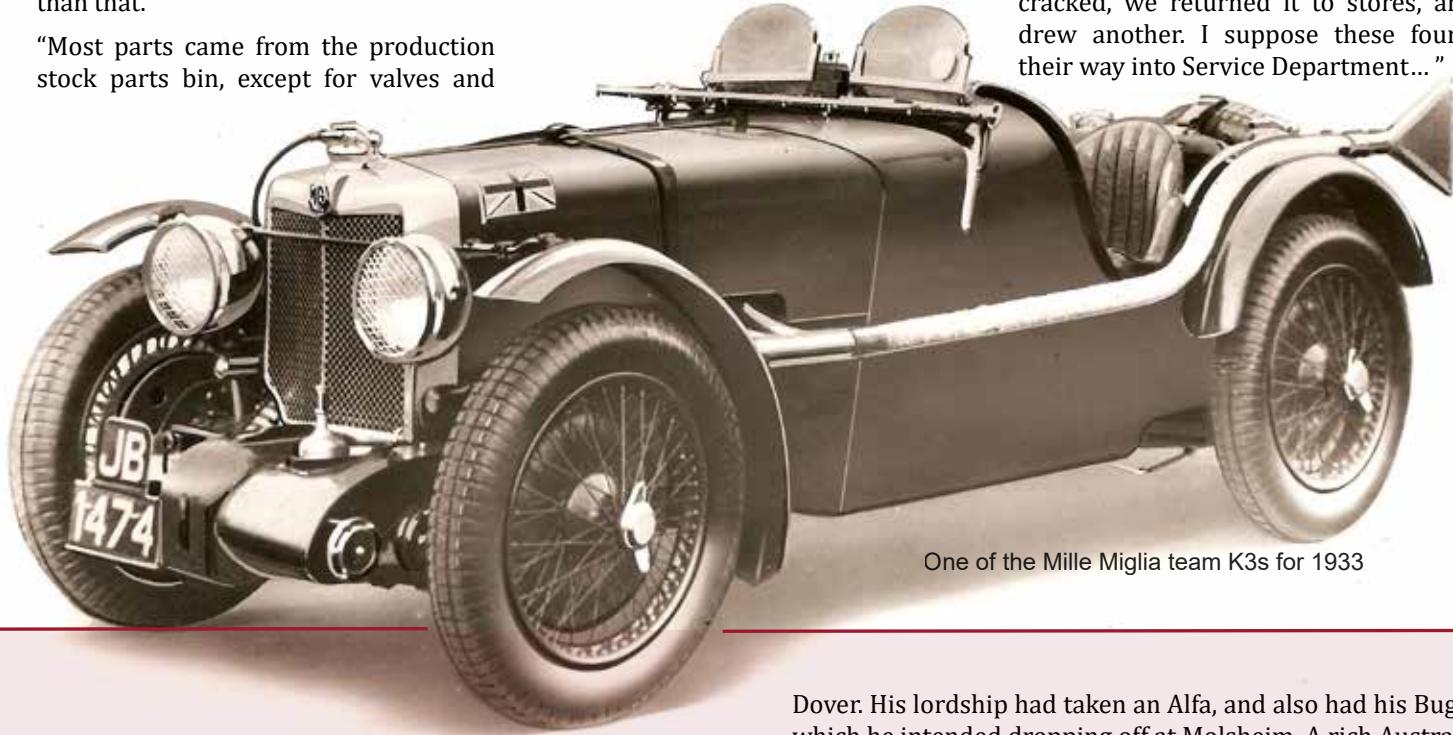
springs in the engine department, the rest were, by and large, standard bits. We used primitive crack-testing of parts prior to assembly, using paraffin and French chalk. The rest was down to careful assembly, and making sure each cylinder contributed an equal share of work. But long before the engine, we used to get the chassis prepared, so that steering and brakes were as near perfect as we could achieve.

"After 1931, as engine speeds crept up, we had special cranks made for the Midgets, the original C-type cranks being made from standard forgings. We had a hundred or so of these made, by Wolseley, and what hadn't been used in C-type production were used in the J3 sports car. I think everyone racing a C-type had

a Laystall crankshaft from 1932 on. This allowed us to use more boost and move to alcohol fuels with more alcohol and less benzole in, and engine speeds went up to 7,000 and more. The Magnettes used standard cranks, crack tested, and replaced after every 1,000 miles or so. We used special white metal on the bearings, and I think after 1933 we had the Q-type, which used special steel for the rods, which was adopted for the K3 rods too.

"Hard work won races, as much as good driving! If the driver did not have a good vehicle, it didn't matter how good he was, because the car had to get to the finishing line before a result could be achieved.

"If a crank or rod was found to be cracked, we returned it to stores, and drew another. I suppose these found their way into Service Department..."



One of the Mille Miglia team K3s for 1933

The 1933 Mille Miglia

"I think it was at Lord Howe's instigation that we were told to prepare cars for the Mille Miglia. Someone had run a Midget in the race in 1932, I think it was Lord de Clifford, but he did it all on his own, with no help at all from us. Lord Howe wanted something much grander though, a full team of cars. Kimber was very keen, but Lord Nuffield had to be involved. He would only agree if the cars were bought by the drivers, but we could have a development car. We had already built a car up like an overgrown C-type Midget, but it was an ugly thing, and it was decided that the pointed tail was old-fashioned and that the car should look like the J2, as near as possible. So we played around with ideas and made up a body, and built a second prototype. This we took to Italy just after Christmas, I think Fred Kindell was with me, and we met Lord Howe's party at

Dover. His lordship had taken an Alfa, and also had his Bugatti which he intended dropping off at Molsheim. A rich Australian called Rubin and the Harley Street doctor, Sir Henry Birkin, were also in the party. I gathered that Birkin and Rubin had agreed to buy a car each, and that Lord Howe was having the third one.

"Howe's personal mechanic, George Thomas, was also in the party; he was driving the Alfa. We drove in convoy across France, and Howe went off to Molsheim. We didn't go there. The story about Bugatti saying the axle was wrong is not true; it was Birkin who said that it was twisting and didn't look strong, and I phoned HN to tell him that. We crossed the Alps and joined up one of the fast Italian roads. Somewhere along there I saw the Alfa weaving around, and thought Thomas was having a problem, then I got a tail wag on myself in the MG, and that was my first experience of black-ice! It frightened me a lot, but we both slowed down, and had no more trouble at slightly lower speeds!"

TT1933

"Nuvolari came over to drive a K3, and this was really a scratch-built car for him. I did the engine, chassis work was done by Kindell and Barrett. The car was the one Eyston had used on the Mille Miglia, but was retained as a development car, so it was a dog really. However it was completely rebuilt and fitted with a Skimpy body. So far as I can remember, only a handful of the Mille-Miglia bodies were built, they were coach built, and very heavy. The Skimpy was a shell, held up by the bulkheads and an eighteen gallon slab tank on the rear. We wired the exposed edges, and the bottom... they were made in house though.

"Nuvolari was fussy about the seating position, which he said was too low, and he wanted the rear raked back. He eventually said the seat should be raised by 2½ inches, with the front of the cushion 1½" higher than the rear. I was working through Hugh McConnell, the scrutineer, who spoke Italian, as Nuvolari himself spoke no English at all, beyond "hello" and all our swear words! All the detail work was done at Belfast, where we were on good terms with Ferguson, a garage owner there. I did the best I could with the seat, but had only raised the height by 2", which I thought was near enough! I turned up with the car, and Nuvolari got in, then straight out: he wanted the front raised by 2½", not just two! Then I realized we were dealing with a real professional driver! He really was special, the Fangio of his day! Like Fangio he could get into any car, and get the best out of it.

"He was also fussy about fitting the hubs, and insisted on greasing all the brake pivots and king-pins with a thick outer

layer of grease, "... in case it rains!" he said. It all made sense to me. He also wanted more braking effort at the front than the rear, and helped us adjust this the way he wanted. No other driver at that time paid so much attention to detail. "Alec will tell you about the actual drive, but lap after lap he improved the best speed, far quicker than any of our usual amateur drivers! He wore out a set of tyres (all four!) in practice, and I said this was "heavy" and we ought to practice a four-wheel change. The great man was adamant that he would only need rear tyres, so that was what he and Alec practiced. They eventually were able to get out of the car, change the rear wheels, put in fifteen gallons of fuel, check engine, gearbox and rear axle oils, and the radiator level in 1½ minutes! Only the driver and riding mechanic were allowed to work on the car. In the race they took, I think, fifteen seconds longer, but wiped the aero screen and had a sandwich.

"During the race he drove fast, but yet he was tidy with it and didn't wear the brakes out either. The car was still sweet at the end of the race and did the rounds of dealers all around the country. We eventually broke it up in 1935, as a German thought he had bought it!"

On a later occasion, I asked about the Nuvolari car, as a claimant had appeared in the hands of Michael Ellman-Brown, who was trying to sell it to Stuart Milton. Stuart was present at this story telling episode.

"The car after the TT was sent on a round of dealers. I had it cleaned a bit, took out the carburetor needle, although actually it was a standard RM8, and removed the rotor arm: we didn't want any of the clowns

giving driving tests of the car. I seem to remember Sammy Davis did drive it briefly but it was on alcohol fuel, and did about three to the gallon!

"Anyway off the car went, in October for a three month trip around the country. I then got a message that someone in Germany wanted that car, returned to Mille Miglia trim for him to use in the '34 race in April. In the event, what with transport difficulties and so forth, I found the car wasn't due back in Abingdon until February at the earliest. I appealed to HN, and he just said "Build him another car". So we did just that using all new chassis and running gear, built a new engine up, and fitted one of the Mille Miglia bodies. It was given the road identity of the original car, which George (Eyston) had driven in the 33 race, and it was dispatched to Jack Woodhouse about the time the Nuvolari car came back to Abingdon, but well in time for this guy Fork to drive in the 34 race.

"The Nuvolari car itself was in a bad state: it was still virtually untouched since the TT, and it was slowly pirated for parts to use on other cars during servicing. I think Albert Eustace had the seat out of it, when he left the Company, and I still have the rev counter. I think the chassis was sold second-hand after the number had been filed, but that was after the winding up of Experimental Shop, so I cannot be sure about the fate... so far as the official story went, the car was sold to Fork: that was what we wanted everyone to believe.

"So, yes, it is possible the chassis still exists... but then what do you do if the Fork car turns up in Germany? That car has no real identity apart from being the one we sold to Fork."



After the 1933 TT, Nuvolari looks jubilant, Alec Hounslow tired, and Jacko checks the polish on his shoes.

"We tried the car, each driver having a go, on the passes in the Alps and the Apennines, and learned a lot. We had only one real problem: I found the brake drums were cracking up, but said nothing to anyone on the trip, and telephoned HN, who told me he had the problem in hand already! Birkin and Howe felt the gearing was too low in the intermediate gears, but everyone liked the Wilson gearbox.

"When we got back, I was deputed to take the gearing up with ENV and they offered an alternative set of ratios, which they called 'high ratio', which raised all three intermediate ratios. HN worked out an axle ratio to suit the much higher bottom gear, and these ratios were standardized for all the MGs. HN redesigned the brake drums, using a screwed in liner, and these were only used on K3s as they were very expensive to produce. Three cars were built up for the race, and the whole project had been completed between October and early March. Even then, that was going some."

Eddie Hall and the special sprint car

"Eddie Hall was one of our best customers. His first MG, or at least that which I was involved in, was the C-type. He never expected anything for nothing, and I believe he always paid his bills promptly. He later had a K3 and a Q-type, but then I think Kimber upset him by not involving him in the NE teams. After all, he had done well with his previous cars, if not a winner.

"He was super with the boys, and always made sure we had a generous tip if he won anything. He once gave me a five pound note for the 'boys', and then another for myself: at the time it was more than I got paid for a week! At meetings his wife would always bring us sandwiches and a few bottles of beer to make sure 'you don't all starve'. What a lovely man, and his wife. I think his father or grandfather had set up a business in wool production, which was very successful, and that he couldn't find enough things to spend his money on.

"Anyway, early in 1935, he bought an N-type chassis, and told us that he wanted to build a car to take the Shelsley record. He wanted the most powerful engine we could muster, and

intended to fit a Q-type body, with a one or two gallon fuel tank in it. I got HN involved, and Syd was drawn in. We decided that a Zoller blown N-type might give 180bhp, but so far had not tried a Zoller on a Magnette engine. HN worked out details of the Hill, and we thought the 5.125 ratio would be right at the rear end. I think we agreed that N-type gearbox would not be strong enough for the power, and used a K3 preselector. On standard MG2 fuel, we ran the engine on test, and it gave over 200bhp! The displacement was 1280cc, so we were in the 1500cc Class.

"The whole party was spoiled by Raymond Mays who brought out the ERA, but Eddie did a good time (43.8 sec) to take second place in the 1500cc Class to Mays. The car was described in the Press as '...a supercharged version of one of the successful TT cars' but this was not true. It was an out and out special. I think Eddie sold it to George Hartwell, and he used it until after the war: I am sure I saw it at one of the early post-war Brighton Meetings. That would be a good car for you enthusiasts to get hold of now."



The N-type sprint car, with which Eddie Hall attempted the out-right Shelsley Walsh record in 1935. It was known as the "Zoller Special" in the Factory, as it used a supercharger of that manufacturer.

R-type

"This should have been a real world beater, but it suffered with too little development. Syd and I started work on independent suspension sometime in '32, I think; it was on a J2 chassis, and we made a rudimentary leaf-sprung wishbone suspension clamped to the front end. This was nonsense, as we couldn't make the car handle at all, it was front end heavy. We had a dirt test track out in the field where B-block is, about quarter or half a mile... where we tested ideas. The chassis twisted as much as the suspension moved, but Charles got the root of the problem.

"The chassis was boxed; I welded 16swg plates along the inside of the channel, and this helped a lot, but then the rear end was too stiff, using standard J2 springs. This must have been in '33, but the racing work kept interfering. I was at the call of every customer, of whom George (Eyston) was the most important, as he only lived down the road and was always here! George also had the merit that he was in Cecil Kimber's good books, since he always paid his bills, spreading the load amongst other pals, I think. CK was a stickler for not lending anyone anything and everything we did was invoiced to someone, which I suppose is why R-type didn't happen before... I remember him loaning a C-type to some Czech count, and the car was returned bent to blazes, but the Count refused to pay anything at all... even though his accident was his own stupid fault. He had refused to practice in the wet, and the race was wet! That was the end of Kimber loaning cars!

"HN decided to design from scratch, and we saw nothing more until the end of '34, when it was decided (by him, I think) to do everything in house. The Q-type had proved almost undriveable, all that power and no road holding worth the name. Bill Everitt (another pal of Eystons) got a couple of sprint records, and I think Evans got theirs going OK, and KD got a result or two.

"Anyway, we got the drawings slowly from the drawing office... it was about this time that Syd went up there. HN took him under his wing; he was always thinking things out from first principles, just like now. I don't think HN ever used ideas without reducing them to first principles and that's probably where Syd got it from.

"When we did the R-type, we needed some special diff cases made for the rear axle, and I was involved with the prototype... it needed some lugs on to mount the suspension, nothing like the standard things made by Wolseley. I made a pattern in wood, which Harry Herring made into a proper sand casting tool, and then I realized no-one had ordered any aluminium for the casting. We had a few dozen old discarded pistons around, so I melted those down; I seem to remember Henry (Stone) was involved too, and Alec (Hounslow). Anyway, I had a fairly large crucible, and all this alloy was molten, using an oxy-acetylene torch for heat, and I kept skimming off the dross from the top, until it was clean. We then decided it was time to pour, but the sand in the tool could not have been dry enough, and as soon as the molten metal touched there was an explosion, and crucible, tool and metal was sprayed everywhere. In those days the Experimental Shop was where the Apprentice School is now, and you can still find the damaged tiles on the wall!

"All was well with the second try, when we got some special casting sand from Wolseley a few days later, and the prototype was cast up. When HN saw it, he said it was brilliant and asked what metal had we used. I replied that it was aluminium, and he asked what spec, so I said 'pistominium' and he had a good laugh. I think Wolseley actually cast up the actual car diffs, but they used Harry's casting tool."

Lagonda Rapier and other cars

We were talking about various cars contemporary with the MG, and one mentioned was the Lagonda Rapier.

"Too bloody clever by half! It had twin camshafts, and all that, but it was never much of a success; much dearer than the MGs. I think it was even dearer than the Riley Sprite, and that never sold in big numbers. The Rapier, like the Rileys, was too heavy, all those great cast-iron lumps. It should have been made in aluminium, but casting techniques weren't very advanced then for large number production.

"The Squire was another... Adrian Squire had worked in the Drawing Office under Charles, and he thought he could make a better car than the K3, forgetting that the K3 was built from mass production parts. He left MG, I suppose late in 1933 after he had seen Manby-Colegrave's K3 through. He produced a very complicated little car, although when the customers eventually got them, they were nicely made, but the chassis price was, I think, over a thousand pounds! Much too much for a one and a half litre car!

"Rileys were nicely made, but much too heavy. The sports cars, Imp, MPH and Sprite, were nice, but totally different from the MG in that they used a mass of special bits, which made them expensive compared with the MG. The Imp was about the same

price as a Magnette, and bad though the K2 two seater was, it went better, and even handled better. The K-types were all over-weight... the Magna handled nicely but they were too long for their width, and were twitchy, especially in bad weather, at speed. The N-type was one of the best of the 'cammy' models; it had nice road manners, and was comfortable too with a high scuttle and windscreen.

"Fred Dixon was the man who made Rileys motor best, although Dick's brother (*Bill von der Beck: Dick was the SU man whom I met regularly on emission business*) was a better mechanic. Dixon liked the juice too much, and it eventually killed him, but he would get an apprentice to file the cylinder blocks and heads all over to reduce weight, we heard. Sounds like him: he was a bluff man, called a spade an f-ing shovel, and didn't care who he upset! He certainly didn't fit in with the most of the racing people, who were largely wealthy gentlemen.

"Parnell was another who didn't fit in well with the racers, even though he and Dixon were better drivers than most of them! Parnell got banned after he caused an accident at Brooklands, I remember, and nearly killed poor Kat Petre. Parnell was a pig farmer from Derby way, but really he came along after we had packed up racing."

The end of racing

"Oh dear! Well we had just got back from the Mannin races, and started to look at the R-type rear end. The problem was that it had equal length wishbones at the rear, and when it rolled, which was one thing it did well, it canted over the opposite way to when you rode a bike, and it felt awful. Handley wanted to fit semi elliptics at the rear. But we knew it was only a matter of getting used to something new, and revising the shock absorber settings by up-rating these. At the Mannin races, the yawing motion became excessive during the race, and we knew that something was wrong. HN came and said the problems were all to do with the Luvax shockers becoming overheated, and bursting their cases. However, he had mods in hand, and was going to get some new bits from Wolseley, which would stiffen up the rear end and he wanted them fitted up as soon as the first set arrived.

"We had a car dismantled, the one Kimber had loaned to Malcolm Campbell earlier, as that one hadn't gone to Douglas, and was assigned as the development car. There were bits and pieces everywhere. Then word came from HN that Kimber was coming round the Factory with Len Lord and Miles Thomas. We all knew that Thomas was a nasty piece of work, and had heard that Lord was a tricky one to deal with. Cousins phoned to warn me and said to keep quiet when he arrived with the party unless I was asked any questions directly. The party arrived, and as Lord walked through the door, he said to Thomas: "This bloody lot can go for a start!" Then he walked out, just like that. HN told me afterwards that he and CK had tried to talk to him sensibly about independent suspension, but Lord had said he didn't want any of this suspension

nonsense on any of his cars! I gather that Wolseley had received similar treatment, telling them they could do away with "camshafts in the head"; side valves would serve the Company for the foreseeable future. Odd really, because the next generation of Morris engines has overhead valves, although pushrod operated... and we have still got those!

"Thomas came back to us, and I was told by him to return all privately owned stuff to their owners, and anything that hadn't been sold could go for scrap. My job was terminated at the end of the month. CK told me to keep my head down, when I went to see him, and eventually, in the October, I was given a roving brief, servicing customer cars, for which I was given the use of either a small van or a motorbike and sidecar, which I actually preferred. The rest of my team went into the Factory, and Syd (Enever) went with HN to Cowley. HN didn't last long there though: petty jealousy within the Cowley DO people in general and Gerry Palmer made sure he was out before the end of the year. Syd stayed, as Liaison engineer between Cowley and Abingdon, and helped get the T-series going, after all the delays we had had with the Two-litre introduction, which was absolutely foreign to us here at Abingdon.

"I came back in '38, when Kimber had seen that war was pretty certain within a year or two, and got me to set up a proper AID Inspection Department. I had a month or two at the Gloucester aeroplane factory learning the ropes. The result of all this was that we were fully prepared by 1939, which Cowley wasn't."



The R-type rear suspension which was due to be modified following the Mannin Beg in 1935. Unequal length wishbones were designed, as was an anti-roll linkage, but sadly the work was never completed, although some of the parts have survived.

The T-type

"When the first T-type came to us, we were disappointed: that lovely little "revvy" engine was replaced with a real plodder, with an exhaust note like a wet fart. After the first long drive I had in one, though, I was sold on the idea. I had done around 160 miles, to see a customer with a recalcitrant 18/80 in Derbyshire, and arrived there and thought to myself "Jackson, you aren't tired!" From that point of view, it was a revelation, compared with a P-type... remember both cars were called the "Midget".

"Then I realized that the engine was actually larger than the Magnette, and nowhere near as smooth. The gear change was fearfully slow with its oil bath clutch, which Morris favoured, but then, with the long stroke engine, gear changes weren't needed that often. So really it was a matter of horses for courses. The T-type was cheaper than the old Magnette, but not such a good car, and when it came to tuning, there wasn't much scope with TA, with its long stroke and very heavy flywheel and clutch. All this was put right with the TB, but that was killed off by the War, and resuscitated as the TC after Hitler was put to bed."

After Racing

I asked what Jocko did after Experimental was closed down.

"Basically, CK told me that I was out of work, but that he would see me OK, and how did I feel about being the Company "trouble-shooter". He said I would have transport and be paid at a fixed rate, I think it was £4 per week, and living expenses while I was away from Abingdon. I would be required to go to customers' homes, and carry out running repairs on their cars. My transport would be fitted out with a supply of oils and greases, and the consumable engine and chassis parts. Other bits needed, I telephoned for and these would be sent "next day" to the nearest railway station, where I could pick them up.

"Initially they spoke about a motor cycle and sidecar, but this was not done and I had a Morris Ten van. I enjoyed this, as I had a free rein, and was my own "Boss". During 1937, I was called back, and told that it looked as though we would be going to war again, and if we were to win any military contracts, we would need a proper inspection department set up. I was dispatched to the Gloster aeroplane factory to get a grasp of what was needed, and three weeks later came back and reported to CK, who gave me the go-ahead to set up what was needed. I was given the title of Chief Inspector, which I held for the rest of my time at MG. This work I have really enjoyed."

JB3852

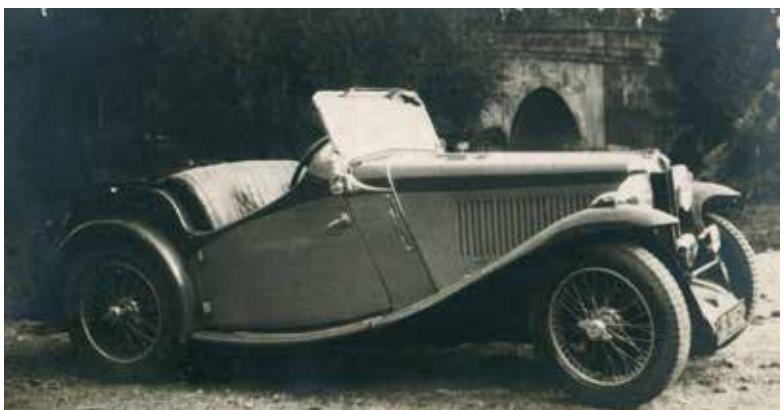
"Your car was stolen at Brooklands, and used in a burglary job. It got involved with the work on deciding a specification for the 1934 Ards TT race. That race, the organizers had decided was for standard sports cars, unsupercharged, carrying all road equipment, including a spare wheel!

"The car already had a high compression head, and Charles decided that the NK (ND) would probably be a better body to use, so three of these were tried at Brooklands. However it was not a listed model, but used up a residual stock old K2 bodies, and Cousins and I decided this was not in the spirit of the regulations for the event. So your car went along to do some lappery of Brooklands as well. Actually, I think yours was the quickest, probably because it had quite a few miles under its belt. It was during this escapade that it got stolen, as we had to leave it over-night at the circuit, and it wasn't there the following day when we went back for it!

"It came back a few days later, a little battered and bruised. As we all know, the Ards cars had to be built with special bodies, I think because the standard ones (and the ND) were all too wide!

"I continued to use the car, on trade plates, until around the end of May, when I was told to make it available for the Alpine Trial that year (1934). I don't think we had too much to do with the preparation for that, although Robbie rebuilt the engine for it, possibly with Jock Routledge.

"After the Alpine, where I think it went well, it came back to my shop to remove all the gear we had fitted for the Trial. It then hung about in Service, and was used as a hack by everyone on business miles. Then a couple of months later I got involved with fitting the supercharger and preselector for the Monte. Fred Kindell was going to go (I hated the Monte, and Fred knew Symons quite well) and he and I worked on the car together... but I think I have told you all about that already!"



JB3852, an NA in unmodified form

The Mannin Beg races: 1934

"1933 had been a debacle, with all the K3s failing, mainly with rear axle problems. For 1934 we were going to make a strong assault on it, with George (Eyston) entering three cars, and another three entered by Kaye Don. George was effectively the main entrant, well supported by the factory, but all three cars were bought by him. His drivers were to be Bill Everitt and Wal Handley. Kaye Don had got alongside Norman Black and A.P. Hamilton, these three cars supplied through Black's garage, Sprosens of Great Portland Street.

"Frankie Tayler was put in charge of the Don team, and I was to run Eyston's, with Roland King-Farlow as pit manager and Time Keeper. Henry (Stone) and Alec (Hounslow) were to help me. 'Dump' Barrett and Bert Wirdnam were helping Frankie. I think it was the first time Don had driven an MG, but he kept complaining about the handling of his car. As a result of this, Frankie had had a really good look at Don's car, and even got me to test it with him, and we agreed it was fine. He reported to Don, who had just finished dinner. Don decided that he would take the car out. It was twilight and he hit another car and the K3 turned over somewhere out towards Ramsey, and as a result, Tayler died, and Don was charged with manslaughter and later went to jail. This cast gloom over the whole event, for we all liked Frankie, and it was the first, and only, fatality we had ever had. Quite unnecessary.

"In the event, Wal (Handley) – who was something of a free spirit, and as an ex-motor cycle racer who had won a few TTs, the equivalent of Mike Hailwood, he was not given to team orders – was given a car with only four or five gallons in, and told to go as fast as he could to break up the opposition, especially the well-fancied Riley of Freddie Dixon, which was actually as quick as our blown

Magnettes in practice. Wal had a lot more spirit than sense, and was so far in the lead after one lap, that everyone else was charging too, but nowhere near as fast... they all had full tanks (20-odd gallons) which slowed them a bit!

"I think it was on the second lap that Wal crashed at the end of the prom, turning into the town, and hit a lamppost with his rear axle hub cap. Photographs taken at the time show him sitting in the passenger seat (although there wasn't one fitted, in the interests of lightness).

"So far as I can remember, he bent the axle casing, but that was all, which said a lot for the standard K3 chassis!"

"Norman Black won the race, and MG took the first five places I think, so we felt that Frankie's death had been avenged a little. I had the job of seeing his widow, which is not my favourite memory. Kimber arranged for her to get some sort of payment, which I think Nuffield doubled from his own pocket, but none of us thought much about pensions or retirement then. That Frankie should be taken so young was a shock though, which I don't think we ever quite got over. I think Don went to jail for manslaughter, or something, but it didn't bring Frankie back, who was a really nice bloke, and a first rate mechanic."

I asked if the car was a 'special lightweight job', as written up by Lyndon, to which he replied: "Good God, no! We never went in for things like that: in any case how much weight could we have saved? The engine, gearbox and axles were all a 'given', so we could only have pared a few pounds off the chassis frame or the body, not worth the physical effort. By putting only five gallons of juice in the tank, instead of the 25, Handley's car was probably 140/150lbs. lighter at the start than, say, Norman Black's car."



TT1934

"The regulations for the 1934 TT race famously called for no superchargers. We had already done quite a bit of work on the L-types which ran in the Relay race the previous year when we used different inlet manifolds and then for the 500 had used extreme compression ratios and alcohol fuel. These engines had delivered over 70 bhp, and we reckoned that there was plenty more if the valve timing was drastically changed.

"Faced with an unblown standard sports car, which the advance notice, which we got towards the end of '33, we knew that the N-type was on schedule, so it was decided, by HN, that a team of N-types would run. Initially, the N-type was going to use the same body as the K2, which had been a lemon, and only a few had been completed. We had twenty five or so bodies to use up, and so it was decided that a special "competition model" would be produced, which we knew as the NK, but which you call the ND.

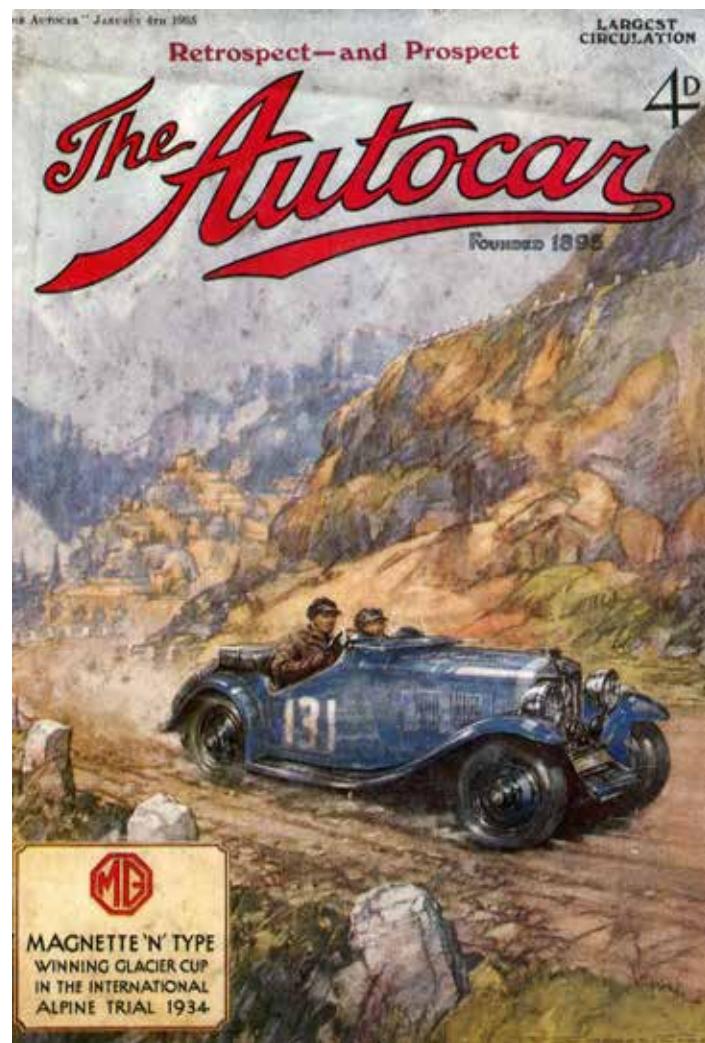
"George Eyston and Kaye Don were going to run the teams in 1934, and Don said he would underwrite a team of three cars, and ordered K3's. George said that he would underwrite the TT cars, and we licensed three cars which were finished in cream and brown with consecutive registration numbers (JB4160, 4161 and 4162). These we took to Brooklands in March or early April, and I drove down in your car, which was kicking around. All four cars had 7.5 compressions, but were otherwise standard. We ran all four for an hour round the bankings and averaged over 75 mph, which we reckoned was OK, and that there was space for engine development. The ride in the standard NA (JB3852) was the best, as the body was insulated from a lot of the bumps, but all four cars suffered with doors flying open and bits shaking loose. I think your standard car was the quickest, probably because it had quite a few miles on it by then!

"By the time we finished the testing, we had got the full detailed regulations (for the TT) through, which specified body dimensions. Neither the NK nor the NA was suitable as the bodies were too wide! We suspected that Riley and Aston Martin had said something in high places about standard bodies, and so the regulations were altered to suit what they had! We quickly made up half a dozen bodies which were fitted to three new chassis, and the NE was born. Don had ordered three cars for the TT, so six were built and one for spare. In the event, in the aftermath of Frankie Tayler's accident, Don's entry was taken up individually by his drivers, AP Hamilton took Don's actual car, I think, but the cars were offered for selling on after the TT. We were split into two

teams, with me in charge of George's cars, and Alec in overall charge of the other three. Cous was in charge of the whole operation, but Temple showed up and seemed to think he was in charge!

"The camshaft and special pistons were developed in time for the Relay race, and three cars were driven by Eyston's Dancing Daughters, which is where they originally got their soubriquet from some wag at Brooklands... but this was used to good effect for the Le Mans run with P-types. By the Relay, the engines were showing 75 bhp on benzole mixture on the test bed, and the engines were run up to 7500 rpm reliably... which would have been over 110 mph in top gear on the axle ratio we used, but I don't think anyone saw that in the TT! In the Relay only one banking was used, so it is unlikely the cars reached their theoretical top speed there either.

"The three NK's were sold off before the TT, a chap called Thatcher had one of them, which he used in trials and minor races, and it came back to me several times in 1934/35: he must have been fairly successful



This NA is on the 1934 Alpine Trial, in which it won a Glacier Cup!

with it. The other two, I think went to Chiesman and I think Welch. Before that, there were used in a couple of trials, captained by Lewis Welch, and calling themselves the "Three Musketeers", but this team had a chequered history!

"After the TT, Eyston's cars were rebodied with P-type bodies and used by the same drivers in a couple of trials... Fred Kindell and Alec Hounslow were two of the drivers with Lewis Welch. Later Sam Nash replaced Fred, possibly when Fred went on the Monte in your car, it was all a long time ago now, and I think they won a rally... Sam will tell you. George wanted to sell the cars to Graham Evans, and went apoplectic when he found they were being used for trials! That is how the Musketeer Specials were born! The NE's were rebuilt by our shop as TT cars, and Graham Evans bought them for the '35 race. We had nothing to do with that race, although I seem to remember taking a holiday in Ulster around that time!"

"I don't think any of the NE's ended up with their original TT bodies, as a chap called Bagratouni raced an NE in Eyston's colours, but I am fairly sure that these cars were sold to Evans. Actually, I don't think many of the race cars ever had the same body on them twice, as the bodies were regarded as a cover for the mechanical bits rather than part of a particular car. We certainly never kept that sort of detailed record then, as Experimental was being wound up."

Musketeers

John Reid had visited the Factory in "Aramis", and he had met Sam Nash and others, Jacko and I were talking about this the next morning.

"In all honesty I had little to do with them. However, before these were built, we had prepared a "team" of three NK sports cars, thinking they would be OK for the 1934 TT regulations, which called for standard unsupercharged cars. Eventually the rules were tweaked; to cater for certain manufacturers who had no catalogue model, and would build whatever the customer would pay for. The RAC came up with a set of body regulations, stipulating a maximum width, and our catalogue models were too wide, so we ended up building special bodies for the TT cars, which became the NE model.

The NK's were run in a couple of trials, led initially by a chap called Chiesman, who was a friend of Kindell, but later I think Lewis Welch led them. As I said we did little to them, the engines were mildly tuned, and they were quite nice to drive. After the TT, John Temple wanted a team made up of the TT cars, and we fitted P-type bodies to three of the cars, and Sam Nash and Alec drove these, again, I think with Welch leading them.

"This ended with a bit of a rumpus, because George had sold his team cars to Graham Evans, but Temple had already sold two of George's actual cars to other people, so we had to convert the cars, now known as the "Three Musketeers", back to TT form for the Evans Team to use in the 1935TT!

"With the closing of the Experimental Shop, Service took over the running of the cars, but we did build up some rather special cars, which was one of the last jobs I did, using the P-type bodies off the old Musketeer cars, mounted on old L-type chassis, and fitted with mildly blown (10psi, belt driven Marshall blowers were used) 1400cc N-type engines. I had nothing to do with these in Trials, but I think they were successful.

The Welsh Rally 1935 team of rebodied NE cars, from left to right are Fred Kindell with his passenger, Sam Nash with his, and Lewis Welch with his. Sadly, history has not recorded who the passengers were. The event was the first major success for the Three Musketeer team.



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