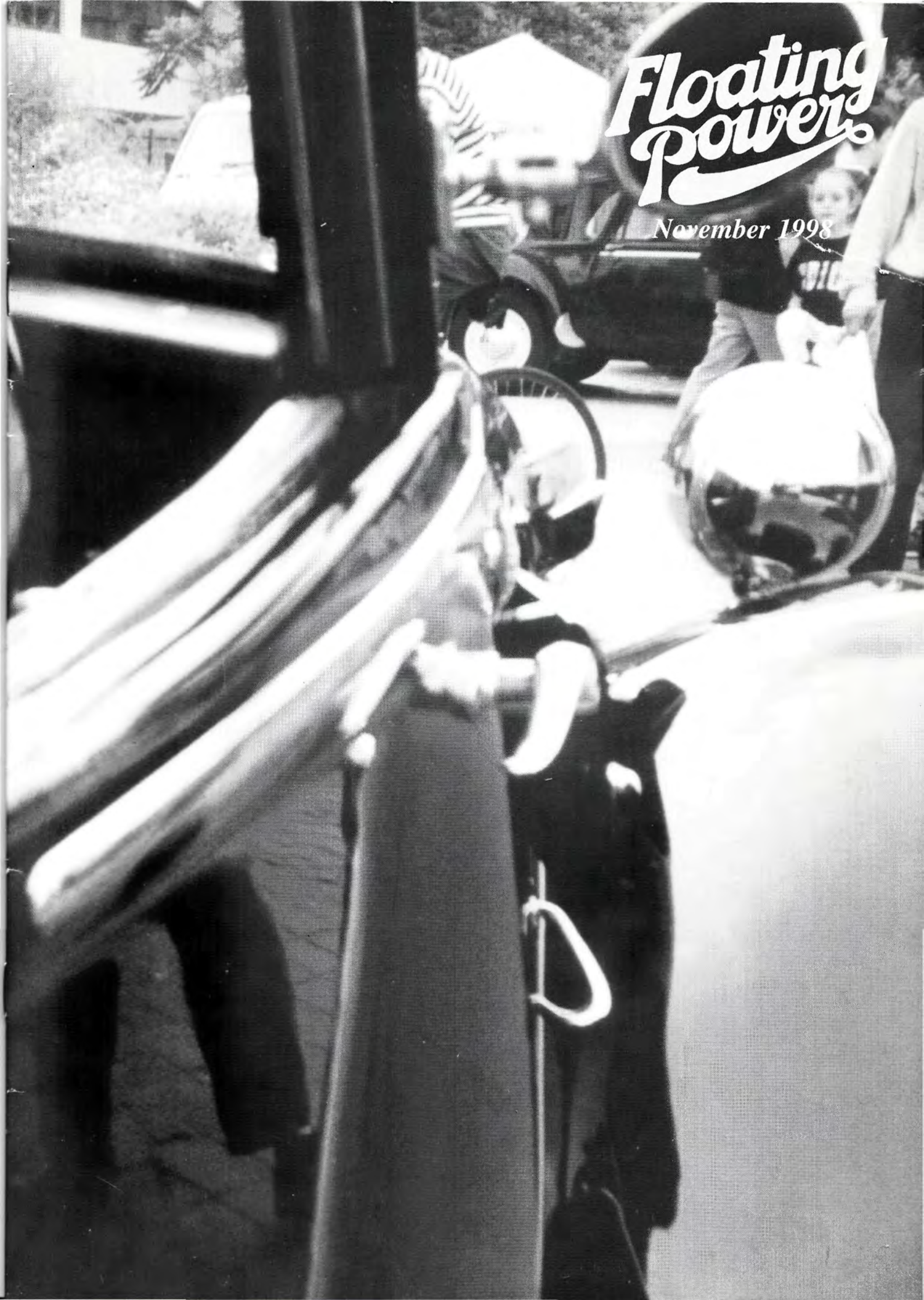


# Floating Power

November 1998





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\* Club Tools are available in these areas

For details of area meetings, please  
contact your local organiser





Berline 7 C/11 Légère

**4** **foctalk**



Faux-cabriolet 7 C/11 Légère

**5** **technical list**



Berline 11 Normale

**7** **Brittany Rally**



Faux-cabriolet 11 Normale

**8** **Big 15 Road Test**



Conduite intérieure 11 Longue

**11** **Classic Malts Rally**



Cabriolet 7 C/11 Légère

**14** **Traction Reborn**



Cabriolet 11 Normale

**16** **foct Correspondence**



**20** **foct ads**  
**MARKETPLACE**

**22** **more foct ads**  
**CARS, PARTS, SPARES ETC**

**EDITORIAL**

In this issue you will see Part 1 of a list compiled by Alec Bilney of past technical articles printed in *Floating Power*.

It has been suggested that we reprint various articles and would ask the membership to write or phone your request for inclusion in future issues.

Some articles may require up-dating and I am sure this will increase the correspondence column.

In this issue you will see a family photograph of a Type A which I hope will encourage contributions on rear wheel drive articles/photographs.

The committee is at present debating the subject of advertising charges in the 'For Sale' section, and we would like to have your comments in this regard. The proposal is to charge non-members and trade ads and also non-related items such as holiday lets. Please respond.

*Glen Robb*

**FRONT COVER**

1939 Lt 15 Roadster RHD, owner John Braithwaite



**Floating Power**

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Issue 3



As it is impractical for us to verify the accuracy of information and advice given in this magazine, neither the Traction Owners' Club nor officers and members thereof selecting or contributing any material, accept any liability for any error, omission or inaccuracy therein.

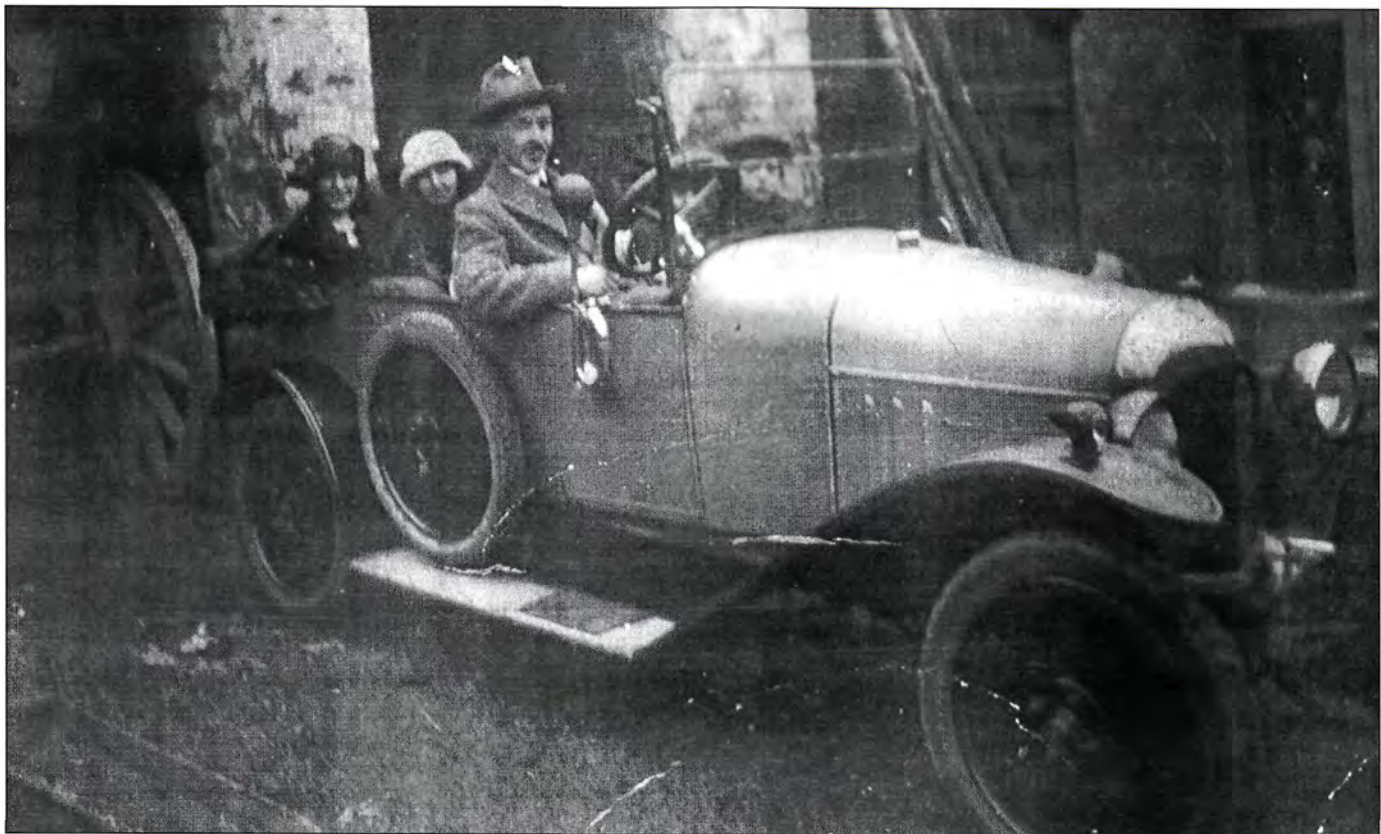
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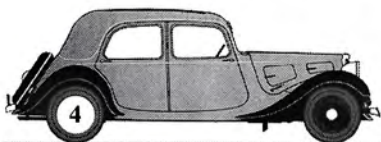




*This original and un-restored 1936 11 Normale has been seen at I.C.C.C.R. Herning, Clermont-Ferrand and now Chevetogne. (Thanks to the Danish Club for picture)*



*To my surprise and delight, this photograph has come to light showing my grandparents in their Type A in 1926. Ed.*



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Produced by Alec Bilney

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## MISS REPRESENTATION

Buying or selling cars is rather similar to houses, you get the time wasters and tyre kickers, the don't knows, the comparers, the ditherers, and the simply not on planet Earth.

The law has changed with regard to representation of those articles and goods offered for sale, so that whether a house or car one is obliged to point out known defects and other traits which might affect the sale, re-sale or value. In the case of a house this might include disputes with neighbours over boundaries or whatever.

Many of you will have been through the vexatious process of buying and selling a house, and I was interested to learn from my solicitor of a recent case she had handled.

This involved a property where some years previously a grizzly murder had been committed, and the vendor was obliged to divulge the fact to potential purchasers.

This poses an interesting problem so far as cars are concerned which may have a sullied history - perhaps a previous owner was a serial killer or the car once belonged to a Conservative cabinet minister.

This phenomenon can of course work the other way, and previous ownership and history can give the car or article a certain cachet and lever the price up.

This all goes to show one has to tread more carefully these days, and only state what is known to you as fact rather than opinion, and this includes giving opinions to third parties.

Of the cars I have sold over the years every sale has been different. Some have gone without a hiccup, others proved more difficult. What still amazes me is the differing approaches punters have to a potential purchaser.

Some are very methodical making copious notes, taking photographs, preparing tabulated charts of comparison with other vehicles seen etc.

Others come clearly knowing nothing about the vehicle they have come to see and expect to be given a comprehensive of the marque and its foibles.

Then there are the other types, often traders who talk money, and are not really interested in the car as such - "What will you take for cash?" is one of their favourites. So far as I am concerned I much prefer a cheque or banker's order, and cash is not an incentive for a lower price.

Another tactic is "What's your lowest price?" My response to this one is, you know what I am asking, make me a formal offer and I will consider it. Unlike houses buyers tend to assume the price you have named is one they can reduce.

There are others who having done a comprehensive survey, and are not satisfied with what they have seen demand a road test, even though they have no intention of buying. Here I draw the line and if I am feeling polite I fob them off by given some excuse about the fan belt slipping or whatever.

There are of course other punters who are both charming and amusing, know what they are looking for, and within reason are prepared to pay the asking price. Alas they are getting fewer. Perhaps the punters who most get up my nose are the "Cognescenti". Usually they come with their girlfriends, partners, wives or whoever. "Of course" they will say in a loud voice intended to be heard by all, "Citroën only fitted a flunger to their 51 models." Or "I refitted my crown wheel back to front and found myself going down the Kingston by-pass at 120 in reverse".

Tosser I say to myself under my breath, piously hoping that they will have heard me, been mortally offended and leave swiftly. No doubt other readers have experiences of buying and selling cars, and it would be interesting to hear their views. However remember the warning which follows the end of the film "The characters and incidents herein are fictitious and any similarity to the names, character, or history of any person is entirely coincidental and unintended".

Chris Ryle



This is the worthless currency from the I.C.C.C.R. Now a collectors item?

## West of England Section

1998 has proved to be an active year for the West of England Section with visits to the Forest of Dean, Bristol Docks and the Historic Vehicle Collection at Wroughton. The now traditional Minchinhampton Common picnic took place in August and thanks must go to Maureen and Dennis Ryland for once again providing an excellent spread. These events have been interspersed with pub meetings and - the highlight of the year - the National Rally at Lackham College faultlessly organised by Dave and Jackie Hackett. The section was also well represented at the rather damp I.C.C.C.R. where, despite everything that the elements threw at us, the good-nature and long-suffering of Tractionists shone through! This year's programme finished with a pub meeting at the White Hart, Littleton-on-Severn - not the easiest place in the world to find, but which turned out to be an excellent venue with good food and a warm fire.

No doubt January will see us at the Tunnel House again brimming over with fresh ideas for 1999.

John Ogborne

## CENTENARY OF MOTORING IN JERSEY

Rally  
13th to 16th May 1999

### POOLE - JERSEY - POOLE

- |                                      |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. L'Horizon Hotel, St. Brelade      | £499 (inland) £610 (sea facing) |
| 2. Portelet Hotel, Portelet          | £355 (inland) £397 (balcony)    |
| 3. Bergerac Hotel, Portelet          | £355                            |
| 4. Silver Springs Hotel, St. Brelade | £315                            |
| 5. Windmills Hotel, St. Brelade      | £265                            |

All prices are quoted per person, based on 2 people sharing and include:

- \* 5 nights accommodation, commencing 12 May at your chosen hotel, with 4 nights on half board (bed, breakfast and dinner), and 1 night, (Saturday 15 May) on bed and breakfast only.
- \* Return sea crossing with Condor Ferries on the 12.55 sailing from Poole on Wednesday 12 May and returning from Jersey to Poole on Monday 17 May at 08.00.
- \* Transportation of a vehicle up to 5 meter in length.
- \* Coaching from hotel to the Living Legend and return on Saturday 15 May for the Celebration de Centenaire Gala Dinner.
- \* Travelsmith representation service.

### RALLY COST £95.00 per person and includes:

- \* Rally registration fee
- \* Civic Reception
- \* Treasure Hunt with Morning Coffee and Danish, Jersey cream tea, Prizes together with free entry to Jersey Flower Centre and Jersey Goldsmiths
- \* Choice of attending Historic Sprints or Shopping in St. Helier (Coach optional)
- \* Celebration de Centenaire Gala Dinner - Aperitif, Dinner, Wine, Coffee, entry to "Jersey Experience" show
- \* Entry to "Through the Ages Cavalcade"
- \* End of Rally Themed Lunch - Aperitif, Lunch, Wine, Coffee
- \* Free entry to "100 Years of Motoring Exhibition" at Jersey Museum
- \* Free entry to Jersey Motor Museum - Veteran and Vintage Vehicles
- \* Rally Plaque
- \* Centenary Brochure and Historic Spring Programme
- \* Arrival pack - Rally souvenirs

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PRESIDENT - JERSEY OLD MOTOR CLUB  
VALLEY VIEW, MONT MISERE  
ST. LAWRENCE, JERSEY, JE3 1FG  
TEL: 01534 863424  
FAX: 01534 863424

# 14 EME RALLYE ANNUAL DU BRITTANY

## La valley des Rois

Brittany time again. Nadine and I had our names down for this rally almost as soon as it was announced. For us one of the high spots of the Tracting year so with high expectations we prepared for the start of the 1998 Brittany rally.



It was good to have Moira and Mick Holmes with us. They stayed overnight with us as our house is well placed for an assault on the Portsmouth ferry terminal only a 45 minute drive away. This year we used the new P.&O. catamaran crossing to Cherbourg in just two and a half hours. From Cherbourg it was a drive across France via La Val to Angers. Our esteemed president had spread the word that a particular hotel to the west of Angers would be a good place to assemble the British contingent of Tractions. My face sagged a little when we arrived at the hotel and saw the sign at reception; "Complete". Relief prevailed because we had pre-booked the rooms so we did have somewhere to rest our heads. Dinner was interesting. Best advice was to go to dinner in the local Buffalo restaurant quite early as they would not be able to cope with 30+ Tractorists after 9.00 p.m. Eccentrically the restaurant insisted on only one bill for the whole party. Who was to co-ordinate the eccentricities of 30 people each with a different selection of starters, main courses, desserts, not to mention the drinks? The answer Linda. A sincere thanks to her. My understanding is that the bill did not match the money received which did not match what people claimed to have ordered, however, it was all so close that there was an amicable ending to the evening. From our perspective it was brilliant.

## Friday

Day one of the rally began with domestic matters down at the local supermarket. Happy fuel tanks and food for picnics are important matters. The rally start was at the town hall in Angers. 'Journal de Route' says 10.30 a.m. start so almost all the British cars turned up on time only to be unceremoniously directed into an underground car park. However, several weddings later, not to mention the late arrival of hosts (or is there a problem with G.M.T., anyway we invented it so it's okay by me), we emerged from the bowels of Angers into the limelight of the town hall concourse; much more in keeping with Traction style. A small civic reception followed. I must say I do admire the way French people welcome guests in their towns and villages. They turn out La Mairie and hospitality to see us happily on our way. I think there is a lesson here for us Brits.

Setting off on the rally with a convoy of about 35 Tractors took us along the edge of the Loire river and then to La commune de Gennes. Parking in the local car park, I think for the benefit of La Mairie, was followed by a short drive to our picnic site.

Après le déjeuner we departed for our main campsite about 100 km away at Blère. The journey was not without incident, with a digression of 20 km around Saumur only corrected by the organisers' consultation with the local gendarmerie. However, no tight faces, this is the charm and style of Brittany tours. Needless to say we all turned up at our campsite and readied ourselves for the first of several dinners. The first was at restaurant "Clair Cottage" about 5 km from the camp site. There was an excellent four course meal, not to mention the accompanying wine. An excellent evening, thanks Patrice. However, we discovered on return to the campsite we were locked out! So we parked outside the campsite and made our way on foot to our tent and thence to bed.

## Sunday

World Cup final day - France v Brazil! The day started rather leisurely with campsite organisation, attending to the needs of Tractions and shopping in the local town.

Our own car developed two electrical problems; non-charging of the battery and blowing fuses. With help from Dave Hacketts the battery charging was resolved but the fuse problem remained. Eventually when back home with time to systematically go through the wiring I did find and fix the fuse problem.

The programme for the afternoon was a visit to the spectacular 16th century château at Chenonceaux built on the banks and across the Cher river. Henry II had the original building extended and it was subsequently occupied by queens and ladies for hundreds of years. Not surprisingly it is also known as 'Le Château des Dames'. A train ride brought many of us from the entrance up to the château buildings and gardens. We toured the building which was well worth seeing. Dinner that night was in l'orangerie of the château. As we have come to expect the food was a gastronomic delight served in real style, with the main course and desserts being paraded through the restaurant before being consumed. The evening ended with Le son et Lumière in the gardens of the château. The commentary was in French of course and I understood almost nothing but it was still a spectacular show. Now I have mentioned the world cup final before. In parallel with dinner was the cup final with our French hosts being slightly distracted by the quiet radio commentary to which they were listening. Goal by goal was accompanied by riotous cheering. I think some French succumbed and left the dinner to watch the match on TV. I was pleased for them, it's nice to have something to celebrate. And they did, all night! Apparently the local town of Blère didn't settle down until the morning. Certainly from the camp site we could hear their celebrations.

## Monday

Sometimes I think in the background deals are done. Publicity with Tractions in front of restaurants in exchange for a good deal for dinner. And why not? This morning we were back at restaurant 'Clair Cottage' ready for the start of a tour of a local family vineyard together with its wine



production facilities. It was good to have a visit by V.I.P. guest ..... author of the book ..... The afternoon saw us at a park with about 20 mini château models. Dinner was at the same place with the associated entertainment from both the French and English contingents.

## Tuesday

This was the last day of the rally and by 9.00 a.m. we were packed and ready for the start of the 30 km drive to Chinon. In Chinon, après le parking up and posing we visited 'le musée du vin et de la tonnellerie'. (It's funny how these rallies have a common theme running through them; Tractors and wine!). Certainly Chinon is a beautiful town and we picnicked by the side of the Vienne river overlooking the beautiful river bridge. We noticed fireworks were in place in readiness for another French celebration that night; yes it was le 14 Juillet.

Unfortunately we had to leave the rally before the final stage back to Samur and Gennes. However, before leaving I did talk to Patrice, thanked him for his organisation and received 'la remise du cadeau souvenir'. It turned out to be a splendid badge for the front of our Traction. My parting words to Patrice, after what Nadine and I thought was an outstanding rally; was a promise "de faire une tour l'année prochaine"? Patrice, big smile: "Oui". See you there in 1999.

Frank and Nadine Bell





# NOVEMBER JOURNEY

## A Citroën "Big Fifteen" Proves a Thoroughly Satisfactory Family Car on a Hurried Excursion to the West Country and Wales

**M**OTORING journalists, when they are not being feasted sumptuously prior to being shown a new car or accessory for which publicity is sought (who first had the bright thought, I wonder, of "feeding the brutes" before letting them put pens to paper—or chisels to stone?) are, in the eyes of their readers, tearing about the country in an endeavour to destroy motor cars lent to them by gullible manufacturers for purposes of road-test.

To conduct a full, scientific road-test can be very hard work, so it wasn't long in the history of motoring journalism before the journalist discovered that he could avoid technicalities by thinking up a touring article as an excuse for borrowing a new car brim-full of petrol and taking it on a pleasing holiday excursion.

From the title of this article you might deduce that the Editor had sunk to this level when he asked Citroën Cars, Ltd. for the weekend loan of a "Big Fifteen" saloon. This, however, is not quite the whole story.

The fact is that, some time ago, certain correspondence was published in *MOTOR SPORT* concerning the demerits of the *traction avant* Citroën. No car is perfect and in any case enthusiasts for this popular car rallied to its defence, but in order to put the matter into better personal perspective I decided that I should renew acquaintance with this famous car, the conception of which dates back to 1932 or earlier. What I desired to do was to judge the Citroën not so much from the viewpoint of the professional road-tester as from that of the private owner. If, I argued, I took my wife and three young daughters for a quick glimpse of the West Country before winter closed in, I should, on my return, be in a position to decide whether the front-drive Citroën is an out-dated design or a satisfactory family car.

It is only fair to confess that when this ambitious idea of taking the children for a hurried look at the south coast of Cornwall, the north coast of Devon and a little of South Wales, as well as visiting some friends in the course of one weekend, took shape, I could think of few cars better suited to the undertaking than the modern Citroën.

The level-keel ride of the car from Slough is an advantage when children are amongst the "crew," apart from reducing fatigue in adults, and the well-known safety-factors of strong all-steel structure, low build, and safety-glass in all the windows, offset a natural apprehensiveness which secretly most parents possess when driving fast with the family on board. Moreover, the spaciousness of the "Big Fifteen," its durable real leather upholstery, entire absence of fumes, and the ample storage space for luggage and auxiliaries are other features of obvious value for family motoring—the new 12½ cu. ft. luggage boot possesses great carrying capacity in spite of the spare wheel being carried therein, so that its rather ugly exterior is readily forgiven (throughout the weekend in question the children counted Citroëns—"those with humps and those without!")

On this topic, let me say that the boot lid has a convincing sup-



*ANTICIPATION.*—The youngest member of the "crew" is anxious to inspect the interior appointments of the Citroën that was to take her quite a long way in the course of the next two days.

porting-stay with sensible release and that the doors and back of the front seat squab have unobtrusive but useful pockets, while the fascia has an equally useful cubby-hole. All this was a great help when my wife produced the usual enormous mountain of luggage on the Friday afternoon. Just before 4 p.m. the two elder children were scooped up from school, the wide bench seats providing ample accommodation for everyone, and we were away. The back ways were taken to Basingstoke and soon we were cruising at a secure sixty miles per hour down A30.

This "Big Fifteen," although having a four-cylinder engine of only 1,911 c.c., thinks nothing of cruising at between 60 and 70 m.p.h., although its normal maximum is not much in excess of the latter speed. Its steady riding and imposing dimensions contribute to the sense of effortless running, and the almost entire absence of rolling when cornering fast pays dividends where children's sensitive stomachs are concerned. The bench seats have folding central armrests, but the aforesaid absence of roll renders these unnecessary, save for resting the arms: while those "pulls," by means of which occupants of many modern cars contrive to retain their dignity, would be quite out of place in the Citroën! The low build is doubtless responsible for this delightful stability (you step *down* into a Citroën!) yet the ground clearance is ample, even the exhaust pipe being positioned sufficiently high up to be out of harm's way when reversing up to kerbs, etc.

Yet, for all the firmness of its torsional suspension the Citroën gives an exceptionally comfortable ride over the notoriously bad road surfaces encountered up and down the country—which is no slight on the roads of the West Country, which in general are splendidly maintained and decently signposted. The only penalty for this comfortable yet stable suspension is a mild degree of up-and-down but pitch-free movement at low speeds when, incidentally, the car is sufficiently quiet for you to hear the upholstery creak.

To leave the Citroën's detail merits for a while and return to our November journey, the last of the daylight faded round the gaunt trees fringing Salisbury Plain, the Cathedral spire appeared dead ahead, we negotiated the long detour of Salisbury town and night closed about us. Without hurrying, and with two pauses, we reached Exeter, where we planned to spend the first night, just before 8 p.m., with 149 miles on the odometer. A very helpful policeman found us the small, comfortable hotel we sought, and for the sake of others who find themselves in this elegant town after the children's normal bedtime we can recommend taking a route straight to St. David's Station (it still bears the "G.W.R." crest on its grey-stone portals) and the hotel opposite.

This winter evening run had proved the Citroën capable of putting 40 miles into each hour without fireworks (although only a hustling Austin pick-up and a Jaguar up Chard Hill, before entering that fine avenue of trees, had overtaken us), and when, after dinner, it was suggested that I should take a friend of my wife's to Newton Abbot to catch her 'bus to Brixham, while my wife stayed with the children, I was able to confirm the car's ability to cover the ground without pushing its speedometer reading beyond 70 m.p.h. It was only natural that, alone in the "Big Fifteen," I should forsake family driving for road-test tactics. Including negotiation, both up and down, of a 1 in 7 gradient, finding Newton Abbot's bus-station and turning round to return, the Citroën again comfortably pushed 40 miles into less than sixty minutes. During this hour's drive I experienced again the joy of steering which, if heavy, is completely devoid of lost motion, is high-g geared, shock-free, and exceedingly accurate. I delighted in rushing into wet, leaf-strewn corners and employing *traction avant* to take the car securely round. The Lockheed brakes, I decided, were entirely adequate, although seeming to lack power until, during subsequent experiments, I stamped really heavily on the pedal. They were entirely devoid of tricks and could be used purposefully on slippery roads with a certainty that retardation would be in a straight line. The judder which accompanied hard applications was in no way troublesome.

The big steering wheel, the polished-wood fascia panel with its high-quality instruments grouped before the driver (lacking, however, oil-gauge or thermometer), the good visibility (somewhat blanked to the near side by a big central rear-view mirror) and the rigidity of





the car, as conveyed by its tremor-free bonnet and lamps, appealed so much that I experienced surprise that in the past I have craved cars with finger-light controls, supple springing and pressed-tin interiors adorned with "dried milk" fittings.

It is not my intention to deal in this article with the detail aspects of the Citroën, for the "Big Fifteen" is very similar in appointments and equipment to the six-cylinder and a full road-test report on that model appeared in *MOTOR SPORT* for May, 1952, under the heading of "A Truly Excellent Motor Car."

But in a weekend jaunt, which, as will be seen, exceeded 700 miles, certain features proved invaluable. Of these, I would include the high-set headlamps, which, unlike many in-built lamps I have driven behind, gave an admirable light in both normal and dipped positions, and the typically-French lamps control, extending from the steering column, carrying the button for the sensibly-toned horn at its extremity, and giving side lamps only or headlamps additionally by turning its knob, a flick of the lever itself taking you, according to the position of the knob, from side lamps to dipped headlamps (for signalling) or from full to dipped headlamps. The horn press is rather lightly sprung, however, so that you are apt to sound an aural warning when meaning to give a visual one. I found no inconvenience in an indicator control set on the fascia, liked the hand ignition control, could easily reach the roof lamp switch, but thought the pedals rather too close-set.

With these discoveries in mind I went to bed in keen anticipation of some good motoring on the morrow.

Saturday morning dawned wet, but so warm that we had no need to "pull the bung" of the charmingly simple Citroën heater. The engine started easily and settled to its work with a minimum of choke and no protests from the Solex carburetter. The rain was only a nuisance because of the disappointment of not being able to open the sunshine roof—the Citroën ranks as one of the few modern cars possessing this excellent ventilatory feature, for which we can forgive it absence of half-windows, rain visors and rear window blind!—for the car is at its best on wet roads, and has efficient screen wipers. I delighted in flinging it into corners and as Devon gave way to Cornwall and the route became more sinuous I found that the steering becomes lighter and pleasantly smooth for fast cornering. There are cars which need less effort to take round bends, but few, I fancy, which feel quite so "glued to the road" and stable as the Citroën, whose tyres did not protest at our manner of going.

Our immediate destination was Liskeard. The rain became wet-mist as we ran at 70 m.p.h. across a desolate Dartmoor, although even here an inevitable "Tea, Coffee, Minerals" notice was spotted! Drake looked disdainfully down on us as we turned right in Tavistock, after which we filled up with National Benzole from a hand pump operated by a talkative lady, a few miles from the Devon/Cornwall border. The rain eased off as we drove under much gay hunting in Callington and, from a 9.30 a.m. start (and a stop to buy a Biro Citizen with which to write this story and to clean the screen and windows with our new "Clean-a-Screen" device), we made Liskeard, with its 10-m.p.h. speed limits, by 11.22 a.m.

Cornwall abounds in narrow streets and lanes, into one of which scarcely wider than his car, the owner of an old Morris Minor two-seater was unconcernedly manoeuvring out of his garage.

After a brief visit we went on to Looe, for the "seaside" is always an attraction with children, although on this occasion we had to disappoint our youngest daughter, aged four, when she asked "Have we got bathing costumes with us?" However, the rain stopped and, driving beside the single-track railway and through the narrow



*CORNISH FISHING PORT.—The Citroën on the sea-wall at Looe, where the "crew" had a brief picnic on the sands.*

streets of this Cornish fishing village, we were able to leave the Citroën unmolested by parking regulations or uniformed attendants and picnic on the soft sand of the sheltered beach. As we did so a huge tortoiseshell cat, spotlessly clean, came to make friends, and above us the fisher-folk mended their nets and tended their boats.

At 1.10 p.m., with 255 miles covered already, 67 of them that morning, we set off for the opposite coast, at first on the undulating lanes and then on a fine fast road to Great Torrington, up the steep main-street approach to which the Citroën ascended strongly in the middle gear of its three-speed box. That brought the mileage to 312, at 2.50 p.m., and although with friends to visit the sea eluded us, we did go to Bideford for tea, parking on the river wall, from which there is an unguarded drop into the water below. Kingsley on his pedestal was getting a drenching!

The afternoon had brought one unhappy episode, when, leaving Looe, we encountered, at a country cross-roads, an early Austin Seven saloon and a Ford Prefect saloon, both on their sides. As a local waved us on we concluded we could be of no assistance, but the impact must have been recent, for the road was strewn with broken glass and we feared for our Michelins. They proved as durable under this unwanted test as our Michelin map had proved valuable in finding the correct route.

The day's motoring had now grown to 224 miles and although the children were tired we contrived to make Taunton that night, a chance encounter at a small garage there when inquiring about hotels revealing that its owner is a member of the Humber Register. (We pointed to a saloon standing in his yard and asked "Is it a 9/20?" "No, a 9/28," came the reply, but clearly we had established a motoring "password"!)

On this run in the dark from Great Torrington to Taunton I caused momentary consternation by tackling a "miniature Porlock" on the way to South Molton and, in concentrating on a sudden left-hand bend up the 1 in 4 gradient, missed the change-down from second to bottom gear. Had I been alone the position would have been difficult because the hand-brake (well placed but of the modern pull-out variety) failed to hold the car, and the front wheels spun wildly when attempting to re-start on the slippery gradient. With the rear window steamed-up and no reversing lamps I should have been in an awkward predicament had I been alone. As it was, my wife got out and waved me into a gateway, where I was able to turn round, descend, and then climb strongly in bottom gear.

"Ah," the critics, will say, "what did we tell you? The change from second to bottom with that fascia gear-lever is impossible." So I will now come to the point of this article, and answer Citroën critics. The gear change is not easy, I admit, although there is excellent synchromesh on second gear for the ham-handed, and the gears mesh easily providing the clutch pedal, which is light to operate, is fully depressed. The change from second to first gear calls for some brutality if hurried, but most certainly is not "impossible" and I readily admit to being ham-handed in missing it under the circumstances outlined. The fact is that, in spite of a four-cylinder engine of under-2-litre capacity and modest power output in a very big and spacious vehicle, the Citroën somehow contrives to be largely a top-gear car. It will run down to around 20 m.p.h., slog up normal hills, and accelerate quite briskly, particularly above 50 m.p.h., in that ratio. Second gear is not used much above 40 m.p.h. and bottom is very seldom needed at all once the wheels are rolling. This being the case, the gear-change characteristics can be written down as adequate, and the lever location certainly leaves the front compartment entirely unobstructed.



*FILLING UP.—The Citroën "Big Fifteen" being filled up near the Devon/Cornwall border outside Tavistock, as the rain began to give over.*



The steering may be heavier than on many modern cars, but I would not willingly exchange the "feel" and accuracy of its rack-and-pinion mechanism for the light but soggy and "remote" steering of many other cars, any more than I would deem their frail, finger-tip, synchromesh masked gear shifts necessarily preferable to the Citroën's crude but positive change. In my opinion, anyone who enjoys motoring for its own sake should be a sufficiently skilled driver and sufficiently interested in the control of his or her car to readily overlook the modicum of concentration needed in respect of these departments of the Citroën, whose virtues of first-class steering, stability and roadholding offset an occasional "crunch" from the gearbox and, in my case, slightly sore hands due to holding the deeply-serrated two-spoke steering wheel without wearing gloves! Another criticism levelled at the modern Citroën is the frequency with which the front-drive universal-joints need greasing. Much of this and other criticisms can be laid at the door of neglected secondhand mechanism, and a Frenchman who visited the MOTOR SPORT Stand at Earls Court and would not hear a word of complaint against the *marque* told me that since investing in a special grease-gun with a suitably long snout he almost enjoys the 1,000 miles ritual of feeding the universals with fresh lubricant . . .

That disposes, so far as this writer is concerned, of Citroën criticisms, and arriving at Taunton after a day's effortless family motoring of over 200 miles in rain and gale he had no reason to alter his opinions. Before a fresh spate of letters arrive from those who always contrive to average 70 m.p.h. or so from A to B (B usually being 400 miles or more from A) I would place emphasis on the family aspect of this journey, for my three young daughters are no better (if no worse) in a motor car than other children of like age, and most parents, even those who read MOTOR SPORT, will agree that there is a difference between undertaking a journey *en famille* and setting out to establish new personal records for speed and distance covered!

We duly found an empty hotel in rather unprepossessing Taunton, but it had no garage. However, the railway officials politely as well as willingly allowed us to leave the car in the station car park for the night for a charge of 1s.—whereas in other towns we have been told "only if you are a railway traveller." The weather was so mild on this November Saturday evening that we had no qualms—in any case, the engine had been given its dose of Esso anti-freeze mixture.

We were not away until 9.45 a.m. next morning, taking the dull but fast road to Bristol to make another brief visit. The Bristol Constabulary were most helpful in directing us and in telling us how to cross the Bristol Channel to Wales! So, after just missing the 11.30 a.m. Aust Ferry, we sat waiting for the 12.30 p.m. boat, the children eating Sharp's toffees as a precaution against *mal de mer*. This ferry, signposted Aust Ferry for miles and finally Chepstow Ferry, costs 11s. 6d. for a car of the size of a "Big Fifteen," less for smaller cars, and there is a nominal charge for adults and children. It takes about 10 minutes to get over, loading and unloading facilitated by a turntable on the *Severn Queen*, which has accommodation on deck for up to 81 persons and which steamed along in fine style, riding as smoothly as a Citroën. As it saves a detour of nearly 60 miles from Aust to Chepstow via Gloucester, the ferry is worth taking and in the average car represents no financial loss in view of petrol saved. It might interest rally organisers besides holiday travellers. We could be excused for expecting to be the only users



SEEN THROUGH SEA MIST from the snug comfort of the "Big Fifteen," the Severn Queen Ferry at the Aust embarkation point.



#### THE CITROËN BIG FIFTEEN SALOON

Engine: Four-cylinder, 78 mm. by 100 mm. (1,911 c.c.).  
Push-rod o.h.v.; 6.25 to 1 compression ratio; 55.7 b.h.p.  
at 4,250 r.p.m.

Gear ratio: 1st, 13.1 to 1; 2nd, 7.3 to 1; top, 4.3 to 1.

Tyres: 165 by 400 Michelin on steel disc wheels.

Weight: 23 cwt. unladen.

Steering ratio: 2½ turns, lock-to-lock.

Fuel capacity: 11 gallons. Range, approx. 286 miles.

Wheelbase: 10 ft. 1½ in.

Track: 4 ft. 10½ in.

Overall dimensions: 15 ft. 6 in. by 5 ft. 10 in. (wide) by 5 ft. 1 in.

Price: £750 (£1,063 12s. 6d. with p.t.) (£10 less with fixed roof).

Makers: Citroën Cars, Ltd., Trading Estate, Slough, Bucks.

on this winter Sunday morning with sea-mist and rain blotting out the opposite coast. Not a bit of it! Cars were queuing up on both sides to make the crossing.

Incidentally, it is possible to entrain a car through the Severn Tunnel, farther down the coast, but this service does not operate on Sunday morning. It is, however, worth noting that the cost is only slightly more than by *Severn Queen* and is balanced by an even greater saving in petrol and time.

Wales greeted us with rain, fog as we ascended into the hills, and closed shops, so that we made a slight diversion in Usk to be certain of obtaining petrol, filling up with Esso Extra. We now encountered two Singer 1,500 saloons in quick succession just as, over Dartmoor, two 1½-litre M.G.s were encountered. Otherwise, only a nice 12/40 Lea-Francis two-seater and a Singer-base Special enlivened this part of the journey. Then on towards Pontypool, along the twin-track road past the vast British Nylon Spinners factory, and fast up the Ebbw valley so that the youngsters could have their first look at coalmining. There is none of the squalor that I saw in my school-days, although the scene was bleak, with a gale hurling driving rain down from the hills, as we hurried along closely pursued by a Bristol 400.

We now began to think that perhaps, with a crew of three children whose combined ages totalled only 17 years, we had undertaken enough, for the weather was dismal and 495 miles had been covered since we set out. After buying minerals and being "attacked" by geese in a side street in Blaina, we set off home, via Monmouth, Ross, Gloucester, and through Cirencester, Hungerford, Newbury and Basingstoke back on to A30. At 3 p.m. we had been beside the South Wales coalfields, at 8.5 p.m., after an unhurried pause for tea in Gloucester, we were home, the mileage totalling 656. Not bad, we thought, for a family weekend's motoring.

Collecting and returning the Citroën brought the final mileage up to 740 miles and it conveniently ran out of petrol immediately outside the Slough factory.

In this mileage the water level had not been checked, the flashing lamp indicator on the fascia gave us no reason to suppose that the Castrolite required topping-up, and the fuel consumption came out at the excellent figure of exactly 26 m.p.g. But for this last-named figure we should have had no reminder that the Citroën is propelled by an engine as small as 1,911 c.c., for if it is a little more noisy than a six, flexible mounting masks any roughness and, as has been said, it contrives to do most of its work on the 4.3 to 1 top gear.

The car had given us a great deal of pleasure and was as sound at the finish, brakes just as powerful, body as silent, as at the start. Only a slight "seagull noise," to quote the passengers for whom this hurried journey had been planned, emanating from the screen-wipers, hinted at the hard work undertaken.

The "Big Fifteen" had certainly proved ideal for the task, the security imparted to the occupants and the driver's knowledge that he had the car under control at all times adding greatly to the enjoyment. For a car costing, basically, £750, the Citroën "Big Fifteen" imparts a feeling of dignity and quality expected of far more costly cars, and the manner in which it combines good handling characteristics, spaciousness, comfort, security and economy make it an outstanding vehicle in spite of the fact that its design has remained generally unchanged over a considerable number of years. Its appearance is as imposing as it is in good taste and the unchanged aspects of the front-wheel-drive Citroën are its own reward. For in an age when automobiles grin ever wider with their radiator grilles, roll alarmingly on soft suspension and do all but drive themselves motoring connoisseurs appreciate all the more the "sure-footedness" and practicability of this outstanding car.—W. B.



# CLASSIC MALTS

by David Baird



last week in April was taken up with frenetic preparations for the May 1 start from Edinburgh Castle. All nuts, bolts and connections were checked and double checked; we got the car through her M.O.T. and finally loaded her up with spares, tools, jacks, axle stands etc. etc.

After crossing on the Seacat from Belfast to Stranraer, we had a leisurely drive through southern Scotland with an overnight



Photos by Mike Johnson

- to the skirl of pipes

November a year ago, a friend handed me an invitation from HERO (Historic Endurance Rallying Organisation) to apply for an entry(!) to the Classics Malts Six Day Reliability Trial in Scotland, the event to start and finish in Edinburgh and cover some 1350 miles during the course of six days "taking in some of the most spectacular scenery in Scotland with an element of competition comprising driving tests and regularity sections" all of which, we were assured, would be within the capacity of any well maintained classic car. The overnight accommodation was included in the entry and consisted of good quality hotels in Irvine, Oban (2 nights), Portree, Aviemore and, of course, Edinburgh.

Jacqueline and I were interested. The idea of a tour in company of six distilleries with a competition element thrown in and, most importantly - as all Paris-built Traction owners will appreciate - no night driving, appealed.

In January we were informed that our application for an entry had been successful, so in some fear and trepidation, we duly sent it off. We assured ourselves that if the going got tough, the tough would get going whilst we took the easy way round out of respect for the age and fragility of our 1954 Onze Legère, not to mention the driver and navigator!

The car itself is fairly standard with the exception of a Roger Williams diaphragm clutch, 10/31 'Economique' final drive and CV joints as originally specified in 1934. As regularity sections required an accurate 'mileometer', we fitted an electronic Brantz clock and distance recorder, operating similarly to a cycle speedo. The sensor was fitted to the gearbox to take up on the four 'webs' of the gearbox final drive coupling. This was very easy to fit and when calibrated, very accurate.

On the basis of don't do today what you can do tomorrow, the

stop in Peebles, a hidden gem incidentally, before arriving at Glenkinchie Distillery south-east of Edinburgh for documentation and scrutineering. What an array of cars awaited us: 1950's Mercedes Cabriolets; a 300 SL; the Alfa Romeo 2600 of the Count and Countess von Bismarck; Jaguar XK 120's, 140's, 150's, MkI's and II's and a couple of E Types; Healey 3000's; TR's 2 to 3A's; Flat Rad Morgans; MGA's; 3 litre Bentley's; Alvises; a Ferrari; an Aston Martin and many others - and us! - comprising 82 cars in all.

The Classes were sorted loosely according to age, cubic capacity and whether a touring or sports car. We were in Class C1, 1941 to 1952 up to 2000cc Touring Cars, which included a 1948 2 litre Armstrong Siddeley Hurricane, three immaculate Bristols and an Italian entry with a 1958 Lancia Aurelia B22 S - they kindly gave us a fighting chance by travelling four up! Interestingly, the majority of entries were husband and wife teams which prompted the suggestion as the event progressed that the Race Committee should include a representative from Marriage Guidance!

After unwisely thoroughly testing United Distillers six Classic Malts at Edinburgh's Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre the night before, the 0500 alarm went off all too soon. After breakfast and firing up 'Edith', we proceeded to the Castle Esplanade in preparation for our start at 0649 on Saturday May 1. To a skirl of the pipes and the dropping of the flag by Edinburgh's Lord Provost no less, we were off on a beautiful, clear - albeit frosty - May morn.

Our first test after the start was at Glenkinchie Distillery 17 miles away. We were both pretty nervous and were cautiously following the directions in the road book provided, which gives distances between changes of direction in diagrammatic







*us and the Cabriolets*

form. However, as the miles rolled by, our confidence increased and on arrival at Glenkinchie we thought it was just possible we might just manage to complete at least the first day.

The tests consisted of manoeuvring - in both forward and reverse - round pylons in a given order, and stopping astride lines as indicated. We studied the test: Jacqueline would be in the passenger seat giving instructions and I would be carrying them out - sound familiar? Well, remember the talk about old and fragile car etc? As soon as the start was given, that all went out the window and it was foot to the boards and the devil take the hindmost for the rest of the event. On flat manoeuvrability tests the Citroën performed very well - fitting CV joints means that lock is no problem. Our times were, on the whole, very respectable except when I couldn't tell my left from my right! After Glenkinchie we encountered our first regularity section at Lammermuir. We were required to maintain an average speed of 27.5 mph throughout. There would be secret checks along the way at which 0.1 of a point would be lost for every second early or late. When everything is going right this is quite a leisurely affair for the driver, although the navigator is working very hard. The problems come when there is a hold-up or you miss a turning. Then it is flat out until you get back on your average.

And so the day continued as we drove through the rolling countryside of southern Scotland on mainly single track roads interspersed with driving tests and regularity sections - often up to 25 miles long.

Eventually, after 300 miles, we arrived at Irvine at 1850 - the only stop, apart from queuing at tests having been a half-hour to grab some lunch. All three of us were exhausted, although Edith seemed to be sticking the pace best.

Sunday dawned bright and frosty and with a start at 0749 we felt we had had a lie in.

Scotland was looking its best for us as we tackled more of the same in increasingly spectacular scenery. The highlight of the day, however, was the Rest and Be Thankful Hillclimb. This showed up the three achilles heels of the Traction; the gearbox, the gearbox and the gearbox. Only three gears, you can't get into first at over 3 mph and you rush a change at your peril.



Despite this, we were featured in the centre spread of Classic Car Mart "tackling" the final hairpin as I frantically tried to time my change down into first without undue damage to the box or stalling the engine. All this, I must say, to great acclaim from the large crowd of spectators.

We arrive in Oban at 1615 not feeling quite so exhausted and thought we might as well check to see how we were doing. We were lying third in our Class behind the Bristol of Alexa Scott Plummer and Sue Shoosmith (who were to go on to win the Ladies Award for the best performance by an all woman crew) and the Italian Lancia. Not too bad, thought we!

Another enjoyable Whisky tasting took place at the Oban Distillery that evening, and on the Monday we had a circular "tour" of the Kintyre peninsula, again on roads few tourists have attempted. All this at a required average speed of 30 mph, regardless of stops, with the exception of lunch, so the pace was pretty hectic. The Citroën, however, was a joy to drive on these roads.

We were often in the company of the big Mercedes Cabriolets and indeed a Jaguar XK 120 who shot ahead of us on the straights but we were back on their bumpers after a few bends! They didn't like it! The results in Oban that night



*- "or when you miss a turning, then it is flat out" ...*

showed we were still in 3rd place, but the Bristol in 4th had narrowed the gap from 40 points to 15. We needed to pull something out of the bag and on Day 4, we did!

Tuesday was the day the weather broke, with torrential rain interspersed with sunshine which contributed to some awesome views of sunshine and showers over the lochs and mountains of the western Highlands and Skye. It also gave Edith the opportunity to show the opposition what she was capable of.

The first regularity section was over an extremely rough forest track on which no cars in our class could maintain the 27.5 mph average, therefore it was the equivalent of a special stage - flat out! Once I learnt to stop using the brakes, Edith flew. The Bristols with 90 bhp and 4 speed box had more power, but their handling just did not match that of the Citroën. Also, with our good ground clearance and no rear overhang, potholes - provided we were going quick enough - were no problem. John Brown, the Organiser of the event,





*-frantically searching for 1st gear on Rest and Be Thankful*

followed us in his BMW through the section and thought we had got lost, or landed on our roof in a peat bog, as at times he said there was neither sight nor sign of us. The French wipers, incidentally, with their manual wipe were invaluable when we were temporarily 'blinded' by the muddy water from the potholes. Combined with this, the fact that the tests didn't include any steep climbs, and with us making marginally fewer mistakes than the opposition, we won the award for the best performance of the day not only in our Class (6 cars) but in our age category (15 cars), which included the Mercedes Cabriolets. The award being two bottles of Talisker, no less.

The opportunity to celebrate our achievement was kindly provided by Talisker who 'bussed' us all from Portree to their Distillery for a Whisky tasting, ceilidh and supper. It was a memorable evening, so I'm told!

The gap between 4th and 3rd was now 62 points. By now, as you can imagine, nothing existed except the Rally. We were totally immersed in the event: the 'touring' element had long been discarded - this was serious! Well, pride comes before a fall, and fall we did on day 5 - the leg from Skye sweeping across northern Scotland to the east coast and finishing in Aviemore. We 'wrong slotted' on a regularity section; took the wrong route through one of the tests and were defeated by a steep test where we either over-revved in first or struggled up in second. This was the problem; if you chose second and couldn't quite get the engine 'on the cam', did you struggle on or virtually stop to get into first? To be able to double declutch her down would transform the car, although the standard ratio would probably have helped.

After a tiring and frustrating day the three of us were glad to arrive at Aviemore at the relatively early time of 1630. Edith was starting to make noises which we thought were coming from the gearbox. Given our performance, we were pleased that we were still ahead of the Bristol in 4th place, but now by only 22 points.

The sixth and final day was long - 0817 to 1936 more or less non-stop. Fatigue was starting to get to us. Edith was 'complaining' more and more, although her complaints were often drowned out by the heated 'discussions' between driver and navigator which culminated in a disastrous test at Knockhill motor racing circuit. This should have been quite simple if either of us could have thought straight. So,

somewhat depressed at having probably lost 3rd place we 'raced' for the finish at Hopetoun House outside Edinburgh. Having lost considerable time at some of the stops we were delighted to get there just inside our time limit.

Edith behaved admirably throughout, although the noise was not the gearbox, it was from the big ends, half the babbitt from which was found in the bottom of the sump. The crankshaft endfloat was also 1.5mm! That said, the engine still didn't miss a beat and the crankshaft was unmarked.

We ended up 3rd after all, the Bristol making a navigational error on the last leg into Edinburgh which cost him 100 points. Edith got a 3rd in the 'Concours'; we attained Bronze medal standard and got the award for the highest placed Irish competitor (a "singular" honour as we were the only Irish competitor!)

During the event, one of the Gold medal winners, Nicholas Pryor, who drove a superb ex-works MGA, kindly congratulated us on our performance and said he had a very



*sunshine and showers*

soft spot for Traction Avants as in Malaya during the 'Emergency' they were much sought after as being the car with the best chance of escaping a terrorist ambush! Surely the ultimate 'driving test'!

Whilst there was no overall winner of the event there was an overall hero. Ernst Krudop and his girlfriend Simone van der Lem drove his 1928 three-wheeled Jap engined Morgan Aero round the full course, including at least two engine rebuilds! Throughout the event he wore a flying jacket in which his grandfather - after escaping from Holland - had completed 80, yes 80, missions with Bomber Command during the war. The story goes that when his grandfather, who is still hale and hearty, heard of his intention to enter the Morgan, said "take this, you could do with a bit of luck"!

Overall impressions: the joy of being able to drive a classic car to near her limit; the scenery; the camaraderie of all the competitors and marshalls (we all wanted everyone to finish) and the satisfaction of completing what was, in the opinion of the experienced competitors, one of the toughest events in which they had competed.

Would we do it again - certainly we would!

*David Baird*





## A TRACTION REBORN SEEKS OUT ITS ROOTS

People's tales of their trips to France in their rebuilt pride and joy make for dull reading, on the whole, unless the author is possessed of a witty turn of phrase or some quite extraordinary event occurred during the course of the peregrination. Neither of these factors apply here, so my recommendation to most readers is to move on to the next article. For those who really don't have anything better to do, let me say that I write this primarily as a tribute to Ryland pere et fils who, with their so aptly named business Traction Renaissance Services, reincarnated Light 15 no. 133673 in the space of a few months to a standard not bettered by its original Slough artificer. And, as those still with this piece shall see, with as great if not greater a degree of reliability. For believe me, this car was certainly put to some pretty rigorous testing following its rebirth.

My love affair began in 1947 when I was but fourteen years old. My cousin was married to an eminent musician, who owned a Traction. Boris and Sonia would be in the front of course, and I in the back. To me, Boris was the bee's knees, because he drove this car that went round corners at 50 mph, dead flat and without having to slow down and no terrifying breaking away of the rear end. None of my pals' dads or cousins had cars that could do that. I was hooked. Four years later we went on a family holiday to Annecy in France. It seemed that every other car was a Traction. That marvellous, musical first gear whine! I just had to own one. However, flogging my National Savings Certificates (or whatever they were called in those days) coupled with an articulated clerk's pathetic salary wouldn't even buy a starting handle. So it had to be old top hat Austin 7s which led to Morris Minors and eventually to company cars - and these had to be British.

As the Traction gave way to the daring DS/ID, thence via the mundane GS to the more promising BX and CX and then the Xantia, my sentimental attitude towards the car of my dreams lapsed into nostalgia. But this was brought into sharp focus a couple of years ago when, travelling in the Dordogne region of France, we were invited to a function at which members of the local "Taco" (French for "old motor", roughly) club were present. One of them had brought with him not only his 11L but also his magnificent 15-6, "la reine de la route", superb in its original grey livery (the car was later featured in one of the monthly classic car glossies). That settled it.



THE PONT DU GARD

I can't remember quite how I got to Messrs. Ryland - and here I am not referring to the tortuous track to be negotiated if approaching their establishment from the east. But find them I did, and immediately took a fancy to a complete and rot-free rolling monocoque sporting a ghastly yellow-green primer. Martin (fils) told me there were doors but no wings, but he could get some. For an agreed price he'd renew suspension joints and bushes as necessary, rebuild the steering, fit a new braking system, find a decently rebuilt gearbox and renew the all-important drive shaft couplings. He would rebuild the engine to my specification; there would be a new wiring loom and, apart from repro bumpers, all brightwork would be rechromed. The trim could be to my specification. As I wanted Paris trim, it would be up to me to find some seats.

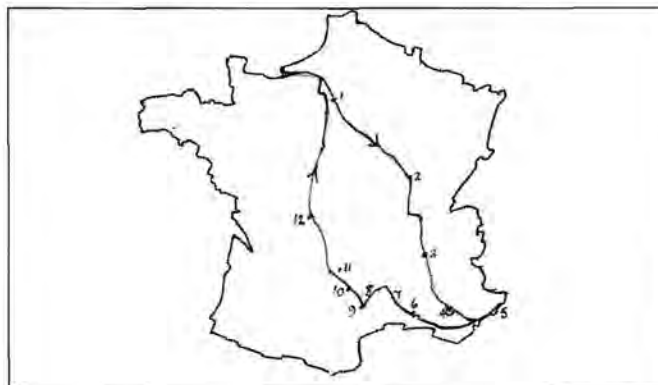
That was November; I said what about completion end-March, Martin said April which experience told me would be May and by mid-June things were getting close. Handover took place on the only sunny Sunday 1998's June had to offer.

Having carefully run in for some 1,700 miles the rebuilt engine and gearbox, drained and refilled oils and greased everything in sight greasable, we now move on to September and into France. What space the small boot Traction has to offer (more than I'd thought, actually) was filled with spare

bits and tools, picnic gear and tennis racquets. Internally we carried my wife, three weeks' luggage for two and, as far as Portsmouth and then from the ferry to the railway station in Le Havre, three French people who'd been spending a couple of weeks with us - and their luggage. But then isn't that what Traction's were designed to do - absorb the whole family and their impedimenta without a bat of an eyelid or a twang of a torsion bar?

Farewells to our friends completed, we set off on what was to be 2,000 miles of French holiday. How this unfolded may be followed on the accompanying numbered sketch map (offered with apologies to any cartographer who may be reading this), so that I shall attempt to reduce the boredom factor by referring only to those places visited by our Traction which we found particularly good.

Around Rouen, on our way to our first planned night halt - comfortably to the west of Paris at Neauphle-le-Chateau (point 1: Hotel Le Verbois, perched atop a hill with stunning views and well recommended) - the motorway traffic ahead ground to a halt as a result of an accident. High ambient temperatures shouldn't be too much of a problem to a Traction engine, but constant stop-start and slow rotation of the fan is bound to add difficulties;



"THE JOURNEY"

and when these conditions are encountered together with the apology for petrol that we have to accept to-day, things are likely to go bad. This they did, in the obvious form of fuel vaporisation. There was nothing to be done but limp onto the hard shoulder and wait until the ghastly, carcinogenic unleaded concoction had reliquified and the long tailback of traffic had started to move again.

I should mention here that, when specifying the engine rebuild I had asked Dennis and Martin for the cylinder head to be fitted with hardened valve seats and appropriate guides for the use of unleaded petrol, only because I'm not sure that, when leaded disappears from the market in about a year's time, substitute additives will really do the job. Maybe they will, but it seems to me that an equally important product to develop would be a burn rate retardant for use in older vehicles. Modern petrols are just too volatile. (As it happened, vaporisation wasn't encountered again during the trip). In France I tend to use 98 octane unleaded rather than 95. I know this seems pointless for an engine with a compression ratio of a mere 6.5:1, but 98 seems to make the engine run more sweetly and the extra cost in France is infinitesimal. I don't know about the comparative rates of volatility - perhaps someone could enlighten me. However, the average rate of consumption for the whole 2,000 miles was around 22-23 mpg, which I thought disappointing - I would have expected at least a 10% improvement.

But back to the journey itself. Point 2 on the map is at Beaune. A must here is a visit to the famous hospices, with the amazing tiled roof. Inside is a blood-curdling exhibition of the surgical instruments used in times past to drill, gouge, inject and scrape the human corpus.

In Beaune we were lucky, through a wine merchant friend, to have invitations to visit two well-known producers and to attend tastings. I have to say that, sadly, Burgundy nowadays isn't what is used to be. I don't think it's a reflection on a jaded palate, but it seems to me that the products of the great estates seem to have lost their richness. Anyway, we enjoyed our visits and were thanked by one producer for enhancing his premises (magnificent though they were in themselves!) with the Traction parked in front.

We had been joined in Beaune by my brother and sister-in-law (in their reliable Volvo). Around Grenoble seemed to be the next area to head for. Driving through Lyon is to be avoided, unless you're actually going there: the motorway through it is always choked and so is the city itself. So we circumnavigated Lyon to the east, left the R.N. 75 and gave the Traction its first taste of long, winding mountain ascents, fetching up at a small ski-ing resort called Lans-en-Vercours (3). The car was more than equal to the ascent and there was useful exercise for my biceps and wrists. The mountains around Grenoble were home to much of the French Resistance movement







OUTSIDE THE CASINO AT MONTE CARLO

during the second World War. Parked in the church square, the Traction excited considerable reminiscence from local people, who recalled many a member of the Maquis, as the Resistance were known, up in the hillsides sitting on the front wing of a Traction with rifles at the ready. Another French woman came up to me explaining how during the War her own Traction had been requisitioned by the occupying forces.

If you've been to Provence but haven't visited the Grand Canyon du Verdon (4) there's a treat in store for you. The river Verdon rises some 7,000 ft up in the Alps, flows through the attractive mountain town of Castellane, before debouching into the Lac de Ste. Croix, having wound its way through the stunning canyon. There are four ways of seeing this amazing natural chasm - three of them by different roads and the fourth by canoe. We chose one of the roads, which runs at altitudes varying from some 2,500 ft to over 4,000 ft above sea level. The river runs through the canyon at about 1,700 ft, which gives you some impression of the depth of the gorge. There are several places to pull over to take in the staggering views. It was all first gear work for the Traction - and all taken comfortably in its sturdy stride.

Monte Carlo or bust. We decided on Monte Carlo (5) and see photograph to prove it). The large gaming rooms at the Casino don't open until 3 p.m., so rather disappointed we busied ourselves for a short while with the one-armed bandits. My sister-in-law Charlotte was eyeing open-mouthed a couple standing at adjacent machines close to the entrance door. These machines were noisily disgorging one-franc pieces at a considerably faster rate than that at which the couple were inserting coins. As Charlotte moved in to request that she took over the handling of at least one of these generous machines, I quickly took her aside, quietly informing her that the couple whose riches were apparently doubling by the minute were planted there by the Casino management "pour encourager les autres", and the machines suitably "adjusted". If Charlotte were to succeed in moving one of the planted players away, the machine would be suitably "corrected". Having won two francs on my own "unadjusted" machine, we went - by bus rather than by Traction - to visit the Royal Palace, at the other end of Monaco.

Although it could be said that much of the Cote d'Azur is now overbuilt and, in the summer months at least, overpopulated, there are still many pleasant towns to visit. In the eastern part where we were, Menton, Villefranche-sur-Mer and Antibes old town are three which do not seem to have lost their charm. Leaving Antibes we drove on to Nimes (whence came the fabric denim, dyed indigo and made into hard-wearing trousers and shipped to the Klondike prospectors from the port of Genoa, or Gene in French, hence "bleu de Gene" or "blue jeans". But you knew that, anyway, didn't you?) Anyway, Nimes (6) is famous for its amazingly preserved Roman amphitheatre, whose twin is at nearby Arles. Events, including bullfighting, are still held in the amphitheatre today, although the prospect of purchasing your advance ticket to witness Romans v. Christians, Christians v. Christians or even Christians v. Lions is probably now somewhat remote.

We were staying a little way out of Nimes in Cabrieres at the Enclos des Lauriers Roses, effectively a hamlet of small villas converted into charming individual suites. There's a restaurant and four (yes, four) swimming pools. As well, it was here that we drank the Wine of the Tour. It was a Costieres de Nimes wine from Chateau Beaubois. Sadly, you can't buy it: most of the small production goes to local restaurants and what doesn't goes to an importer in Belgium. I would highly recommend the Enclos as a really nice place to stay for anything up to a week. There is much to be said for visiting this part of France, as there is such a variety of wonderful places and monuments to see within easy reach. One of these is the amazing Pont du Gard, built by the Romans as part of an aqueduct to supply water from the hills to the city of Nimes. A road bridge was added later, but unfortunately at the time of our visit it was closed to vehicles, so the photograph of this magnificently-preserved structure will have to appear without a Citroën to adorn it. However, we returned to the car park where we had left the Traction

to find it surrounded by a large crowd, listening to a eulogy on the model from one of their number. He turned out to be an Israeli, who had owned a model 7 Traction in Czechoslovakia, from where his people had hailed. He had a comprehensive knowledge of the car, and was a pleasure to listen to.

One of my favourite small towns is Uzès, not far away from Nimes, and we proceeded via that delightful place and then Anduze, following the Gard valley, towards St. Jean and the start of the wild scenery of the Corniche des Cévennes (7). Much of this was first gear stuff, but we discerned no hint of toiling from the trusty Traction. It might here be mentioned that, during the whole 2,000-mile journey, I needed to add not a drop of water to the cooling system.

From the top end of the Corniche, at Florac, we pointed the Traction southward again along the dramatic Gorges du Tarn (8) - another of France's long and in places majestic rivers. The journey along the gorge is simply one beautiful scene after the other. Eventually we descended into the valley, staying at Millau (buy leather goods here), and the next door drove on to Roquefort (9), a splendidly preserved town built on a rock (of course!). Here the king of all cheeses is produced. We visited a factory, sampled and took away. We were told that the cheese would last in its specially sealed and refrigerated pack for 48 hours. We had in mind six days and, although when we got it home some of the cheese's moisture had run out (but still inside the pack), the flavour was superb. Moreover, the Traction exhibits no trace of having been used as a conveyor of an extremely pungent Roquefort.

Still in the department of the Aveyron, the night was spent at a small town by the name of Salles-Curan (10), which stands above a lake. I mention this halt only because we found our third recommendable hotel and restaurant - the Hostellerie du Levezou. Once a convent, almost everything about the place and its family management is to be applauded. On our departure we found the Traction surrounded by a gaggle of schoolgirls with their teacher in attendance. The girls were clearly amused by the Citroën, although they may not have recognised it as such, but they became really interested when I suggested to them that it could be said to represent as much a part of their national heritage as Moliere or Monet. Fortunately the teacher nodded her agreement.

On the way to Figeac (another delightful town, requiring a serious descent from either direction) my wife said I'd missed the turning to Conques. While I hadn't known we were going there, we consulted the map and found an alternative route. I use the word "alternative" in the sense that there turned out to be a more or less navigable secondary means of access which I suppose could be termed a road and, as with all French byways, what width it had was all metalled. We rose and twisted, sometimes erring and finding ourselves apologising in a farmyard, passed through the very pretty hill village of Noailhac and eventually came down to the larger but equally lovely village of Conques (11). Or had we? In fact our descent had terminated in a lovely old stone bridge, whose width reminded me of one of those mock gymkhana tests car clubs put on for fun, in which the driver is required to sit in his car some 50 yards distant from two poles, obliging a marshal to move the poles to a width such that the driver judges his car will just fit between without touching either. The trouble with this real-life test was that the sides of the bridge were of stone. Fortunately two helpful villagers appeared at the far end and nursed us through without mishap. Conques itself is famous for its 11th century church and abbey, which was for centuries one of the sanctuaries for pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

It was probably the rigours of the journey to Conques that saw to the demise of the Traction's speedometer. As an accurate indicator of rate of progress I suppose it had never really been much good, but at least I knew that a reading of 70 mph meant 55, and so on. However, after a sudden tendency to wild oscillation the instrument finally gave up the ghost with a series of blood-curdling screeches. These were accompanied by a few dozen furious rotations of the needle round the dial culminating in the rest pin slicing it clean in two. (What was left of the needle continued to rotate happily but uselessly for the remainder of the journey).

We said farewell to the Massif Central, France's beautiful high plateau with its magnificent mountains, ridges and gorges, and entered Limoges (12). Here we visited one of the porcelain makers, buying some of the exquisitely painted china. And then it was more or less time to run for Le Havre and home - though not, of course, before loading the Traction at an Evreux hypermarket with a few comestible goodies not obtainable in England and about six months' supply of beer.

2,000 miles; so what, you may say. Perhaps to you it's nothing remarkable. But from a bare monocoque to a fully re-built, *handbuilt*, reborn Traction; and then, almost straightaway, 2,000 often difficult, tortuous and low-g geared miles, with progress impeded only by a broken speedo needle, a couple of stops to blow out some muck from the idle jet and a temporary halt due to vapourisation ..... well, I think it's worth at least a couple of toasts: one to Andre Citroën, God rest his soul; and the other to Dennis and Martin Ryland. Thank you all for a splendid holiday and, I'm sure, more to come.

David De Saxe



# focCORRESPONDENCE

Peter Rowlands  
41 Derwent Road  
Orrell  
Wigan WN5 8PJ  
Tel: 01942 203975  
Fax: 01942 748581  
20 October 1998

Dear Sirs,

I have been a member of the T.O.C. for almost two years and in that time have attended two A.G.M.s My son-in-law, Chris, has attended a regional 'get-together' which I was unable to attend due to prior commitments.

My impression is that the club is made up of a wide range of members who own Tractions for pleasure, many of whom either a) do not wish to attend social events at all or b) do not wish to attend the social events that are presently organised by the T.O.C. I had intended attending the I.C.C.C.R. in Belgium and had received my permit etc., but was prevented from going by the necessity of having a hip replaced. Having read the reports I may well have had a lucky escape. Having lived in France for a period of time however, I am well aware of their feelings about the abilities of the Belgians. I get the distinct feeling from some members at the A.G.M. that we are consequently seen as *second class* members as we do not wish to 'join in the fun' of the social events.

I am under the distinct impression that a club is made up of *like minded individuals* in this case owners or enthusiasts of Tractions. I applaud the new editorial team in the stance it has taken towards producing a magazine for Tractionists of all kinds rather than a magazine for the 'social club'. Long may it continue. I am much more interested in information about tractions than learning what Barrie the Brick was wearing at a fancy dress do, although I do concede that there is a need for social events to have some place in the magazine.

I would also point out that I was willingly prepared to put myself out to provide a Traction for the stand at the N.E.C. last year and indeed Chris and I assisted in manning the stand ourselves. I was therefore rather offended by the person whose comment at the A.G.M. was that only those who attended social events were serious Tractionists and that only members of the 'social set' actually *drove* Tractions despite the fact that I was one of only four or five members who had attended the A.G.M. in their Tractions. I have nothing at all against those who enjoy attending social events indeed I applaud the organisation of social events. I myself would be happy to attend certain social events but would prefer them to be opportunities to discuss Tractions with Tractionists rather than being involved in a 'dressing up' occasion or a 'knees-up' neither of which I am particularly keen on. To quote an example, my family has 'flown the nest' and the thought of a Christmas Social surrounded by children, albeit of Tractionists, fills me with dread. I am also not a camper. Arrange a Tractionists week-end in the conviviality of a pleasant hotel to 'talk Tractions' and sample good wine and I would probably be the first to sign up.

I would also point out that in the short time that I have been a member I have suggested a rule change and recommended that the newer members would benefit from a list of what the club shop actually sells. Again, whilst longer serving members may well have back copies of *Floating Power* showing them how to *splurge their grotchets* there are many of us who are unaware that we even have *grotchets* let alone that they require *splurging every 5,000 miles*. Perhaps a 'Tractionist's week-end workshop' could be considered by the committee as I would think that many of us would like to find out how to do some sort of job that takes us two full days which others seem able to accomplish during tea breaks. Likewise a simple 'how to' section in *Floating Power* would be useful. The two most useful articles so far in my short time as a member have been a) how to repair a water pump, and b) where to find the greasing nipples. Without those two articles I would have been struggling. Chris, being a Beetle owner as well draws comparisons with the Beetle Owners Club. Having seen some of their magazines their technical help section is certainly superior.

Much discussion has also taken place about the internet. Whilst not

being privy to what took place prior to last year's A.G.M., as I was not then on the internet, I have found the page produced by Marcus interesting and informative. In particular the list of spare parts is invaluable.

Judging by the number of new members joining, by whatever means, I would ask the committee to consider the participation of *all* members as important to the future of the club, not just those attending social events or even the A.G.M.

Perhaps a member of the committee could be given the role of liaison with 'new' members as this is the lifeblood of any organisation. It would be an interesting statistic to know how long new members actually continue their subscriptions and what is the reason for non-continuation of membership.

It is a fact that new members can often see things that are not addressed by longer serving members simply because they already know the answers or have access to information in back copies of the club magazine. Being a long standing member they may not realise how difficult it is for new members, particularly those who are not a part of the social set, to integrate into the club. New members may also possess a certain expertise which could be invaluable to club members. I myself am in the field of group travel so have access to lower ferry and shuttle fares than can normally be obtained by club members, likewise contacts with international and national hotel chains.

Chris and I, with our Traction, have attended several classic car shows in the North, for example at Tatton Park, where clubs such as the Jaguar Owners Club and even the Lada Owners Club have had official representation. Perhaps this is where the regions should be putting more emphasis as most Tractionists, like us, enjoy 'showing off' their cars. We are now trying to gain entry as a 'privateer' to the Northern Classic Car show at Gmex.

I would ask you to accept that this letter is written by someone who is keenly interested in the T.O.C. and its future and that the points raised are simply my own feelings as a 'new' member rather than criticisms of what is, at heart, a thriving club. I also regret to inform you that I will be continuing as a member and will most certainly be attending next year's A.G.M.

Best wishes,

Peter

Tel: 975 4730  
Fax: 394 0033  
E-mail: convey@global.co.za

I have for sale 3 Traction Avante (Light Fifteen) bodies, which are all, complete with doors, boots, bonnets, mudguards, engines, gearboxes and suspensions. All are partially stripped and require restoration. One of them has an engine and gearbox, which was reconditioned approximately 18 years ago and has never been used - the unit was filled with oil for preservation. Also available is a substantial amount of spares - such as  $\pm$  6 sub assemblies, 8 cylinder heads, doors etc.

I would prefer to sell as one lot and could possibly squeeze them into one container for shipping. Asking price is £1500-00 EX Johannesburg, South Africa that includes packing but excludes the costs of the container and transport thereof which would be approximately £500-00.

Could you please advertise the above in your magazine and also advise where else we could advertise, possibly on the Internet.

Regards,

Mark Lindner

Number 10  
Nethergate Street  
Bungay  
Suffolk NR35 1HE  
5 October 1998

Dear Glen,

Enclosed some pictures I took last year at the Norwich Union Classic Car Rally. I don't know why it's taken me this long to forward them! Anyway I thought they might fill a hole in the







magazine. I'm afraid I've lost the owners name and address but John Gillard might know him. He told me (in broken English) the chevrons were missing because the local garage insisted he had changed the car too much for it to be classed as a Citroën! The body had been strengthened and the engine seemed a standard 11D unit with 3 speed box.

The work had been done to a very good standard and personally I think the rear end is an improvement over the standard "add on" boot. I never have liked running boards though.

Yours,  
Tom Evans

The Old Dairy  
Egerton  
Kent TN27 9AN  
15 October 1998

Dear Glen,

I was interested to read your article in September's *Floating Power* which prompted me to write and record our experiences of Chevetogne.

We booked a hotel way back in March through the I.C.C.C.R. recommended organisation, sent off all the required monies and made our way on the Friday 21 August to Dinant, to a beautiful hotel which was an old Chateau. It's always a bit of a gamble passing over the arrangements to a third party but in this case we seemed to be in good hands.

This was our longest run in the 'Madame' which we had bought at auction some eight years ago when I stuck my hand up and after some back door negotiations with the previous owners we now owned a pretty 1951 Light 15. Since then she has had a gentle mechanical rebuild and this winter will have some tin worm cut out and be resprayed. On our trip to Belgium we only broke down once when we were caught in a slow motorway traffic jam and she decided to overheat and vapour lock.

We made the trip in convoy with Steve Thompson, Helen, and the

three boys who were in a French Normale which had been borrowed from someone who wanted the car to have a run as 'it does them good.' And from here it went downhill .....

Both Linde and myself work in the people business and we were appalled with our experience of the show. It took us an hour to get into the showground ....

We wanted to park with similar vehicles preferably Brits but there was no organisation to allow this. We had no map of the park, which was enormous and the bus which took people round was always full. The information pack which contained the map was only available at the chateau which was a mile away and in the opposite direction. We could not drive there and it was now raining!!!!

As it turned out the chateau was in a different direction from the trade stalls.

After a half hour walk we found the stall area, which had a selection of bits that every Traction owner dreams of (new or previously loved by someone else). We wanted to buy lots of stuff but we had no way of getting it back the mile to the car!!

Mid afternoon and we now fancied a bit to eat with a beer but we could not buy any food except by producing these Eurocrotrothing currency only changeable from real money into cardboard and not back again, available at the other side of the tent.

At the end of the day we were exhausted, we had walked miles, never found the concours events, but we had wandered through one of the largest and certainly the most interesting car park in Europe, we had spoken broken English and poor French to people from every European country and made one or two friends who we shall write to. Reels of films were shot.

We checked out of the hotel on Sunday morning to make our Shuttle crossing back to England only to be overcharged by the hotel by twenty pounds (its nothing to do with the hotel please take it up with Luc Dorval who is the official organiser of the accommodation). Letters written but no reply does not answer the phone, no surprise at all. Did anyone else have this experience?

What a good weekend, and all for a little more than £500 for two!!!! The 12th I.C.C.C.R. will have to be sold to us with vigour.

Kind regards,  
Tim Lee

Dear Mr. Robb,

Have you ever had to change a wheel at night without good light, trying to find where the studs meet the wheel the weight of the wheel alone is enough to exhaust and wear out the strongest amongst us.

My tip paint the ends of the studs with white paint makes location so much more easy.

Yours sincerely,  
Alan Hill

1 South Drive  
Sandal  
Wakefield WF2 7NB  
21 October 1998

Dear Glen,

Seeing your request for stories of breaking down and getting mobile again, without A.A./R.A.C. assistance, I wondered if you'd be interested in how I repaired my car with an elastoplast. True story.

When you want stories of how you didn't get going again I'll tell you about the two comedians on the Ile de Ré who said they could change a sump gasket, but that's another story.

Pat and myself had been on the Ile de Ré for three weeks in May. Luxury camping package, proper beds, a fridge and electric lights, and much cheaper than paying your own ferry fare and taking the two man ridge tent and one burner gaz stove. Our elder daughter joined us for the last week of our holiday, having made her own way to France. Coming back there were three of us in the Traction, but only two passengers on the ferry ticket. We arrived in Caen Saturday morning to stay overnight and catch the 8.00 a.m. ferry Sunday morning. Rather than have any problems catching the ferry I was persuaded to drive to Guistreham on Saturday afternoon to alter



the tickets. As we drove into the car park the car coughed, spluttered and cut out. I coasted into a parking bay. I thought perhaps if we went in to change the tickets the car would have recovered when we came out. Changing the ticket was no problem at all, the basic fare was for a car and five, so they just reprinted the ticket. As we came out towards the car there were the usual couple of people stood round it. After a while we were able to get into the car and attempt to start. It took ages. It would fire, then cut out. All I wanted was to get away from the busy terminal, somewhere quiet to get the tool box out. With much stopping and starting, cutting out and backfiring we managed to get out of the terminal and head round towards the beaches looking for a quiet spot. However after about five hundred yards the car stopped. Really stopped, just where roadside parking began, right next to a pedestrian entrance to the ferry terminal and opposite a couple of restaurants.

As wives and daughters are usually more hinderance than assistance in times such as these I persuaded Pat and Adele to walk to the nearby shops and enjoy themselves. By now the car had already attracted a couple of cyclists, father and son, and half a dozen elderly French people. I explained that I had broken down, took the tool box out of the boot and propped the bonnet open. The two cyclists came and stood close by me to watch, my elbows were almost pinned to my side, and the six elderly French began to examine the rest of the car. As usual they, their fathers and their grandfathers had had several Tractions, if only they'd kept them, and they began to point out carefully all the non original, 'shouldn't be like this' bits. And I'd swapped my wife and daughter for these! I'm not the most methodical or knowledgeable car fixer. I usually think 'what was the last bit I touched' and take it from there. However this day, I don't know why, perhaps it was the audience, but I remembered long ago calling out the R.A.C. on a very rare occasion when I was tidily dressed, it was dark and wet, and my CX broke down. So I checked for oil, water and petrol. All present. I then checked for a spark - there wasn't one. Just as I prised the top off the distributor to check the points an English vice asked 'Do you speak English?' I said that I did, that I was English, and two bored English truck drivers joined the party. By now I could see that the points were still there while accounting for why I was there and why I had the bonnet up and relaying the price of a good Traction. And my wife and daughter returned from shopping with half a dozen schoolchildren. It was getting very crowded under the bonnet by now, and without the benefit of my reading glasses one of the truckers said 'Should that wire be broken?'

Indeed, the small wire from the opposite side of the distributor body round to the other half of the points was broken. I put it down to the other half of the points rubbing against it every time the points opened. Poor design!

I love to go in Auchan or Carrefour, head for the car spares aisle, and fill the trolley with those small packs of everything, electrical terminals, joints male and female, spade connectors, connectors with holes in the end, multicoloured insulating tape. I then take them all home, prized purchases, and proceed to lose them all somewhere in the garage. I hadn't yet been allowed in the car aisle in Carrefour, Caen so I didn't have a single electrical connector, terminal or centimetre of coloured insulating tape anywhere in my toolbox, not even a spare bit of wire, usually from a redundant 2CV wiring harness!

Having no idea what else to do I borrowed a short piece of wire from an overlong wire lead running from the coil to the side of the distributor, bared the ends and inserted it into the gap in my broken wire inside the distributor. How could I insulate the two joins? Then it came to me. My wife's handbag always contains the proverbial hundred and one 'what are you doing with that' items. She was bound to have at least two elastoplasts. So, to the amazement of my 'siamese triplet' cyclists I took the protective film off the elastoplasts and wound them round the bare wires, replaced the distributor cap, waggled the lever on the fuel pump, got in and turned the key and pulled the starter and the car fired up like a good one. I put my tools and sockets and reading glasses away, disposed of my blue vinyl gloves and smiled at the world. The collected audience dispersed no doubt off to tell the story of this Englishman repairing his car with an elastoplast.



The car ran perfectly for a number of weeks before I decided I really ought to make a permanent repair. That was when I had a couple of problems with shorts and cutting out. The proper bits and pieces didn't at first work half as well as the elastoplast.

We hope you are both well, we were sorry not to see you at the annual rally but there doesn't seem to be enough days in the week these days. I am in the middle of half a dozen small jobs at the moment, one of them being a chassis swap on a 2CV. I'm six weeks into it already. When I bought the galvanised new chassis 'the man' said he paid his lad thirteen hours to do the complete swap, so I thought if it takes me a week? That was in sunny August, now we're into the wind, the rain and the frost. Even at an hour yesterday, ten minutes today, I'm halfway there so I'm aiming for a new M.O.T. and tax disc on 1st November.

*Dennis & Pat Rosser*

*Top marks for ingenuity Dennis. I hope you kept the elastoplast. Ed.*

Fazenda Boa Esperança  
Itatiba - C.P. 70 - SP  
CEP 13250-000 - Brasil  
Fax: 55-11-408 7271

Dear Sirs,

It is a pleasure to contact you. I took your address from Classic and Sports Car magazine (January 1998 Edition) at Buyer Guide Report: Citroën Light 15.

For more than 40 years I am a happy owner of a Citroën 11 CV BL 1953 (Light 15) and a Citroën 15 Six also 1953 model - year. I have been use these joys as a working car for many years they still remain completely original.

Nowadays, we do participate on Classic Car events in Brazil.

As a part of the family these cars drove us to the most exciting trips by the late 50s and early 60s I drove the 15 Six, to all the Brazilian new roads and highways to the north, central and south of Brazil. Each tour demanded 3000 to 6000 kilometers. We visited Brasilia, when it just started as a Brazilian capital, I drove to the southern part of the country and Rio de Janeiro many times with all my family.

In 1964 we drove to Montevideo - Uruguay and Buenos-Aires, Argentina for the first time. Always going and back, driving.

"Suite Memories"

By the late 70s up to now I did participate on the Classic Car events in our country.

In 1989, the Brazilian Veteran Car Club and Jaguar Driver's Club were invited to compete at the Rally Internacional del Uruguay for classic and sports cars.



The Brazilian team booked 16 classic cars, including MGS TC, and T.D., Mercedes 190 S.L., Merc. 300 S.L. Porsche 356-A, 356 C Roadster, 356 B, Pontiac Firebird Trans-AM 1969 Packard 1952, Austin Healey 100-Six, Mercedes 220-S 1958-Jag XK 150 Roadster,



Jag 150-S D.H.C., Jag "D-Type" Replica, Jag MK IV 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Saloon, Jag MR IV Drop Head, Jag MKV-Drop Head, and obviously my Citroën 15-Six.

These cars were delivered by two trucks, one of them a classic 1963 G.M.C. truck full restored in mint condition.

By the day of delivery check-in at São Paulo. I have been spoke to my wife, and said to my oldest son, one of the Jaguar team members.

Your mother and myself decided to celebrate a Silver Jubilee from the "15-Six" first trip to Uruguay and Argentina, making a double celebration so, we will drive from São Paulo to Montevideo in a two and half days trip to meet you and the crew at the start-point in Montevideo. I will not put my car in the truck this will be our personal challenge.

So, we arrived at Montevideo driving, in time to participate at the 3 days and 100 km competition.

After receiving the checker flag in its class and a rewards for the 3500 km adventure we drove back happy and safety to Brazil.

I would be pleased to receive a magazine and reports from your Association, as well as, join your club as a membership if be possible.

Herewith follow some photos.

With nothing further, we remain

*Sincerely yours,*

*Jorger R. B. Luizello*

The Garage  
Three Counties Park  
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18 September 1998

My Darling Andre,

I hope I may call you Darling after such a short "acquaintance". I am just so pleased to have met you.

My heart trembled with trepidation when my driver, Richard, said we were going on such a long journey to the Loire Valley. It is the longest journey I have made for some years, and I wasn't at all sure I could make it.

We set off well enough, and reached Southampton without incident. This is where my troubles started. My silly driver had the sailing times wrong, and we were half an hour late, and missed our ferry to Cherbourg. This meant waiting for the ferry to Le Havre, which took longer, and we landed at half past nine at night. I set off into the dark and rainy night, only one wiper working, my driver as blind as a bat, not knowing where he was taking me. My navigator, Ann, did her best, but under trying conditions. No wonder we missed a vital turning, and went round in a vast circle. Fortunately my driver



had the sense to stop at Beuzeville, and the Hotel had secure parking for me.

The next day we set off at 10.30 hoping to arrive in Anger in time, but despite my keeping up a good pace we were not going to make it. My navigator changed our course for Tours and Blere. All was going well until suddenly there was an almighty bang, water all over my engine. My driver switched off my engine promptly, and had a quiet panic. Visions of travelling back to England on the back of a lorry flashed through his mind. Fortunately he found the trouble was a radiator hose had come off, and after refitting it, and topping up my water, I carried on. Of course, after a couple of hours, the other radiator hose came off, with the same panic, and same action. The silly fool of a driver had not realised that my water pump was leaking so much that I was running dry. After driving through Tours in the evening rush hour, with great trepidation, and French men gesticulating at my leaking coolant, we arrived at Chisseu just outside Blere. I know it was a great pleasure and relief for Richard and Ann to meet Letzie and Bill Tilly who had booked the rooms. And it was here that I first met you, my Darling Andre, such a happy meeting after all my troubles.

That evening Ann and Richard met Richard and Pat Hutton and that scamp, Peter, and all the other friendly people on the tour.

The next day, Thursday, after some very useful help and advice at the campsite from Dennis and his cronies, we set off to Chenonceaux. Probably one of the most beautiful chateau on the Loire, a great pleasure to see around its splendid rooms. This was followed by a marvellous dinner in the Orangry, made even better by entertaining company. The Son Et Lumier was good, but have seen better. And guess what, the French won the World Cup, so of course those staying at Chisseu had to join the locals for a drink before going to bed.

Monday morning saw us all moving off in convoy to the vineyards of Pere Auguste at Civray-de-Tourain. We were shown around Caves hewn from the rock by hand, and then had a well organised degustation, many of us buying the wine at very good prices. At lunch time we moved from Chisseu to Le Boeuf Couronne in Blere, where we had a good lunch, before moving off to the Mini Chateaux at Amboise. These are models of all the best chateaux on the Loire, set out with rivers and boats. Most impressive. This evening's dinner was taken in the Restaurant, with an enjoyable meal and the usual end of term follies. The graceless Sand Dancers followed by the mad Barber. Who was that man who if he told Richard once he told him five times, he had just shaved off his beard? Such kind words about Richard and Ann's wedding.

We returned to Blere, and it was so wonderful to spend the night with you, Andre, in the private garage. You are such a big boy! The following day we set off in convoy to Chinon, such fun passing through so many villages with people waving and cheering. I felt quite important. The drivers and passengers visited the Animated Museum of wine, with degustation and after, Ann and Richard joined Letzie and Bill for a most pleasant drink in the main square. After picnic lunch on the bank of the Vienne, Richard had some useful advice on my engine, and after some tinkering, we set off for Laval.

Richard and Ann have particularly asked me to express their thanks to Patrice Crusson for organising such a splendid rally. A great deal of thought and preparation went into the trip, and everyone enjoyed themselves, very much. Many thanks Patrice. Also to all our fellow rallyists, both French and British, whose friendliness made the trip so worthwhile.

Our return via Laval and Cherbourg went without any real problems, just a lot of hours on the road. Ann and Richard promise me that in future we will take it in much shorter stages.

Finally my Darling Andre I must close. I hope to see you again very soon, meanwhile keep away from that older woman Yvette. She's an old 59 and I am only a young 47.

*With my love, your Fifi.*

I think this smutty affair must come to a stop. Ed.



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**Citroën Light 15 1947**, white, new leather, M.O.T., good condition throughout, R.H.D. Bargain **£4,500**. 01296 613007 or 01442 824517

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Retroviseur (Magazine) 'Traction'  
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As fitted to pre 49 Light 15.  
£28.50 plus p+p

**Traction gearbox, good condition,**  
£220. Phone Frank 01365 325847

Original Light 15 repair workshop  
manual £40.00.  
Original sales brochure £20.00.  
Pair second hand kick plates  
(rear) for Light 15/11BL £20.00.  
Phone Michelle 01202 246385  
(Poole, Dorset).

**Citroën Repair Manual.** Original  
red cloth for Twelve and Fifteen.  
£45 o.n.o.  
Alan Webb. Tel: 01923 822191



### P.F.P. MODEL CARS

These Citroën cars are revival of  
the Citroën toys from the thirties.  
At that time Citroën made, for  
advertising, children's model cars.  
Big ones were very luxurious but  
the 1/43 scale range was cheap.  
Bodies were made in plaster and  
flour, with lead wheels and red  
rubber tyres.  
These toys were very naïve pretty  
charming, but because of Citroën  
financial managing, eventually  
production ceased.  
Nowadays, you can keep living the  
spirit of these toys by buying a  
P.F.P. model car (made in Paris).  
Jean Pirot Price £17 (inc p+p)  
8 Rue du Cloître Saint-Merri  
75004 Paris  
tel 00-33-1-42 74 66 97 (REP)  
fax 00-33-1-42 78 11 55

**Front chrome number plate plinth**  
£25 Windscreen Wiper motor £10  
Mild steel Exhaust down and thru  
pipe £20 the pair. Windscreen  
(legal) £25 Master Cylinder £20  
Repair manual £40 Two front  
Shock absorbers £40 the pair  
One rear brake drum and brake  
shoes (lined) £20 Petrol Pump £25  
Hand brake cable £25 Recd Lucas  
Dynamo £15 Solex 32PB2C Carb  
£50 Brass Rad Cap £10 Two front  
Shock absorbers £20 each.  
Four Hubcaps £40 the set.  
Contact Jack Fallon, Tel: 0181 886  
5598, Fax: 0181 886 6482

### LIGHT 15.

Sunroof, panel and frame £25.  
Slough flat dipped bumper and  
iron £15. Lucas headlamp, good  
chrome £5. Marchal fog lamp £7.  
Marchal spot lamp £7. Heater tube  
assembly (no rubbers) £10. Big 15  
starter hole grill wings £10. H10  
spark plugs (20) £1 each.  
Phone Colin Moss 0181 398 3176  
(Evenings)

### SET OF DOORS

Light 15, very good condition,  
straight, no filler. Ex South Africa  
so rust free. Also 2 good small  
boot lids.  
Phone Marcus Carlton  
Tunbridge Wells 01892 532896

**1 set used Michelin 165-400X**  
**tyres.** 1 Duron brake lining set,  
boxed, new. 1 Durite 0-833-06 12v  
regulator, new. Head and  
waterpump gaskets, new. 1 brake  
drum puller. (All for Citroën Lt 15).  
£80.00 Phone: Ruedi Egger  
01371 811051 evenings

### Traction Parts for sale

**1 pair of bumpers** with irons,  
overriders and number plate box,  
to suit big 6 or big boot car £100  
**1 oil bath air filter** £20  
**2 pair of 6 drive shafts** and a  
selection of inner cardans, usable  
but I would recommend they are  
overhauled £200

**A selection of big 6 clutch plates,**  
new £75.00 and used £50  
I have surplus to requirements a  
quantity of Fram C4 and C3 oil  
filters at £6.50 each.  
All prices are negotiable.

Derek Fisher, 01225 429533 evenings

## NEW PARTS

**French number plates.** Your traction  
is not equipped yet with authentic  
black/alu French number plates? Send  
me your car registration number, FF  
400 in cash, U.K. or Euro cheques in  
French Francs. You will then receive  
them in 3 weeks (specify small or big  
boot).

Write to Gwenaël André, 25 rue Saint-  
Héliér, 35000 Rennes, France. Phone:  
(33) 02.99.65.47.03.

**Rubber plugs for front cradle tubes.**  
£2.40 per set of 4+P+P  
Rear engine mount £10 each  
(exchange)

Side engine mount pads £1.60 each  
+50p sae  
Silentbloks £60 per set of 4  
(exchange)

Petrol tank filler pipe rubbers (large  
and small boot) £2.50 each + 50p sae  
Triangle door rubbers £14.80 per set  
of eight + £2 P&P  
Gaiters for top & bottom swivels £2.50  
each + £1.50 P&P

Steering rack pin rubbers £1.20 per  
pair + 50p sae  
Rear Panard rod cones £2.50 per pair  
+ 50p P&P

Rear bumpstops £15 per pair + £1 P&P  
'H' van radiator hose set (three hoses)  
£17.50 per set + £3.25 P&P

Driveshaft inner bearing ring nut  
spanner (with reinforced ring around  
teeth for those nuts that are very tight).  
£28 + postage to cover 2.75lbs  
weight.

Ball pin adjuster for the track rod end.  
£11 + £1.50 P&P.  
Door seal 18ft fits 4 doors £7.50

1 1/4" wheel cylinder repair kit (2 cups  
- 2 boots) £4.50  
Seal between 32PBIC carb and flat  
type air cleaner £2.30

Bonnet and door grommets, pack of  
10 £2.00  
Front axle bump stops c/w nut/washer  
£3.80 each

Shock abs/Panard rod bushes 60p  
each  
Dust covers in hard rubber for outer  
track rod pins £1.20 per pair

Radiator base washer metal/rubber  
£1.00 per pair  
All plus post/packing, all other  
advertised parts still available.

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
Exchange items only sent when old  
ones received first.

Mike Tennant, 49 Hollywell Road  
Mitcheldean, Gloucestershire  
GL17 0DL

**New stainless steel bumpers** for  
Traction. Made from 3mm 304 grade  
stainless steel. Four types available:  
'dipped' Legere & Normale and post-  
'62' 'straight' Legere & Normale.

Supplied drilled and polished 'ready  
to fit'. These bumpers will not rust, are  
stronger than the originals, there is no  
plating to crack or peel - minor  
damage can be inexpensively  
corrected and repolished. All types  
£230 per pair. Citroën script badges,  
jet cut from stainless steel, polished.

Available either with mounting screws  
placed as for fitting to spare wheel  
cover at £27.50, or plain, as fitted to big  
boot cars at £22.50. Can also be used  
to beautify your 2CV, Visa, etc!

These are also available in MDF - one  
for £3.00. Two for £5.00, or five for  
£10.00. Jonathan Howard  
Tel 01608 643065 Fax 642973

**OTHER**

**Southern Brittany.** Large house  
sleeps 8 - 10, divided into 2 self-  
contained apartments. Available  
separately at special rates in low  
season. Rural location overlooking  
river, walking distance to  
restaurant, village shop and  
bars. Private off road parking.  
Ideal golf, walking, fishing. 40  
minutes to beaches. Tel:  
(01282) 863803

**Paris Central Location, Studio**  
**Apartment.** 2 Metro stops from Eurostar  
Train Terminal. Quiet Street, 1st floor,  
Sleeps 4, Kitchenette. Available April  
onwards. Phone Frank 01365 325847.

**South Brittany**  
Farmhouse, 15 minutes from Quimperlé.  
Rural situation, but with shops only 3  
mins. 15 mins to sandy beaches, forest,  
lovely rivers and estuary walks. 85 miles  
from Roscoff. Sleeps 7/9. Available to  
rent most dates. Early booking essential.  
From £120 to £265.

Phone John or Eileen Wain for details  
01803 782468

**Normandy**  
Two lovely 18th century gites. One hour  
from Cherbourg. Sleep 4 or 6 plus  
baby. Electric heating, log fires and  
every comfort. 13km from the sea. Ideal  
base for visiting invasion beaches,  
Bayeux, Mont St Michel. Available  
separately or together for short breaks  
or longer holidays. 10% discount for  
TOC members.

Phone Tom or Gill O'Malley on 01252  
795182 for details.

**Cote d'Azur** Very special B&B in the  
South of France. Bring your own  
Traction to meet ours and be  
pampered in a beautiful old villa  
overlooking the Med near Monte  
Carlo. Margaret Ritson  
Tel: (33) 93784725 Fax: (33) 93786401

**Loire Valley**  
Large, classic country house 5km west  
of Langeais, (between Tours and  
Saumur), ideally situated for wine lovers  
and chateaux visiting. Sleeps 8-10 in 4  
large bedrooms with 1 acre garden and  
ample space for Traction! Available to  
rent from £375-650 per week.

Tel. Brian Thorley  
01253 295409 office 882558 home

**Southern Brittany**  
Camping Le Bohat, Sarzeau. Large 4-  
berth caravan with awning and mains  
electricity. Available mid May - mid  
Sept. Swimming pool, children's pool,  
creperie.  
Bookings taken now.

Tel. Stan Barker 01425 672311

**BURGUNDY -**  
Comfortable traditional house in very  
picturesque village only 10 miles from  
Beaune, in the heart of Burgundy. Apart  
from excellent wine-related activities,  
there is plenty to see and do locally, with  
stunning countryside and wonderful old  
towns and villages to explore, plus easy  
day excursions to Beaujolais, Dijon,  
Geneva, etc.

Fully renovated and well equipped, the  
house sleeps 4 to 6 and is available May  
to October at very good all inclusive  
rates. Please phone for further details  
and availability. Leo and Liz Quinn, tel:  
01977 620116

### PERIOD MICHELIN MAPS

The "Final Touch" for your  
restoration - a period Michelin map  
for your glovebox. I have a selection  
of original maps (most dated with the  
year of publication), all in good to  
excellent condition, some carrying  
an "X" tyre pressure chart on the  
rear cover including Traction models  
plus Panhard, Renault and Simca.  
Some also show war damaged areas  
and bridges, even coastal  
minefields!! £8 each including  
postage and secure packaging.  
Leo Quinn, tel: 01977 620116

### Somerset

Bed and breakfast in lovely Somerset  
Village Inn. Real ales, good food and a  
warm welcome to Traction (and their  
owners!). Call Peter or Carole at The  
Stags Head Inn, Yarlinton 01963 440393





