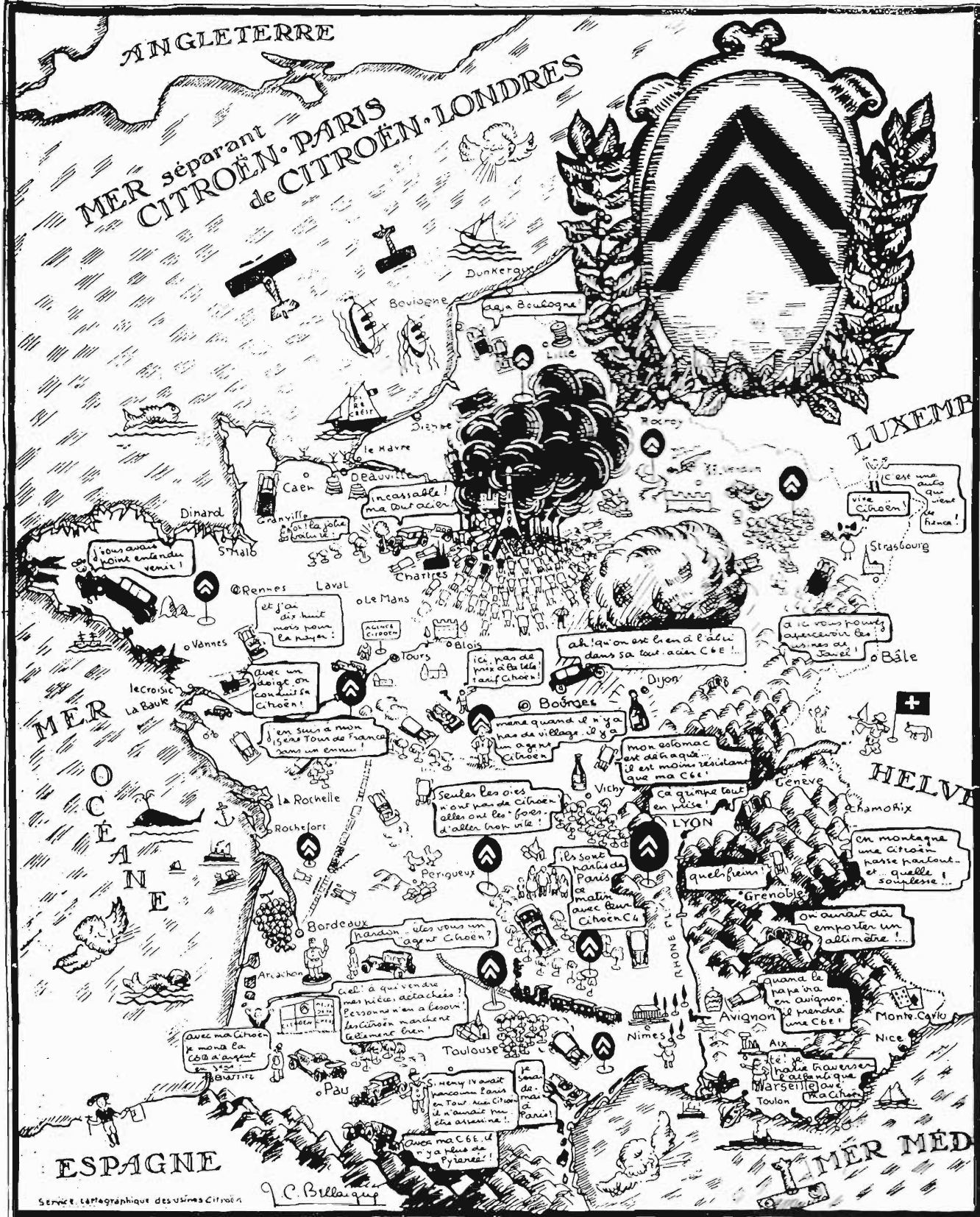




LE CITROËN



PAGE MENSUELLE DES PROPRIÉTAIRES ET FUTURS PROPRIÉTAIRES DE VOITURES CITROËN



This charming map is one of many fascinating reproductions of period motor advertising featured in 'La Publicité Automobile 1925-1930' - there's also a companion volume covering 1930-1935. Published by Publifusion as part of their 'collection Auto/Archives', it's obtainable in this country for £8.95 (or 70FF if you're going across the water).

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Floating Power

Volume 13, Number 6

January, Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-Nine

HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all, I imagine that like me you have all put on a few pounds, or should it be kilograms, over the festive season. The latest recommended way of removing this excess weight is cleaning and polishing Tractions ready for this year's forthcoming events.

There is certainly no shortage of events this year; it is becoming difficult to decide between them all. Belgium, Brittany, Southern England, Holland plus one at the end of May, I will let you guess what that one is, someone commented that the last magazine contained nothing else but reference to it.

That brings me to another point, New Year's resolutions. The erratic nature of the magazine can to some extent be laid at the door of the members. The magazine requires content to be issued, therefore one of your resolutions should be to write at least one article for the magazine this year. However I would emphasize that all copy for the magazine must be submitted to the editor for inclusion. Recently one or two items have missed the net and they had the potential for being misconstrued (I had a dictionary for Christmas).

If there are plenty of articles it makes the magazine easier to put together. If there is a dearth of articles it means that someone has to find copies of reprint articles to fill the blank pages and of course this takes time.

Currently there are a total of 319 members and I would have thought that this should produce enough copy for regular issues. Possibly I am being hypocritical because I was a member of the club for four years before writing an article, I am also in danger of sounding like an old record therefore I will change the subject.

Who is going where this year? If all goes well I hope to go to Belgium and Holland and if finances allow to Brittany.

I am sure that my Traction does as many miles abroad as it does in the UK.

A word of warning to those members planning on taking part in the 4th Tour of Brittany, places are now extremely limited. Would all participants please, therefore, confirm in writing to social sec. Mike Wheals that they *will* be attending or otherwise, so that any vacancies can be allocated to other members.

I would like to add my thanks to Peter Simper and Alec Bilney for the efficient way in which they handled the spares section. It can be an arduous job with a lot of responsibility. Unfortunately recently both have had to relinquish the job due to other commitments. Currently there is no one running the spares section of the club and in the short term request for spares are being handled by members of the committee, so do bear with us if slight delays occur.

The situation with regard to the spares is under discussion by the committee and the chairman will be circulating the membership for comments in the near future. In respect of this can I urge that members do respond because the availability of spares is an important factor and should be run in such a way that it meets the requirements of the member, i.e. you. This can only be achieved if the committee know what the members want.

Finally, to get the New Year off on a humorous note Darlington member David Mason sent in the following that he found in a book called "The Motorists' Weekend Book" by Frostick and Harding. It is not attributed to anyone.

The Truth about Citroens.

Some 'ave rear wheel traction, and some avant!

Nice one David

Have a splendid New Year, everybody,

Dave Gardner/Bob Wade

MEMBERS' CARS A QUICK OF TIDYING ...or so Rik and Jan Blote imagined



On arrival... Rik Blote's Légère.

I FIRST REALISED I really wanted a Traction back in 1975. Having been given a ride in a friend's some years before, I clearly remembered how well it rode and handled, easily beating another friend's mildly-tuned Morris 1000. (You may laugh, but it was quite sprightly in its day). I fancied something with a bit of style and character without being 'overtly showy', whilst still being a practical everyday car.

So, having made the decision to get one, the search began to find one... but, as probably happens to many others, something would catch the eye in *Exchange & Mart* or a friend would tell of some car he knew of for sale and I kept coming home with superb bargains that were not Tractions and needed a lot of work.

These included vehicles such as a Porsche 356C with a burnt-out piston and no clutch for £80, a 1958 Morgan totally dismantled and in boxes for £200, a 1934 Wolseley 15 with a seized engine for £50, a tatty but running E-Type 4.2 Coupé for £1,500 and so forth.

Each of these vehicles turned out to be

more fun to restore than to run (except the E-Type). For instance, the Morgan was lovely to work on and look at, but driving it was excruciatingly uncomfortable due to poor suspension, seats and weatherproofing. The Wolseley was nice to work on and looked OK but drove just like a truck. The Porsche was well built but awkward to work on and looked much too modern for my taste. As for the E-Type, it was absolute hell to restore and the cost of parts so astronomical that it had to be sold immediately on completion – to avoid total bankruptcy!

After the Jaguar I felt I would never do another car up... but after several years break the 'bug' struck again. I was amazed how much Traction and other prices had risen. Realising that leaving it much longer would put them out of reach for good, the search recommenced.

Eventually in March 1988 I put a 'Wanted' ad in *Exchange & Mart* for a Light 15, which was spotted by many Club members. It was amazing! Members without a car for sale were phoning up just for a chat and to ask if I

had found one yet!

I had never experienced anything like it and needless to say, joined the TOC. As for finding a car, one of the calls came from a man who has a Citroën specialist garage in Billericay, Essex and he had two Tractions in my price range.

One was a very tidy French 1950s Big 15 for £3,500, but the one I fell for was the very sad and neglected 1938 French Light 15. I suspect, in my enthusiasm, I paid far too much for it at £2,500, but I managed to drive it the 80 miles home and liked it.

The thing that makes Tractions so special is not just the shape, it's the way it has the old car looks whilst being like a modern car to drive in terms of ride and comfort, something unique amongst old cars. It was soon discovered that (as usual) instead of a 'little tidying', the car needed a total restoration (sound familiar?) and I decided to do the whole job in-house (and workshop, garden and anywhere with space). The only snag in the story is that for some four years we had hoped to buy a campsite in France, and for the last two years we had been actively looking for somewhere but with little success. Within three weeks of buying the car we found a site for sale, the purchase of which will be completed in December '88. This left only six months to do a total restoration. Will this be a record for an amateur working in spare time, I wonder?

My poor long-suffering wife has had to put up with my disappearing into the garage every weekend and virtually every evening from Easter till November as well as bits of car all over the house. Yet she still sewed the new rooflining and seat covers for me, and put up with the smell of glue and solder whilst I made new door panels and soldered the radiator in the kitchen!

Anyway, the welding, back to metal respray and mechanical work are now done and reassembly and trimmings are underway.

I will not bore you all with all the trials and tribulations of the restoration itself since this has been done before by better writers than I,



Original interior, apparently ravaged by steroid-fed moths.

but one note of caution; if you fit a NEW CV type drive-shaft from Peacock Engineering, along with the NEW inner cardan, they will not fit. Each part is slightly oversize to allow for wear on the other component and hence, if both are new, some machining is required.

Also watch out when getting a new locking 'curly' type door handle. The shaft has a round section to pass through the lock bracket and a square section to operate the lock, but the one I bought was exactly the reverse, i.e. the square bit was round and the round bit was square! This meant some very delicate welding with MIG equipment so as not to melt the handle and lock assembly.

As for the history of the car; it was previously owned by Keith Rutter (a TOC member at the time) who ran it as his only vehicle from 1975 until 1987, when he sold it. The car's history is well described in an article written by him and published in the March 1986 issue of *Floating Power*, in which he also highlights how difficult Traction ownership was before the advent of the 'Arch' and the TOC.

At this point I would like to express my sincere thanks to Peter Simper and Alec Bilney for their help, advice and of course the supply of the many parts ordered. The Club is fortunate indeed to have such members willing to give of their time to operate what must be one of the most vital functions of the Club.

We are off to France on the 15th December and we will be taking the Traction with us (it's the new company car!) so, after thirteen years in England it is finally going home again.

Our campsite is 3-Star and lays on the banks of the River Lot about 40 minutes drive west of Cahors and about 50 minutes south of Bergerac on the Dordogne. It has 70 pitches and 10 touring caravans (for those who do not want to tow their own). It also has tennis and volley/badminton courts, free hot showers, swimming pool, bar, snack bar, shop and there are canoes and bicycles for hire. In addition there are wine-tasting trips and outings by private bus to various points of interest for those who do not want to do all their own driving.

We are in all the guide books and have booking arrangements with the Caravan Club and the Camping and Caravanning Club, and we also have an English contact address, namely: Jim and Margaret Lynch, 12 Park Street, Towcester, Northants. NN12 7DQ. Tel: 0327-50899, who can send you details and booking forms.

We shall of course be continuing our membership of the TOC, albeit as 'ex pats', so if any of you out there fancy a holiday in France then why not come and look us up at: Rik and Jane Blote, Camping le Ch Timi, La Rogue, Touzac, 46700 Puy L'Eveque, Lot, France. Tel: (010 33) 65 36 52 36.

TOC members can claim a free drink at the bar and special discount will be given to those arriving in their Tractions!

Hope to see you there.

P.S. The Traction successfully completed the 800 mile journey, requiring minor soldering repairs to the wiring carried out with a screwdriver heated up by two disposable lights.



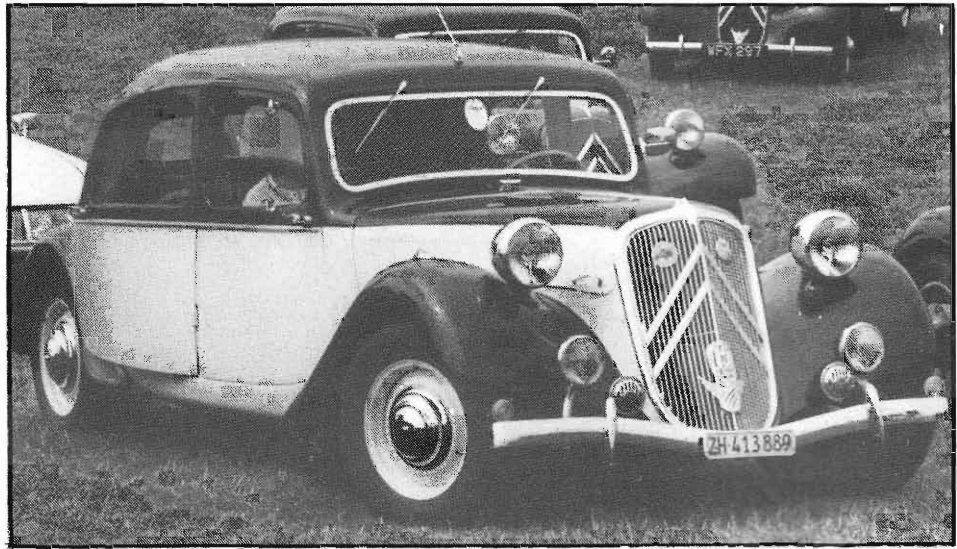
A typical Tractionist's garden?



Rik and Jan's restored Légère.



SHELL SERVICING GUIDE



CITROEN Six Cylinder

ITEM	APPLICATION	GRADE	MILEAGE	REMARKS
1	Engine (12½ pints)	SHELL X-100 20/20W	Daily 2,000*	Top up if necessary Drain, flush and refill
2	Gearbox and Differential (5 pints)	SHELL SPIRAX 90 EP	4,000 12,000	Check, if level is low, drain, flush and refill Drain, flush and refill
3	Front Suspension Control Arms	SHELL RETINAX A or CD	600	Gun—4 fittings
4	Steering Track Rod	SHELL RETINAX A or CD	600	Gun—2 fittings
5	Drive Shafts	SHELL RETINAX A or CD	600	Gun—2 fittings
6	Wheel Bearings	SHELL RETINAX A or H	12,000	Remove hubs, clean, repack, replace
7	Shock Absorbers	SHELL DONAX AI	12,000	Refill if necessary— shop job
8	Air Cleaner—Fabric Type	—	4,000	Remove element, wash in petrol, dry, replace
	—Oil Wetted Type	SHELL X-100 20/20W	4,000	Remove element, wash in petrol, dry, dip in oil, drain, replace
9	Water Pump—Oil Lubricated	SHELL X-100 20/20W	600	Oil can—few drops
	—Grease Lubricated	SHELL RETINAX A or RB	600	Gun—1 fitting
10	Gear Shift Control Mechanism	SHELL X-100 20/20W	600	Oil can—few drops
11	Dynamo	SHELL X-100 20/20W	12,000	Remove cap, soak wick, replace
12	Distributor—			
	—Automatic Timing Control	SHELL X-100 20/20W	4,000	Oil can—few drops Oil can—few drops Smear
	—Cam Bearing and Shaft			
	—Cam and Contact Breaker Pivot			
13	Clutch Operating Shaft	SHELL X-100 20/20W	4,000	Oil can—2 oilers
14	Carburettor Linkage	SHELL X-100 20/20W	12,000	Oil can—1 or 2 drops
15	Speedometer Cable	SHELL RETINAX A or CD	12,000	Remove, smear, replace
16	Steering Gearbox	SHELL RETINAX A or CD	12,000	Remove plug, repack, replace—shop job
17	Brake Fluid Supply Tank	SPECIAL FLUID	1,000	Top up if necessary

* Initially after first 200

SERVICE PERIOD SUMMARY

FREQUENCY	ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION
Daily	1
600 miles	3-4-5-9-10
1,000 miles	17
2,000 miles	1
4,000 miles	2-8-12-13
12,000 miles	2-6-7-11-14-15-16

ENGINE ADJUSTMENTS

Valve Clearances (Hot)

Inlet	.006"
Exhaust	.008"

Contact Breaker

Points Gap	.015"
Spark Plug Gap	.025" to .028"

APPROXIMATE CAPACITIES

(Imperial Measure)

Cooling System	21 pints
Fuel Tank	15 gallons

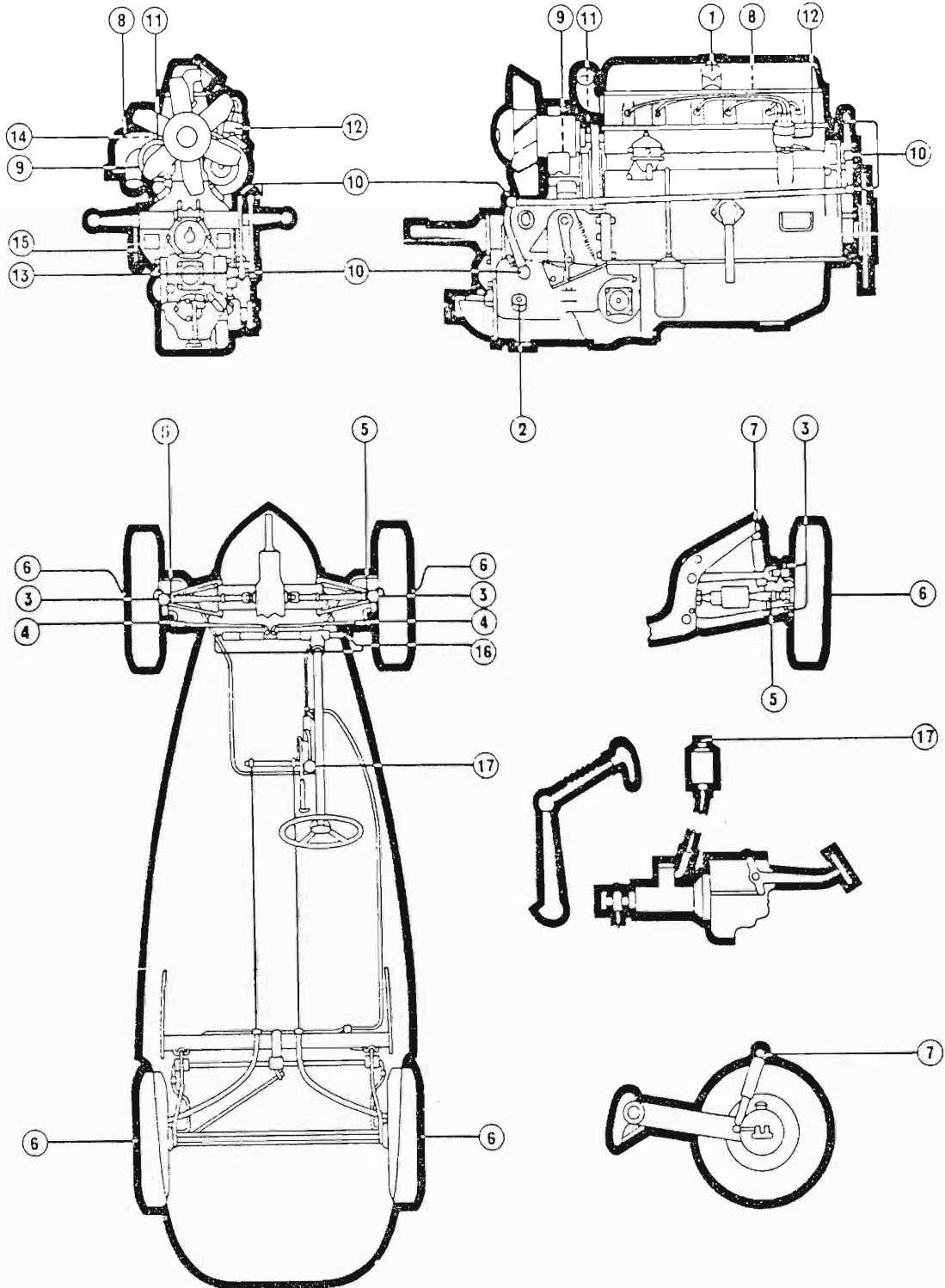
SIZE

185 x 400

PRESSURES

Front	20 lb. sq. in.
Rear	22 lb. sq. in.

TYRES



A COUPLE of DO's

...at which

Martin Nicholson finds himself leading the good life

XMAS LUNCH

WHITE HART – 18th DECEMBER

Forty-five happy Tractionistes sat down with their families and friends to a splendid Christmas meal at the White Hart in Whitchurch, well up to the high standard we have come to expect.

In the absence of hosts Bill and Doris, daughter Maureen made everyone feel at home and fully relaxed.

Chairman Roger Dyer welcomed all, especially our guests from France, Jean-Pierre and Gabrielle Plantard. Also most welcome was 'La Traction Universelle' Champagne kindly donated by Ben Stevens, many thanks from us all, Ben!

Past Chairman Bernie Shaw thanked Mike Wheals and Roger on behalf of all present for organising yet another fine event.

After the inner man (and woman!) had been satisfied Carol Bilney was 'volunteered' to draw the raffle. Mike Wheals, who had coincidentally



Chairman Dyer keeps on counting while Julie Reed looks on.

organised the raffle, placed himself at the head of one of the tables, coincidentally next to the place where the raffle was to be drawn, and coincidentally won the first three prizes! (but being the gentleman he is, declined the second two!!). Mike's look of horror brought a smile to everyone else's face.

The lucky winners collected their prizes and all the children received bags of Christmas goodies and we adjourned to the lounge bar for coffee.

A box of old toy cars, (not Tractions I hasten to add!) kept most of the kids happy for some time, until Paul Daniels alias Bernie Shaw



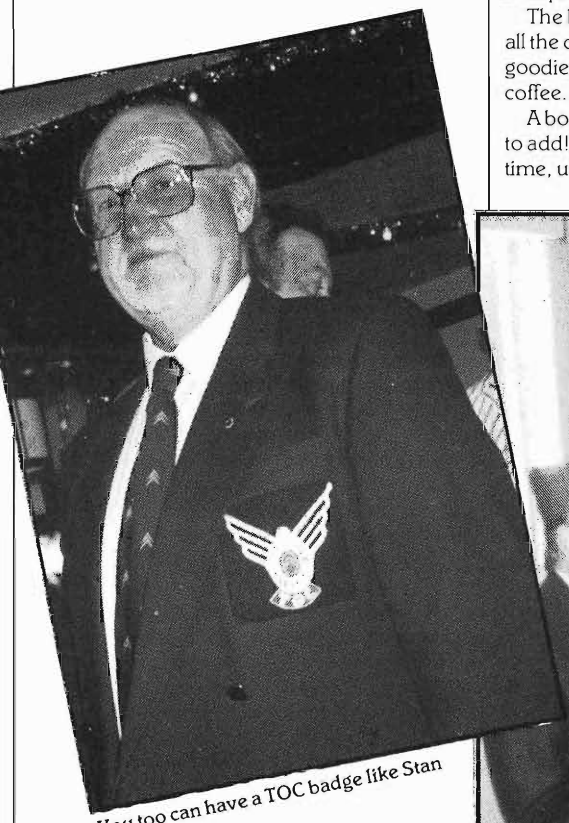
In the White Hart car park – Christmas 1988.

commenced his "act" and kept the older ones mesmerised with his sleight of hand. Those 'big kids' watching wondered what it was he had in his hand that kept vanishing – it looked like a half chewed plug of tobacco, but was probably a little known part from a Traction Arrière!

A predeparture inspection of the car park revealed a 'transcendence' of six gleaming Tractions (yes, even Mike's was gleaming!), including Dave Gardner's ever-immaculate Light 15 (did someone say that he is thinking of having it resprayed?) and Jean-Pierre and Gabrielle's "Quinze".

Yet another most enjoyable "Mike – Roger Production", a big thanks from the '45' (or 43 really I suppose!) and we all look forward to the next meeting.

(WMF 342? – Yes, it does really exist and is coming on slowly now that I've managed to clear the garage of inherited furniture, etc, and can actually get to the car. – Oh!, and the Pilotes have been sandblasted and primed, – what more do you want!)



You too can have a TOC badge like Stan Barker!



Christmas fayre – Mike Wheals (foreground) laughs it off whilst Martin Booth drinks on.



The ex-Sam Wells Normale accurately parked under the right sign by its new owners Jon and Jilly Peace.

CENTRAL SOUTHERN AREA MEETINGS, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

The first of the "return to the first Sunday in the month meetings" at the White Hart in Whitchurch. Usually a social event, but the gathering was called to order by Mike Wheals for three important points. Firstly FP needed someone to write a few words for each issue and a volunteer was called for. (I think I was waving to the waiter at the time!). Secondly, the suitability of the White Hart as a venue. Mike had to admit that he was somewhat biased here as we were meeting in his 'front room', (which he actually shared with Lord Denning!). All present agreed that the venue was excellent, particularly with the fairly relaxed drinking hours, good food and welcome for families, and finally Mike proposed that the Central Southern Tour should run again in '89 and dates of 16-19 June were agreed. Enter these dates in your diaries NOW. There is hope of some sponsorship and help was offered from those present.

As this is the first of these 'notes', I'll mention a few names. The Club's 'Top Brass' was well represented with Roger Dyer, Steve and Julie Reed and family, Mike Wheals and Jon and Jilly Peace with young Tom, (the way he handles a fruit yoghurt will be excellent practice for age-old Traction grease!) the Editor sent his apologies - hangover or something!, and regulars Stan, Gwen and Paul Barker.

All present welcomed Dave and Grace Stockwell to their first meeting and also Martin Booth to his second. Martin also lives in Whitchurch but does not seem to have the same "pull" in the White Hart but he's trying! Oh!, and Vicki and I were also there.

A pretty good turn out, but from the list Mike has of area numbers a lot of you are missing an excellent family lunch time meeting. Why not give it a try next month - Mid-day - First Sunday - White Hart, Whitchurch - see you there.

P.S. Just in case you think we only sit there

eating and drinking, 1988 saw amongst other main Club events, treasure hunts, Traction video shows, visits to local beauty spots (yes, alright, and pubs!) and guided tours of local car restoration specialists, and veteran, vintage and 'classic' car sales specialists.

Moving on to the December meeting now, names were being taken for the 1989 4th Tour of Brittany, and the Central Southern Tour. Exact dates should appear elsewhere in this issue! Our bearded emblazoned area rep announced that the Christmas Lunch on the 18th December had 45 partakers, plus kids!, with a White Hart maximum of 44 - an excellent turnout.

Steve Reed announced that he had been quoted £350 for white metalling his big end mains!, and recovering from the shock (and the pain as well I should think!) had been speaking to a fine boring specialist who reckoned he

could sort out shells for your very own Traction. No doubt we shall hear more on this matter in the future. (In the meantime back at the ranch down in Sagebrush Country I bet Mike Anderson has already solved this problem with his amazin' three pointed file, while we Brits stand around suppin' ale!).

Unfortunately Vicki's firm have taken away her Visa GTi and given her a Golf GTi instead. I used to enjoy a quick 'scream' down the A303 to Whitchurch in the Visa, but the Golf is nowhere near as responsive at the moment but then it is still a bit tight. I always thought the Visa GTi was extremely good value for the money with loads of 'extras' in the standard price. Certainly the Golf is a more solidly built car with better trim and finish, but is it worth another £5,000?



Another view of the Christmas lunch line-up.

Andy Cartwright sent us this article from 'Money Observer', here reproduced with kind permission

INVESTING IN CARS

Vive la Citroën!

Prices of these unconventional cars are climbing steadily, writes Sue Baker

Soaring values in recent years have taken much of the historic car market into the stratosphere for all but the wealthiest investors. But there remains plenty of scope for a healthy appreciation of outlay among some of the less rarefied marques. Among extremely interesting investment prospects to be found in the £5,000 to £10,000 bracket are makes like the French company Citroën.

The key to buying well at this level of the investment car scene is to choose a model as much for the pleasure it will give to drive, own and cherish as for the potential profit it will have accrued when the time comes to sell.

Citroëns are not in the big league for investment interest. An outlay of £15,000 will buy almost anything ever made by the Paris-based manufacturer (most of the current cars included, although their showroom prices go up to just over £17,000).

Values are, however, on a steady upward curve, with certain models, such as the Citroën 20 of the 1930s, and the familiar Citroën 6, built between 1938 and 1956 (immortalised as 'Maigret's car') now worth around £15,000-plus for some of the better-preserved examples.

In the long term, the prospects for Citroën values to rise healthily are good. Some intriguing cars have carried the familiar double-chevron badge over the years, including some motoring mile-

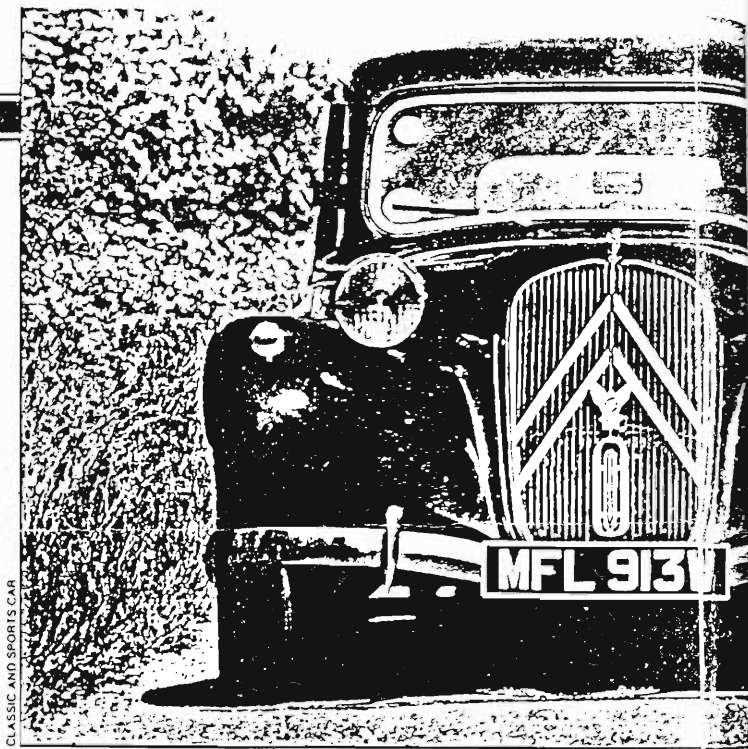
stone models as well as some frankly quirky machinery.

The Citroën story started with the birth in Paris in 1878 of André Citroën, destined to be an engineer of outstanding ingenuity, and the founder of the company which still bears his name although it is now part of the giant PSA car group.

At the turn of the century Citroën graduated from the Paris Institute of Technology with a significant idea developing in his mind: a herringbone gear drive using double helical teeth. He made a prototype, and so quiet and smooth did it prove in operation that he decided to commercialise it. The result was the founding of the Citroën Gear Company, with a factory on the Quai de Javel in the 15th arrondissement of Paris, on the 30-acre site of a former market garden.

Some models are now worth over £15,000

By 1919 Citroën was in the car-making business at his Javel factory, with the highly original 10-horsepower type A, hailed in retrospect as Europe's first mass-produced car. It was a four-seat open tourer with a hood, intended to be driven by the per-



Traction action: The *Traction Avant* cars, like the *Onze Normale* (above) have become fashionable with investors. The pretty Thirties *Rosalie* (right) and *Traction Avant Cabrio* (below right) are fancied too

son who bought it, rather than by a chauffeur as was the custom in those days. Citroën gambled on making 30 prototypes, reckoning that the time was ripe for motoring to expand beyond being an activity merely for those wealthy enough to employ chauffeurs.

He was right. By 1921 the type A was being built at a rate of 10,000 a year. Those numbers explain why the four-cylinder, 1300cc type A does not fetch higher values today. But even though so many were built, it still represents good investment value, with a typical example fetching around £3,000 to £4,000.

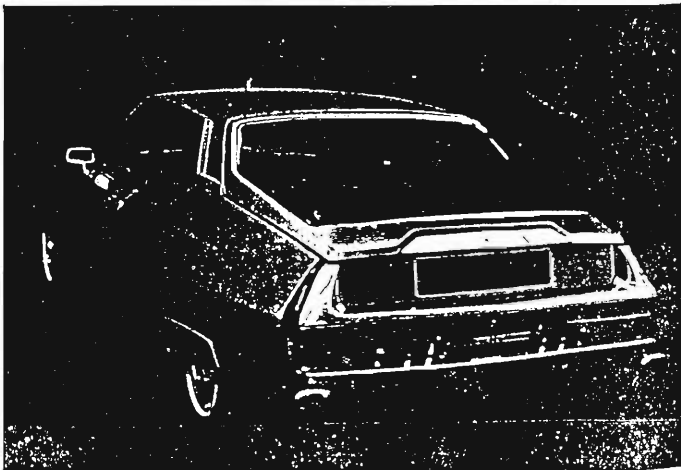
The A was followed in 1922 by the SCV 'Cloverleaf', now highly thought of among Citroën aficionados. Today this 885cc car fetches from around £5,000 to £8,000, depending on condition.

A steady diet of models succeeded it, none worth much more

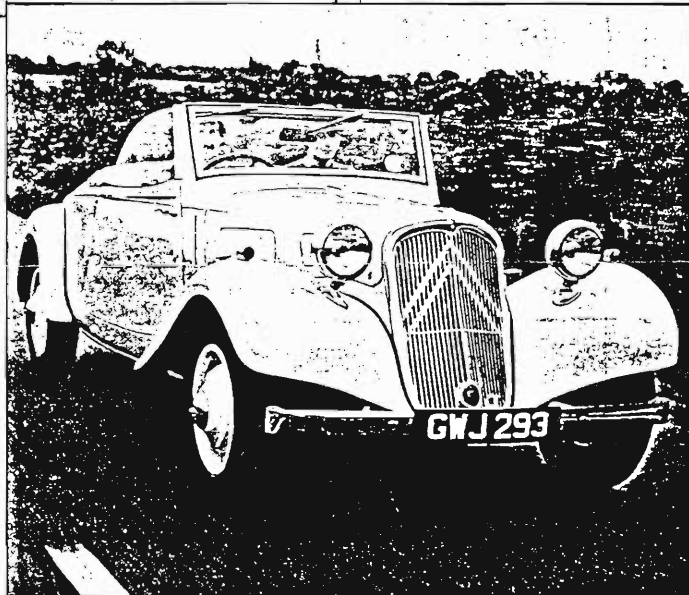
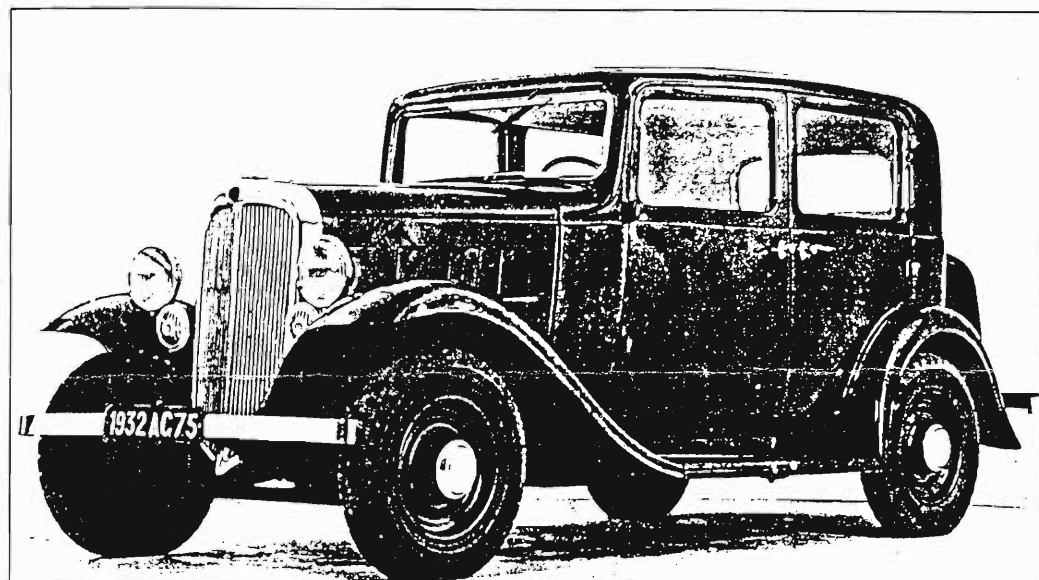
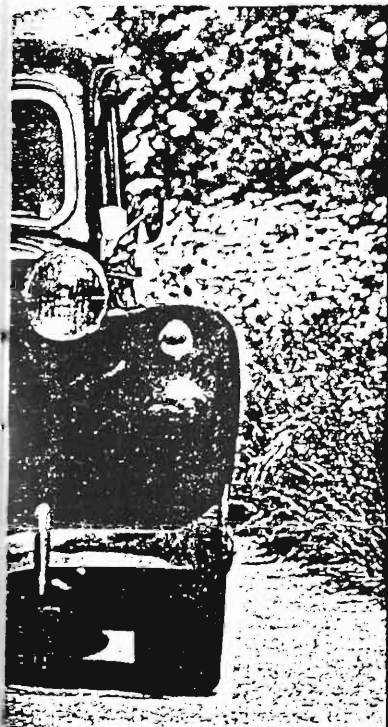
than around £5,000 today. Then in the early 1930s came, first, the Big 12, a four-cylinder, 1767cc car which now changes hands at up to £8,000, and the 20, an elegant six-cylinder, 2.6-litre produced in both saloon and open tourer versions. It rates among the most highly sought-after Citroëns, with prices in the £10,000 to £15,000 bracket.

By the mid-1930s, Citroën was ready to turn his back on conventional design by pioneering front-wheel drive. The year 1934 hailed the arrival of the now legendary *Traction Avant*, originally a 1495cc model, today worth from around £6,000 to £10,000.

That car was in production only until 1936. Its sister model, the 'Light Fifteen', with a 1911cc engine, stayed in production for 20 years until 1955. A good early one is now worth upwards of £10,000.



Enviably engineering: DS Cabriolet and Maserati-engined SM have great appeal, to aficionados and investors alike



The late 1930s saw the arrival of the Citroën 6, one of the best-known Citroëns of all time, becoming the archetypal French car from its fame as the black Parisian police car of the television series *Maigret*. Expect to pay upwards of £12,000 for the best examples of one of these — and be rewarded with a lovely car to drive, with its big, lazy, six-cylinder, 2.8-litre engine.

The early post-war years saw Citroën dominated by the 'tin snail' 2CV, still in production 40 years later, though today made only in Portugal. Intended as a car capable of transporting four burly Frenchmen across a ploughed field in comfort, the 2CV has always had its fans, but investors are not among them.

Among later cars, the elegant DS19, Citroën's 'Goddess', is notable as a model likely to appreciate in future. Values today are modest, around £2,000

to £5,000, with the exception of the Cabrio versions built between 1961 and 1971, where values have risen past the £10,000 mark, making Cabrio DSs a sufficiently worthwhile prospect for fakes to have become a problem. Those considering buying a DS Cabrio should take the trouble to investigate its history, specifically checking that it was not originally a saloon which has been 'de-lid-ded' to enhance its value.

From the early 1970s, the Citroën SM is a car well worth watching. Although its ultra-sensitive steering makes it quirky to drive, the 2670cc of Maserati engine under the long sloping bonnet made it a silkily quick performer. Currently worth between £6,000 and £10,000, it has good potential to increase in value over the next few years. It will also be a thoroughly enjoyable car to own and drive in the meantime.

A lovely car for peers and pets

Citroëns find favour among a diverse range of owners, from show business to the world of design. Michael Aspel, new man with the *This is your Life* red book, has a Citroën BX. So has actor Gordon Kaye, better known as Rene in *'Allo 'Allo!*, who bought his BX in the unlikely setting of Clapham.

Designer Sebastian Conran has a 1930s *Traction Avant*, which became well known in London last Christmas when it was parked — resplendent with Father Christmas in the driving seat — outside his father Sir Terence's new restaurant in the old Michelin building.

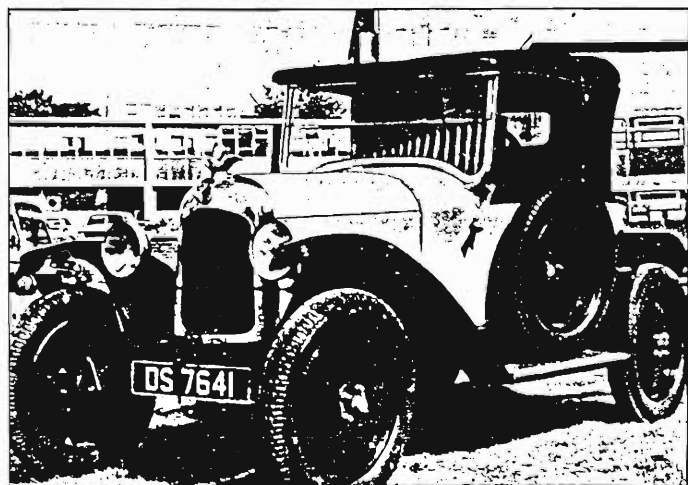
Motoring peer Lord Strathcarron is another enthusiastic Citroën owner. He has a two-seater 1923 5CV, bought last summer for £5,500. 'I happened to see it at auction, and I thought the shape was charming, so I

bought it. I hope it goes up in value, it should be worth about £7,000 in three years' time.

'It's part investment, but just as much for fun really. Call it a pleasurable investment. It's a lovely car, very solidly built. It has an 885cc four-cylinder engine, it'll do 40 mph maximum and it'll cruise all day at 28 mph.

'The only snag comes when you want to stop. The brakes are on the rear wheels only, and they aren't up to much.' He keeps the car at his country home, appropriately neighbouring the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu, and takes it on outings 'about twice a month'.

One member of the family yet to sample the delights of the Citroën is Perry, Lord Strathcarron's pet parrot. 'But he will. He goes just about everywhere with me, so I expect he'll enjoy the odd trip in the Citroën.'



Lord Strathcarron expects his pet parrot to enjoy a trip in his 1923 5CV

CLUB NEWS



Nice car, pity about the camera

Six of the Best

Equipped with no more than a death-to-photography instant Polaroid, and hell-bent on achieving the Worst Photograph of a Traction Award, Sam Wells caught chairman Roger Dyer about to depart from a committee meeting in his latest acquisition. Roger tells us that he acquired the desirable small boot Quinze from a woman who had won the car in a soft drinks competition – more used to driving a mini, the winner had predictably found the maxi proportions of the Traction difficult to handle and was even unable to stable it in her driveway. As a result of his new purchase, Roger has a number of other vehicles for sale – though whether he will part with his notorious vintage lawnmower remains doubtful.

A.W.

What's in a Name?

Over the years, we've grown used to an increasing number of abbreviations of car makes and names. My mother distinctly remembers Bugattis being called Bugs antebellum, not to mention the endearing, if non-abbreviated, Banana Squeezer for Hispano Suiza. More recently, Merc, Caddy and Olds, for example, have been predictable shortenings. For some reason, though, we now seem to be amidst a spate of more ugly-sounding renderings – Pug for Peugeot, Cit for Citroën (try pronouncing it à l'italienne) and Bimmer (!) for BMW. Worst of all, a French old car magazine has recently repeatedly referred to Traction Cabriolets as Cab Tracs – an ugly concoction surely born out of laziness rather than affection.

S.W.

Aged Autos

Newcomer on the newsstands is *Old Car*, claiming to feature all ages of so-called classic, vintage and veteran cars. At the moment, it's a strange publication printed on paper that appears to have escaped from an impoverished Eastern European country, and with generous amounts of a curiously large typeface of a Janet-and-John reading

primer size. Some of the articles appear to be rehashed press releases, in order to make up space (yes, yes, we sympathise!), and many photographs sport curiously jejune captions. The third issue, interestingly enough, boasted an article on a very handsome Traction – a prewar Légère – belonging to one Colin Crawford. Even here, the writing was at times wincingly clichéd – for instance: '... the French Citroën owner differs (from the Slough Citroën owner) in that he is concerned with style ... he probably owns a Wells-Coates radio set, and Eames chair and a Braun calculator'. Well, hands up all those who are guilty. We are also warned that 'proper maintenance is vital on these cars and is not really a task for amateurs'. Hmm ... so much for many of our readers. The same issue also has an article on Carbonflo products, which – consisting of a handful of small tin cones – you are supposed to cast into your petrol tank when filling up with lead-free fuel, thus 'releasing tin in molecular form into the fuel', and therefore taking the place of lead in lubricating the engine. Although this sounds rather like the kind of experiment we used to do in Physics-with-Chemistry in the Fifth form ('Sir, can we throw some pennies in the nitric acid?'), you never know – you are invited to write for further details to ECM Darwell Ltd, 50-52 George Street, Walsall, West Midlands (if any member does, we'd like to know).

So, though it's nice to see a new magazine – especially one that doesn't have that dread and misplaced word 'classic' in the title – *Old Car* could be a lot better in both presentation and writing. The benchmark for both quality of writing, photography and presentation must still be FF Publishing's *Supercar Classics*, even though in size it makes for a far slimmer meal.

S.W.

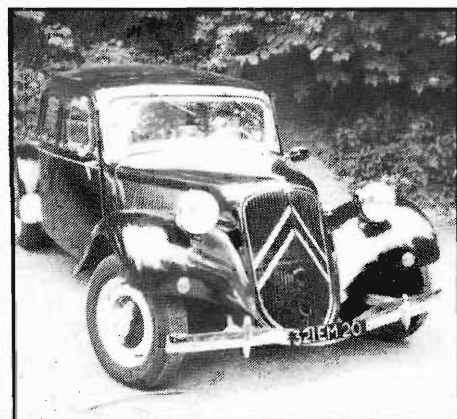
New Year Nosh

Thanks are due to John Gillard for organising the London Section dinner on January 14. The venue was changed at the last minute to Le Chef in Connaught Street, where the party of metropolitan Tractionists and their suburban colleagues took over the basement for a suitably French four-course meal, plus a variety of cheeses mature enough to be your grandmother. The only disappointment was the complete lack of Tractions, owners apparently being nervous of bringing them into the West End on Saturday night. Unfortunately, the restaurant staff had to go home before dawn, though we were able to leave late enough to purchase the following morning's papers.

S.W.

Stolen

Rodney Burns tells us that his Traction has recently been stolen from the Aldershot area. It's a 1949 Onze Normale, chassis



Gone missing – Rodney Burn's Normale

number 173198, and still has French plates 321 EM 20. If anyone sees or hears of this car, let John Gillard know at the Arch phone number (01-928 6613).

Up Yours?

We recently received a letter from Martin Cooke of Bain Clarkson, the insurance brokers, emphasising the need to consider increasing insurance values. Whilst it is, of course, in the insurance industry's interest that we should all pay larger premiums, it's equally important that none of us should always increase the insurance value every year (providing we keep our cars in good condition). Whilst not wishing to promote Bain Clarkson over any other companies (always get at least two quotes, and compare Terms and Conditions as well as prices) we feel that their letter, from which we quote below, emphasises an important point: "Last week a telex arrived from Hong Kong asking us to increase the amount insured for a certain Ferrari from £85,000 to £250,000. A good illustration of what is happening to values of the famous Marques which are highly sought after.

Some reports suggest that values of classic cars in 1988 saw increases higher than property prices, and certainly there have been dramatic auction prices published from the recently discovered rare Mercedes fetching £1,500,000, to the famous Bugatti Royale realising £5,000,000. Even humbler classics have proved to be good investments and the need for the right Agreed Value cover assumes greater importance.

Remember that standard motor policies pay market values and it may take a lot of haggling to secure a realistic offer in the event of total loss through fire, theft or other misfortune.

Do therefore consider an Agreed Value policy which undertakes to pay a pre-determined amount. The cost of such a policy will almost certainly be less than a standard policy as Insurers specialising in this type of contract realise both the special care lavished by club members on their vehicle (some say they are cherished more than their wife or children) and the limited exposure of the vehicle to the road and the elements."

Balljoint Bothers

Keith Boyes

MY TRACTION WAS manufactured at Slough and was initially purchased by the French Government and used at the French Embassy for two years between 1953 and 1955.

Following this spell of duty it was then registered on the 18th June, 1955 to a L. G. Brown of 15, Hawthorne Crescent, Slough who owned it for 14 years before selling it to a possible relative (?), K. J. Brown of 18, Buckland Avenue also in Slough.

In 1975 the vehicle was sold to Mr A. L. Ayres of 3, Chestnut Drive, Holme on Spalding Moor in Yorkshire. The vehicle was then owned for some time by my dentist, Mr M. Lowe who had several addresses in Yorkshire. Mr Lowe decided to sell the Citroën at Christie's Motor Auction at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu in September, 1987.

However, the Traction did not reach the reserve price and I was offered it for the highest bid price before it was withdrawn (£2,650) providing that I collected the car from Hants.

I was 'over the moon' with the car which still had a current MoT certificate but after getting it home I only managed to travel 26 miles before the inner cardan coupling on the front wheel drive gave way thus making it un-drivable! I had the vehicle tested at this time and it also failed with worn bushes on the nearside wishbone.

I rang John Gillard at the Arch in London and he told me he could fix me up with these two parts. Unfortunately, the wishbone went astray, to somebody in Kent by mistake I believe, and took months to retrieve.

I asked two mechanics that I knew if they would come and fix the new parts but was let down by both of them. They called themselves mechanics but both declined the work after assessing what the job entailed. One actually made a start and left a trolley jack behind in my garage but hasn't been back to collect it!

I finally persuaded a HGV fitter who was unemployed at the time, to do the repair for me and a start was made in August, 1988 without, however, any of the special tools required including a lower ball-joint extractor. Great difficulty was found in trying to dismantle the ball-joints and it appeared that previous attempts had also been made without success. I even hired an extractor from a local plant hire shop but it turned out to be of no use in removing a Traction lower ball-joint!

Not knowing anyone from the Citroën or TOC car clubs to ask for advice, I allowed my

'mechanic?' to continue with his extractor and large hammer and when the ball-joint finally came out of its socket it was found that the ball pin thread was so badly damaged that it rendered the complete front swivel casing totally useless for re-assembly once the new inner cardan on the drive shaft had been fitted.

I was very fortunate indeed that almost immediately I was contacted by Roger Williams who lives at nearby Beverley and who was in the process of organising the Traction Rally at Beverley, and was able to relate my problem to him and ask his advice.

Roger contacted Bob Wade and I was extremely lucky to find that Bob had in his possession a spare front swivel casing which he sent to me. The casing was just what I wanted and was in very good condition.

Roger Williams advised me to kick my HGV mechanic into touch and he has kindly offered to assist me to re-assemble the parts and hopefully I shall be back on the road and available for any future Traction rallies or functions.

I have kept the engine turned over regularly and it sounds good. I do know that the gears etc; are okay so hopefully it will not be long before it has passed it's MoT again and running regularly.

I am grateful to Bob for sending me the front axle swivel unit and have now joined the Traction Owners Club and look forward to meeting other members.

*The Traction
Owners Club*
**ANNUAL
RALLY**



**STRATFORD-
UPON-AVON
27-28 MAY**

You are cordially invited to participate in the Annual Rally of the TOC which will be held at the Racecourse in Stratford-on-Avon on Saturday and Sunday, 27th and 28th May 1989.

Participants may arrive on Friday 26th and remain on the camping site until Monday 29th May. This is Bank Holiday week-end.

You may camp on the camp-site reserved for Tractionists at the rally or stay in the town which is near.

There will be a full programme of activities, including a Concours d'Elegance, a convoy drive through beautiful countryside, entertainment on Saturday evening, and many prizes, including a prize for the Traction which travels the furthest distance to the rally.

All traders, and anyone wishing to sell spare parts, are especially welcome.

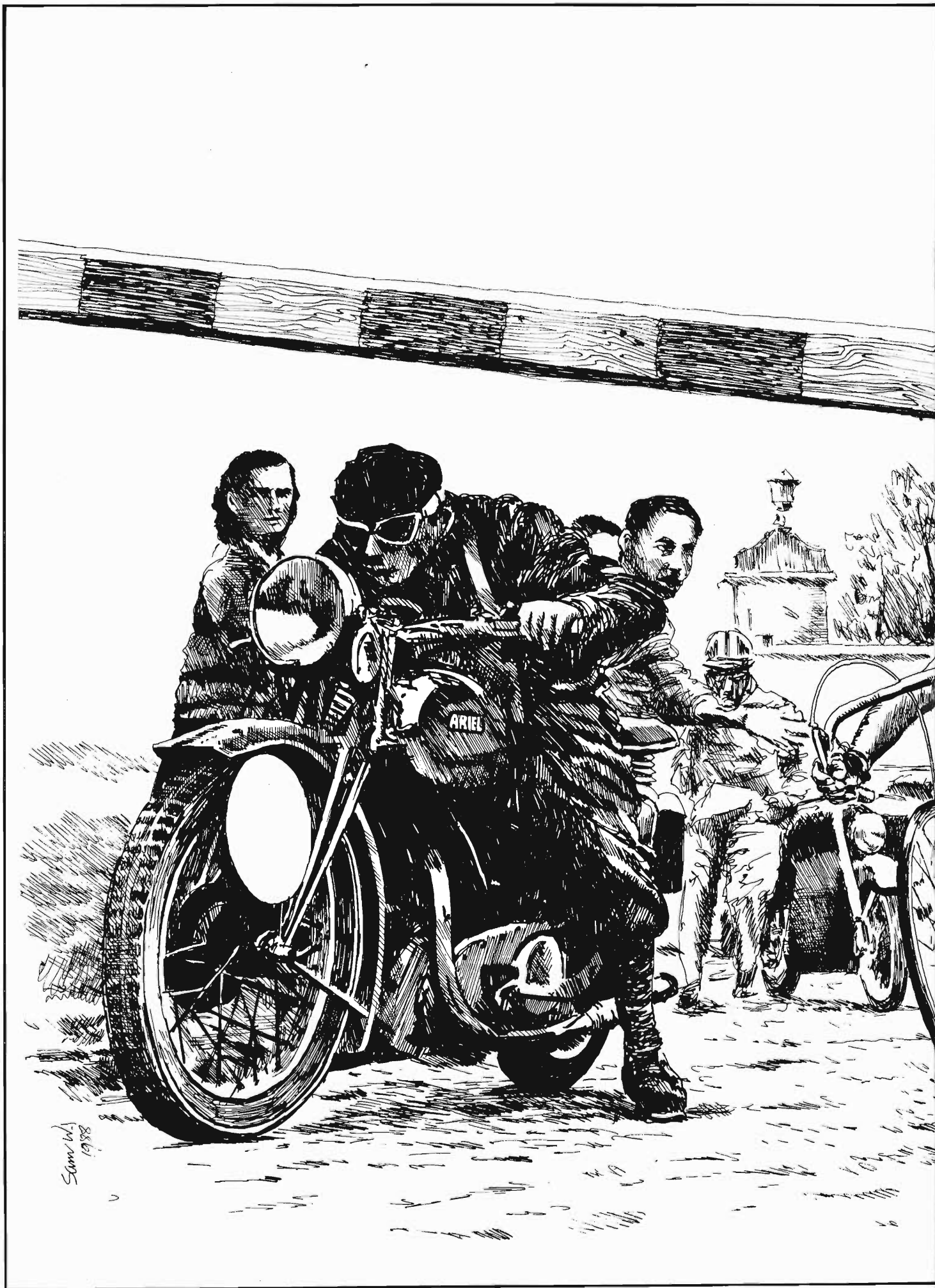
We are hoping that nearly 100 Tractionists will attend the rally.

Stratford-on-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare, is an historic town set in attractive surroundings and close to the Cotswolds, an area of outstanding beauty.

If you require further details or help with accommodation (it is advisable to book in advance), please write to

Alan Kembery at 46 Widney Manor Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 3JQ.

DON'T MISS IT!



Sam W.
1988