



SECTION VENUE

NORTHERN (N)

New Inn, South View Road, East Bierley, near Bradford Contact Jim or Liz Rogers. Tel. 0274 545 600

CENTRAL SOUTH (CS)
The White Hart Hotel, Whitchurch, Hants.

Contact Mike Wheals

EASTERN (E) The Lamb, Lamb Corner, Dedham (off A12) Contact John Starke. Tel. 0206 231 241 WEST MIDLANDS (WM)
Four Alls Inn, Welford-on-Avon, Stratford
Contact Simon Saint. Tel. 0905 54961

LONDON (L)

Rose of York, Petersham Road, Richmond, Surrey Contact Alec Bilney. Tel. 081 546 7071

PEAK (P)

Bull I'Th'Thorn, A515 South of Buxton towards Ashbourne Contact Bev & John Oates. Tel. 0298 78473

NB: Central South and Peak are lunchtime meetings (12 noon), all others are evening meetings

DECEMBER

Section Meetings: 3rd-N, 6th-P, 9th-WM, 13th-CS, 29th-L
13th – Central Southern Area Christmas Lunch, White Hart Hotel, Whitchurch, £12.95.
Further details from Mike Wheals on 0256 896 876

1993

JANUARY

Section Meetings: 3rd-CS, 7th-N, 13th-WM, 26th-L

FEBRUARY

Section Meetings: 4th-N, 7th-CS & P, 10th-WM, 23rd-L

MAY

1st/3rd - Classic and Sportscars International, NEC, Birmingham.

NEW MEMBERS at November 1992

1096 D. Williams, Wolverhampton	1106 A. J. Cornyn, Crossmaglen	1116 R. Simmonds, Sandford on Thames
1097 J. W. Bryant, Sheffield	1107 M. Mayhead, Worthing	1117 M. Dalzell, Groby, Leics.
1098 A. Andrews, Cookham Dene	1108 P. A. Jackson, Portland	1118 S. R. Cooper, Ayot St. Peter
1099 M. Hooper, Sherborne	1109 B. Armstrong, Windsor	1119 J. W. Montgomery, Lidlington
1100 M. E. Finn, Burnham on Crouch	1110 I. Cabot, Jersey	1120 N. R. Hopkinson, Tockwith
1101 M. Heath-Guy, Poole	1111 L. W. Percival, Addlestone	1121 N. Brookes, Cheshunt
1102 A. W. Jackson, Gin-Gin, Australia	1112 B. C. Plant, Great Witley	1122 P. K. Vogel, Barrington, Illinois
1103 B. F. Bellingham, Stafford	1113 J. H. Blackman, Yoxhall	1123 R. J. Davis, Newport, I.O.W.
1104 K. M. Gavan, London W13	1114 F. J. Bell, Milford	1124 C. F. Christian Folco, Oxon
1105 S. Thompson, Sidcup	1115 N. M. O. Adams, Jersey	1125 M. R. Hamer, Liverpool
	1126 A. Aherne, Dun Laoghaire	

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Roger Dyer, Hill Top, Tuckey Grove, Send Marsh, Woking, Surrey GU23 6JG.

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Social Secretary

Stan Barker, Barcus Mead, North Ripley, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 8EP.

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Steve Reed, 1 Terwick Cottage, Rogate, Near Petersfield, Hampshire GU31 5EG.

Membership Secretary

Peter Riggs, 2 Appleby Gardens, Dunstable, Beds. LU6 3DB.

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Phillipe Allison, Stan Barker, John Gillard, Colin Gosling, Tony Hodgekiss, Martin Nicholson, Steve Reed, David Shepherd, Nigel Webb.

Club Spares

Denis Ryland, "Woodholme", Frithwood, Brownshill, Stroud, Glous. GL6 8AD.

Tool Hire

Peter Simper, 215 Whitton Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 7QZ.

Club Shop

Steve Southgate, 11 Woodlands Avenue, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 3LN

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Peter Stenner, Bailes Fastprint, Mill House, Market Place, Houghton-le-Spring. 091 584 6097.

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David Gardner, 33 Austin Drive, Banbury, Oxon OX16 7DL.

Honorary Life Members Fred Annells David Shepherd

ISSN 0265 0630



Volume 17, Number 5

November, Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Two

T the AGM following my comments in the last magazine, John Starke was proposed and accepted as the new Editor of 'Floating Power'. He will take over as from this magazine.

So here we go with a last and brief Editorial. I would like to thank all contributors over the last 2-3 years without whom the job would have been more difficult. I will endeavour, in the next few weeks, to return all outstanding photographs which have been submitted, apologise for not having done so sooner. I would suggest to advertisers that they re-submit any continuing adverts to John to ensure continuity. Similarly any reports, snippets or articles for the January magazine should be sent to John, whose address can be found on the Club News page as Eastern Area organiser.

I hope that the Club membership will provide John with equal if not better support to continue what I consider to be an important facet of the Club. Judging by the programme which John produced for the Annual Rally, I am sure that the magazine is in good hands.

The subject of renewals also came up at the AGM. It is important that members send in their subscriptions by the Club's year end -31st March. It saves the Membership Secretary a great deal of time and the Club a great deal of money in reminders and wasted magazines.

By the time you receive this magazine it will, no doubt, be almost Christmas, therefore on behalf of all the committee (whoever they are, in joke re AGM), I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

DAVID GARDNER

Statements made or opinions expressed in 'Floating Power' do not necessarily reflect the views of the Standing Committee or the Traction Owners Club or of its officers, and neither the Traction Owners Club or its officers accept any liability for statements made.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information and advice given in the technical articles in this magazine and in the replies to readers enquiries, neither the Traction Owners Club nor the officers and members thereof nor the authors accept any liability whatsoever for such information and advice.

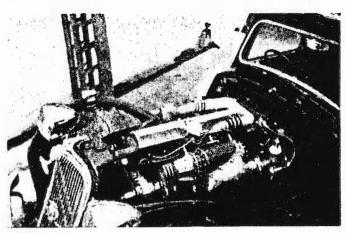
VOITURE FAMILIALE POUR L'ENTHUSIASTE

TOWARDS the end of last month, by courtesy of Mr. H. M. Johnson, we took an evening drive in his Citroën Six saloon with Wade-Ventor supercharger installation. The appearance of the car intrigues, even seems mildly aggressive in a purposeful sort of way. As the unusually long wheelbase forecasts, there is ample room inside for five grown-ups. This, then, is a comfortable family car, but after driving out of London as far as Maidstone, during the evening traffic peak, we realised that not only are all the splendid qualities of the "Light Fifteen" reproduced in this latest front-drive car from the Citroën factory but that in spite of its capaciousness it is able to shame many so-called sports cars in the matter of performance.

Mr. Johnson, who formerly owned, Darracq, Rolls-Bentley and Studebaker Darracq, Rolls-Benucy and scars, bought this Citroën and drove it cars, bought this citroën and drove it. He about 1,000 miles in standard form. He decided that he liked it and took it along to Pat Whittet & Co., Ltd., to have some additional urge instilled. The Ventor blower installation fits in very neatly with the under-bonnet scheme. A Type R 020 four-lobe supercharger is mounted high up on the near side and driven from the front of the camshaft in two stages, first by chain enclosed in a neat alloy casing and thence by short triple belts running over spring-loaded jockey pulleys. An S.U. carburetter behind the blower feeds via a curved inlet pipe and a largebore delivery pipe passes from the blower, behind the engine, to the centre of the six-branch inlet manifold on the off side, where a blow-off valve is hidden beneath the delivery-pipe/manifold junction. At the back of the engine the main oil feed is tapped to provide drip-feed lubrication of the rotor gears and the driving chain. Ki-gass injectors enter the delivery pipe on the off side and here also it is tapped for the boost-gauge line. The pulley on the camshaft having been sacrificed for the chain sprocket, a new belt drive has been devised for fan and dynamo. The supercharger blows at 4 to 4½ lb./sq. in. at maximum speed; the compressionratio of the engine has been lowered from 6.7 to 6.4-to-1. To obviate valve bounce ե -in. packings have been inserted beneath the valve springs and a Fram filter and Runbaken Oil Coil are fitted. The engine is otherwise the standard 3-litre Citroën unit evolved some years ago for lorry propulsion. The bonnet has been felt-lined to absorb noise and a boost gauge and oil and water thermometers have been added to the unobtrusive squaredial instruments on the right of the standard facia panel. Hand ignition control is a standard fitting.

As a result of adding a Wade-Ventor

As a result of adding a Wade-Ventor installation to the Citroën Six a very good motor car has been rendered outstanding to a point of being unique. The engine responds instantly to the throttle and acceleration is most impressive both by reason of its degree and its



TAILOR-MADE INSTALLATION.—The Wade Ventor supercharger fits neatly with under-bonnet scheme on Mr. H. M. Johnson's Citroen Six.

continuity. As soon as possible you get out of the 13.24-to-1 bottom gear and in the 5.62-to-1 middle ratio of the facia-controlled three-speed box, the car surges cleanly forward up to an easy speedometer 60 m.p.h. Although top gear is as high as 3.87-to-1 and the car weighs 26 ewt. unladen, speed continues to build up just as rapidly as in second gear, the engine as smooth as a turbine and inaudible except for a faint hum from the blower. On the over-run things are just as smooth and unobtrusive.

The true maximum speed is probably in excess of 90 m.p.h., and on traffic-infested roads 70 to 75 m.p.h. was the usual gait. The feeling of absolute security up to The teeling of absolute security up to maximum speed is most pronounced. As with the "Light Fifteen," however, so in this "Six" speed as such is subordinate to the delightful manner in which the ear gets on with its job. The steering is so obviously connected to the front wheels and so pleasantly high front wheels and so pleasantly high-geared that its heaviness is no disadvan-The Lockheed brakes require fairly heavy pressure but are free from The ride is so level-keel that it ensures complete confidence when cornering or standing on the brakes in an emergency, and the suspension so effectively absorbs road shocks that to ride in any seat in this car is to realise how much the French knew about motor car design fifteen years ago and how sadly our designers lag behind. For the Citroën Six derives its delightful riding and handling qualities from front-wheel-drive, low build, torsional suspension, and rigid one-piece construction, features which caused English eyes to goggle at the Citroën Twelve away back in 1934 and carroen Twelve away back in 1934 and have enabled Citroën ears to serve ordinary Frenchmen as such satisfactory utility motor-cars ever since. It may even be said that the "Six" has more refinement of running than its famous contemporary the "Light Fifteen."

Morcover, as it has been naturalised,

Moreover, as it has been naturalised, the car we tried has r.h. drive and spares and service were available from Staines.

In his blown Citroën Six Mr. Johnson has a profoundly inspiring car. The supercharger, now that its bronze and steel rotor gears are bedded in, imparts merely a low hum to the under-bonnet silence and apart from that only a little

resonance and wind-roar, more noticeable in the back than in the front seats, proclaim the sort of performance that is being delivered. After the wire-mesh was removed from the radiator grille no scrious overheating has been experienced, and during our drive the water temperature did not exceed 75°C. The blower belts have lasted about 5,000 miles. Castrol XL oil and the plugs supplied with the car are used, and a double S.U. pump now looks after the fuel feed. Fuel consumption has scarcely increased since the engine was blown, 16 to 17 m.p.g. being normally obtained; 10 per cent. benzole is added when available. The only serious trouble in 5,000 supercharged miles was clutch slip, which Monaco of Watford ured by fitting different linings, which sweetened the action. Oil pressure, when hot, is 30 lb./sq. in. at 70 m.p.h.

In spite of its 10 ft. 1½ in. wheelbase the car can be thrown about with impunity. An American Bosch radio is fitted and tyres are 185/400 Michelins.

No car is perfect, as Mr. Johnson is the first to admit, but the snag-sheet relating to his present car is a very short one. Bottom gear is too low, and an additional gear between middle and top, with the latter a still higher ratio, would be an improvement, as at present the Citroën is a top-gear car. Hunting at idling speeds is evident to a slight degree due to supercharger surge, which is common to many blown engines, and the car sometimes suffers from a very slight "flatspot," noticeable when opening-up from low speeds. The accelerator pedal has rather a long movement, and clutch engagement is rather difficult.

After which you return to the opinion that here is one of the few truly-great quantity-production cars of the present day. That such a bold statement is no exaggeration can be appreciated when to the foregoing remarks are added the facts that Citroën still refuses to streamstyle or aerodyne his cars, and that the doors of the all-steel body swing easily on their hinges and allow entry and egress with a minimum of contortion.

This Citroën is a roomy family saloon, endowed with additional speed and acceleration by reason of a mild boost, and it would do some of our designers a power of good to drive it.—W. B.

BIG 6 REBUILD

Part 2.5 By Derek Fisher

The continuation of the pictorial account of rebuilding a Big 6. The photographs are those which could not be included in the July issue of 'FP'. Hence the title 2.5 and not Part III, which hopefully follows as Derek makes further progress.



New inner skin on front horn ready for welding, front horns should be braced to prevent movement during welding.



New outer skin for front horn ready for fitting, these panels are a complicated shape to make and took some time to complete both sides. I was lucky in having a Light Fifteen to cope as this panel had been destroyed by whoever fitted the strengthening steel.



Outer sill screwed in place ready for plug welding

Tour of Northumbria

with PEARL SHAW

aving returned damp and bored (yes, both Bernie and me!) from the ICCCR in Denmark, we stopped off in Berkshire for the chauffeur to attend a 24-hour job interview, and proceeded thence overnight in Yorkshire with the trailer-tent re-provisioned. By Friday lunchtime we were at Coquetdale caravan park. Rothbury is "a small hillside town of ancient lineage, nestling in the valley of the Coquet - a salmon river". I quote from the abundance of literature provided by the tour organiser, Tony Stokoe, along with a short quiz designed to encourage us to read it all.



The start – Bucks Fizz all round.



Lined up in front of Cragside House.

Those of you more accustomed to my role as TOC Tour Librarian might be intrigued at my writing this report. Let me explain. Before Denmark, the programme looked interesting. After Denmark, we needed on the hand (mine!) a decent break, and on the other (his) a good Citroen social event. We arrived to find Ian and Wendy Nairn from Edinburgh, Mike Hyatt and Karen from Glasgow, Dave Gardner and family Gibson all already installed. As Brian took the first of many photos and Tony handed us each a welcoming glass of Moet et Chandon (quelle finesse!), we suspected that this would be a class event. The afternoon visit to Cragside House and Gardens, formerly of the Armstrong (as in Siddeley/Vickers) family, and now National Trust, reinforced our impression. Joy and Steve Southgate arrived in time for the evening meal at 'The Corn Road', a superb little bistro in Rothbury where Tony's parents also joined us. The meal and venue confirmed that this was already better than the ICCCR after just one day. Saturday started bright and sunny. After a hot wash at the

facility block we tantalised our neighbours with our customary bacon and egg breakfast before setting out from the campsite in convoy, the less hardy joining us from the local farmhouse hotel. Our route took us through beautiful countryside, rich with purple heather and populated by happy sheep and cattle, to the Roman fortress and museum at Vindolanda. We were joined by the Andrews family who had come from Hartlepool for the day. The fortress ruins have "talking posts" - Cariolanus, the Roman soldier, telling you what it was like to live and work there. The museum has a good collection of artefacts, a talking Roman mum, wife of a soldier, standing in her kitchen, and an amazing display of leatherwork – shoes and sandals, bits of tents and horses harnesses in superb condition, thanks to the Romans sealing them in a bog.

Lunch was provided at the 'Twice Brewed' inn, near the village of Once Brewed. After this we drove to, and then along, Hadrian's Wall towards Bellingham, to spend the



Bellingham before the rain.

Tony prudently led the convoy off to his home town of Morpeth rather than risk the elements on Holy Island as planned. After a potter round the town whilst Tony assisted the Glaswegian contingent with some vehicular problem, we were all warmly welcomed for our "picnic" at the Stokoe family home. COOKSWELL GARAGE Bellingham Annual Fair (after the rain – beautiful rainbow). afternoon at the annual show. It was a typical country show with exhibits ranging from Guess where?

sheep, goats, cattle and pigs through to vegetables, handicrafts and a

few old cars. There were gymkhana events, a pipe band, bird handlers and many stalls to keep us amused for the afternoon. We dined well that night at a pleasant hostelry, the 'Three Wheats Head', in the next village "o'erlooking the Simonside Hills". We were joined by Tony's sister, Rosemary, who anxiously counted heads and made a mental note on appetites as she had been dragooned into preparing the picnic to be eaten by us all at Holy Island the following lunchtime.

Sunday started so damp and windy that by breakfast-time Harry Howard had decided that his tent and wet clothes had lost their attraction, and was forced to make tracks for home.



Privileged position at Bamburgh.



Official Tour Finale.

Rosemary's preparations had resulted in an ample buffet which left us staggering back to our cars for the drive to Bamburgh. There we were permitted to park in the castle grounds overlooking the sea. We spend a pleasant couple of hours visiting the inside of the castle, rounded off with tea and scones whilst the rain abated. We returned to Rothbury by a scenic route wreathed in rainbow and noted Alnwick Castle as

one of many desirable places to see on any future trip to Northumberland. That evening we were unable to resist the lure of 'The Corn Road', where we indulged in

another delicious dinner at a very reasonable cost.

By Monday morning only holidaymakers and unemployed club members and their partners remained, but the Andrews' once more met up with us at Cookswell Garage in Pegswood, our first call of the day. We then made the most of a fine, though blustery morning by walking on the splendid sands of the Northumbrian coastline to blow away the cobwebs, and posing to allow the official tour photographer to capture our likenesses one last time before parting on our separate ways.

We spent a most enjoyable weekend designed to counter the vagaries of the English weather with an interesting and varied programme plus excellent food and all in splendid company.

PS - The chauffeur says I must mention the cars . . . All I can say is that they were old and, with the exception of a red one, I couldn't tell one from another.

A DEDICATED FOLLOWER OF FASHION

"If you've ever experienced a mechanical breakdown, you'll know it sometimes takes more than a pretty face to attract the attention of fellow motorists. Clever girls know that wearing the right clothes can be a help. For what masculine, mechanically-minded man can resist a bit of feminine frippery by the roadside? If you want to catch men in their tracks, our model can recommend hip-hugging trousers, bottom-clinging skirts and sensuous swirly dresses - all in the softest, prettiest Autumn colours of course . . . They might just be worth a try next time you want to stop the traffic too!"

Their words, not mine! Very sexist and unlikely to be seen in print in the liberated 1990's. This was the opening paragraph to a fashion

guess not many of those 1970's lady readers took much notice of the car – far too interested in the fashions and the prices. But I was keen enough to keep the article and hide it away in some ancient scrap book until I rediscovered it the other day.

Also with it was this double page spread from a different magazine of a beautifully restored, gun-metal blue LHD Légére with bonnet flaps,



"A real eye-catcher."

chromed window surrounds, and pleated upholstery. But the most outstanding feature for me are the chrome wire wheels! I've never seen a traction on wires before. Were they ever factory-optional equipment I wonder?

As I recalled in my last article, my passion for Tractions began in the 1950's and has continued ever since. Just as a mater of interest, does anyone know where MMM 216L has got to after all this time.

RICHARD HOOLEY



"Traction on wires."

article which appeared in some long-forgotten women's magazine in the mid 1970's. The platform shoes and the wide bottom loon pants give a clue to the era as do the prices – tights from Mary Quant for 40p. Amazing!

Which ever long-forgotten magazine these pages come from (the only clue being a black spade at the end of each editorial), we must give credit to photographer Mike Gilchrist and fashion editor June Marsh for selecting the Traction for a prop. Its athletic, curvy lines really do compliment the graceful curves of the models. No wonder it has been a favourite of photographers and designers for so long. Even on September 6, the Sunday Express magazine had a Traction in its fashion feature to epitomise the 1940's. I



A DAY AT THE RACE TRACK

THE London Section of the TOC recently chose to have a joint meeting with another one-make car club. to broaden our knowledge and meet new faces. Since John Cresswell is also a member of the Austin Seven Owners Club a contact was easily arranged and a venue fixed.

On a bright English summer day, therefore, a smaller than expected convoy of our black Tractions swept into a car park at Epsom Downs to find eight Austins waiting for us with an enthusiastic group of owners. Mac Bonar, the leader (?) was a colourful character who wore little tainted specs like Sam Wells, outlandish clothes like Steve Bull and a leather flying helmet and goggles like Biggles. He introduced us to other people keen to talk about their cars, and in one hour we learned a lot about them.



The Austin Seven was first introduced in 1922 with a pull-start inside the car like a lawn mower. The range of body styles was quite large, and even today is added to regularly as people simply build 'specials.' Headlamps were originally mounted on the scuttle just in front of the windscreen so at night gave a lovely view of the bonnet but not much of the road. However, as magneto ignition gave



way to coils so owners desire to see where they were going caused the lamps to move to the front wings.

We were able to riposte that 6-volt Traction headlamps of even the 1950's allow an air of mystery about the road ahead. Both types of car seem to need religious attention to greasing schedules but don't always get it.

By the time we left on a convoy drive through the lanes of Sussex there were five Austin Sevens, two bigger Austins and the four Tractions. Traffic coming the other way had no problems with the 4-foot wide Austins, but the Normale and Familiale mixed up in the convoy were another matter. On the other

hand the little 750 c.c. cars, despite their light weight, could not match the Tractions when climbing Box Hill.

It was a bright and cheerful day, meeting in an extremely picturesque setting and enjoying a lovely run through sunlit lanes dappled with shade, and made charming by cellulose and coach lacquer on cars enthusiastically owned and driven.

The London Section will be repeating the experiment one day, with the same group or another car club. I hope I have indicated that it was fun and so we can hope for a larger Traction turnout then.

ALEX BILNEY



VEHICLE INDEX MARKS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES

by NIGEL WITT

At the recent Classic Citroen Rally, organised by Classic Restorations and held at the Design Museum, I was interested to see that no fewer than five of the Tractions there had the two letters SU on their number plates, usually preceded by serial letter.

This made me think that it might be of interest to readers of *Floating Power* to have details of the original issuing authorities of the two-letter index letters which form part of number plates.

I therefore contacted the AA. They were kind enough to provide me with a document they produced in 1989 and have given permission for the reproduction of extracts of that document.

Vehicle index marks in Great Britain and Ireland were, from 1904, issued by county, county borough and larger borough councils and consisted of one or two letters, followed by the numbers 1 to 9999.

When all these marks had been allocated, three-letter marks were introduced, by the introduction of a prefix letter to an existing two-letter mark and followed by the figures 1 to 999. These prefix letters were issued alphabetically, though some were avoided (such as I, Q, U and Z).

Once all these marks with numbers following had been allocated, the marks were "reversed" with numbers preceding the letters. In this way the maximum number of symbols on an individual number plate never exceeded six.

By 1963 circumstances had altered and some councils had exhausted their allocation of marks. The regulations were therefore

altered to permit the use of seven symbols, the seventh symbol being a suffix letter which was added at the end of a three-letter and 1 to 999 number. This was introduced from 1st January, 1963, when the suffix letter A was used for the year ending 31st December, 1963, although the system was not taken into use by all licensing offices until 1965.

Following representation by the motor industry, the annual suffix letter was altered to commence from 1st August in 1967, so the suffix letter E had a short life, from 1st January, 1967 to 31st July, 1967. Twenty-one letters of the alphabet were used as suffix letters, the letters I, O, Q, U and Z being omitted. The final suffix letter Y ended on 31st July, 1983, when the present annual prefix number was introduced.

In 1971 the legislation was changed and this transferred the responsibility for vehicle registration and licensing to the Secretary of State for the Environment, in preparation for centralising these functions at the DVLC, Swansea.

However, the councils who had been responsible for licensing since 1904 continued with their functions until September, 1974.

On that date 81 local vehicle licensing offices, and DVLC, took over from approximately 180 local authority motor taxation offices. DVLC held all records of vehicles first registered from 1st October, 1974 and the records of earlier registrations as these were transferred to Swansea by the local authorities.

Subsequently the relicensing of vehicles became primarily the task of the Post Office

and the number of local vehicle licensing offices was reduced to 50 by the end of 1981.

The various reorganisations resulted in the reallocation of some index marks. For example, the letters AA, originally issued by Hampshire County Council at Bournemouth, were reallotted to Salisbury, and the letters AG were allocated to Hull from Ayr County Council. The letters SV and SY are now reserved for issue by DVLC for age-related registration numbers, and I suspect that SU, originally allocated to Glasgow, may be likewise.

It is, of course, possible to confuse the identification system (!) by transferring a registration number from one vehicle to another, provided the conditions set out in the transfer form V317 are met. Nevertheless, for most Tractions which were originally first registered in England, Scotland and Wales, you merely have to look up the last two letters of the index mark in the Index Mark List (see below) and this will tell you the office which dealt with the original registration.

For example, my first Light 15, which I still regret selling for £10 in 1961, was JRV 20. Ignore the J and look up RV. The answer is Portsmouth. Likewise with VLY 67, which was at the Kentwell '92 Rally, ignore the first letter V and look up LY. Answer: London NW.

Finally, the DVLC will provide information free of charge to a registered keeper who asks for details about his own vehicle.

INDEX MARKS	Inde Mari		Inde Mark		Inde Mar		Inde Mari	
These are listed in order Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales).	AN AO	Reading Carlisle	BT BU	Leeds Manchester	CY	Swansea	ED EE	Liverpool Lincoln
,	AP	Brighton	BV	Preston	DA	Birmingham	EF	Middlesbrough
SV and SY marks are	AR	Chelmsford	BW	Oxford	DB	Manchester	EG	Peterborough
allocated to all Vehicle	AS	Inverness	BX	Haverfordwest	DC	Middlesbrough	EH	Stoke-on-Trent
Registration Offices for	AT	Hull	BY	London NW	DD	Gloucester	EJ	Haverfordwest
issue to used vehicles	AU	Nottingham			DE	Haverfordwest	EK	Liverpool
which qualify for a non-	AV	Peterborough	CA	Chester	DF	Gloucester	EL	Bournemouth
suffix mark on	AW	Shrewsbury	CB	Manchester	DG	Gloucester	EM	Liverpool
registration at DVLC.	AX	Cardiff	CC	Bangor	DH	Dudley	EN	Manchester
registration at DVLO.	AY	Leicester	CD	Brighton	DJ	Liverpool	EO	Preston
ENOLAND			CE	Peterborough	DK	Manchester	EP	Swansea
ENGLAND,	BA	Manchester	CF	Reading	DL	Portsmouth	ER	Peterborough
SCOTLAND AND	BB	Newcastle upon Tyne	CG	Bournemouth	DM	Chester	ES	Dundee
WALES	BC	Leicester	CH	Nottingham	DN	Leeds	ET	Sheffield
Index Office	BD	Northampton	CJ	Gloucester	DO	Lincoln	EU	Bristol
Mark	BE	Lincoln	CK	Preston	DP	Reading	EV	Chelmsford
AA Bournemouth	BF	Stoke-on-Trent	CL	Norwich	DR	Exeter	EW	Peterborough
AB Worcester	BG	Liverpool	CM	Liverpool	DS	Glasgow	EX	Norwich
AC Coventry	BH	Luton	CN	Newcastle upon Tyne	DT	Sheffield	EY	Bangor
AD Gloucester	BJ	Ipswich	CO	Exeter	DU	Coventry		
AE Bristol	BK	Portsmouth	CP	Huddersfield	DV	Exeter	FA	Stoke-on-Trent
AF Truro	BL	Reading	CR	Portsmouth	DW	Cardiff	FB	Bristol
AG Hull	BM	Luton	CS	Glasgow	DX	Ipswich	FC	Oxford
AH Norwich	BN	Manchester	CT	Lincoln	DY	Brighton	FD	Dudley
AJ Middlesbrough	во	Cardiff	CU	Newcastle upon Tyne			FE	Lincoln
AK Sheffield	BP	Portsmouth	CV	Truro	EA	Dudley	FF	Bangor
AL Nottingham	BR	Newcastle upon Tyne	CW	Preston	EB	Peterborough	FG	Brighton
AM Swindon	BS	Inverness	CX	Huddersfield	EC	Preston	FH	Gloucester

Inde: Mark	K Office	Index		Inde Mark		Index		Index	Office
J	Exeter		Liverpool	NN	Nottingham		Aberdeen	VN	Middlesbrough
ĸ	Dudley	KB	Liverpool	NO	Chelmsford		Glasgow	VO	Nottingham
Ĺ							0		
M	Peterbrough Chester	KC	Liverpool Liverpool	NP NR	Worcester Leicester		Edinburgh Truro (Isles of Scilly)	VP	Birmingham
N	Maidstone						,	VR	Manchester
0		KE	Maidstone	NS	Glasgow		Glasgow	VS	Luton
P	Gloucester	KF	Liverpool	NT	Shrewsbury		Aberdeen	VT	Stoke-on-Trent
	Leicester		Cardiff	NU	Nottingham		Edinburgh	VU	Manchester
R	Preston	KH	Hull	NV	Northampton		Edinburgh	VV	Northampton
S	Edinburgh	KJ	Maidstone	NW	Leeds	SH	Edinburgh	VW	Chelmsford
Т	Newcastle upon Tyne	KK	Maidstone	NX	Dudley	SJ	Glasgow	VX	Chelmsford
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GE	Glasgow	ΚV	Coventry	OH	Birmingham	SU	Glasgow	WH	Manchester
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НС	Brighton	LT	London NW	PE	Guildford	TS	Dundee	XE	
HD	Huddersfield	LU	London NW	PF	Guildford	TT	Exeter	XF	
HE	Sheffield	LV	Liverpool	PG	Guildford	TU	Chester	XG	
HF	Liverpool	LW	London NW	PH	Guildford	TV	Nottingham	XH	
HG	Preston	LX	London NW	PJ	Guildford	TW	Chelmsford	XJ	
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IG	Maidstone	MV	London SE	RG	Newcastle upon Tyne	UV	London (Central)	YG	Leeds
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TRACTION ARRIERE

by MALCOLM BOBBITT

Life can be full of pleasant surprises. A letter arrived a little while ago with a plea of assistance from a fellow classic enthusiast who had just purchased an elderly Citroen.

In the event, the call for help unearthed a conundrum which, on turning over relevant information, sank deeper and deeper into a quagmire of intrigue.

The letter, from Richard Liken, contained the story of how he came to purchase a rear drive Citroen from a taxi operator in Bolton who, apart from running a modern fleet of cars, has an interest in vintage taxis. Committed to the restoration of several Austins there was no room for the Citroen Big Twelve Family 7-Seater Saloon and the decision was taken to let it go.

Richard happened to be in Bolton with his wife the day the Big Twelve was put on show. The inevitable happened, Richard fell in love with the Citroen and with encouragement from his better half bought it there and then.

It appears the car was originally supplied as a taxi by George Wray and Company of Virginia Street, Southport, and was issued with a local registration, WM 9121. The chassis number 520305 denotes a type P34 and year of manufacture as 1933. The Slough-built car was ideally suited for taxi and hire car work: the long wheelbase, forward-facing occasional seats, full length sun roof and leather trim afforded that extra touch of comfort.

The Big Twelve provided approximately twenty years service as a taxi before it was relicensed as a private car and used up to about 1960 when the then owner laid it up in dry storage. It had as a stablemate a Ford Pilot and remained tucked away for some twentyeight years before being acquired by Roy Tomkinson of Bolton, taxi operator and enthusiast of vintage taxi cabs who has stored the car for the last four years.

In spite of its age and varied use the Big Twelve is in remarkably good condition considering little or no work has been

attempted to restore it. Richard has had

added which is not Citroen standard

venturing only within the immediate locality but driving it far enough to realise the gearbox, clutch, rear axle and brakes are working. Although a major mechanical inspection has yet to be carried out evidence so far shows merely king pins and bushes are needed as a matter of urgency.

The bodywork is in amazing condition although the paintwork has suffered badly and the chromework has literally fallen off. The interior is basically sound with the leather generally good but requiring minor attention to the front seats; carpets and headlining alas have seen better days and will have to be replaced.

Richard's Big Twelve is something of a rarity, especially as it is a Slough model, and he is hopeful the car will not be too difficult to restore. As the car is in a basically sound condition it is hoped the project will not be too protracted.

The mystery of the car revealed itself upon close examination of the body: whilst a long wheelbase seven seat saloon, it would not have been fitted with a Gallay trunk due to the elongated coachwork but supplied instead with a folding luggage grid; on Richard's car,

equipment and is considerably less deep than of the type found on the Big Twelve and Twenty Saloons.

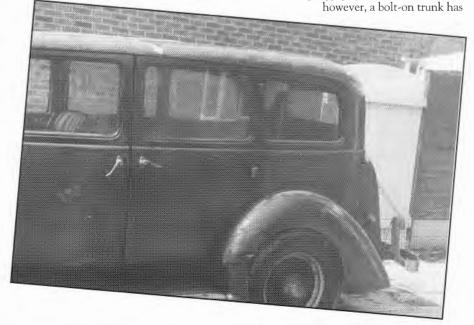
The sun roof is also non-standard; Slough cars were fitted with a roof that extended as far as the front door pillars but on WM 9121 it extends virtually the entire length of the

A further intrigue is the design of the front and rear wheel arches. On initial examination it appeared they conformed to the 'NH' nouvel habillement design which appeared from January 1934 in France and somewhat later on Slough cars; it is interesting to note that an advertisement dated 24th July, 1934, clearly shows a Slough Big Twelve with the original wheel arch design. It would not have been inconceivable for a car to have a 1933 chassis with a later body especially if demand for cars had been lower than anticipated, however, this avenue of thought was dismissed upon close examination under a microscope.

Whilst the front wings resembled in general the 'NH' design, subtle differences were to be noted; as for the rear wings the difference to both the original and 'NH' designs is quite evident: the arches are deeper and more rounded almost shrouding the tyres; towards the rear they are flanged and elongated giving the rear assembly a heavy

Other points of interest include th trafficators which, on Richard's car, are mounted at scuttle level ahead of the front doors but are shown to be flush fitting and pillar mounted on contemporary illustrations. The front seats are designed to tip forward, the only feasible explanation is to allow passengers greater access to the occasional seats when used.

There are therefore a number of unanswered questions that relate to WM 9121, a Slough Big Twelve Family 7-Seater with a difference. Perhaps merely a hunch, is this one of the cars that is reputed to have been fitted with a Meadows engine and British bodywork? If anyone can provide an answer to any of these questions or supply further information correspondence would be most welcome.



CORRESPONDENCE-

Dear David.

I am a newcomer to Tractioning and I am still finding my way round my Light 15. Having spent an afternoon under the front end recently I am still at a loss to find out how one gets at the two inside drive shaft grease nipples with a grease gun. I'd be glad to learn what the trick is!

Whilst writing, readers might be interested to learn that a 50mm towing ball cover (one needs to choose one made of flexible, rather than hard, plastic) makes an excellent cover for the starting handle dog end of the gearbox on the Slough built model. This is especially useful in keeping the dirt out from the bearing if the normal Citroen cover plate is missing or, as in my case, doesn't fit.

Yours sincerely, N.O.E. WITT (Mr), Farnham, Surrey

Dear Peter.

Please find enclosed our 1992/93 subscription bankdraft. We have just received the latest magazine and the article by Eric Knowles was enlightening to say the least. I almost fitted an alternator to our 1950 Dear David.

Tucked away in a sleepy corner of Oxfordshire, amidst some of the finest Cotswold countryside, seems hardly the place to find a cache of early Citroens. And yet, Malcolm C. Elder's workshops revealed, behind large metal doors, a selection of very desirable motor cars bearing the double chevron insignia.

Malcolm Elder together with his son, Mark, operate from the Enstone establishment a veteran, vintage and classic vehicle restoration business which has amongst some very desirable vehicles for sale an Alvis 4-seat Silver Eagle tourer, Morgan tricycle and a Reo charabanc, as well as three Citroen Traction Arriere and a 11 BL Normale.

Upon entering the storage area, the 1954 Traction Avant, quite naturally in gleaming black paintwork, spearheaded an impressive array of motoring classics; within the confines of the building there was represented a fine cross-section of automobile history ranging from the quite enormous Reo

to a diminutive Fiat Topolino.

The rear drive Citroens could be seen standing together at the end of the building, their blue double chevron badges distinctive on proud radiator housings. In front of two 1932 saloons, a C4 1X and a C4G, stood a '29 AC 4-seat open tourer known as the Torpedo Commercial and finished condition but again unrestored. Both are finished in a plum and custard paint job, yellow with maroon wings and coach line which suggests they could have been owned by the same person or perhaps used for hire purposes. The C4 1X is of course quite a rarity as it was listed in the catalogue from October 1931 until Spring 1932 with just 17,500 built. A sound example of a Traction Arriere, which could be an affordable and restorable proposition.

For the ultra enthusiast, Malcolm Elder knows of an early model Kegresse in France. It is said to be in a restored condition and in full working order. It is expensive, but, for a unique motor vehicle and a Citroen at that . . .

Also for sale is a 1948 Light 15 which has spent most of its life in New Zealand, it is understood to be in good condition but appears to have been re-upholstered in leather cloth. The Normale as already mentioned is also for sale.

> MALCOLM BOBBITT Uxbridge, Middlesex

Dear David,

I have recently been having a problem with trying to find some replacement wheel nuts for my Slough built Light 15 and it may be of interest to others that the Nissan Primera wheel nuts (part no. N4022421001), obtainable from a Nissan dealer, seem to fit excellently. These are an open ended nut and cost 50p each.

The Nissan Stanza wheel nut (part no. N40224V5500), which is a closed end nut not dissimilar to the original Citroen brass nut, also fits and looks better. However, there is a bigger gap at the end of this nut, before the thread starts, than with the open ended nut and the Stanza closed end wheelnut is priced at £1.50 each.

Yours sincerely, **NIGEL WITT** Farnham, Surrey



AC4 Open Tourer

look of the device it was totally out of place so I fitted a slightly modified ID-19 (early sixties) generator instead.

The only thing that was achieved is that the generator took up less room as the previous one was quite large, the car was originally six volt, now 12 volt.

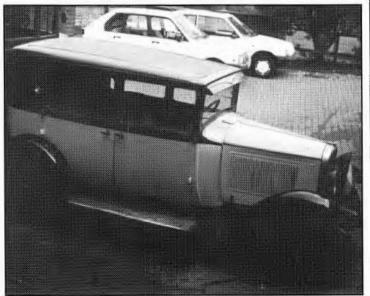
A question I must ask is would a Paris built RHD 11BL Traction be all that common in England as I have never seen a photo of one from there, one would assume that there must be some.

This letter will have to be brief as I am about to leave on a work trip (again)) to the outback (some poor soul has to do it). Well as I always say the magazine is up to its usual high standard, keep up the good work.

> Happy Tractioning, LINDA and JOHN ALLEN Salisbury, South Australia

in the standard but attractive olive green paintwork. Although unrestored, the Torpedo is in very reasonable condition apart from the steering wheel which appears to have been used as chest expander by the Charles Atlas. The car represents a promising project for the enthusiast.

The two saloons are also in a very fair



C4G Saloon

CLUB NEWS

MUTUAL AID

Older members, not particularly in age, but time served, may remember the 'Mutual Aid' map which used to appear in the magazine. The objective was to provide members travelling around the country with points for assistance, in the unlikely event of the Traction giving trouble. It has been suggested that this map is revived. Anyone willing to put forward their name and phone number for publication should write to D. Gardner, 33 Austin Drive, Banbury, Oxon OX16 7Dl. Assistance need only be a cup of tea whilst the member phones elsewhere for help or at the other end of the scale you may be able to provide some mechanical assistance. There is no obligation, the idea is to provide a smiling face in time of adversity.

Name and numbers would be published on a regular basis with a map for reference. The scheme is also open for members in mainland Europe to include their names for offering assistance to the more intrepid members.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The mailing list of many organisations with information usually of limited interest and available elsewhere, therefore it is not included in the magazine. However, for members interested in 'Classic Tours' usually of the multi marque variety should write to Stan Barker with a SAE whereupon some information may be available.

RENEWALS

Renewal date for Club Subscriptions is the 31st of March *each* year. As from March 1993 a more strict polity on subscriptions will be introduced. Members will only get two magazines, March and May, before being taken off the mailing list. So if you fail to get your July magazine you know why. The committee realise that money is tight but getting subscriptions in on time helps the voluntary Officers of the Club timewise and the Club itself financially .

What can I do for the Club, rather than the Club do for me (plagiarism still rules).

Design a windscreen sticker incorporating the Club name and Helpline phone number. A mystery prize awaits the winner. How

many times have you seen people looking at your car, wouldn't it be useful if those really interested know how to get in touch with the Club? One point to remember is the limited glass area available in the traction. Stickers could be put in your second car as well.

An item spotted in "rival" publications by our intrepid reader/reporter Martin Nicholson:

I don't have too much faith in these Hot Rod people. how do they think that we get on at the moment, the front wheel on my Traction appear to turn with the steering wheel. I also notice that the photograph is of a very smart Traction I saw at Paris at the great gathering of '84 and I am sure the owner would not turn it into a Hot Rod.

FWD HOT ROD!

My father and I intend to build a fairly unusual hot rod based on a Citroen Big 6 Traction Avant. When finished we want the car to still have front-wheel drive and torsion bar suspension so we are thinking of using a small block Chevy V8 turned round and possible mated to a Volkswagen transaxle. It must be an automatic and strong enough to take the engine's power.

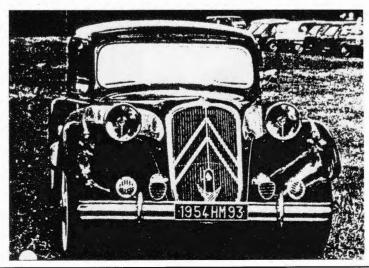
Is there an adaptor to join the trans and Chevy, and will the wheels go round the right way? We don't want to find ourselves with four reverse gears, do you have any suggestions?

STEWART DIVES, Surrey

There are quite a few problems with your ideas on building a front-wheel drive rod. Adaptors are available to mate the small block Chevy to the Volkswagen transaxle, but only the manual versions. The autos were terrible anyway.

Your biggest problem, and one we can't see any way of resolving, is the steering. How do you intend to turn the front wheels? Although your idea sounded quite good at first, and we like to encourage unusual projects, it isn't really feasible and any advantage of having a FWD rod like this are certainly outweighed by the difficulties you'd have.

Maybe you could try something a little more conventional.



AREA CONTACTS

Eastern Area Contact John Starke, The Cottage, Harts Lane, Ardleigh, Nr. Colchester, Essex.

West Midlands Area Contact Simon Saint, Snigs End, Danes Green, Clains, Worcester.

Central Southern Area Contact Mike Wheals, 'Ladle Cottage', 11 Fairclose, Church Street, Whitchurch, Hampshire.

Northern Area Contact Liz and Jim Rogers, 11 Wilmer Drive, Heaton, Bradford BD9 4AR.

Scottish Area Contact Mr. I. Nairn, 490 Lanark Road, West Balerno, Edinburgh EH14 9AN.

Peak Area Contact Mrs. B. Oates, 42 Clifton Drive, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9LY.

Irish Contact Mr. J. N. Moore, 19 Main Street, Limavady, Co. Londonderry,

Northern Ireland BT49 0EP South West Area Contact Mr. W. T. Bruen, The Barn, Beech Farm, Kingston, Kingsbridge, Devon



"TOC CLUB HELPLINE" 0425 74476 (Answerphone)

When phoning give:

- Full name.
- 2. Phone number
- Brief description of subject matter on which information is required.

Classified

Notice Concerning Advertising Please note that neither the Traction Owners Club, the Standing Committee, the Editorial Team, nor any other Club Officers can be responsible for the truthfulness of claims made in any advertisement, or for quality of goods and/or services offered in any advertisement. Advertisers are reminded of the provisions of the Trade Descriptions Act.

For Sale

Traction 11 BL, 1939 (January). The car is a good runner (sound engine and gearbox etc.). Body shell is good however renovation is required on floor and sills. Seats are complete, but need re-upholstery, as does the roof lining and door panels. A new acquisition forces the sale of this car, hence an excellent opportunity to purchase a Pre-war Traction in need of renovation and a good home, £3.500. For further details please contact Ian Cabot. Tel. 0534 483280 (Jersey CI).

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Period-style heater kit for Tractions, with all fittings complete and ready to mount. Simple to install, or we can fit for a small charge. Either 6 or 12 volt (please state with order).

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Optional in-line thermostat £35 plus VAT.

Classic Restorations Arch 124, Cornwall Road London SE1 8QT Telephone and Fax 071-928 6613



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For Sale

9x31 Crown Wheel and Pinion. £250 inc. VAT; 10x31 CWP can be made if there is enough interest at £275 + VAT, delivery March '93. Those interested and placing a deposit of £150 before January '93 will get a discounted price of £250 + VAT. Driveshafts, new inner cardan with CV outer joint, no exchange or reconditioned parts – Light 15, Big 15, £250 + VAT each. Light 15, Big 15 driveshafts with splined stub axle and brake drum conversion, £325 + VAT each (brake drums exchange items). Big 6 driveshafts, £800 + VAT per pair. Many other parts for Tractions being manufactured. Tel. Derek Fisher 0225 429 533.

For Sale

1957 LHD Commerciale.
Completely rebuilt engine and back to metal respray (Cream colour), 5 years ago.
Mechanically very sound, used regularly. Current tax and MoT. Interior, good and original, but needs new headlining. Any sensible offer considered. Tel.
Paul Crossthwaite 0272 734 078.

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For Sale

1953/4 Traction Big 15, left hand drive, Paris Built, black with buttermilk wheels, some bodywork TLC required but otherwise a daily runner, MoT, £4,950. Tel. 0702 77444 daytime.

Holidays

Southern Brittany. Camping le Bohat, Sarzeau. Large 4-berth caravan with awning and mains electricity. Available mid Maymid-September. Swimming pool, children's pool, creperies. Bookings taken now. Tel. Stan Barker 0425 72311.

Classified

Braking: 1955 Normalle

Body shell completely U.S. but most mechanical parts available, i.e.: complete engine and gearbox, £250; complete front axle including drive shafts, £250; 5 wheels and tyres, in reasonable condition, £100. Many more parts available, P.O.A. Sets of chrome motorcycle indicators still available, £16 per set plus postage and packing. Tel. Steve Reed 0730 821792.

Trade Services Listing

Some of the services listed in the following advertisements are provided by companies, individuals or organisations who offer TOC members an exclusive or in some cases a discounted service. No recommendation of these services, either express or implied, should be inferred from their inclusion herein. All enquiries and decisions regarding the suitability of a product or service must be made direct to the advertiser and *not to the TOC*. The decision to include or exclude a listing from this section rests with the TOC Standing Committee only.

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