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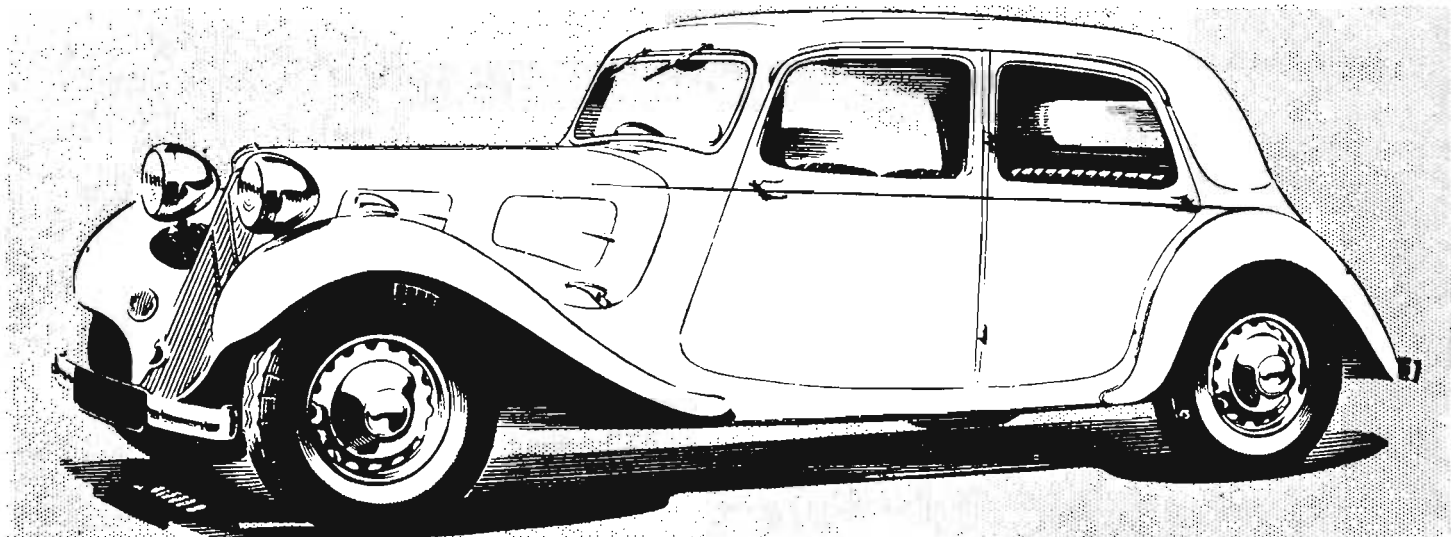
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Floating Power

Volume Two Number One.

February Nineteen Hundred and Seventy Seven.

You will see from elsewhere in the magazine that we now have a complete diary of events for the year, and I think that the social committee should be congratulated on having organised this under pretty extreme pressure. Our thanks to those members who have offered invaluable help and suggestions. We will be keeping everyone informed about regional activities throughout the year.

Two people who I would particularly like to thank for all the effort they have put in throughout the last year are Tricia Brice, who is the best secretary anyone could wish for, and organises us all admirably, and John Dodson to whom the high quality of the magazine is entirely due, it is the amount of work that he does on the art-work side that enable us to produce the magazine at all.

Our Christmas dinner at the Meantime Restaurant, Greenwich, was a tremendous success, and I think everyone enjoyed themselves thoroughly. A mouth-watering 3 course meal was followed by a hilarious (and pretty blue!) cabaret that Helen and Mike Hood had arranged for our benefit. Our very great thanks to them for a superb evening, and I urge anyone who is in the area to sample the first-class cuisine of their restaurant.

'Classic Car' are running a big feature on Traction in their March issue, including a picture on the front cover, so I hope that as many tractionistes as possible will buy a copy! Not all newsagents stock 'Classic Car', so that it might be a good idea to order the March issue in advance. It is, in any event, an excellent magazine, and publishes an extremely useful annual supplement of specialist services. Their feature will bring us some welcome publicity, and as Jonathan Wood of 'Classic Car' himself pointed out, for a car that was one of the most outstanding precursors of modern design features, the Traction Avant has been far too underrated for far too long! One reads of Rileys, of Jowetts, of 'Leafs' in the columns of august motoring publications but barely a whisper of the Traction. Well, as the Americans say, we aim to change all that . . .

And now for the thorny problem of subscriptions . . . this will be the last magazine before your subs fall due on March 31st. There are full details elsewhere in this issue of how much to send, and who to send it to, all I would ask is that if you do wish to renew your sub., you could do it promptly. There will be a final reminder in the April issue of 'F.P.', and if we haven't received a renewal by the end of April, then we will assume that you don't want to continue your membership. This means, in effect, that you would receive no more issues of the magazine after April. Although you have, in theory, a month's grace, we ask both for our sakes and for your own that you renew your sub; on the date due, as it causes less headaches for everyone, and means (hopefully) that no magazines are held up or go astray through administrative hassles. Thank you!

Finally, we wonder, after the rather apt 'Winter Tractioning' article in the previous issue, how members coped with January's snowfalls? Our minor road was virtually blocked, and every tractor in the village was employed in the mornings pushing cars out on to the well-salted main road - a pretty dodgey procedure! And talking of salt . . . a farmer friend of ours has an excellent mixture that he uses on his machines against rust and the ravages of winter - the recipe is as follows: 3 parts Esso 'Rustban' (thin grade) to 1 part Esso Greasy 'Rustban', and a small amount of paraffin, stir thoroughly - you won't get it totally amalgamate, but just make sure that you scoop up a good dollop of the thicker goo on your paintbrush when you come to use the mixture. It can be painted directly onto a damp surface, and is one of the best underseals that I have come across. It does need redoing every 8 months or so, unfortunately!

It has been suggested that we run an occasional pull-out technical advice sheet in the magazine that you could gradually collect, - any comments on this? If readers think this a useful idea, we should be very glad if they would write to us, and then we could explore the idea further if the response is good. And now, it only remains for me to wish you - Happy Tractioning! G W.



North Cottage, Mongers Farm, Barcombe, Nr. Lewes, Sussex.

TWO DOOR TRACTION

Surely the epitome of tractionning, both the faux - cabriolet (fixed-head coupe) and cabriolet (convertible) models are those to which most aspire; elegant, superbly proportioned and, regrettably, all too rare - Fred Anells estimates a total of 200 in existence today. The drooling editors in a moment of weakness decided to consecrate the issue entirely to a self-indulgent orgy of snippets and pictures of a few of these machines. The next issue will be more prosaic and earth-bound but not as beautiful to look at!

The roadster and coupe were conceived right from the start as an integral part of the FWD range announced in '34, although amongst the multitude of model types and designations which rapidly succeeded each other in the first few months of the Traction's production, these two appeared only in 7B (1529 c.c.) and 7S (1911 c.c.) guise. The prototypes and pre-production batches were built by the Henri Chapron coachbuilders who were to continue their association with Citroen well into the sixties. The cabriolet (designated 'roadster' because of its fold-flat 'screen continued until 1940, and the last coupe rolled out of the works during 1938. The continual programme of mechanical and cosmetic modifications applied to the saloons was, of course, adopted on these models simultaneously. They run approximately as follows:

Late '34 : front bonnet flap opening forwards instead of aft; single scuttle ventilator replaces pair.

Early '35 : horns incorporated behind grilles in wings rather than on bumper.

Salon '35 : painted grille replaces chromed one; outside chevrons; convex headlight lenses; wing-mounted No. plate replaces central one; single filler cap; telescopic dampers; Pausodyne engine mountings; cruciform back axle;

May '36 : Rack and pinion steering; column-mounted instruments.

June '37 : Horns disappear onto gearbox.

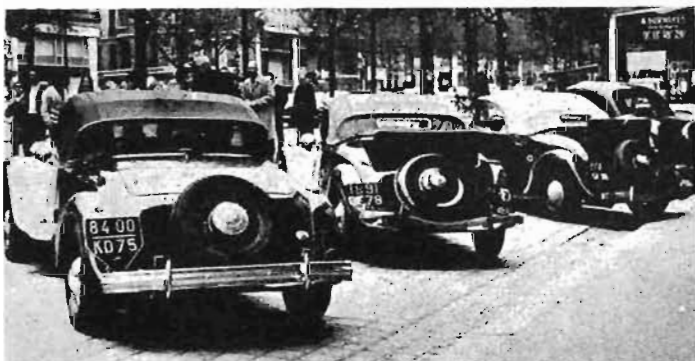
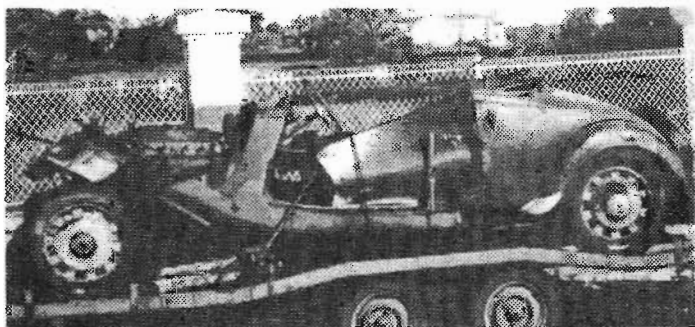
June '38 : Pilote wheels with larger wings.

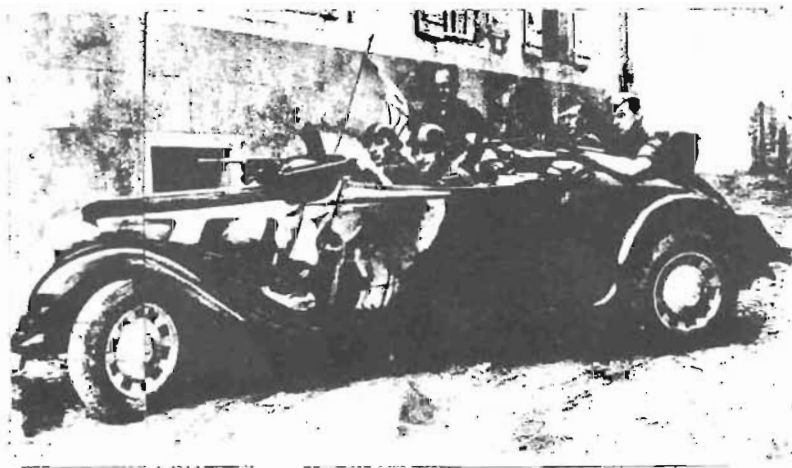
Both two-door bodies were fitted to Light Fifteen and Big Fifteen floorplans, and Slough carried a full range presumably - although I have never heard tell of an English Big Fifteen f.h.c. The cars were much more prone than the saloons to corrosion, and soon became banana-shaped when rusty hence their scarcity, with the result that wrecks such as the sad heap on the trailer (which is actually in two halves!) are being sold as restorable propositions.

LE ROADSTER

It is interesting to compare relative road test statistics between the two-doors and the saloons. For instance, 'Autocar' tested a Light Fifteen saloon of 1938 which tipped the scales at nearly one hundredweight lighter than the 1940 roadster whose test is reproduced in this issue. Why is this? can there have been that many strengthening fillets welded into the roadster coque to account for this differential? Perhaps an owner can enlighten us. Nevertheless, the drophead reached 50 in 19.6 seconds, a full second before its similarly-powered saloon counterpart: even with the windscreen up, the decreased air resistance might account for this. The turning circle, inexplicably is smaller on the roadster at 40', though even this is a full four feet more than the original 'Super Modern Twelve' tested in 1934 (early-type steering presumably accounts for this).

We have some fine roadsters within the club - the hardest used undoubtedly being Walford Bruen's splendidly period-looking SY 6178. Flying helmet secured, 'screen down, tonneau half-unzipped, he zooms down nonchalantly from Ayrshire for the occasional weekend meet, and epitomises the tractionniste spirit.

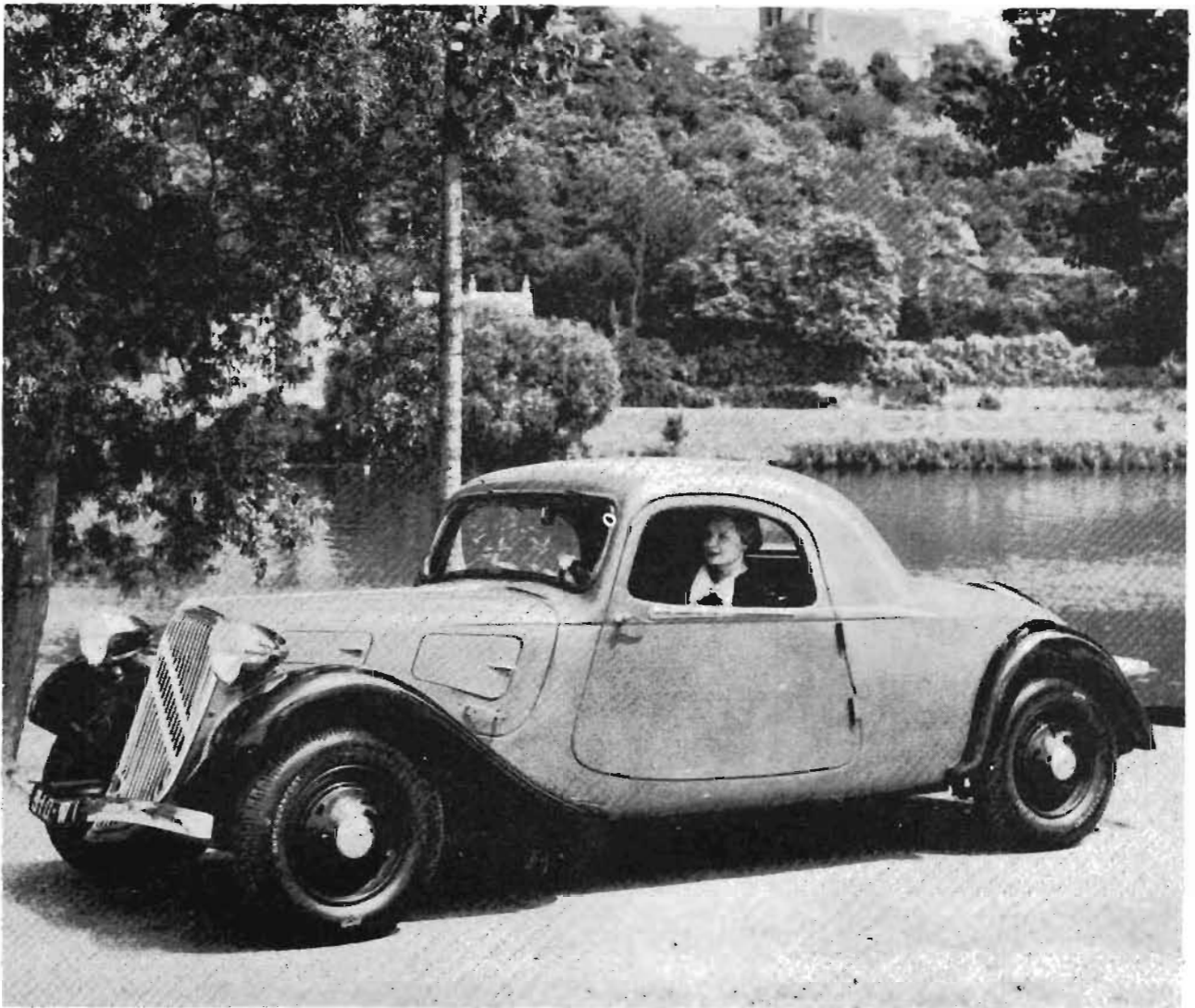
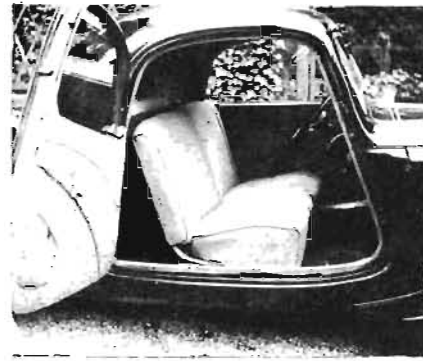


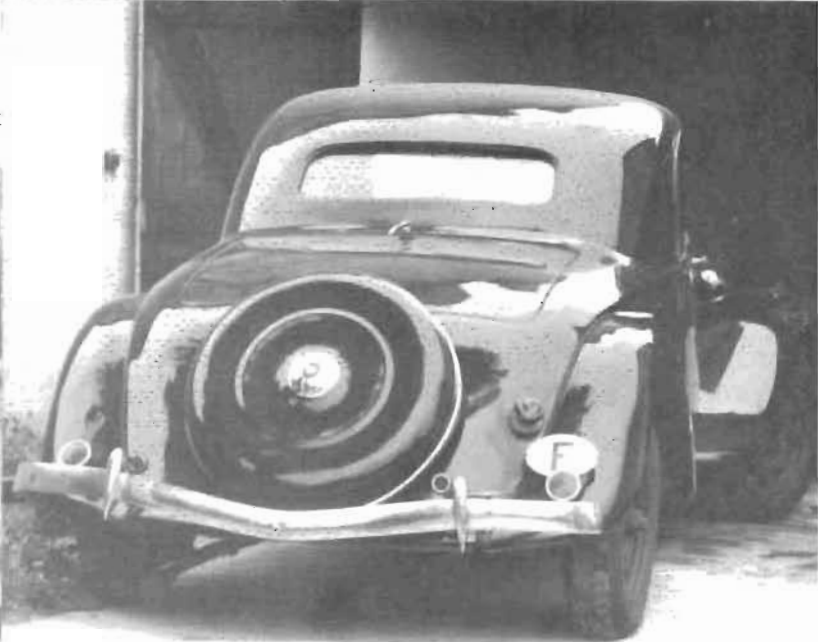
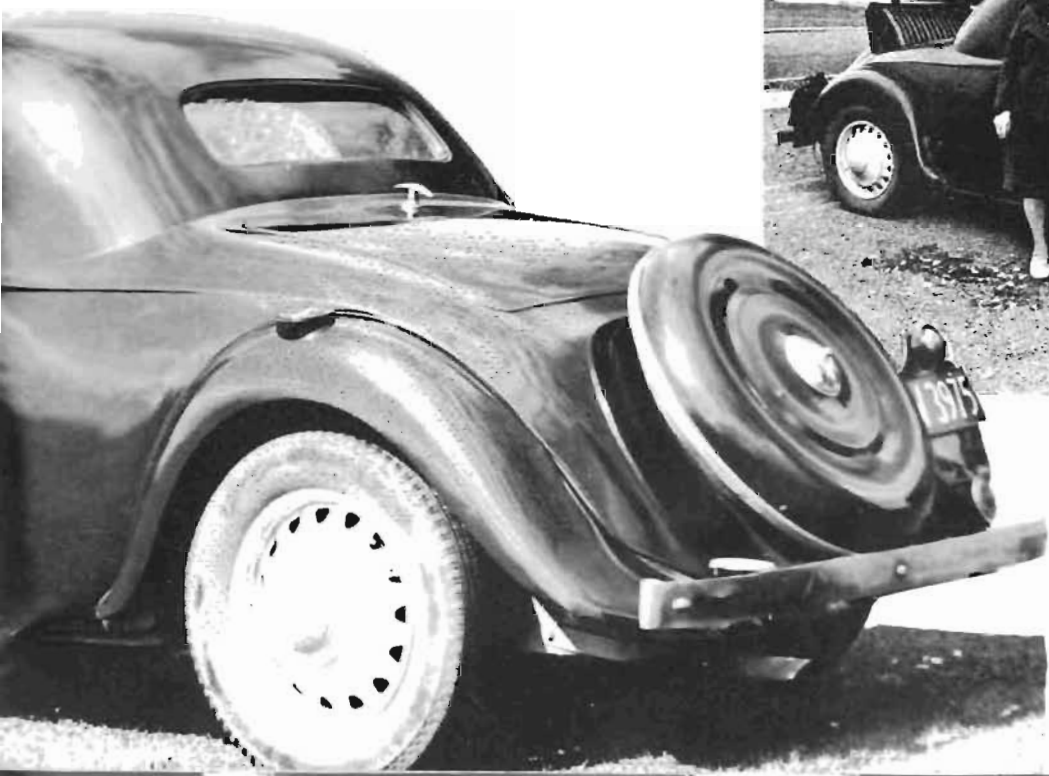


THE COUPE

This, the rarest of Traction body styles, was the kingpin of Citroen's numerous publicity stunts at the time of the introduction of the new model in the guise of the record-breaking Rosalie V11 (see 'On the Track' in this issue). Although the long rear deck looks odd from certain angles, these suave motorcars share the panache of the common or garden roadster together with a little extra elegance, (and the advantage of what must be the ultimate Mother-in-law seat!). As can be seen from the sales catalogue picture, the dickey was built with removable cushions, thereby giving an enormous luggage boot.

A Big Fifteen coupe I have never seen or read that any have survived - they were equipped with three-abreast bench seats as opposed to the smaller models individual ones. Three Slough coupes are known: Fred Annell's royal blue car (in process of rebuild - ready April), the unrestored car Dave Shepherd acquired last year (the front-hinged boot of which is thought to be a later modification), and the most famous of all, Mrs. Flora Smith's 1935 machine. This she bought brand new to replace a Saxon purchased in 1918 and has used it in her native New Zealand as her everyday transport for most of the years since. Now 93, her eyesight is failing, and we hear from both David and Fred that she is intending to sell this unique traction - though precisely because it is so widely known and because of the scarcity of the model, it is thought to be extremely expensive.

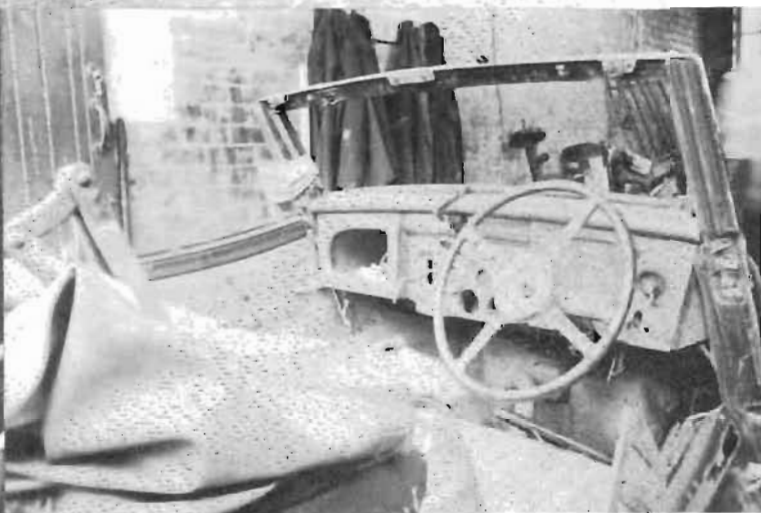
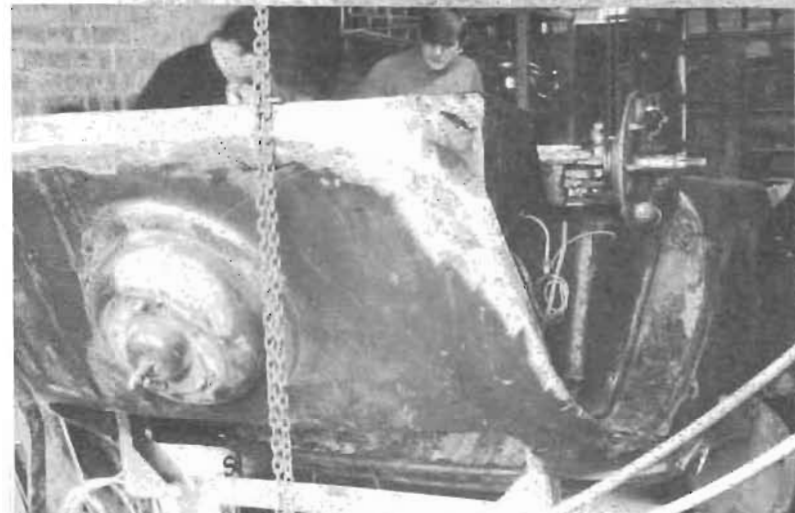


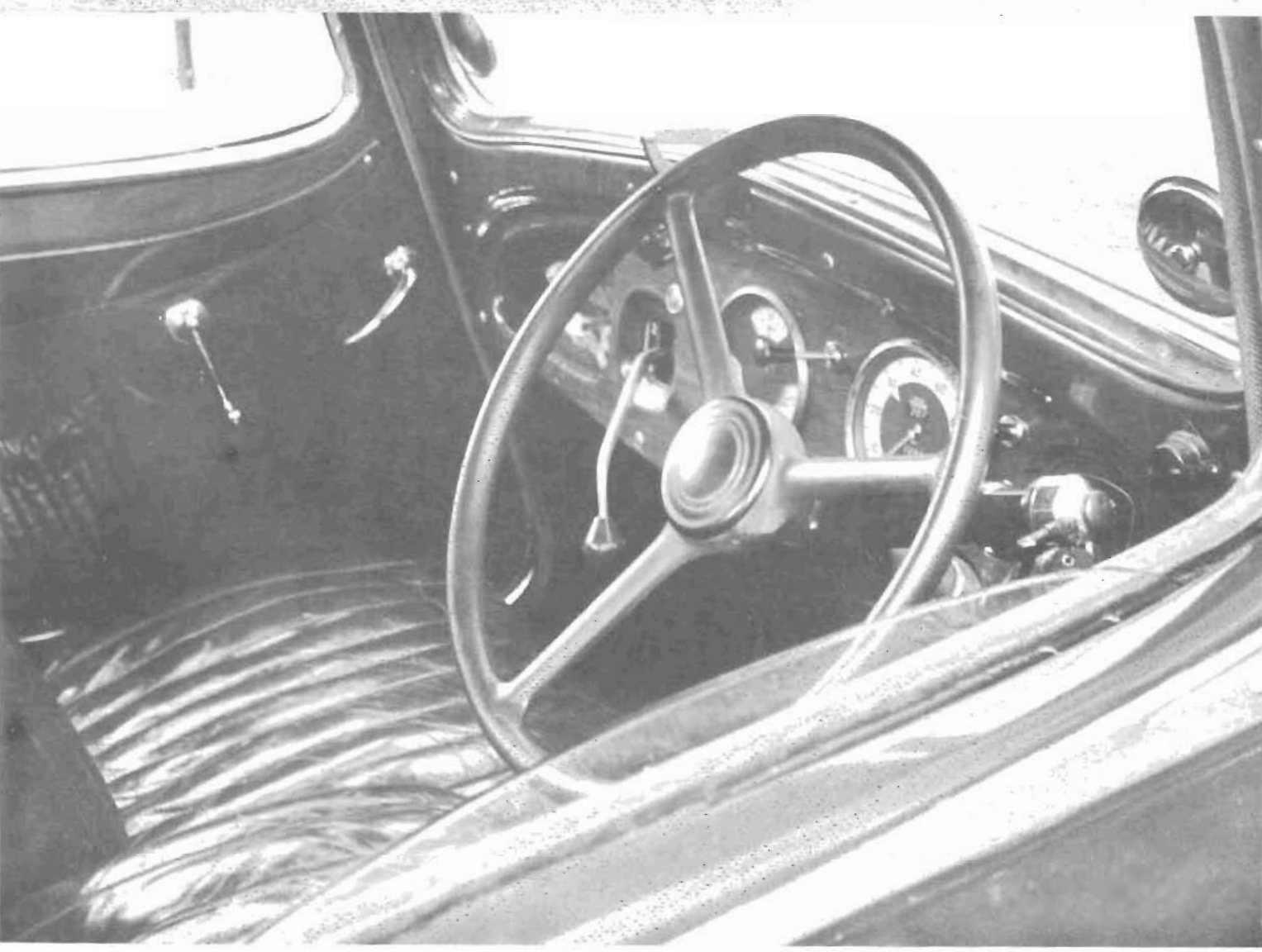
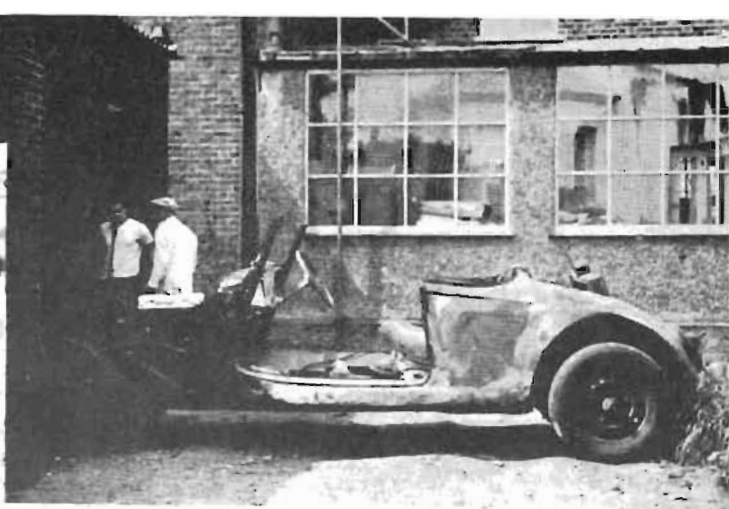


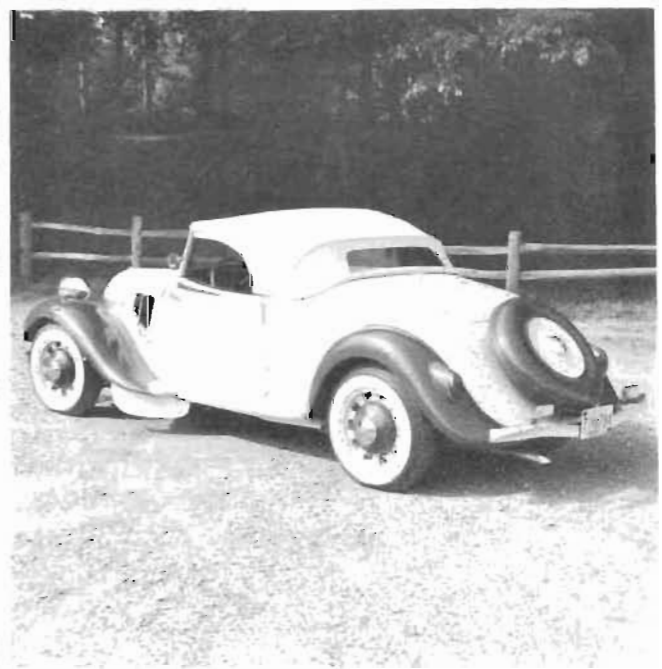
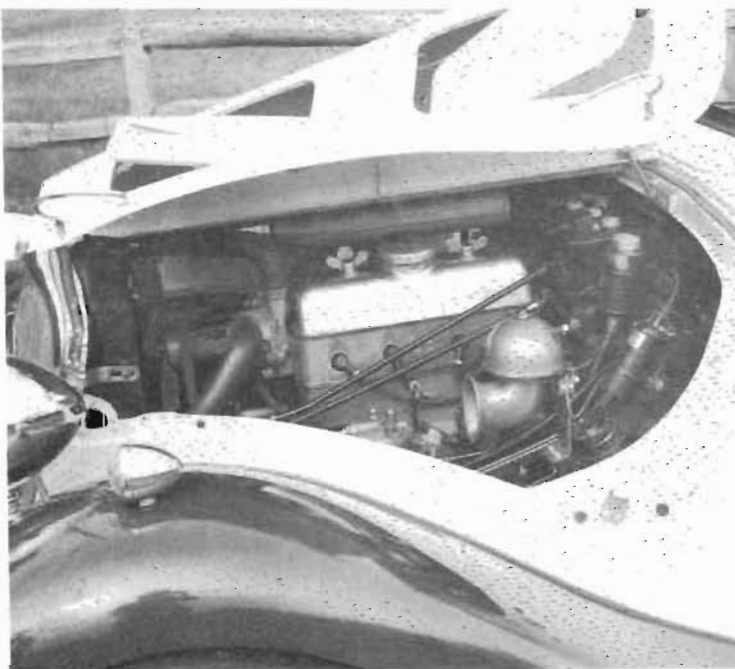
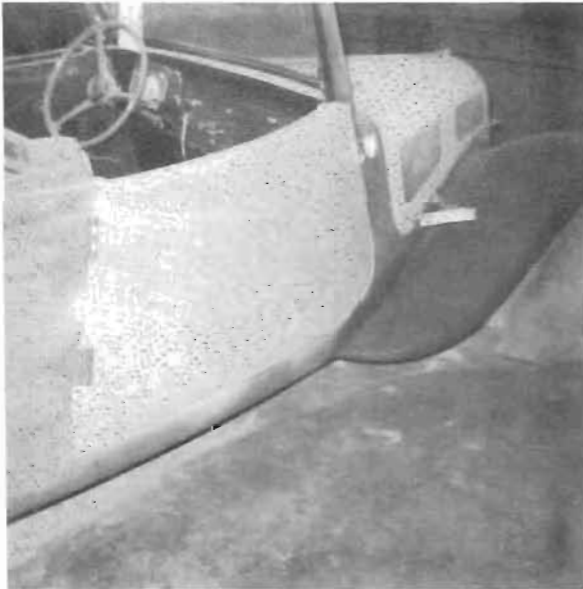
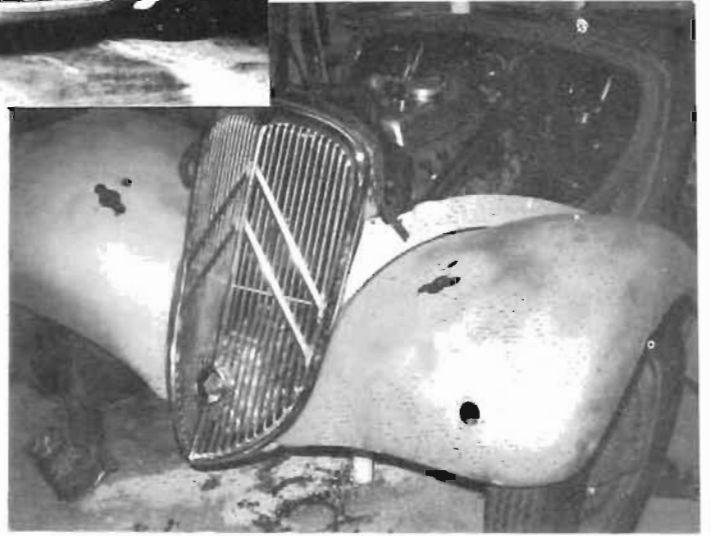
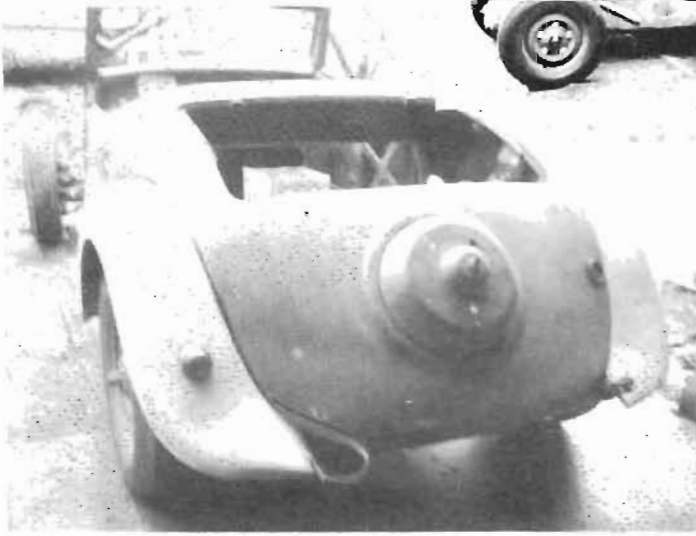
ANNELLS' ANNALS

The infuriating thing about Fred is the immensely covetable collection of Tractions he happens to own; not content with his run-of-the-mill pre- and post-war Light Fifteens, lurking in his lock-ups lie not only a '39 Big Six nine-seater limo, ENE 442, the blue f.h.c. shortly to re-emerge refurbished with entirely brand new mechanicals, but also the only known surviving Slough-built Big Fifteen roadster. It has a famous history, having been swapped for the team Roesch Talbot Brooklands car, BGH 23, thus passing into the hands of racing driver Mike Couper. (He has recorded his experiences with it in 'Motor Sport' of April 1951). We publish a little-known picture of this 1939/40 car as it was in its intermediate period, when owned by a certain R. Lassell. Since its earlier days, it has lost its 'Grand Luxe' trim - windtone horns, twin spots, etc., acquired Radwar spats, indicators new fawn hood, and Slough door handles as opposed to its original French 'curlies'. Those enormous headlamps have been retained, however.

As is well known, when Fred got the car it was floorless and in the terminal stages of decrepitude. His mammoth restoration, which included the fitting of a fabricated tubular steel chassis and grafting on of a Big Six floorpan, has been very extensively documented in the 'Citroenian' of 1969. Pressure of work has led to Fred's being unable to complete this daunting task as yet, though all the structural work is completed - the sole survivor saved. The coupe is shown below next to the Chairman's similar 1936 Paris Faux Cabriolet for comparison.







The accompanying pictures graphically illustrate the saga of the German-built roadster which now belongs to Steve Varso of South Bend, Indiana. And what a delectable looking machine it is! Steve has consistently been of great help since the beginning of the club, and supplied the information for the Big FWD and Budd articles in recent issues. Comment on the car seems superfluous, save for congratulations on an excellent restoration (and the fact that he needs a five-hole Pilote wheel for it - can anyone help?). He writes:

A friend of mine who does the 'Avanti' interiors helped me do the interior, the body and wheels are Volks Beige, fenders Audi brown. The Volkswagen taillights are a deliberate compromise to comply with local regulations. It took three years to complete. The original car was assembled in Cologne, (the motor was assembled in France in April of 1936 and sent to Cologne.)

I secured the car from Warren Chedister of Naperville, Illinois in 1972 although I kept my eye on it since 1965 it was a basket and ball case. After assembling (with the aid of pictures sent to me by Jacqueline Dupont of the Citroen factory - there was no manual available) it was assembled by the picture.

It handles just grand, rides like a Citroen and our local club has planned tours once a month during the summer, we have monthly winter meetings. Steve Varso.

SIGH - GONE!

The pristine roadster illustrated here now lives in Pennsylvania, but its history is an eventful one. The owner, Scott Ebert, was kind enough to supply copious details of the car, some of which we reprint below, and photocopies (unfortunately unreproducible) of its bizarre and garish appearance when he first bought it. He writes:

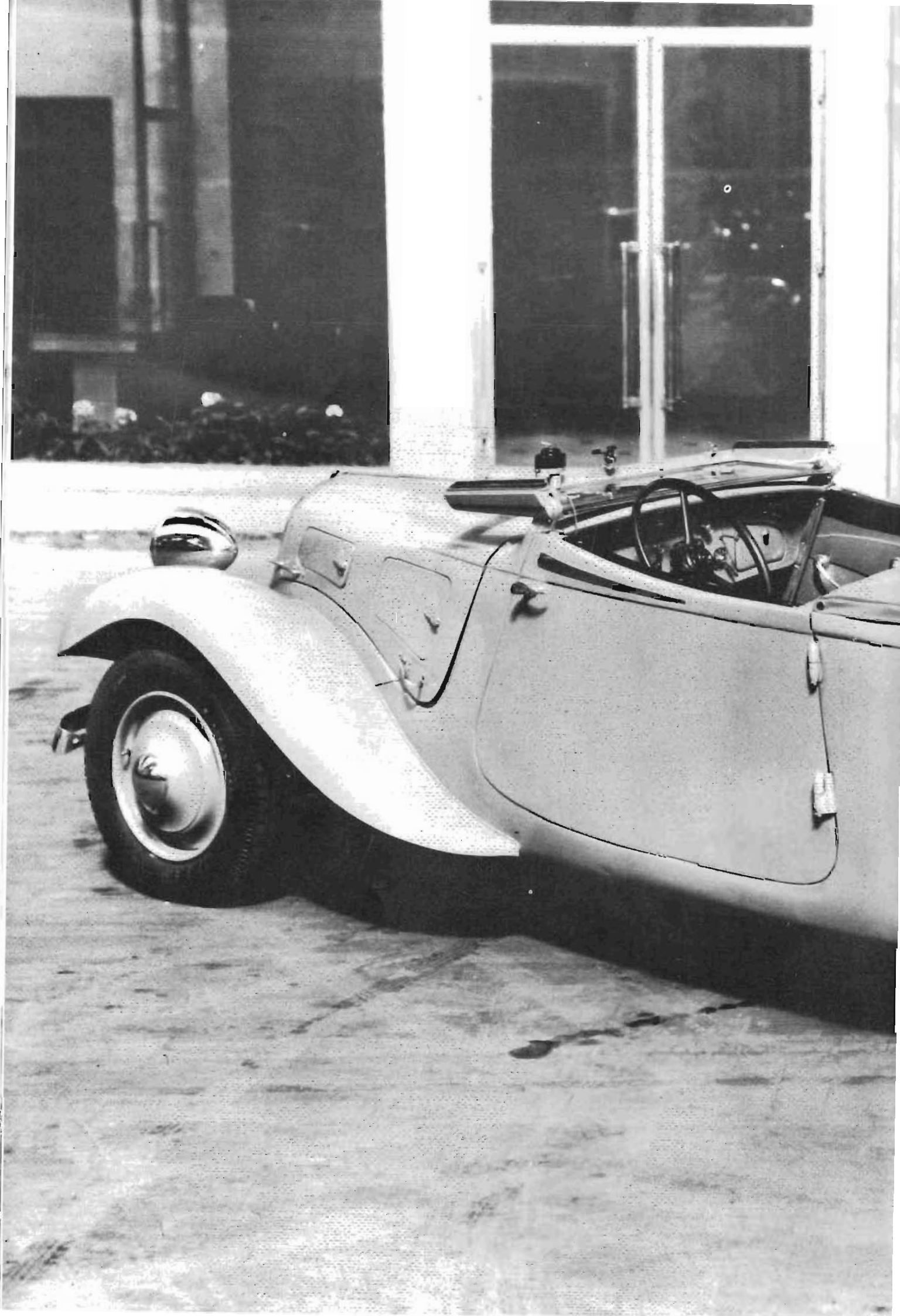
Purchased the car in Saigon, Sept 1974. I restored the car as close as possible to original. It had been customized with a 'Buffalo' Panhard-type nose piece and grill, heavy 15CV bumpers, 15CV wheels and hubcaps, recessed outside door handles, large tail-lites, and turn signal lites mounted on the front and rear fenders, heavy large chrome head-lites, a modified chevrolet steering wheel and dashboard including instruments plus chrome strips running the length of the car on each side. It was painted a bronze color. The car is a 7C model (Serial No.093268) manufactured in 1937. It has been restored to original except for the engine which is 11CV and the hood which is from a postwar 11CV. It was assembled in France. The registration is Saigon. It has pilote wheels and 'Robri' alum-

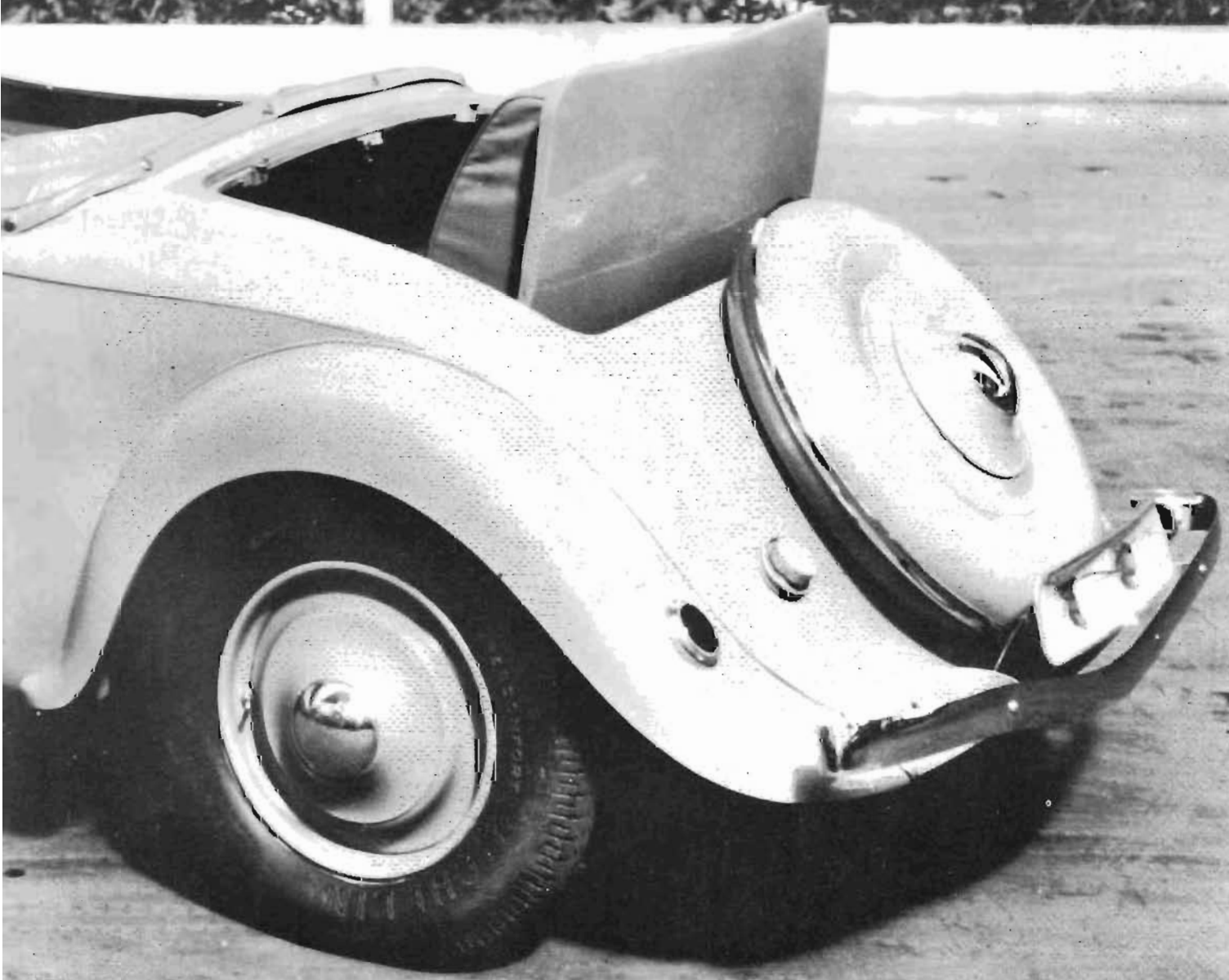
inum accessories as fender covers. A drop-down trunk rack was made up in Saigon which folds up against the spare wheel cover when not in use. Flipper type turn indicators are installed. In addition TR3 Lucas tail-lites have been modified to also be used as signal indicators. The battery box has been relocated and recessed in to the right side of the firewall. The old battery box has a cover now and is used to hold tools, the battery can now be removed without removing the hood. The paint is 1968 Citroen dark green for the body with black fenders and yellow wheels.

I brought the car back from Saigon in March 1975. At that time there were 5 roadsters in Saigon we were restoring but none of them got out before the communist take-over. I drive the car regularly, it cruises nicely at 95 - 100 k.m.h. We have another Roadster in the area, it is one I brought back from Cannes in 1960. It is a 1939 Normale 11 CV Roadster with pilote wheels. The paint is burgundy body, black fenders, yellow wheels. We are also restoring a 1960 H van traction, a 1953 BL Sedan 11CV, and a 1939 Peugeot 402B Sedan.'

As a postscript to this story, we also received information from Mike Chilton, of Springfield, Oregon, who owns two roadsters which unfortunately he was unable to export from Vietnam before the collapse; one is a 1938 car, and even more interestingly, the other bears a 1948 chassis number with factory bodywork (therefore not a 'special'). All the records indicate that Quai de Javel made no roadsters or coupes post-war; perhaps remaining cabriolet coques were built up as complete cars and quietly unloaded on the Indo-Chinese concessionaires. Anyway, Mike knows of the whereabouts of eight more roadsters in Vietnam similarly abandoned, and comments that 'with the price of gasoline as it is in that country, they probably haven't moved since then...' An unhappy plight for the owners. (The chairman already has his visa application in the post)







It was the sight of the photograph reproduced here of the squat and purposeful mystery racer number 47 that first persuaded the writer to join the CCC; the sober-coloured, lightened shell devoid of all gimcrackery, the beautiful louvred bonnet, the skimpy cycle wings and aero screens, still send a



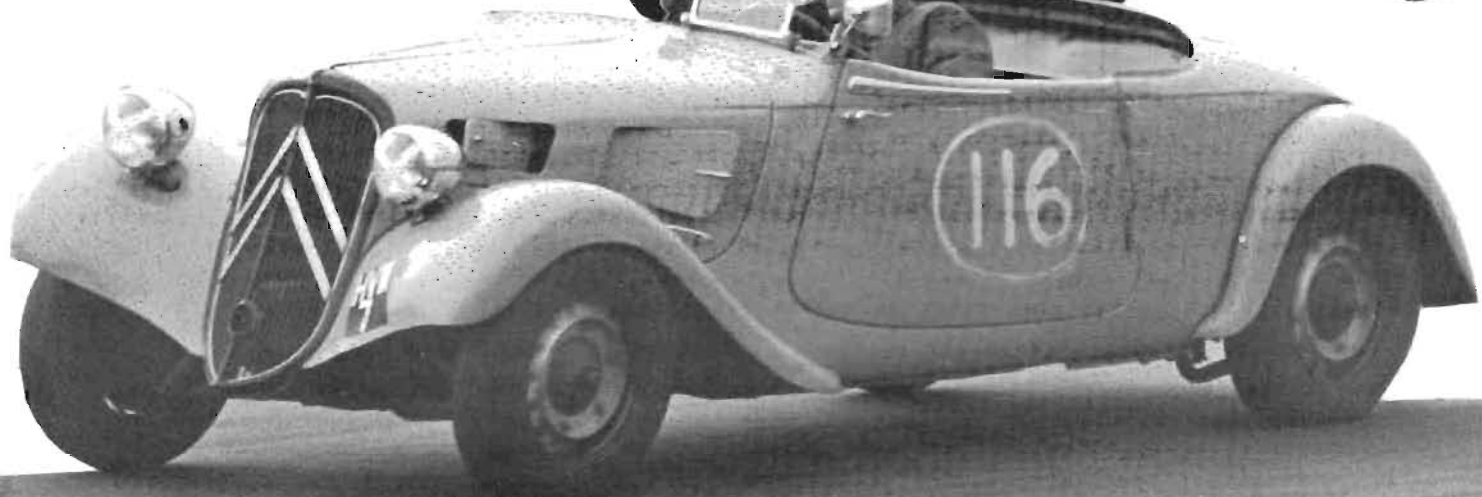
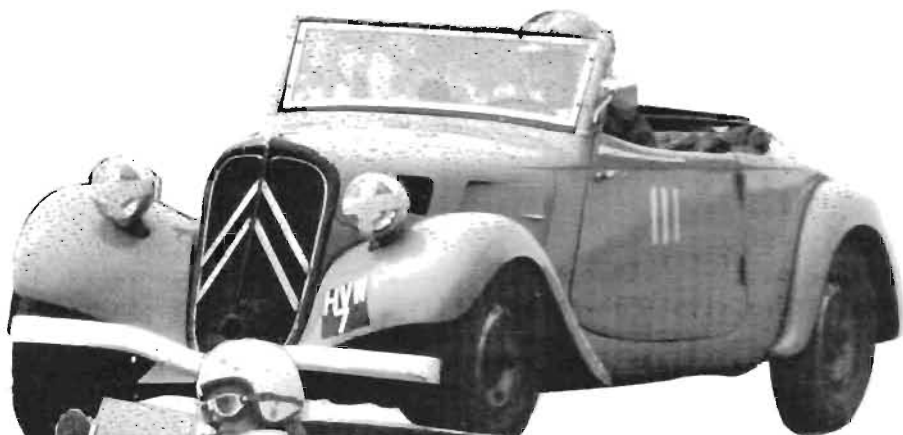
tingle down my spine. Unfortunately, we know nothing of the car or the people involved whatsoever, except to say that it is probably American. The Swedes were obviously similarly impressed, since they have chosen this Traction as the logo of their 'B11 Klubben'.

It is from their excellent magazine that we reproduce Fig. 1, a much modified example which we can tell you little about, exasperatingly, because, try as we might, we can't find anybody who can translate Swedish! Apart from the cut-

away doors and the bolt-on grille cowl (one of a selection of such accessories offered by various firms pre-war) the most puzzling deviation from original is the bonnet arrangement. It looks not to be based on the standard component at all - probable aluminium - and is much louvred, but how does it open? The rubber retaining clips seem to be in mid-air, unless there is a hidden joint-line dividing the two tones of the colour scheme, and the bonnet opens alligator-fashion from the scuttle. It will be noted that the intermediate panel between bonnet side and the 'horns' of the front of the coque are missing or rather incorporated into the bonnet sides.

The Paris-Nice rally car (45) is similarly equipped with cut-away doors, though on this car they are flimsy-looking makeshift lightweight affairs. Yet more louvres, too big ones in place of the side flaps, and wheels identical to those fitted to Dr. Sellers' racer often featured in these pages. The svelte fully-dressed dark car is participating in a Swedish winter rally, and travel-stained No. 39 with bulbous nose and bonnet flaps replaced by wire mesh competed successfully in the 1938 Monte Carlo Rally.

Seen storming past the Montlhery pits and timing apparatus, the Yacco Oil-sponsored coupe baptised 'Rosalie' 7' took to the circuit at 1.30 on the 17th July 1934 and, bar oil and tyre changes, didn't stop again till the 23rd, having covered 16,000 kms. in the interim at an average speed of 112k.p.h. (including stops) - 10,000 miles at 70 m.p.h.!



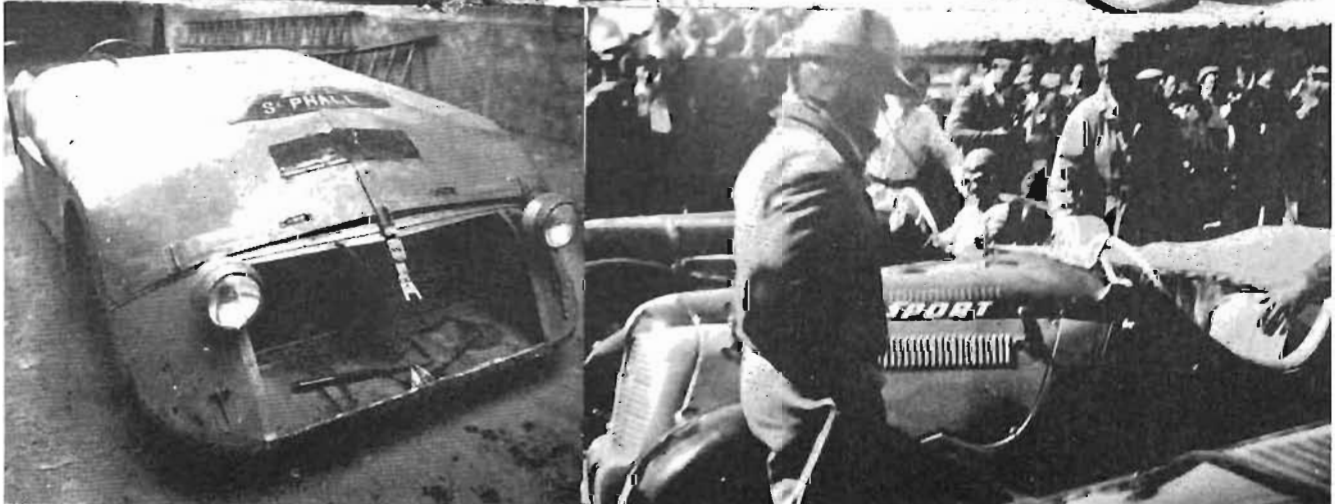


Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 4,



Fig 3.



The story of the ten or so factory bodied six-cylinder roadsters is dealt with in issue No. 3, - the pre-war cars built up for the Michelines, and those assembled from surplus new shells after the war. One is alleged to lurk in the Rochetaille museum, another in the hands of Walter Mead last heard of in Winnetka, Illinois, and the best known, which we illustrate here, belongs to M. Denys Joannon in Paris. Although a May, '39 car, it has later bumpers and indicators and is equipped with wire wheels. (The car behind it in the picture is, incidentally, a Panhard 'Dynamic' - more of this in a future issue).

The two white cars on this page were the product of Swiss coachbuilders. The heavier-looking machine with the outrigged trafficators and front-hinged doors was executed by Worbluafen in 1949 (the same model as the expensively auctioned ex-Roquet collection car). We find its styling rather English-looking and ponderous compared to the Langenthal-bodied example (see also elsewhere in this No.)

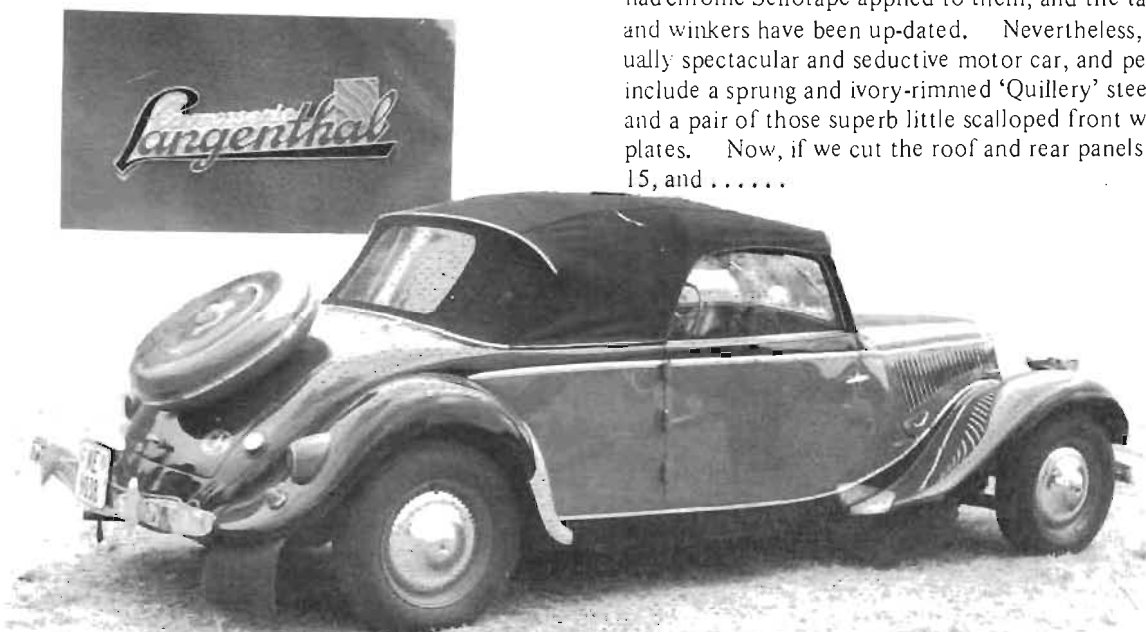
No less hideous is the home-made Six coupe in Fig 2. John and Jody Dodson discovered this car last year in France. It is based on a post-war Six saloon with three feet of hood taken out and the two ends mated up again. The door was made by retaining a standard front bottom half and screen pillar and welding on the top rear quarter of the window surround of a back door - goodness knows what glass it has in it! Although the result looks passable from the angle shown, the fact that the relatively upright saloon roof rear quarters are used robs the end product of the elegance of a proper coupe when viewed from behind. Very much at the other end of the economic scale is the state tourer pictured in Fig 3. - a late fifties presidential car built on a Six floorpan by Henri Chapron, and Fig 4 equally indistinguishable as a Traction is the seductive SWB 'Squale' sports coupe, from the pen of Fioni.

The car featured here was first seen in England at Kenilworth last year, during which trip it consumed its own gearbox (and was so ably tended to by BWB of Brixton). The owner of the beast, Rene Mauron, found it some years ago under several tons of wood in a local Swiss timber yard, and restored it himself.

It was first built by the Langenthal coachworks in 1951 and is one of the few of their small post-war production run to survive: another example of their work is shown elsewhere in this issue amongst the drophead Sixes. Although both share the same panelwork aft of the scuttle, the 'Quinze' is equipped not only with running boards but also with completely different front and rear wings, the former incorporating faired-in headlights.

The writer was surprised to notice, when crawling underneath this stunningly well-proportioned red and black motor car, the sunken and reinforced floor section behind the front seats which characterise the LWB 'Familiale' 9-seater cars (it accommodated the three occasional seats when folded flat). Langenthal presumably used this type of shell as the basis of their cars, rather than that of a normal 11B because Citroen must have used heavier gauge steel and more extensive strengthening in the floorpan of these models, in their case because of the excessive wheelbase of the Familiale, in Langenthal's because, although they were to 'cut and shut' the chassis considerably, the body to be fitted was devoid of any stressed roof panels.

The quality of the body is extremely high; the outer door skins are of aluminium, but the remainder is of steel and is extensively cross-braced internally, and the fit of the panels is superb. There are a few deviations from the original specification on this particular car - the spare M. Mauron has mounted externally, enclosed in two standard wheel covers fixed back to back, the wheeltrims and headlight bodies he has had chromed, the sills and louvres have had chrome Sellotape applied to them, and the taillights and wipers have been up-dated. Nevertheless, it is a visually spectacular and seductive motor car, and period extras include a sprung and ivory-rimmed 'Quillery' steering wheel and a pair of those superb little scalloped front wing kick-plates. Now, if we cut the roof and rear panels off our Big 15, and



The fully folding head fitted to the early 1934 saloon in Fig 5 was of the type offered on all four-door models by the firm A.E.A.T. until well into the early fifties, as the similarly bodied black car shown. Erect, it seems to give a somewhat Mercedes-like appearance, but it is an extremely professional job, with the hood harmonising well with the lines of the car - though goodness knows how and where the additional strengthening is built in to compensate for the loss of the stressed top. Note too the luggage rack on the later car -- and the superb number plate signwriting. The rear window is, I think, glass.



The effeminate Light Fifteen roadster 'Concourse d'Elegance' car has been cobbled out of the grille of a Rosengart Austin Seven. I have never seen the type of proprietary bumper and hubcaps that are fitted to this roadster, though I have noticed contemporary adverts for the chromium-plated spoke-covers for the Pilote wheels,

Lucien Rosengart died last month; he will be remembered for his involvement with Citroen in the epoch of the A and B models, the early twenties, his building under license of the Adler 'Trumpf' f.w.d. cars, Austins and various V-8 engine hybrids. The car shown in the field, door invitingly open, is one of his lesser-known achievements: the Rosengart 'Supertraction', based entirely upon Citroen mechanicals, but clothed in a carrosserie entirely of his own design. Drool

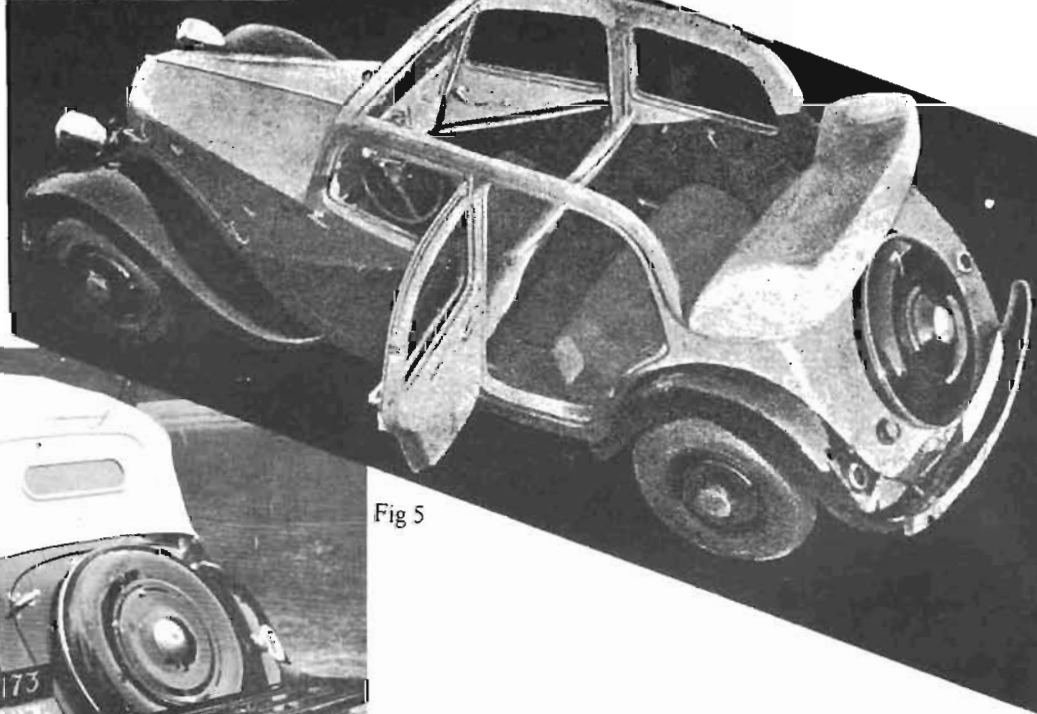


Fig 5



Correspondence

All letters to the Editor, Sutton House Cottage,
Sutton House, Iford, Nr. Lewes, Sussex.

THE TOC : An Anniversary.

An Autumn teaparty at Mongers Farm, where almost by accident the assembled company were traction-mad to a man, reminiscences on the part of Fred Annells, then present: a few 'wouldn't it be nice ifs? . . . and the Traction Owners Club became an obsessional gleam in a few eyes . . . The details evolved more solidly over pints of beer in the Turbridge Wells area, where little conspiratorial groups were to be seen huddled in the corners of pubs in the Pantiles, hatching plans with the revolutionary fervour of Russian mensheviks.

The first thing was to establish whether there was a demand at all for a separate club for Tractions Avant, to this end, we put an advertisement in 'Exchange & Mart', and from the response received, we had no doubt that we should go ahead and produce a pilot issue of a magazine devoted to tractions, and attempt to form a club. This was where we began to tread on a few CCC toes, and relations were, for a month or two, fairly rancorous; on one side, the attitude was that we had no reason to wish to separate our activities from those of other Citroen owners; on the other, that the sooner we effected a total break the better. Both viewpoints softened considerably after the first dust of battle had died down, agreement was reached on an affiliation which could only benefit both clubs by a renewal of goodwill, and we remain compatible bed-fellows.

In summarising our first year of existence, I think that without sounding too complacent we can say that as a club we have already achieved a certain amount to be proud of, not the least of which is just getting the traction noticed in motoring circles. The increasing contact that has taken place between individual owners is, I hope, a growing trend, and a very valuable one.

The magazine is probably our most evident achievement, and the editors hope that it will go from strength to strength in the future: we have received a growing pile of tremendously interesting (and erudite!) contributions from readers recently.

High spots of the past year would have to include that amazing convoy that set off across the Midlands to Donington Motor Museum from Kenilworth, Mr. Bibendum picking his way over happy prostrate wine-filled figures at the French picnic in September; and the delicious and uproarious Christmas nosh-up. May there be many such events to come . . . Rhodri Prys-Jones's Welsh Weekend promises to be one such.

On the spares front, we have formed a useful liaison with the Dutch Club, who have the sort of finance and facilities which we can never hope to achieve with our much smaller membership, and their spares shop is open to our members. Our own spares committee have been hard at work digging up finds here and there, and we have passed the information on through the classified pages of the magazine. We have bought our first small lot of spares, and hope to gradually build this up.

Finally, it only remains to thank every member of the club for having supported the TOC in its first year, and to welcome all those who have joined more recently. We have, as you can see, a full social diary for 1977, and I hope that everyone who can come to events, will! To all our members THANK YOU and, (a little late) - HAPPY NEW TRACTIONNING YEAR! G.W. R.W.

Dear Editor,

Michael Sedgwick's letter in Floating Power No.6 prompts me to write in the hope that he or anyone can explain a couple of peculiarities about my traction; as after its purchase I began to discover that it is a most unusual car, at least in the U.K.

The car is a 1951 French built Big 15 'Performance' with R.H.D., a large boot and roll top sun roof!

I have found out that the first owner had bought the car direct from the Paris factory at the end of his diplomatic service and imported it privately into Britain. Although basically French, it has R.H.D., a speedometer calibrated in m.p.h., and a mixed electrical system of Lucas/S.E.V/Ducillier components. It has been suggested that it is of the type built for the Swedish market, but why m.p.h? Can anyone confirm this or propose an alternative?



The other two features were added by the second owner, the boot being the most interesting. This is a big boot conversion on a small boot car, and appears to be a standard accessory. The rear floor being extended over the bumper brackets and the boot lid is hinged below the rear waist line, rather than above. The lid is also indented around the petrol filler cap, and has a dipped as opposed to a flat base. Are there anymore of these about and who was the manufacturer?

The roof is a simple tin opener job, carried out in a professional manner by the second owner. The hole extends from just forward of the rear passengers heads to the windscreen, and is almost as wide as the screen. The cloth cover is fixed at the front and press studded around the edge, its shape being maintained by a removable cross member above the central door column, which fits on the rear parcel shelf when not in use. What this does for the cars rigidity I don't know but it seems satisfactory, and it is a pleasure to drive in hot weather.

The more I think about it the more I am amazed that coincidence should give this one car these features, and to cap it all the first owner sent me the original factory inspection slip, which was stuck to the car when it left the factory; so it even has a birthday (23.8.51.) scribbled in galtic pencil.

Any answers to the above questions would be much appreciated and I'm only sorry that MLP 627 is not seen around more often, but a gearbox in pieces and an unsympathetic bank manager are keeping it in the garage.
Tom Cockeram.

The AUTOCAR ROAD TESTS

OWING to the fact that the Citroen known in this country is the result of Anglo-French combination, it remains as one of the very few cars of basically foreign extraction that is still available in any numbers to buyers here. In view of the position of economic reciprocity prevailing between France and Great Britain, and because the whole building up of the car concerned (from major components imported from France), down to its final finishing and equipment, represents a considerable proportion of British labour as well as materials, the Citroen occupies a special place at the moment and does not have to be regarded as simply "a foreign car."

Interest has been added to this particular test of the Light Fifteen roadster model, first by the fact that in the past only saloon models have been tried, and, secondly, because the car in question was taken over brand-new from the Slough factory and the running-in process carried out prior to the performance figures being recorded and final opinions formed.

The roadster is a type that in some respects is essentially a Continental style of body. It is neither strictly an ordinary open two-seater with hood nor a drop-head coupé. With its winding glass windows in the doors it is more substantial than the former, yet less elaborate than the latter.

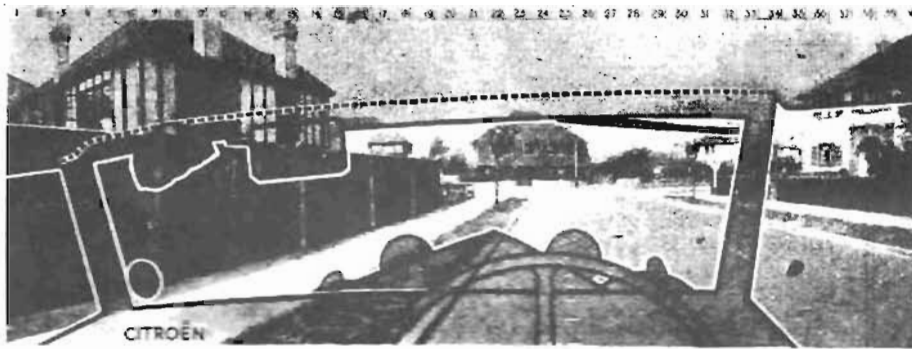
It opens up as an admirable fresh-air car for settled fine-weather use, and for the rest of the time provides satisfactory all-weather protection for the inside seats. For general purposes it is really only a two-seater; there is a roomy external dickey seat, comfortably upholstered, but carrying the usual disadvantages of such a seat. Except for the finest weather, when passengers could travel there, the space concerned is chiefly useful for luggage. When the action of the various folding arms has been grasped it is not difficult to put the hood up and down, and it has the merit of not flapping even in a quite high wind.

In appearance this car is appealing, the lines being smart, and in general "feel" on

No. 1,323.—Citroen Light Fifteen Roadster

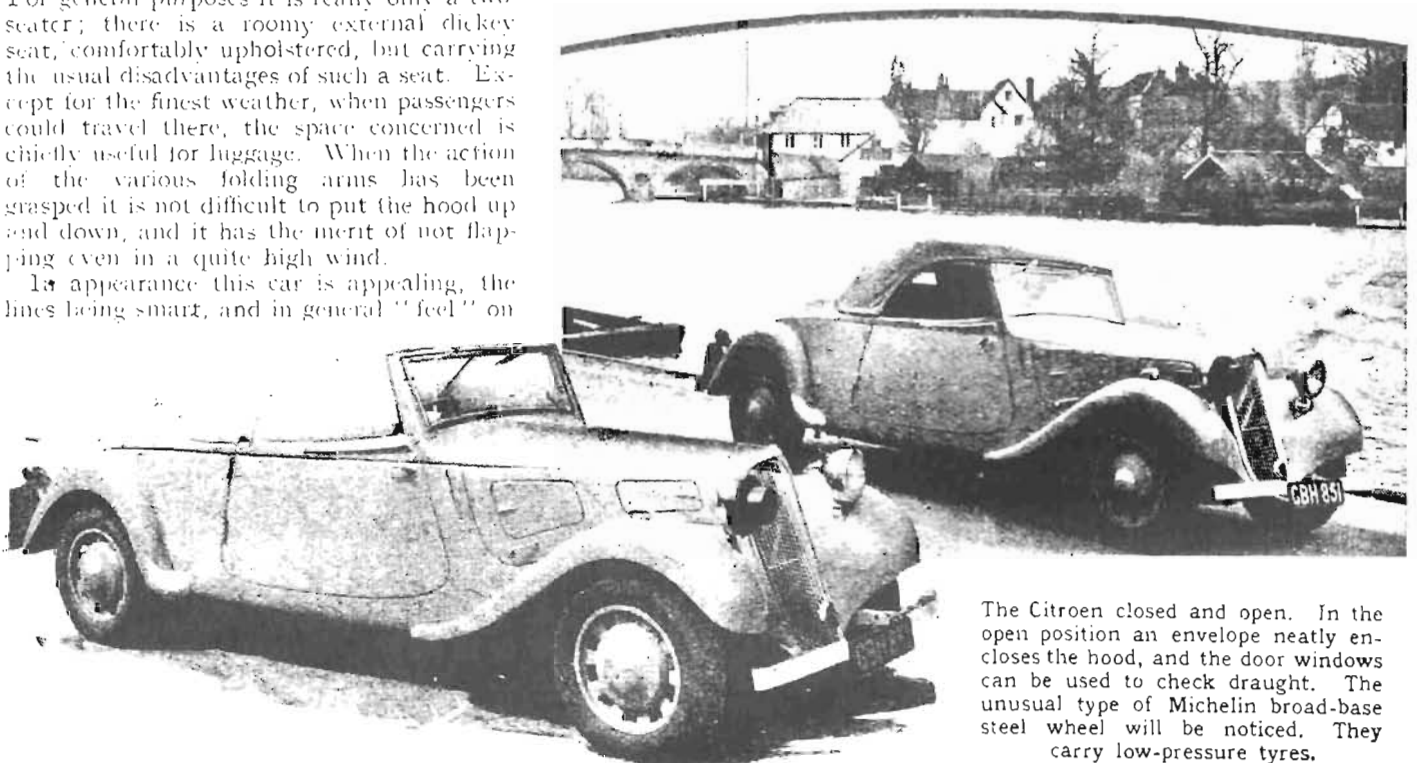
the road as well as in performance it has much of the sports machine about it. This impression is largely contributed to by the tautness of the special torsion-bar suspension that has been a feature of the front-wheel drive Citroen for several years. The front wheels are independently sprung. An outstanding suggestion of safety is afforded, and few, if any, cars can be cornered faster within their limits if a driver's tastes lie in that direction.

It would be possible to handle the machine for a considerable time and not realise that the drive is to the front wheels. As deliberate tests have shown, no difficulty arises within the performance available according to whether corners are taken pulling or on the overrun, irrespective of whether the roads are wet or dry. One can cut the throttle in and out with impunity. The present-day f.w.d. Citroen will restart on any gradients that the majority of owners are likely to encounter. There is no abnormal pull on the steering account to the drive; also, it is not noticeably heavy steering, and there is caster action.



The bonnet is not obstructive to driving vision, and the near-side view is good. Both wings can be seen. The windscreen is shown by the Visibility Chart to be fairly wide, but shallow, which results in top vision being somewhat cut off; the screen pillars are not disconcertingly thick.

Almost the only clue for those not acquainted with the design would be the unconventional gear lever, projecting through the instrument board and working vertically in an open gate. The connection from this lever runs, of course, to the front of the power unit, where the gear box is situated. The synchromesh provided on top and second gears works very well.



The Citroen closed and open. In the open position an envelope neatly encloses the hood, and the door windows can be used to check draught. The unusual type of Michelin broad-base steel wheel will be noticed. They carry low-pressure tyres.

Advantages deriving from the unorthodox construction include reduction of weight. It will be remembered that there is no separate chassis frame, integral or unitary welded-up construction being employed, and, as this design was introduced some six years ago, it was one of the earliest examples of the practice now increasingly adopted.

The favourable power-to-weight ratio results in lively acceleration, including a brisk top gear pick-up in spite of the quite high ratio of 4.3 to 1. This, in turn, makes for ease of running at the higher speeds. The natural rate on a main-road journey is around 50 m.p.h., which the car holds with an entire absence of effort, having always the reserve to allow the speed to be increased usefully, and taking the gradients with little reduction in speed.

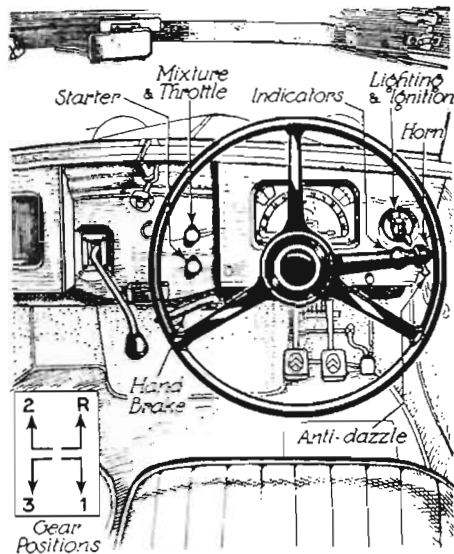
As one moves off from rest there is a highly satisfactory impression of liveliness even with moderate use of first and second gears in the style that commands itself at the moment for reasons of economy, and within obvious limits the faster the Citroen is driven the better it runs.

It would be hard, indeed impossible, to load the engine as being a four-cylinder—and a fairly large one—anywhere between 30 m.p.h. and the maximum. At lower speeds it is not far from a suggestion of snatch, and at all points as far as the setting of this particular car was concerned, 20 m.p.h. on top gear was just about the lowest speed pleasantly maintained without changing down.

Under acceleration there was slight pinking, but never enough to be disturbing. Consumption tests were made at various speeds and over different types of roads. Once again it was established that better results could be obtained at speeds around 50 m.p.h. if a moderate amount of coasting were used than at a steady 30 m.p.h., and more than the reading in excess of 30 m.p.g. was obtained in favourable conditions—a creditable performance for a 2-litre car.

There was not sufficient room to work up to the proper normal maximum speed. The mileage covered at this stage was still insufficient for the car as a whole to be in the best condition. The highest speedometer reading reached was 74, the instrument having an optimistic error of slightly less than 5.5 m.p.h. at 70; the discrepancy ranged between 4 and 5 m.p.h. right down to 10.

Even the more limited running allowed by present circumstances gives a clear idea of the average speed capabilities on long journeys of pre-war type. The steady speed which can be



held largely irrespective of bends is an important factor in this. Tyre scream does not occur when cornering fast providing that the pressures are kept well up.

It is a car which gives the driver the feeling of being closely in touch with the control. The handling is not in the least vague. The steering is quite high-g geared, slightly less than 2½ turns of the wheel being necessary from lock to lock, and small movements of the wheel count.

Again, the Lockheed hydraulic braking system is extremely good. A dead-straight and very rapid emergency pull-up can be made without applying heavy pedal pressure, and for general use the braking effect obtained is exceptionally smooth and well graduated.

Even when a pull-up has been left a little late the car can be brought up with certainty "on the dotted line." The pedals are unusual in being of what may be called piano type as opposed to the normal forward pushing design. It is desirable to depress the clutch fully for quiet engagement of first gear when starting.

The driver sits well up to the wheel, receiving firm support from the separate type of seat. The gear lever is more convenient than might be supposed, but the pull-and-push type of hand-brake lever involves a reach forward.

Advantages of the car's layout are the flat floor and the fact that the near-side door can be as easily used by the driver as the off-side.

The Citroen torsion-bar suspension is exceptionally efficient. That this springing makes all road surfaces, apart from the extreme, seem of nearly the same quality is very much a part of the steady, easy swinging along that is a pre-dominating impression of this car's travel. Wavy roads, setts, level crossings, none of them causes shock. Few suspensions as well combine stability with comfort.

General arrangement, finish and equipment conform to the British pattern for reasons mentioned at the outset. The 1940 model, which this roadster represents, has an attractive polished wood instrument board, and the leather upholstery is of obviously good quality. Satisfactory access is given to the engine by a normally hinged bonnet. Instant starting from cold is obtained.

A simple form of interior heater is fitted, a conduit the mouth of which can be closed and opened from inside the car leading warm air from the radiator. The arrangement of horn and traffic indicators switch on a steering column arm is very convenient.

DATA FOR THE DRIVER (Wartime Test on Pool Petrol.) 10-5-40

CITROEN LIGHT FIFTEEN ROADSTER.

PRICE, with two-four-seater roadster body £298. Tax, £18 15s.
 RATING: 15.08 h.p., four cylinders, o.h.v., 78 x 100 mm., 1,911 c.c.
 WEIGHT, without passengers, 21 cwt. 3 qr. 3 lb. LB. PER C.C.: 1.28.
 TYRE SIZE: 165 x 400 on bolt-on pressed-steel wheels.
 LIGHTING SET: 12-volt, Automatic voltage control.
 TANK CAPACITY: 9 gallons; approx. fuel consumption, 25-29 m.p.g.
 TURNING CIRCLE: (L. and R.): 40ft. GROUND CLEARANCE: 7in.

ACCELERATION				SPEED	
Overall gear ratios	From steady m.p.h. of			Mean maximum timed speed over ¼ mile	m.p.h.
	10 to 30	20 to 40	30 to 50	—	—
4.30 to 1	11.7 sec.	11.8 sec.	14.2 sec.	Best timed speed over ¼ mile	—*
7.50 to 1	6.5 sec.	8.8 sec.	—	Speeds attainable on indirect gears (normal and maximum):—	
13.10 to 1	—	—	—	1st	15-26
From rest to 30 m.p.h. through gears	—	7.3 sec.	—	2nd	39-48
To 50 m.p.h. through gears	—	19.6 sec.	—		
To 60 m.p.h. through gears	—	34.9 sec.	—		

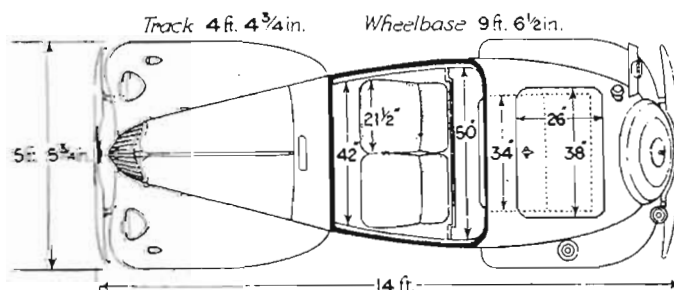
* Insufficient timing run available.

BRAKE TEST: Mean stopping distance from 30 m.p.h. (dry concrete), 33.5ft.

WEATHER: Dry, warm; wind light, S.W.

Performance figures for acceleration are the means of several runs in opposite directions, with two up.

(Latest model described in "The Autocar" of August 18th, 1939.)



Classified

Sales, Wants, Toys, Books, and Miscellaneous.



SUBSCRIPTIONS : Please send all 1977 subscriptions direct to Mike Wood, 119 Danebury Avenue, London S.W.15, NOT to the TOC Treasurer. Please also specify which club you wish to join, or if you wish for joint membership. T.O.C. only £6.50 C.C.C. only £6.50 Joint membership for T.O.C and C.C.C. £9.50.

For Sale

SPARE PART CATALOGUES reprinted by the Swedish B11 Club (Text in French) superb printing and illustration, better than the original. 45 skr each plus postage. From Bengt Olsson, 239 Sodra Nas, 432 00 Varberg, Sweden.

CLUB MANUALS for all models are available for loan from the Secretary, £1 p & p., together with a cheque for £20 as a deposit (returnable of course).

CITROEN T.A. 1939 commercial, one owner, 45,000 km from new. In good condition. Make an offer to M. Picard, 28, Avenue des Ronays, 91600 Savigny-sur-Orge. Tel, 996.18.28.

CITROEN B14, berline, interior and exterior to be restored, although the engine turns. Price 1,500 frcs with a grey card. M. J-L Ruelle, 23, Route de Creil, 60500 Chantilly, Tel. 457.05.95.

SET OF FIVE cast aluminium wheels (pre-war) in good condition. Offers. M. Ducourthial, 73 Rue Cazala, Chatroux, France.

BRAKE HOSES (for English cars). Front - No. 4044; Rear - No. 4036. Vincent Works, Vincent Lane, Dorking, Surrey.

JOHN AUSTIN has the following new spares available. For Light 15's: Brake pipes 1946-1955, Brake shoes (exchange), Front and rear wheel cylinder kits, Master cylinders, Brake drums front and rear (skimmed), Wheel bearing front and rear, 1 new set easy clean wheels (4), Wishbone pins and bushes (exchange), Driveshafts (reconditioned) when available, New clutch plates, Reconditioned pressure plates (exchange), 1 new rear door (big 15) off side, Shock absorbers front and rear, Exchange cylinder heads, Timing chains, Exhaust front pipes, Torsion bars (new), Cardin couplings (exchange), Fan belts, Radiator hoses, Front cradle, Exchange radiators.

For Big 6's: Brake pipes (English or French - please state year of manufacture), Wheel cylinders, Master cylinders, Brake shoes, Front wheel bearings (when available), Brake drums, Driveshafts (reconditioned) when available, Secondhand gearboxes, Crown wheel and pinion (new), Timing chains (new), Reconditioned heads, Valves (new) inlet and exhaust, Shock absorbers, Rear wheel bearings, 1 new rear door (Big 6) off side, Front wheel cylinders.

Front end tools for hire - substantial deposit required. Stock of secondhand spares too numerous to list. PLEASE STATE YOUR EXACT REQUIREMENTS.

When replying please state year of manufacture, model and whether English or French, and enclose s.a.e. to Wellington House, High Street, Shirrell Heath, Southampton, Hants.



FRONT HUB PULLERS available off the shelf for £13 plus VAT (No. 220) from Bretco, 226 Whitehorse Rd., Croydon, Surrey.

A RARE CHANCE - to acquire an 11CV cabriolet in immaculate condition. No other details are available, but the car is for sale by M. Maurice Laffont, Esso-Service moderne, 12400 Saint-Affrique, France.

REVUE TECHNIQUE - The most comprehensive illustrated manual available. (In French) £6.00. Write to Peter Stevens, Box No.1 The Magazine.

LT 15 INLET & EXHAUST VALVES now in stock £2.75 each incl postage or £20. per set. Write to Mike Tennant, Martindale, Upton Bishop, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire.

THE CLUB has for sale : Sets of four pistons and barrels (please state year of car), £65 inclusive of p & p. All orders to John Gillard, 19 Carol St, London N.W.1. Cheques payable to the Traction Owners Club.

PRE-1930 CITROEN PARTS. Mr. Stubbings telephone Churchstanton 445.

POSTERS. In addition to Tom Evan's Superb Club poster, illustrated in our last issue, we now have stocks of two of the Dutch Club's posters. Apart from being stunning designs, they are also excellently printed on high quality paper. They cost £1.25 plus 25p p & p. and are available through the Chairman. (John Dodson).

CITROEN TRACTION AVANT SPARES AVAILABLE FROM GUY ISBELL.

Gaskets, 4 cylinder, all except sump and gear-box gaskets £5.00 per set.
Radiator hoses, top and bottom £2.35 each.
Valves, exhaust and inlet (better than original) £2.10 each.
Clutch pressure plate reconditioned. Exchange £16.50 plus £5.00 surcharge.
Clutch centre plate new £12.50. Reconditioned £10.00.
Brake shoes, set of 8, relined and new bushes £15.50 plus £5.00 surcharge.
Wheel cylinders, reconditioned ready to fit £3.75 each complete
Master cylinder £9.60
Reconditioned radiator (new core usually copper) with 12 months guarantee £42.50 plus £5.00 surcharge on old unit.
Fan belts, 4 cylinder car £1.87
Fan belts, 6 cylinder cars available.
Starter motor reconditioned 4 cylinder cars 12V exchange £24.00 plus £5.00 surcharge. New £38.
Starter motor reconditioned 6V exchange £31.- plus £10.00 surcharge on old unit.
Dynamo's 12V reconditioned exchange £8.00 plus £5.00 surcharge. New £14.00.
Dynamo 6V reconditioned exchange £31.00 plus £10.00 surcharge.
Dynamo 6 cylinder cars, 6V and 12V recon. exchange £50.00 plus.
Top and bottom ball joints, recon. Exchange £2.30 each plus 50p. surcharge.
Carburettor Solex 32PB1 suitable for French and G.B. cars (state which, slight difference) Recon. exchange £16.25 plus £5.00 surcharge.
Carburettor as above, new £33.50
Brake hoses, G.B. Cars, front and rear £2.35
Brake hoses, French cars, front and rear £2.10 approx.
Speedometer cables available for all models 4 cyl cars £2.75.
Brake cables. All models, new £4.25 each.
Distributor, 4 cyl. Ducellier or S.E.V. New £30.00
Wiper arm G.B. Cars £1.04 each
Wiper blades, G.B. cars 95p. each.

Coming shortly exhausts in stainless steel.
Stainless steel downpipe £14.00 approx.
Stainless steel straight pipe £12.00 approx.
Stainless steel box £14.00.
Starter 6 cyl. cars, 6V and 12V recon. exchange £50.00 plus.
Top wishbone pins and bushes recon. Exchange £13.50 plus £3.00 surcharge.

ARE YOUR Big-ends banging? Ball-joints bickering? Brake-shoes balding? Then phone Guy on Compton (Sussex) 213 for an end to your problems (and the start of mine). The mobile mechanic extraordinaire will be in France, Holland, Spain and anywhere else that Tractions lurk until he gets his English license back. (No, he wasn't drunk, or speeding or driving badly, he mislaid some of his red tape!)

CITROEN TA 11C commerciale, 5 seats, 1954, exceptional condition. M. P. Bongrand, Sainte-Gemme, 47250 Bouglon. Tel. (58) 93.90.34.

Events

January 23rd
Meeting at the Aladdin Sports & Social Club, Greenford, Middx.

March 20th
Treasure Hunt. Reading, Wantage and Newbury Triangle. Meeting-place will be notified in the Stop Press. Last one was a great success don't miss this one!

April 8th - 11th
Welsh Weekend. Friday afternoon, arrival and natter at the Snowdonia Hotel in the evening. Saturday and Sunday: Scenic drives in the most beautiful part of Wales, meetings with local motoring clubs, films, etc. The meeting will take place at the home of Rhodri Prys-Jones, and arrivals should gather there on Friday afternoon. He has some accommodation at his house, and there is a camp-site at the Snowdonia Hotel, Waunfawr. If you would like to be put up at the house, please notify Rhodri as soon as possible. This is an opportunity for an amazing weekend, spares swap, and general reminiscence.
Rhodri Prys-Jones, 15 Ty Hen, Waunfawr, Caernarfon, Wales.

April 16th
V.S.C.C. Silverstone Meeting. We hope that William Sellers will be fielding his car, and would appreciate a traction back-up! Make sure that you are in the 'Interesting' car-park, and the TOC members can assemble there.

May 7th & 8th
Historic Vehicle Silver Jubilee Tribute, Windsor Racecourse. An entry of five cars from the TOC will be in the parade on Sunday. Saturday is Rolls-Royce only day.

June
Combined Summer Rally - TOC and CCC. Date and venue to be announced. French and English Concours, driving events, etc.

July 17th
Lingfield Racecourse: the once Penshurst Pageant of Motoring.

August 13th & 14th
Yeovil Car Clubs 2 day event, pageant, etc.

August
Classic and Thoroughbred Car Concours, Shipnall, Staffs. The TOC will be fielding some entrants!

September
French Picnic at the London Gliding Club, Dunstable. Date to be announced.
A combined meeting with a 2CV Popcross at Chelmsford,

October
Lunchtime pub meeting followed by an Auto-Jumble at John Austins barn, Shirrel Heath, Hants.

November
Noggin & Natter, London area.

December
Christmas Nosh-up, Meantime Restaurant, Greenwich.

ALEXANDRA PALACE AUTOJUMBLE. The Spares Committee will have a stall here on the 19 February. On sale will be as much tractionaria as possible including the newly acquired sets of pistons and barrels. Contact either John Gillard or Brynn Hughes for any specific requests beforehand,

