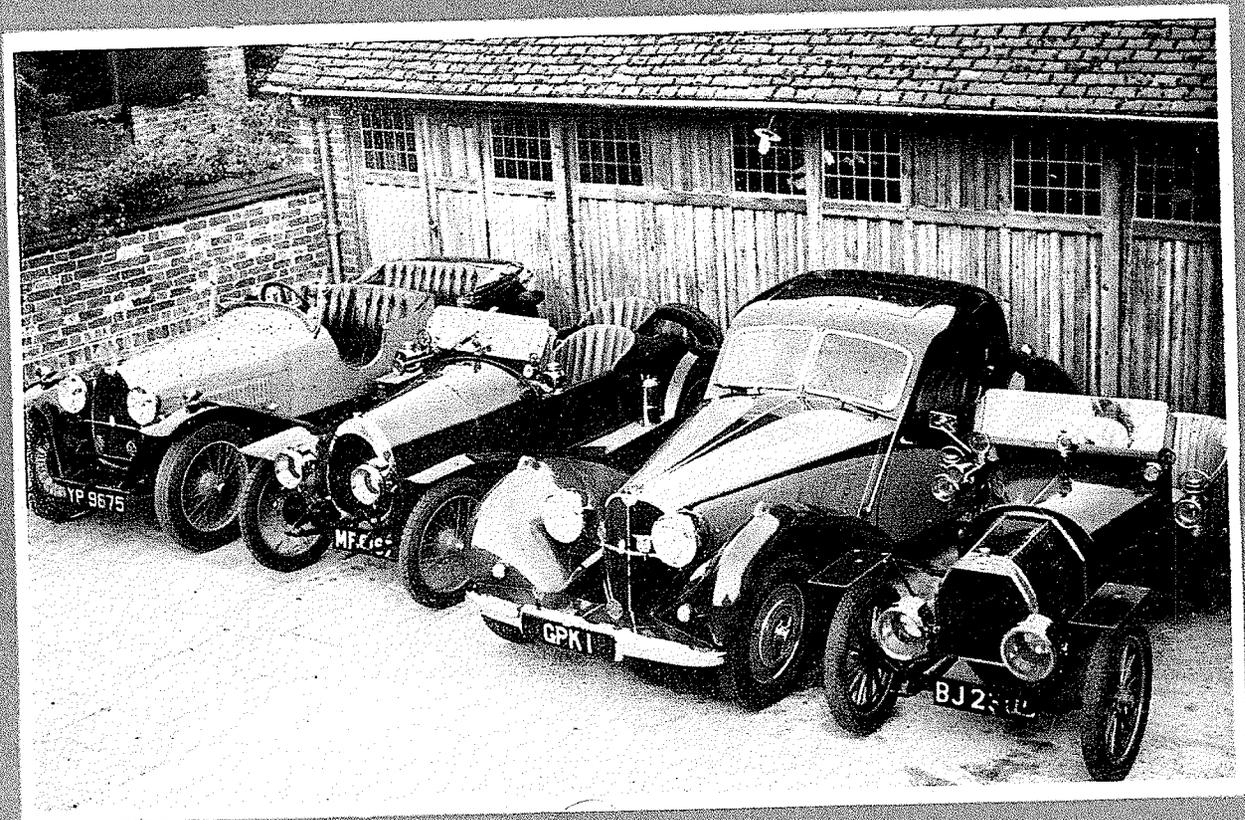


FEBRUARY 1955

THE VINTAGE *and Thoroughbred* CAR

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THE VINTAGE *and Thoroughbred* CAR

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SPICK AND SPAN

THE high standard of finish of the competitors in last year's Anglo-American Vintage Car Rally was a notable feature of this happy event and our own veteran cars, owned by members of the V.C.C., set a similarly high standard.

Vintage cars, too, are usually nicely presented to the organisers of competitive events which suit them, although there is some excuse for these vehicles if they fall somewhat from grace in this respect, because these worthy vehicles are often owned by the less-affluent enthusiasts, or they may be used regularly on the road in all weathers.

We do not advocate that all vintage cars need sparkle and shine in the bright lights and possess the impeccable varnish found on most veteran vehicles. But we do consider that old cars—and motor cycles—should be maintained in reasonably good condition, not only mechanically but outwardly.

Only the other day we were amused to observe an Austin Seven chummy of about 1928 vintage parked rather awkwardly in a busy shopping centre. Drivers of modern cars were carefully manoeuvring round it, leaning out to be sure of clearing its newly re-painted mudguards, the majority of them smiling tolerantly. Would they have been so lenient had this little vintage car been tatty in appearance, hood trailing behind it, rust flaking from its bodywork?

In any fresh legalisation concerning police or garage checks of car condition old cars which are kept in spick and span order are more

likely to get a square deal than those which are shabby and unkempt.

It is not unduly difficult to get reasonable results when restoring old cars in this enlightened age. There are paints which the amateur can brush on with good results, specialist firms who will tailor new hoods and tonneau-covers for not at all exorbitant sums, while many vintage cars have aluminium body panels which defy rust.

There are even preparations for building up rusted-through body panels and others which quickly remove rust and filth from mechanical parts. Modern hand-cleansers await human restoration when the cherished vintage or veteran vehicle stands without in pristine order.

Electrical specialists who understand magnetos and early electrical apparatus can be found and if it is not as easy to locate craftsmen who can "re-button" Edwardian upholstery, apply a varnish finish or rebuild wooden wheels, they are to be found.

Perhaps readers would like to send us their experiences of old-car restoration, so that we can pass their better tips on to fellow enthusiasts.

Meanwhile, there is little excuse for shabby vintage vehicles.—THE EDITORS.

Front Cover Picture: PART OF PETER HAMPTON'S COLLECTION which is described elsewhere in this issue. From left to right are seen the 1926 Type 30, 1914 Type 13, 1938 Type 57SC. and 1910 Type 13 Bugattis from this illustrious stable.

PERFORMANCE YARDSTICK

(Continued from the January issue)

WITH a view to providing a yard-stick whereby the performance of well-known vintage cars of today may be compared with the same cars when they were just run-in by their proud first owners, G. BANCE summarises contemporary road-test findings.

The 9-20 h.p. Humber Tourer of 1926

Specification: £260. 1056 c.c. 58 mm. × 100mm. 4 cylinders. Overhead inlet and side exhaust valves. Gear ratios 4·9, 9·5 and 16·6 to 1. Weight as tested with two passengers 18½ cwt. Wheelbase 8 ft. 6 in. track 4 ft.

Performance: Speeds: 46 in top, 34 in 2nd, 17 in 1st. Acceleration: 10-30 in top 19½ secs; 20 to 40 in top 22½ secs. Brakes, 70 ft. from 30 m.p.h.

There were certain aspects of this model which commended it to lady drivers: control of the vehicle in all respects was light; the layout of the controls was evidence of careful thought to achieve the most accessible and/or comfortable position as the case may be; the all-weather equipment was extremely efficient; the side screens being rigid and rattle free, and together with the windscreen, were of adequate height. Yet, such were the excellent proportions that from a distance the vehicle gave the impression of being considerably larger than in fact it was. It was, in point of fact, a small car; the R.A.C. rating, by virtue of the long stroke, was a mere 8·35 h.p.; there was a combined Lucas dynamo lighting and starting unit which was perfectly silent in engagement; an Autovac fed the Cox-Atmos carburettor from a six-gallon rear tank, which contained a telescopic spout for the convenience of filling from a two-gallon can; brakes were external contracting, hand on rear wheels, foot on transmission.

On the road the engine proved a smooth power unit; a good point on all HUMBERS, the gear change on the 9-20 called for no pause in neutral between gears, and was particularly easy; the engine responded in lively manner

which, combined with light steering, made traffic driving much more a matter of ease.

A comfortable cruising speed on the road was 35 to 40 m.p.h., the top gear being capable of dealing with many hills which one would have thought would have necessitated a change down; thus, a surprisingly high point-to-point average could be maintained. The steering was considered of great usefulness, the left circle being 42 ft., right 38 ft., and this added to the capabilities of the car to manoeuvre in dense traffic. The width across the rear seat cushion was 42 in., distance from the back of the bench type front seat to the rear seat squab was 38 in.; from the pedals to the front seat squab, 43 in. It was a car which carried four adults in comfort and, in view of the small size of the engine, with surprisingly good performance in terms of journey averages and lack of driving fatigue.

The 5-litre Bugatti Saloon of 1931

Specification: £1,485. 5350 c.c., 81 mm. × 130 mm. 8 cylinders, single o.h.c. Gear ratios: 3·9, 5·45 and 9·8 to 1. Weight 36 cwt. Wheelbase, 11 ft. 6in., track 4 ft. 7in.

Performance: Speeds in gears: 88·23 m.p.h. in top, 45 in 2nd, 25 in 1st. Acceleration: 10 to 30 in 2nd, 5 4/5 secs., in top 8 4/5 secs. Brakes, 51 ft. from 30 m.p.h. 12 m.p.g.

It is, perhaps, a trifle difficult to conceive a Bugatti which had as one of its outstanding characteristics, tractability in top. Yet this certainly applied to the model in question, notwithstanding a final drive ratio of 3·9 to 1. At a docile and easily maintained walking pace, the throttle could be snapped open, and the car would surge away cleanly and certainly, right up to its maximum of close on 90 m.p.h.

In fact, this could be considered as a top gear car; this ratio could cope with such conditions as following other vehicles at a low speed up a fairly steep grade, or in traffic, or in winding country lanes. Another good point about this Bugatti, and one which may be more expected of it, was that of a high cruising speed, attained in short time after a check, and which may be practically anywhere in the top gear range; 2nd gear could cope with very severe going, such as a steep gradient combined with rutted surface and sharp bends. The gears were practically inaudible; the rear axle emitted a characteristic noise, not in the least unpleasant. Brakes: progressive, sensitive; the wheels would not lock unexpectedly; the hand brake did its job well, apart from its use as a mere parking brake. The gearbox and clutch individually and as complements to one another were delightful to use. The change from gear to gear could be made just as fast as the hand could move the lever across the gate—in fact, a racing change; the clutch was light and positive. A start on level ground could be made in 2nd gear, but if 1st were used, the car need only be got moving, and then—straight into top. The body on the car in question was a two-door metal panelled Weymann; both the front seats were extremely comfortable and easily adjustable to accommodate large variations in stature of driver and passenger. There was adequate leg room in the back, and sprung side arm rests, also a central folding one. The windscreen opened to a small extent; the instrument board, lit indirectly and also by two external lights, contained amongst other things, an oil pressure gauge and coolant thermometer. The beautiful finish of the engine and chassis reflected the same high standard of the body. There were two plugs, two inlet valves and one exhaust per cylinder. The water heated inlet manifold and the two exhaust branches were on opposite sides of the head; the fan had a hand adjustment to take up slack in the belt; two electric pumps coped with the fuel supply; there were individual adjustments for the brakes; engine lubrication was by dry sump, having the reservoir on the scuttle; the trunk at the back had two fitted suitcases with two spare wheels slung on the outside, as standard equipment. The consummate satisfaction derived from driving or being driven in this Bugatti could not be explained in so many words; going out in the car was the sure way of experiencing the companionship of a thoroughbred.

The Straight 8 Delage Sports Saloon of 1930

Specification: £1,025. 4050 c.c. 77×109 mm. 8 cylinders. Gear ratios: 3·9, 6·2, 8·2 and 13·5 to 1. Weight, 35 cwt. Wheelbase, 10 ft. 10 in. Track, 4 ft. 8 in.

Performance: Speed in top, 86·53 m.p.h. Acceleration: 10-30 in top, 9 1/5 secs., in 3rd, 5 4/5 secs., in 2nd 4 3/5 secs. Brakes: 29 ft. from 30 m.p.h. 14-15 m.p.g.

The cruising speed for this car could be anything up to about 65 to 70, at which speed there was no sign of effort. This aspect of the performance was in keeping with the character of the vehicle as a whole. To drive this Delage was to feel part of it. It could be handled as a sports car, taking bends at speed with no sway, braking from quite high speeds without judder, steering with firmness and certainty. The acceleration, especially in indirect gears, was outstanding; the gear change between top and the "modern" silent running 3rd gear was easy, and, like the other changes, light; this adjective could also be applied to the smooth clutch and vacuum servo assisted brakes. Steering at low speeds was inclined to be slightly heavy, partly due to the big low pressure tyres. So much for the Delage as the sports car: there was another side to its character, however; that of the town carriage. Carrying a Vanvooren Weymann body, beautifully finished, with a one-piece front seat adjustable for reach and for angle of back, and excellently equipped as to receptacles for maps, etc., arm rests and so on, the heavy car could be treated as a top gear vehicle if so desired; docile at 6 to 7 m.p.h. in top with the hand operated spark control retarded, the same ratio could be used for all normal main road hills or town traffic. In the latter conditions, the car presented no problems as to manoeuvrability, but springing would then give the impression of being slightly hard, the price to pay for the rock steady manner of its going at high speed. At a 45 m.p.h. cruising speed, there was no impression of any effort. In keeping with the bodywork, the engine was a fine piece of engineering, with accessibility, another of its virtues, the radiator shutters were thermostatically controlled; there were grouped nipples for lubricating the chassis. The windscreen could be opened out wide, having a blue glass vizor above it; the rear window was green tinted, thus completely preventing glare from the rear, even though there was also a blind, operated from the driving seat. This car was excellent value for money.

THE MOTOR-CARS OF AN ENTHUSIAST

A Private Owner's Fine-Collection, Housed in Sussex

Visited by BARRY DOVE

IT is the practice to refer to collections of motor-cars as "stables," and often they are in fact housed in buildings which at one time had a use connected with the horse. Not so the motor-house which C. W. P. Hampton has at Bolney, for this was designed and built by him some fourteen years ago on the basis that, in great comfort, it was to be of a size capable of housing six Bugatti Royales or a dozen Austin Sevens. All the vehicles are in this one great room and with ample space between them. There are benches, of course, and cupboards; the lighting is carefully thought out, the heating is kept on from October to April and from the walls look down at you framed pictures of the great days, notable among them the coloured prints of Gordon Crosby and many originals by Roy Nockolds. In 1902 Sir David Salomons wrote:

"The abode of the horseless carriage requires to be superior in many respects to the shelter given to the machineless vehicle."

How right he was, but he cannot have visualised the perfection of this Sussex motor-house.

For the purposes of these notes I have divided the cars into two categories, "Historic" and "Work-a-day"; the former are those licensed at irregular intervals, while the latter are taxed throughout the year and used regularly. Let me say at once that there is no distinction between the categories in condition or turn-out. They are all ready for the road and resting on their road-wheels with correctly-inflated tyres. They are all most beautifully painted and upholstered, and any car (including the hack Ford Zephyr about which Hampton speaks most highly) is washed and brought back to Concours condition within 24-hours of getting weather-stained. Every badge and instrument is of correct period; every instrument works properly; even in such things as number plates Hampton is an exacting purist. Above all, he talks about each car with affection and great knowledge.

HISTORIC CARS

1. 1902 5½ h.p. Single Cylinder Bébé Peugeot, O.1805

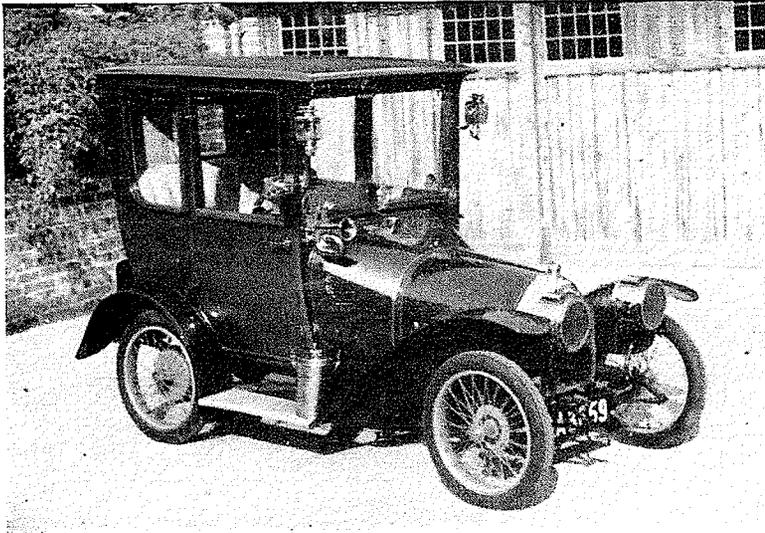
This car took part in pre-war Brighton Runs, but eventually was used for instruction in a London Secondary School where it was bomb-damaged. Acquired by Hampton in 1945, it did its first post-war Brighton in 1946 and has covered 1,030 miles in his hands. Cruising speed: 20/25 m.p.h.; top speed about 30 m.p.h.

2. 1903 60 h.p. Mercédès, GY 5145

I was not able to see this car, which is a recent acquisition, although I remember seeing it in 1950 at Messrs C. R. Abbot & Co's. premises when still owned by Lord Selsdon, from whom Hampton bought it. It was driven to Stuttgart and back in 1954 without mechanical troubles of any sort (it is tactless to ask the owner if he had any tyre difficulties on that trip!) and won the Mercédès-Benz Club Trophy for being the oldest car to arrive at the factory on time. The car is similar to that on which Jenatzy won the Gordon Bennett Cup in 1903, and cruises happily at 50 m.p.h., with a maximum probably in excess of 75 m.p.h.

3. 1910 Type 13 Bugatti, BJ 2305

The engine of this car is rated at 10.4 h.p. having a capacity of 1,327 c.c. and bore and stroke of 65×100 mm. There are eight valves for the four cylinders, a three-bearing crankshaft and the overhead camshaft is lubricated by wick, while drip feeds maintain the sump level; the big-ends have scoops for the splash lubrication. Power is transmitted via a multi-disc wet clutch and the gearbox has four speeds; it is a delightful box to operate. Both foot and hand-brakes now work on the rear drums, the original foot transmission brake having been eliminated. Ignition is by Bosch magneto and Lodge C3 plugs. A hand air-pressure pump forces petrol from the rear



INSPIRATION FOR EMMETT! — Peter Hampton's 1913 Bébé Peugeot with coupé body by Henri Gautier.

7½ gallon tank to the Zenith carburettor, and oil from a small copper tank by the exhaust manifold to the sump via the two drip-feeds. The springing at the rear is by double half-elliptics placed side by side and the result is a most uncomfortable ride unless heavily laden; there are no shock absorbers. The steering is extremely light and "Bugatti" in feel.

On the road with a top-gear ratio of 3·21 to 1 60 m.p.h. is obtainable (25 m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m.) and over 40 in third, yet the car is extremely flexible. The weight is 11 cwt. with full tanks. Forty miles in an hour on main roads is possible at a petrol consumption of 45 m.p.g., and Hampton (who acquired the car in 1938 and has since covered 3,000 miles with it) won two races at the Crystal Palace in 1939.

BJ 2305 is thought to have been Ettore Bugatti's personal car when new and fitted with a limousine body. His signature is finely engraved on the oil drip-feed on the dash. In 1912 a Colonel Dawson bought it, fitted the present two-seater body, and retained it until 1938.

4. 1913 Bébé Peugeot AA 3659

This car has a 4-cylinder side-valve T-head engine with bore and stroke of 55×90 mm. giving a capacity of 856 c.c. and a rating of 7·5 h.p. It is said to develop 10 b.h.p. The carburettor is a Zenith and ignition is by

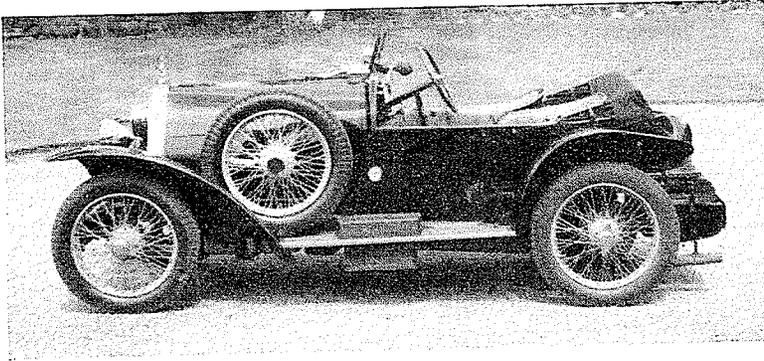
magneto and Lodge C3 plugs. It transmits power through a cone clutch and a 3-speed gearbox on the propeller shaft. The springs are half-elliptic in front and reversed quarter-elliptic at rear. The gear lever and other components bear the stamp of Ettore Bugatti, which is not surprising as in 1911 he designed the car, which was built under licence by Peugeot.

With a track of 3 ft. 5 in. and a wheelbase of 6 ft. there is not much scope for the coach-builder, but Henri Gautier of Paris built the Emmett-like two-seater coupé and the result is wholly delightful. It so charmed an American recently that he enquired whether Hampton would accept £1,000 for the car.

The performance naturally is not startling, but with a top speed of 35 m.p.h., 28/30 m.p.h. is a happy cruising gait and it is believed that this car is lower geared than the more usual open model because it climbs hills quite well. Petrol consumption is 50 m.p.g. Supplied new in 1913 to a noble Lord, it was stored in his orangery for many years and Hampton acquired it in 1948; he has since covered 600 miles.

5. 1913 5-litre Bugatti, XN 1331 ("Black Bess")

This has an o.h.c. engine of bore and stroke 100×160 mm., a capacity of 5,027 c.c. and of course four cylinders. The gearbox has four forward speeds and reverse; power is



CHAIN-DRIVE BUGATTI.
—The famous "Black Bess" discovered by W. Boddy, derelict in Derby, restored by Col. G. M. Giles, and now owned by Peter Hampton, does nearly 100 m.p.h.

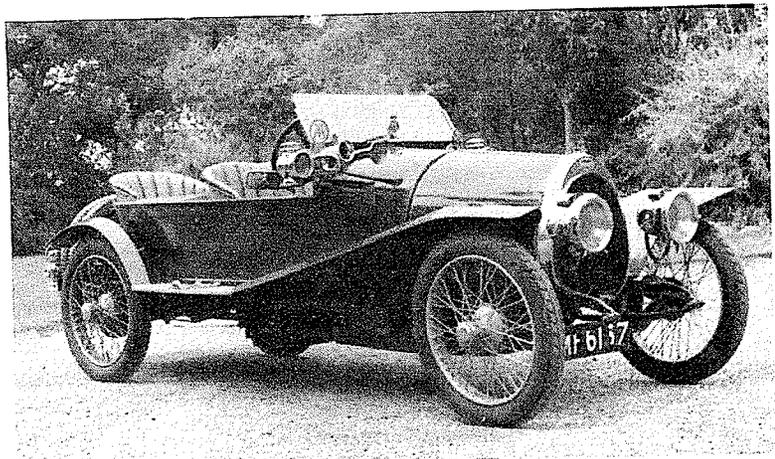
relayed from the crown wheel and pinion to sprockets and thence by chain to the rear wheels. A self-starter has been fitted as the compression is so formidable. The brakes, now both working on the rear drums with some retarding action from the foot brake on the transmission, are quite good. There are double side-by-side half-elliptics in front and reversed quarter-elliptics at rear. The steering is light, high geared and accurate. With full tanks (15 gallons) the weight is 25 cwt. and 1,000 r.p.m. in top is about 50 m.p.h. The maximum speed on the 2 to 1 top gear is nearly 100 m.p.h., with 75 m.p.h. a comfortable cruising rate. This car can consequently compete with modern traffic and put 50 miles into an hour at a consumption of 15/18 m.p.g. Handling generally is excellent but the short wheelbase (8 ft. 4 in.) makes the tail a little happy.

"Black Bess" was supplied new in September 1913 to Roland Garros, who was a great friend of Bugatti's and who was killed in action in 1918. It was subsequently owned by Louis Coatalen, Ivy Cummings (who used it in sprints and hill-climbs) and others. It went sadly down the hill until bought by Colonel Giles, who began the job of restoration. Rodney Clarke then owned it and from him Hampton bought the car in 1948. Almost immediately thereafter it took him to the French G.P. at Rheims in company with Sam Clutton in the 1908 Itala and Laurence Pomeroy in the "Prince Henry" Vauxhall. It has proved to be reliable as well as attractive to drive for over 4,000 miles.

6. 1914 Type 13 Bugatti, MF 6167

Mechanically this car differs from the earlier example in many ways. The wheelbase is

TYPICAL.—Peter Hampton's 1914 example of this famous Bugatti model has a replica 3-seater body of varnished mahogany with inlaid teak decking.



8 ft. 4½ in. as opposed to 7 ft. 10½ in. on the 1910 car, it has detachable knock-off Rudge Whitworth wire wheels, an axle ratio which gives 23½ m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m., a pear-shaped radiator, a pressure-lubricated camshaft, and air-pressure is maintained by a camshaft-driven pump. The rear springs are reversed quarter-elliptics and there are small Truffault shock-absorbers. The other main engine and chassis components are similar to those on the earlier car.

It will do nearly 70 mp.h. in top (and over 45 in 3rd) with a cruising speed of 50/55 m.p.h. Lower gearing has not made it more flexible in top than the 1910 car nor are the brakes as effective. Hampton says the 1914 example is noisier and less delicate to handle, but is tremendously better sprung. It weighs 14 cwt. with full tanks, and 40 miles in the hour on a gallon of petrol is easily possible.

The early history of MF 6167 is unknown. On the eve of war at the Crystal Palace, Hampton was offered "a very old Bugatti" in pieces for £5. It turned out to be this car and he transported it to Bolney in his Lancia Lambda. After several set-backs the assembled car finally took the road in 1950 with a replica three-seater torpedo body in varnished mahogany with inlaid teak decking.

7. 1923-25 Brescia Bugatti, ND 243

This is a 16-valve Brescia with a wheelbase of 6 ft. 5 in. and is a Full Brescia. Rated at 11.9 h.p. it has a capacity of 1,496 c.c. with bore and stroke 69×100 mm. It was in a dreadful state when acquired by Hampton in 1944, having been maltreated and modified. A good 8-plug block was found, and also the twin magneto drive and platform which is driven from the rear of the overhead camshaft. There are now two Scintilla magnetos, with a Bosch in reserve on the front offside of the engine in case the twin-magneto drive shears. There are two Solex carburettors (originally there was one) and the Riley front axle with brakes was replaced by an original axle without them; the car does not stop outstandingly well. With a top gear of 3.5 to 1, 90/95 m.p.h. is obtained and petrol consumption varies between 20 and 30 m.p.g. The body is a bolster-tanked two-seater made as near as possible on contemporary lines, and the whole car shows what patience, time and money can combine to do in bringing a near-wreck back to pristine condition. Early history is vague but the car

is believed to have been raced by Boothby and Orlebar in pre-war days.

8. 1926 Type 30 Bugatti, YP 9875

In 1911 Ettore Bugatti built an eight-cylinder car using two type 13 engines coupled together lengthwise, and in 1919 he designed and built a straight-eight which did not go into production; an example exists in a neglected state at Molsheim to-day. The Type 30 was the first eight-cylinder design of his to go into production with a bore and stroke of 60×88 mm. and a capacity of 2 litres. It has now two-barrel-throttle Solex carburettors, and Lodge C3 plugs do not oil-up, although this is the model of which it was said it ran on eight cylinders in the country but on five in town. The brakes are hydraulic in front and cable-operated in rear, and under severe braking stress the front axle twists.

It was a car of this type which figured in the case well known to lawyers as *Baldrey v. Marshall* (1925) 1 K.B. 260. A purchaser complained that the car did not comply with his stipulation that it must be "comfortable and suitable for touring purposes." The judge at the original hearing, after a trial run, entirely agreed with him!

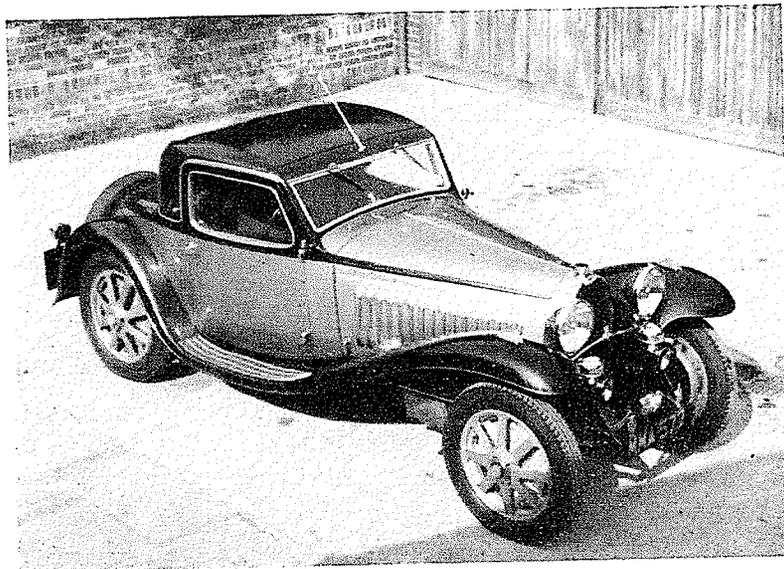
For all its faults Hampton has enjoyed his 1,450 miles in this car since it was bought from the original owner, who had laid it up in the early 1930's. It is not wise to ask if the crankshaft has ever broken! Hampton describes the car as noisy, with the heaviest Bugatti steering ever, but beautifully sprung. Maximum is about 75 m.p.h., but this is the long-wheelbase chassis (9 ft. 4 in.) fitted with a French open touring body with four seats and completely devoid of doors.

WORK-A-DAY CARS

1. 1928 45 h.p. Hispano Suiza, YV 5877

In 1919 the famous 37.2 6½-litre model with a 12 ft. 1¼ in. chassis was introduced by the French factory of Hispano-Suiza. For the 1920 Boillot Cup Race at Boulogne the 6½-litre engine was mounted in a chassis of 11 ft. 1½ in. wheelbase. In 1924 for André Dubonnet in the Targa Florio the shorter chassis was used, but the original engine (100×140 mm. bore and stroke) was enlarged to 7,983 c.c. by increasing the bore to 110 mm. Later this combination was adopted as a production car and known as the 45 h.p.; it remained in production until 1934. A habit has grown up

NEAR-PERFECTION.—
The 1929/30 supercharged 1½-litre "hybrid" Bugatti coupé represents the very essence of comfortable yet exhilarating vintage motoring.



of calling any short chassis car a "Boulogne" type, which is not correct.

The example owned by Hampton was acquired by him in 1949 from the original owner, who had covered a mere 11,500 miles in it. The mileage to-day is 28,000 and when Mr. Briand (who services the car) was asked recently why it would not achieve the magic 100, he replied that it was not yet run-in. The body originally was a very sporting two-seater and the present very attractive 4-light 4-door Weymann saloon was built by Gurney Nutting in the early 1930's.

Having had a run in this car, I envy Hampton his motoring in it very much indeed. It still feels taut and in one piece, the gears sound freshly cut and if 70 m.p.h. comes up frequently on minor roads one feels completely confident that the superb servo brakes will cope with the 45 cwt. and any incident that occurs. Hard driving produces no trace of fumes or fatigue in the mechanism. Hampton has taken this car on four continental trips and states that it is quite oblivious to road surface although the fitting of Newton shock-absorbers has improved the already very good handling. It is his pleasure to leave Monte Carlo shortly before midnight and driving through the night to cover the 600 miles to Paris in time for lunch. There is 90/95 m.p.h. whenever required, with an easy 80 m.p.h. cruising speed. One gets the impression that 2nd gear is on the low side;

I believe it is 6.9 to 1 and top 3.0 to 1, 1st, 2nd and top gears giving respectively about 12, 23, and 33 m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m.

The o.h.c. engine is wonderfully smooth and powerful but not silent. If consumption is only 10/11 m.p.g., in return one gets either extraordinary flexibility or a real kick in the back when the throttle is opened wide. This car can be, and YV 5877 certainly is, treated as a modern high-speed touring car and unless you insist on speed in silence it has no equal for that job.

2. 1929-30 Type 40 Bugatti, MMA 572

Not so long ago Hampton felt that what he required was a Bugatti (you will have gathered by now that he is rather fond of them!) which could be used for station work and be both economical and easy to maintain. A re-registered £10 tax Type 40 ("Molsheim Morris-Cowley") was acquired, and fitted with a Type 37A crankshaft and pistons, and a Type 39A Bugatti-Roots supercharger after the usual thorough attention to the ordinary things. A Type 57 back axle was added—as being the quietest ever made at Molsheim—and Newton shock-absorbers. Lockheeds provided a special hydraulic braking system which works superbly. A Brescia right-hand-change gearbox was fitted as Hampton considers this to be the best ever made. To shroud all this mechanical excellence the body and wings