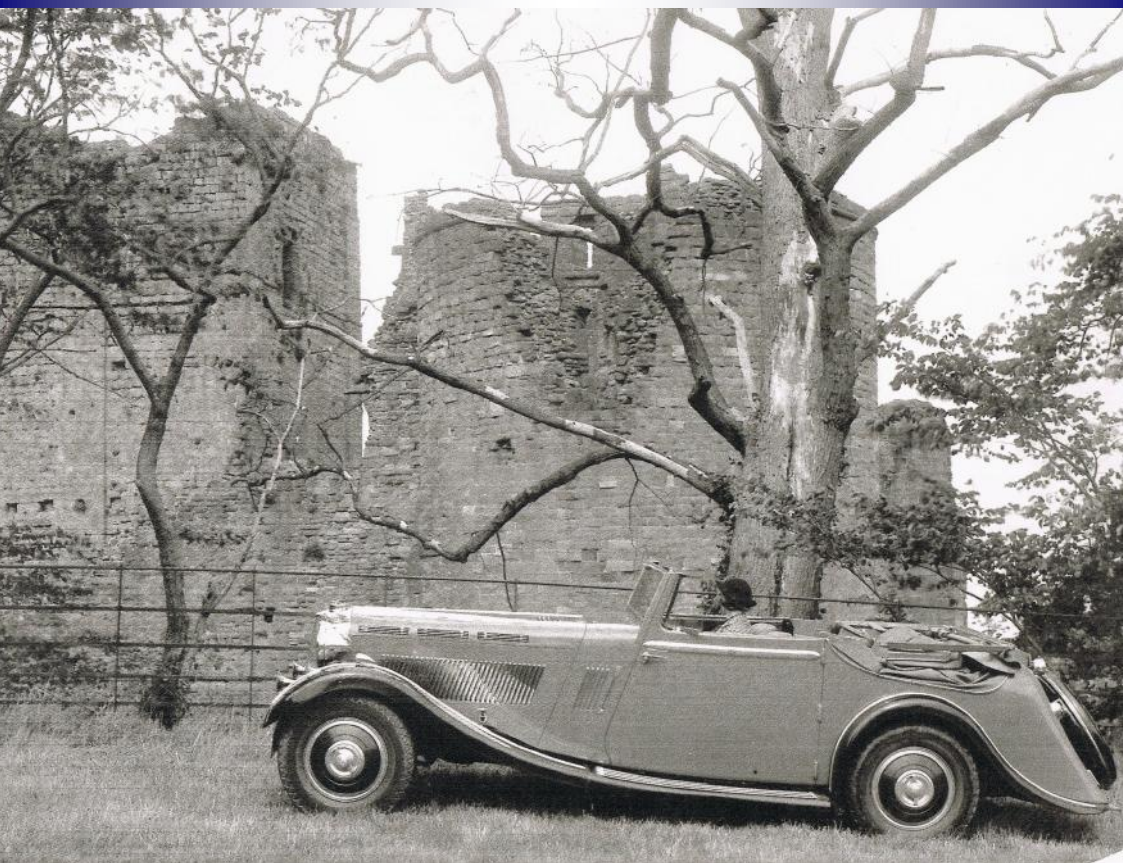




OWNERS CLUB BULLETIN



January / February 2025

RAILTON OWNERS CLUB

LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

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RAILTON OWNERS CLUB

The premier British club for enthusiasts of all
Brough Superior, Railton, Hudson, Essex and Terraplane
motor vehicles.

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The **front cover** shows what is probably a publicity photograph of a 1935 Brough Superior "Dual Purpose Car". From John Dyson's collection, the photo credit is G. Leslie Horn (via Peter Brockes).

Can anyone identify the castle in the background?

The **back cover** shows a "Stratton" Saloon on 117" wheelbase. This picture was reproduced in the last Bulletin to fill a page but the gremlins got to it and only a small portion of the image appeared in the printed copy of the Bulletin.

No fault of the printers, it was a quirk of the pdf print quality export software. As it was not present in the standard quality export it was therefore overlooked.

R.O.C. Website: www.railton.org

If they have been mislaid, the user name and password for the Members' area may be obtained from the Editor, the Chairman or the Secretary.



Railton Owners Club

Printed by Ridgeway Press Limited

<https://www.ridgewaypress.co.uk/>



EDITORIAL

In this issue the sales brochure issued by Hudson Essex Motors Ltd, of London is reproduced, in its original sepia colour. It notes on p.2 that the Railton Terraplane is described in a separate catalogue. The brochure shows some very attractive bodies on the Terraplane chassis, very few of which survive. Also reproduced in this issue is some information about the Napier-Railton's life after John Cobb. I had long been aware of the parachute testing modifications but not been cognisant of the mechanisms involved; I hope others will find it equally interesting.

One of the reasons these items have been reproduced is of necessity, due to the absence of material from the wider Club membership. There were a considerable number of welcome contributions (large and small) in 2024 but they came from only about one sixth of the total membership. So, to the silent majority, please tell the Bulletin about *your* car, its activities, history, problems, and plans for the future, and please share any information you may have about the Club marques, even if, like the parachute testing, it is tangential to our main enthusiasm.

My own Railton motoring in 2025 started with the V.S.C.C. Measham night rally on the 11th January. After the snow earlier in January and the ice and floods which followed, it was with some trepidation that I set off to the start near Leicester. After fuel supply problems during 2024's event, the car is now fitted with the Zenith carburettor which originally graced a Cobham saloon; simpler than the Carter, it has a manual choke.

We were scheduled to commence the route's first half at 20:41 and the second half at 02:11. With only 15 minutes between route hand-out and the start, my navigator had to plot on the move whilst regularly breaking off to give me directions. The route was spread over four O.S. sheets so he also had to contend with continually shifting between maps. Freezing fog was experienced on the drive from Oxford to Leicester but during the event, as the temperatures dropped to about -2°C, this cleared. Mostly the roads, whilst frosty, were not quite as slippery as I feared although there were several icy sections including one perilously slippery downhill section where I dared not brake but did manage to grab second gear to slow the car, thus enabling me to retain a modicum of control around the curves. At the end of the first half we were leading the rally with 31 penalty points but we missed a time control in the second half which dropped us into third place. However, just finishing the event is in itself an achievement.

The Railton performed well but unfortunately lost a hubcap, probably in one of the rougher sections. Hopefully, as my contact details are painted on the inside, it might conceivably be found and returned but, if not, I should have a spare somewhere.

Neil Thorp

CLOSING DATE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MAR /APR BULLETIN IS THE 9TH MARCH.



SECRETARY'S NOTES

The first weekend of 2025 and, as I am writing, after a few centimetres of snow, the nation is apparently being brought to a standstill. What has happened to us? Surely back in the 1960s and 70s when we had **real** winters we fitted our Dunlop “Weathermaster” or Goodyear “Town and Country” with their chunky treads and motored on. Perhaps it’s to do with absurdly wide wheels and low-profile tyres which merely polish the snow and ice rather than dig into the surface; or perhaps drivers nowadays have had so little experience of driving on snow they just don’t know how to adapt. It’s probably a combination of both.

So that’s my “grumpy old man” bit out of the way and I can share some more positive thoughts about 2025. I hope many of you managed to get your cars out on New Year’s Day to join one or other of the vintage gatherings around the country. Perhaps the weather was not ideal but the secretarial 1937 Cobham braved the elements to reach the Royal Oak at Much Marcle in time for a welcome breakfast bacon bap. Also enjoying a warming cup of coffee while wandering around the cars were fellow members Robin Butler and Allan Lloyd, though sadly without their Railtons.



FPH 386 at the Royal Oak’s New Year’s Day meeting.

The year has begun well on the membership front with six new enrolments recorded on this issue’s New Members page. It is always good to welcome new recruits but particularly so when their joining brings back into the fold an especially significant or “important” car. So it is this month with John Smith and AMF 1, the very last Railton to be registered in the UK. Dating from May 1950 and sporting independent front suspension, this was the car whose driving experience was specifically commented on by Geoff Moore in a feature article for *Motor Sport* in April 1983. Its exclusivity would have been pretty well assured by a price tag of £4,168, some £1,500 more than a Mark VI Bentley! More details of this unique car will be found elsewhere in this issue.

Turning to the here-and-now, we have much to look forward to in 2025. The restoration of good relations with the management at Brooklands has enabled us to build the programme for this year's National Meeting around the "Brooklands Revived" weekend in June. It will be the 90th anniversary of John Cobb's setting the all-time lap record in the mighty Napier-Railton and, of course, 1935 saw the launch of the straight-eight Brough Superior. Details of the programme for the weekend will be found on the Calendar page and I know some of you have already booked accommodation arranged at the Talbot Hotel in Ripley. We hope for a really good turn-out for this major commemorative event.

A month or so later in the summer, we have a Club invitation to join in another weekend event on the Worcestershire/Herefordshire border. Some members will recall our previous successful collaborations with the Vintage Minor Register and their Pre-War Prescott event. For 2025 they are inviting our participation in what promises to be an exciting new venture centred on the Herefordshire town of Bromyard where the annual Festival of Speed will, for the first time, incorporate a hill climb. Herefordshire Council has agreed to the closure of a section of the B4203 leading out of the town up onto the Bromyard Downs. With some interesting bends rising up through beautiful countryside, this will be a non-competitive climb on a public road -- very much along the lines of the annual gathering at Kop.

Details of what is planned for the weekend of July 25-27th can be found in the latest issue of the Vintage Minor Newsletter at <https://www.vintageminor.co.uk/January.pdf>. Entry forms for organised tours on the Friday and Saturday, as well as the hill climb on Sunday July 27th can be found at the end of their Newsletter. We are invited to participate in all or some of these events as non-members. I have already signed up and hope to see a number of Midlands-based R.O.C. friends also joining in what promises to be an enjoyable programme in beautiful countryside.

Of course, for members reluctant to venture north of the Home Counties, the Kop hill climb will continue to have appeal – and particularly it seems for our Brough-owning members. I see that Kop organisers have declared their dates this year as September 20/21st.

In looking for a suitable **archive piece** with which to conclude, in this 90th year of the Brough, I was delighted to come across the following from **40 years ago**. In **January 1985** the then editor John Dyson printed a letter received from Bill Boddy of *Motor Sport*; in it he recalled a pre-war road test taking in "a wintry London-Gloucester Trial":

"... we gave a lift to a motorcyclist who had crashed his machine on black ice. I enquired what he had been riding. 'A Brough Superior', he replied, 'and what is this car you are kindly giving me a lift in?' 'A Brough Superior', I answered. I don't think he believed me..."

I wonder if our current editor could discover that contemporary road test report?
[It is reprinted in the Gold Portfolio p.149, but without any mention of the motorcyclist incident. Ed.]

Max Hunt

CALENDAR 2025

Annual Meeting 13-15 June 2025

Brooklands Museum

The new management at Brooklands is keen to restyle what is now their *Brooklands Relived* weekend to direct the focus back to older cars and do away with the theme park atmosphere. So, out will be the hot hatches in the sprint meeting on the Saturday and in will be pre-1960 vehicles, just as it was in the days when the V.S.C.C. ran the competition for them. An autosolo will be held on the Sunday and, again, Club cars will be welcome to enter. We have therefore agreed with Brooklands to have our 2025 Club annual meeting on the site and are hoping for a good turnout of Railtons, Brouchs and Hudsons. The Brough Superior Club will be joining in and hope to field 6 – 10 bikes and 3 – 4 cars. The usual Museum attractions will be open including Concorde and the bus museum.

Please put the dates in your diary.

The Club has the potential to field a good entry in the sprint as we have at least 6 cars across all marques that could fly the flag. (N.B. The V.S.C.C. is an invited club and has arranged their calendar so that there is no clash with their own speed and race championships.) Entry details and regulations will be sent directly to Club members who have competed recently. They are expected to be available by late January.

We want to commemorate the 90th anniversary of John Cobb setting the all-time lap record in the Napier-Railton and Eric Fernihough's similar success on his Brough. To this end we hope to persuade the museum to mount an exhibition telling the story of John Cobb's exploits and Reid Railton's rôle in making them possible.

Accommodation has been agreed with *The Talbot* in Ripley (close to R.H.S. Wisley) where we have reserved just 10 standard deluxe rooms on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations will be held until 2 months ahead of June 13th. Rates are £151 per night double, £139 (double room single occupancy) including full breakfast. *The Talbot* will reserve a parking area for 10 Club cars. There is plenty of alternative accommodation in the area at all prices, after these rooms are taken. To book your room at the reduced rate, please call Krystyna on 01483 225188 (Monday – Friday between 9am and 5pm) or email weddings@thetalbotripley.com

When booking a room, a card number and expiry date will be required but no payment will be taken until the day of arrival. Check-in is from 3pm and check-out is 11am on the day of departure.

On Saturday plans to have the Club dinner in the Bluebird Room at the Brooklands Clubhouse have fallen through and it will now take place in the *The Talbot*. Non-residents need to contact *The Talbot* directly to book places at the Club dinner.

The venue for the Friday lunchtime rendezvous is still being finalised.

Neil Thorp



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

New Members

We are very pleased to welcome five new members and one returnee this month:-

- 1278 Adrian Webb 69 Fosseway, Clevedon, N. Somerset, BS21 5ET.
Adrian made himself known on the Club stand at the N.E.C. He is restoring a 1939 Hudson 112 de luxe and is an enthusiastic user of the Club second-hand spares scheme.
- 1279 Douglas Reicher 308 Highland Avenue, Syracuse, New York, U.S.A.
Douglas has acquired a 1935 Stratton Saloon originally registered MG 4415 but with very little of its history or identification. The Club has been able to help with background information. Douglas tells us he has owned a number of British classics in the past.
- 1280 Clifford Richard 48 Springfield Road, Kameruka, 2550 Australia.
Richard joins as an Overseas Associate Member and is helping a local car club in New South Wales with the restoration of a Railton tourer.
- 613 John Smith 38 Julians Acres, Berrow, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset, TA8 2LX.
John has joined with his late father's 1950 Railton D.H.C. and has been allocated the original membership number associated with this very significant car. AMF 1 was the last Railton ever registered and has a number of unique features. Currently being recommissioned after a lengthy hibernation, the car is featured elsewhere in this issue.
- 1282 Mark Wilkins 29 Betony Vale, Royston, Herts, SG8 9TS.
Mark's membership is in partnership with his father Graeme, long-term owner of a Fairmile III, MG 5981.
- 1165 Richard Beddall 3 Dorchester House, Marsham Lane, Gerrards Cross, SL9 8HA.
Richard is our returning member who tells us that he had given up his search for "an interesting Railton" until he spotted the ex-Peter Beynon woodie estate in a recent auction. The construction of the estate body on EGU 9 was written up in a series of Bulletin articles in 2014 after it was displayed at the N.E.C.

From Anthony Fenwick-Wilson

At last, after a terribly busy and chaotic few weeks, I am girding the loins and putting pen to paper, or rather bashing out this letter on my rather worn-out keyboard. This is to confirm that my racing career is now definitely over. May I therefore sincerely thank you all, as well as so many members of the R.O.C. for the help, comradeship and friendship extended to me and 'Rosita'. The memories will definitely linger of the pleasure and enjoyment, over the last ten years that I have had the honour of being a member of such a unique club. I feel Rosita should still keep racing, so I have sold her on to her next steward. He is Steve de Merist, who has become a member of the Club, and promised that you will see Rosita racing in V.S.C.C. events. So, once more, Thank You All.



THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Sometimes, stories do not all have happy endings. In the last edition of the Bulletin I recounted the successful efforts to rejoin documents in the possession of Andrew Bamford with Club cars previously owned by his father. I promised to see what we could find about one of the cars, AFS 401, that was in the Nottingham Industrial Museum undergoing restoration; so far so good.

Further investigation, however, led me to discover that the restoration of AFS has stalled and that this situation has existed for some time. Club member Graham Stewart saw the previous Bulletin article and advised:

"Sadly, the car's restoration isn't ongoing, as that project ground to a halt some years ago. I can't recall the exact circumstances, but I'm sure there were some shenanigans that went on that effectively left the project in limbo – without an engine for starters!"

Whilst technically not impossible, the completion of a full restoration would be a huge undertaking. The list of missing major components is evident in the attached photos, which I took earlier this year during a Nottingham University reunion event. The museum doesn't have the resources to even contemplate such a challenging project, so most likely the vehicle will remain as it is."

Member Howard Wilcox added later:

"Graham is correct in some respects, the museum had a £90k grant to restore the car as a 'community project' but I think the majority of the funds were spent on the "fluffier" elements and little on the nuts and bolts of the car and the cash was soon spent! There were all sorts of mis-management issues. A lot of parts went missing during a previous attempt to restore the car but I think most of these have now been replaced (though not on display with the vehicle)."



At best a rolling chassis

It is hard to say what the future of this project will be as there is still a massive amount of work to do. Finances will be the issue as few museums these days have access to the sort of funds required to get AFS back on the road. Any ideas?

Mick Jarvis

AMF 1

In memory of my dear father, John Smith, and in gratitude to a good friend, Geoff Moore.

First, let me introduce myself. I am Dylan Smith, the proud owner of AMF 1, a beautiful 1949 Railton drop-head coupé, bodied by Airflow Streamlines Ltd. of Northampton. AMF 1 is the last Railton built and the second of the two post-war Railtons bodied by Airflow.

Nancy Astor, who was the first woman seated as a Member of Parliament, was the first to own AMF 1. She can be seen in the American Motors Family Album standing by her 1933 Six-cylinder Essex Terraplane convertible coupé also showing the plate AMF 1. The number AMF 1 was a gift to her, from her close friend and wealthy businessman, Anthony Morton Fisher.



AMF 1 in the car park of St John's RCC School in the early 1980s.

Now we must turn the clocks forward to when my father first purchased AMF 1 in 1980. My father was a teacher at St John's Roman Catholic Comprehensive School. There he became acquainted with supply teacher, Geoff Moore. As some of you may know, Geoff was the proud owner of a 1925 Lancia Lambda Torpedo 55 Series 5 and a Railton Terraplane Tourer (JT 427).



AMF 1 and Geoff Moore's JT 427 at Foxbush Rally in the early 1980s.

Knowing that my father had an enormous interest in classic vehicles and that he greatly admired JT 427, Geoff thought he would apprise my father of the fact that a Railton – namely AMF 1 – was shortly going to appear at Sotheby's (auctioneers). My father and Geoff quickly arranged to see it before it went to auction. Father very much liked what he saw. At Sotheby's, AMF 1 did not reach the reserve. Shortly after the auction, father decided he would pay AMF 1 and its owner another visit. This time he would see if he and the owner could agree on a price for this spectacular car.

I was only 8 years old and had been camping with the Cub Scouts at the Downe Scout Camp. I knew nothing of AMF 1, the auction, or the negotiating. When I returned home from camping, I wondered who on earth could be visiting my parents, and with such a fine car. Could it be Royalty?

At first, father kept AMF 1 in Grandma's garage, where he went about overhauling it. It had been laid up in its previous owner's garage for 21 years, and at some stage had been to a so-called reputable garage – Jensens, I seem to recall – for engine work. In the process of repairing the engine, a mechanic had managed to bend the valves!

Adventures in AMF 1

Once father had completely rebuilt the enormous 4.2-litre straight eight engine and had given the rest of the car a complete overhaul, and with a new MOT, AMF 1 was now back on the road. With my proud father at the wheel, my mother and I were 'all set' to enjoy many adventures in this magnificent machine.

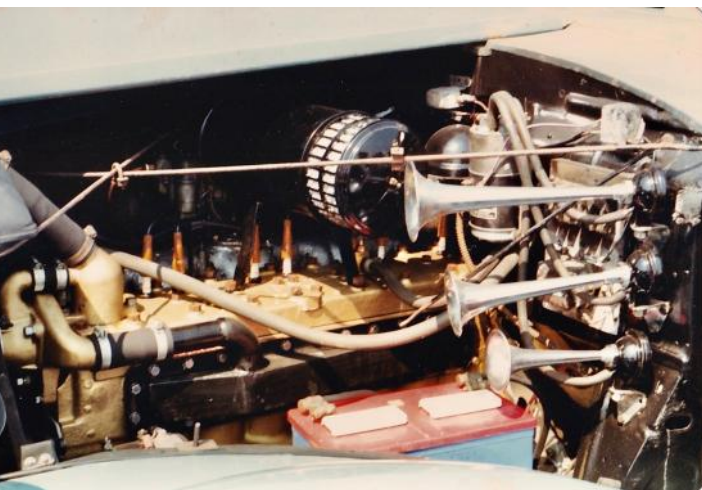
Our Adventures in AMF 1 were both splendid and plentiful. Those of particular note included holidaying to Somerset, where we drove through Cheddar Gorge with the hood down. There's nothing cheesy about that.

Participating in a spectacular line-up of vintage cars in the splendid grounds of Leeds Castle in the early 1980s as shown in this picture of AMF 1 and Geoff Moore's Lancia Lambda.



We also had a splendid day, with Geoff and his Railton at the wonderful Brooklands Racing Circuit, where I experienced first-hand the roar of Parry Thomas' mighty BABS! I don't think my poor old ears have been the same since!

I also recall another fabulous day with members of the R.O.C. and their Railtons at Duxford Aerodrome, where father drove us at exhilarating speeds of over 100 mph on the runway! This day was made even more memorable when Barry McKenzie awarded father the Richard Early Trophy for best engine restoration.



The mighty 4.2-litre Hudson engine, having been completely overhauled.

At the following R.O.C. gathering, Timothy Railton was the guest of honour. On that eventful day, father was awarded a beautiful oil painting of AMF 1, as his prize for winning the Richard Early Trophy at the previous R.O.C. meet at Duxford Aerodrome. The likeness

of AMF 1 was painted by Barrie McKenzie, artist and R.O.C. secretary at the time. It was also at this Club meet that I managed to get my hands on the mighty Napier Railton! I didn't get to drive it, you understand, for me, touching it was another memento of a fabulous day!



Alan Nicholls presenting father with the painting of AMF 1 with Timothy Railton (far right), while Barrie McKenzie admires another of his own works of art.

AMF 1 has also carried many happy brides and their fathers to church. And got them there on time! Here is father, chauffeuring Mr Shaw and his daughter to church in 1982.

AMF 1 has been off the road for a good many years, and I now look forward to returning this spectacular car to its former glory. At present it is in need of a complete overhaul but, hopefully, it won't be too long before I am attending club events in AMF 1, where I look forward to meeting some of my fellow Railton enthusiasts.





Details of AMF 1

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[It is very good to know that AMF 1 will be back on the road soon. The last time the car was mentioned in the Bulletin was in the September/October 2021 issue and the essence of that article is reproduced here. The original query was from non-member Doug Burgess; unfortunately the accompanying picture from my files was a disaster as the poor quality original pixellated very badly when printed. Ed.]

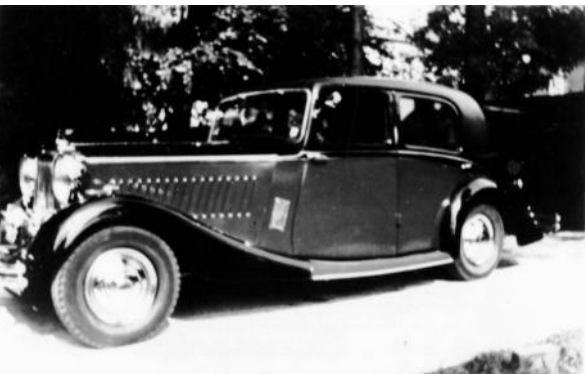
I know this is a very long shot but I am trying to track down a Railton Convertible which was owned by the Keens Sausage Company of Epping, Essex in the 1960s. I had a garage in the Arches in Capworth Street, Leyton, E10 during the 1960s and Keens had an arch next door and I always admired this car which was cleaned on a regular basis but I never did get to talk to the owner. I am just wondering whatever happened to this beautiful car and it would be nice to be able to see if it still about. Maybe you know of this car. I am just curious and maybe I could even buy it if it came up for sale. The car was a light blue.

John Dyson, who has an amazing memory, reckoned that AMF 1, the ultimate Railton, was the most likely candidate. A. Morton Fisher had owned it perhaps almost from new. He lived in Harpenden in considerable style and, on the couple of times we called, there seemed to be a party going on – he was a competent amateur drummer. An apparently affluent business man, he had a finger in various pies (pun intended), i.e. Brazil's pork pies of Amersham and the name Keens also comes to mind, as well as various other interests.

AMF 1 is one of two Railtons to be built on a post-war chassis and the last one to be produced. It has independent front suspension, steering column gear change and bodywork by Airflow Streamlines of Northampton (ex-Arthur Mulliner employees). At one time it was registered as 817 WAR.

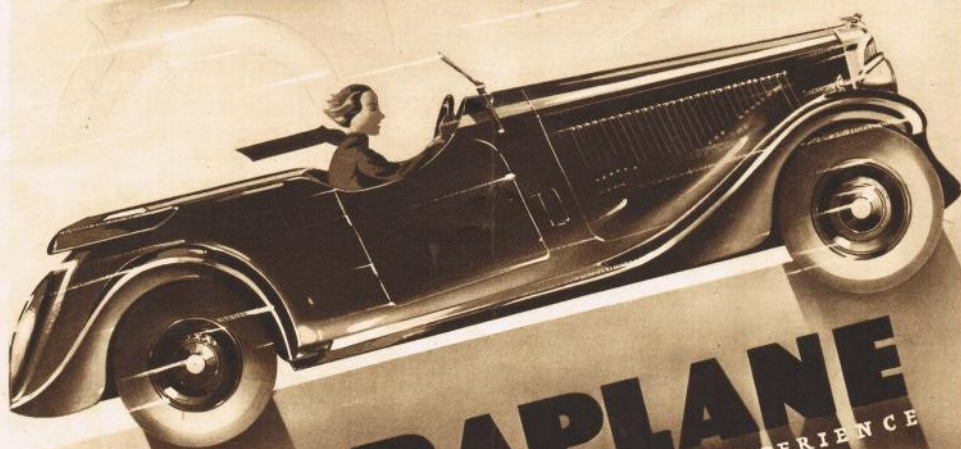
ANOTHER POST-WAR CAR

These poor quality images turned up from Nigel Plant recently. The Register notes that HXO 643 is a Metropolitan Police car whose body was transferred from ELT 841 which was scrapped. It was put into service 1.12.46 and sold by the police on 9.6.48. The last known owner was Dr J. Gayner of Cadogan Place, London. Another image was printed in the Bulletin in the July/ August 2018 issue. The car was last seen in 1983; where is it now?



bKing

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This is the principle on which aeroplanes are built. The fuselage or cabin is not there merely to protect the passengers, but as an integral part of the frame of the machine, just as essential a part as any other.

When you drop a high efficiency engine such as the Terraplane into this revolutionary type of chassis, the result is a performance which has astounded the most experienced judges. The Hon. Maynard Greville, writing in "Country Life," calls it "absolutely phenomenal." The "Motor," "superlative" and "electrifying." The facts are that the

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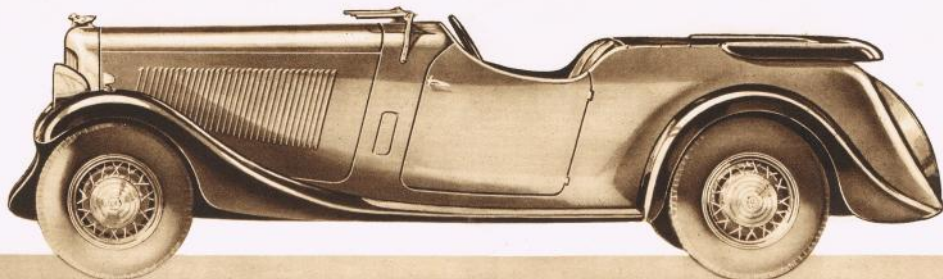
From standstill to 60 m.p.h. 14.2/5 secs.!



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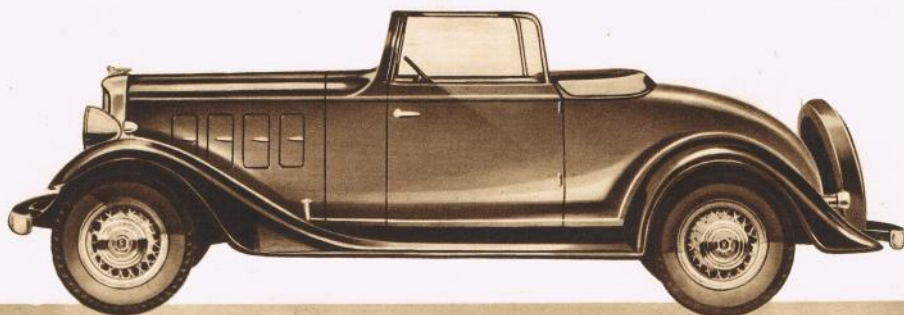
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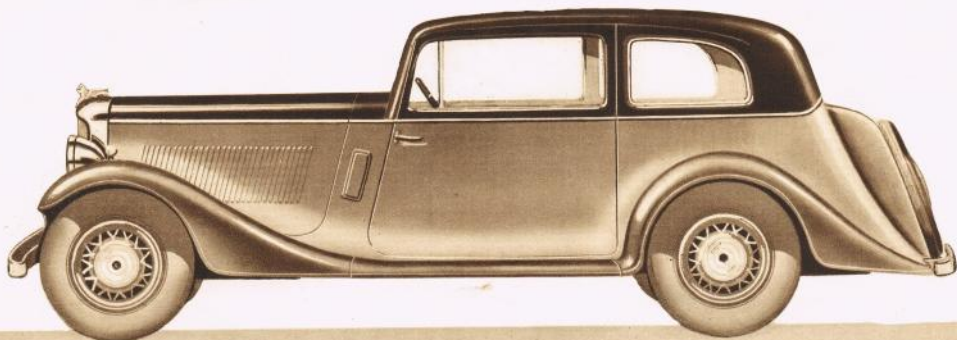
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space. All closed mode
roof and*



THE ESSEX TERRAPLANE CONVERTIBLE COUPE

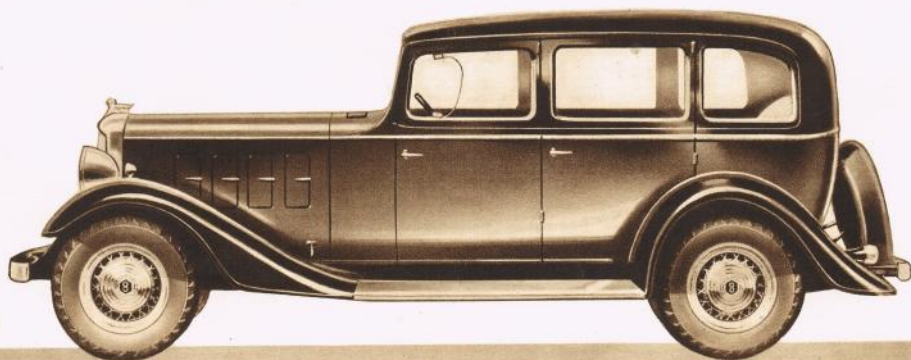
- OPEN, IT'S AS SMART AS A TWO-SEATER, CLOSED IT'S AS WEATHERPROOF AS A SALOON.



THE ESSEX TERRAPLANE SPORTS SALOON

- A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF BRITISH COACHWORK, EXPRESSIVE IN ITS FLEET LINES OF THE WONDERFUL TERRAPLANE PERFORMANCE.

*available are shown on this
are equipped with sliding
direction indicators ~ . .*

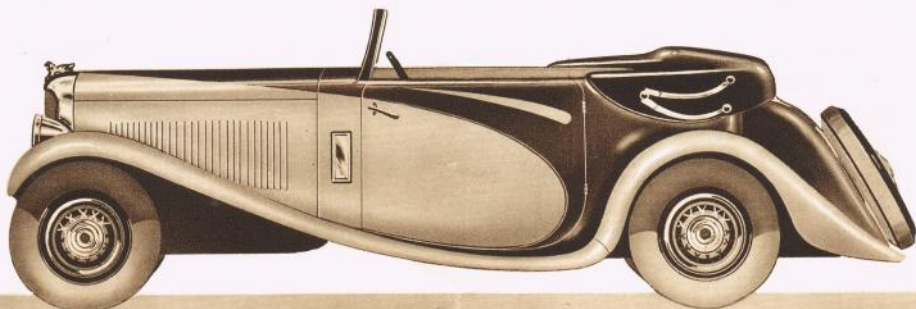


THE ESSEX TERRAPLANE STANDARD SALOON

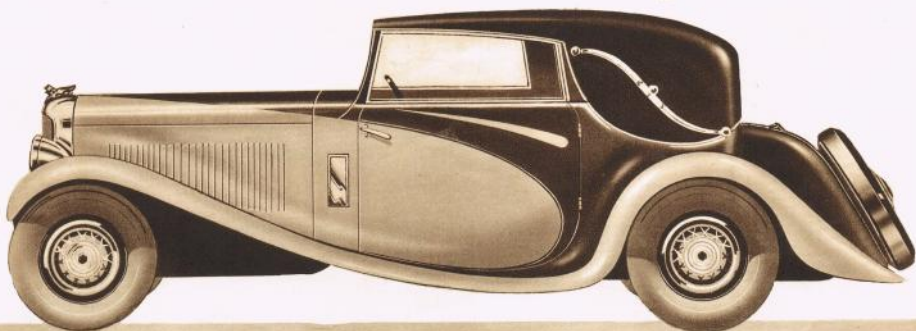
- LUXURIOUSLY COMFORTABLE SALOON BUILT ON THE REVOLUTIONARY TERRAPLANE PRINCIPLE OF UNIT CONSTRUCTION—AN ALL-STEEL BOX-GIRDER CHASSIS AND BODY FRAME.



The New Drop Head SALOON



THE ESSEX TERRAPLANE DROP HEAD SALOON (OPEN)



THE ESSEX TERRAPLANE DROP HEAD SALOON (CLOSED)

JUST as Hudson-Essex pioneered the saloon body for the man of moderate means, at a time when it was the exclusive privilege of the well-to-do, so, to-day, they offer you what is undoubtedly going to be the body of the future. A body which is a saloon for 4 passengers in wet or inclement weather, and a fully open car when the sun is shining. The body, illustrated here, gives every one of those

advantages which motorists have always longed for. It is opened or closed with supreme ease—the head, in fact, is manipulated with much greater ease than the hood of many open 4-seaters. Windows wind in the usual way, and can be raised or lowered, of course, independently of the head. The illustration shows how neatly the head folds down.



FEATURES THAT MAKE *the* TERRAPLANE *a different kind of car*

1 AEROPLANE POWER TO WEIGHT RATIO—The effect is two-fold, a performance that eclipses everything in its class, combined with a fuel economy that many small cars would envy. Hudson-Essex are the first manufacturers to make available the many advantages of aeroplane power to weight ratio.

2 UNIT ALL-STEEL BOX-GIRDER CONSTRUCTION of chassis and body.

3 PNEU-MOUNTED ENGINE—The last trace of vibration is banished by a unique method of suspending the engine on rubber and air.

4 THE MOST EFFECTIVE SPRINGING SYSTEM EVER DEvised—a combination of splayed springs, thermostatic shock absorbers, Air-wheel tyres, and low centre of gravity.

5 ALL-WEATHER VENTILATION—gives complete freedom from draughts with perfect ventilation. In a saloon you can light an unshielded match with the window wide open and the car doing 60.

6 SILENT SECOND SPEED and easy-change gearbox.

7 DUOFLO LUBRICATION—two simultaneous streams of oil fed to front and rear of engine.

8 TRIPLE-SEALED OIL-CUSHIONED CLUTCH.

9 ADJUSTABLE DRIVING SEAT, PEDALS, AND STEERING COLUMN.

10 TELL-TALE LIGHTS TO FLASH CONDITION OF THE OILING AND ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS.

Despite the general tendency to increase prices, Hudson-Essex have found it possible to offer you an even better and more fully equipped Terraplane at the same low prices.

TERRAPLANE PRICES

LIGHT SIX—16.9 h.p. Chassis, £230, Fixed Head Coupe, £295, Open Sports 4-seater, £295, Standard Saloon, £305, Sports Saloon, £320, Convertible Coupe, £335, Drop Head Saloon, £425. BIG SIX—20.7 h.p. Standard Saloon, £335. TERRAPLANE "Eight"—27.6 h.p. Chassis, £275, Open Sports 4-seater, £365, Standard Saloon, £385, Convertible Coupe, £390, Sports Saloon, £420, Drop Head Saloon, £485, Fixed Head Coupe, £375.

CHASSIS SPECIFICATIONS

of

The ESSEX TERRAPLANE

Light Six & Big Six

ENGINE.—3 point "pneu-mounted" 6-cylinder. **LIGHT SIX.**—2.21/32" bore, 4½" stroke (67.45 m.m. x 121 m.m.), capacity 2,560 c.c. Rated h.p. 16.9, tax £17. Engine develops 61 b.h.p. at 3,600 revs. **BIG SIX.**—75 m.m. bore 121 m.m. stroke, capacity 3,163 c.c. Rated h.p. 20.7, tax £21. Engine develops 70 b.h.p. at 3,600 revs. (more brake horse-power than any other mass-produced stock engine of similar size). Inherently balanced compensated crankshaft, steel connecting rods, aluminium alloy pistons, down-draught carburettor giving extremely rapid acceleration and good all-round performance. Firing order 1, 5, 3, 6, 2, 4.

COOLING SYSTEM.—Large cellular ribbon type radiator, capacity 2½ gallons, special jacketing of cylinder block, neatly mounted centrifugal pump, large fan.

LUBRICATION.—"Duoflo" system, with large double acting pump, special cooling paths around walls of sump, capacity of sump, including trough, 5 quarts.

IGNITION.—Battery and coil, fully automatic.

CLUTCH.—Single aluminium alloy plate, spring drive running in oil.

TRANSMISSION.—3 forward speeds, ratios in box, 2.42-1, 1.61-1, top direct, reverse 3.30-1; constant mesh silent second gear. Drive to rear axle through large diameter tubular cardan shaft and Spicer universal joints.

REAR AXLE.—Semi-floating Hotchkiss drive, helical bevel crown wheel and pinion. Ratios: **LIGHT SIX** 4.55-1, **BIG SIX** 4.1-1.

STEERING.—Worm and sector, ratio 15-1, running on Timken roller bearings. Column Adjustable.

SUSPENSION.—Long semi-elliptic springs front and rear, with patent self-adjusting shackles.

BRAKES.—Special, diagonally compensated, cable-operated. Low velocity, 2-shoe Bendix, with all important parts Cadmium plated.

FUEL SUPPLY.—9½-gallon tank at rear, fuel supplied to carburettor by pump. Electrically-operated petrol gauge on fascia.

CHASSIS LUBRICATION.—Alemite lubrication throughout.

WHEELS.—Special type wire wheels on all models fitted with 16 x 600 Air-wheel tyres by Goodyear.

● MAIN DIMENSIONS—LIGHT SIX.

	Standard Saloon.	Sports Saloon.	Drop Head Saloon.	Open Sports 4-Seater.
Wheelbase ...	106"	106"	106"	106"
Track ...	4' 8"	4' 8"	4' 8"	4' 8"
Overall Length ...	13' 10½"	14' 10"	15' 6"	15' 10"
" Width ...	5' 6"	5' 6"	5' 6"	5' 6"
" Height ...	5' 9"	5' 7"	5' 8"	3' 11"
Turning Circle ...	38'	38'	38'	38'

Eight Cylinder

ENGINE.—3-point "pneu-mounted" 8-cylinder (in line) 2.15/16 bore, 4½" stroke (75 m.m. x 114 m.m.), capacity 244 cubic ins., 4,010 c.c. Rated h.p. 27.6, tax £28. Engine develops 94 b.h.p. at 3,600 r.p.m. Heavy 5 bearing fully compensated crankshaft, steel connecting rods, aluminium alloy pistons, down-draught carburettor giving amazing acceleration and even torque at all engine speeds. Firing order 1, 6, 2, 5, 8, 3, 7, 4.

COOLING SYSTEM.—Large tube-type radiator, capacity 3.4 gallons, special system of cylinder block jacketing, neatly mounted centrifugal pump, large fan.

LUBRICATION.—"Duoflo" system with large double-acting pump, special cooling paths around walls of sump. Capacity of sump, including troughs, 2.1 gallons.

IGNITION.—Battery and coil, fully automatic, twin-bladed distributor.

CLUTCH.—Single aluminium alloy plate, spring drive, in oil.

TRANSMISSION.—3 forward speeds, ratios in box 2.42-1, 1.61-1, top direct, reverse 3.30-1; constant mesh silent second gear. Drive to rear axle through large diameter tubular cardan shaft and Spicer universal joints.

REAR AXLE.—Semi-floating Hotchkiss drive, helical bevel crown wheel and pinion. Ratio 4.11-1.

STEERING.—Worm and Sector, 15-1 ratio, running on Timken roller bearings. Column adjustable.

SUSPENSION.—Long semi-elliptic springs front and rear with special type U noiseless shackle in conjunction with "Thermostatic" shock absorbers.

BRAKES.—Special, diagonally compensated cable-operated low velocity, 2-shoe Bendix, with all important parts Cadmium plated.

FUEL SUPPLY.—13.5 gallon tank at rear, fuel supply to down-draught carburettor by pump. Electrically-operated petrol gauge on instrument panel.

CHASSIS LUBRICATION.—Alemite lubrication throughout.

WHEELS.—Special type wire wheels on all models fitted with 16 x 600 Air-wheel tyres by Goodyear.

● MAIN DIMENSIONS—BIG SIX & EIGHT.

	Standard Saloon.	Sports Saloon.	Drop Head Saloon.	Open Sports.
Wheelbase ...	113"	113"	113"	113"
Track ...	4' 8"	4' 8"	4' 8"	4' 8"
Overall Length ...	14' 5½"	15' 0"	15' 6"	14' 4"
" Width ...	5' 7"	5' 7"	5' 6"	5' 6"
" Height ...	5' 9½"	5' 8½"	5' 8"	3' 11½"
Turning Circle ...	41'	41'	41'	41'

HUDSON-ESSEX MOTORS LTD., GREAT WEST ROAD, LONDON, W.4.

AYK 923

In the last Bulletin Jim Scammell wrote about AYK 923's 90th anniversary in which he made reference to an article in Vintage Racecar whose title offended a "woke lady reader in the U.K." who wrote:

Glorious Illegitimate Child

Dear Editor

I feel I must write to you and express my strong disapproval of the title on the front of Vintage Racecar, March 2016. I feel the title "Glorious Bastard" is not the sort of language one would expect from a magazine of your quality. I feel it lets down all the hard work you and the team have done over the years to establish the magazine in Europe. It was especially insulting to those wives, partners, girlfriends and children attending the family show at Race Retro. I hope you will make my feelings known to whoever is responsible for such a vile heading.

Best regards.

Bernadette Byrne, Brixworth, U.K.

Amazing! The heading picture of that article, still with the "vile" heading, is reprinted here. — Ed.

RACECAR PROFILE

GLORIOUS

1934 Raitlon-Terraplane

by Patrick Quinn

BASTARD



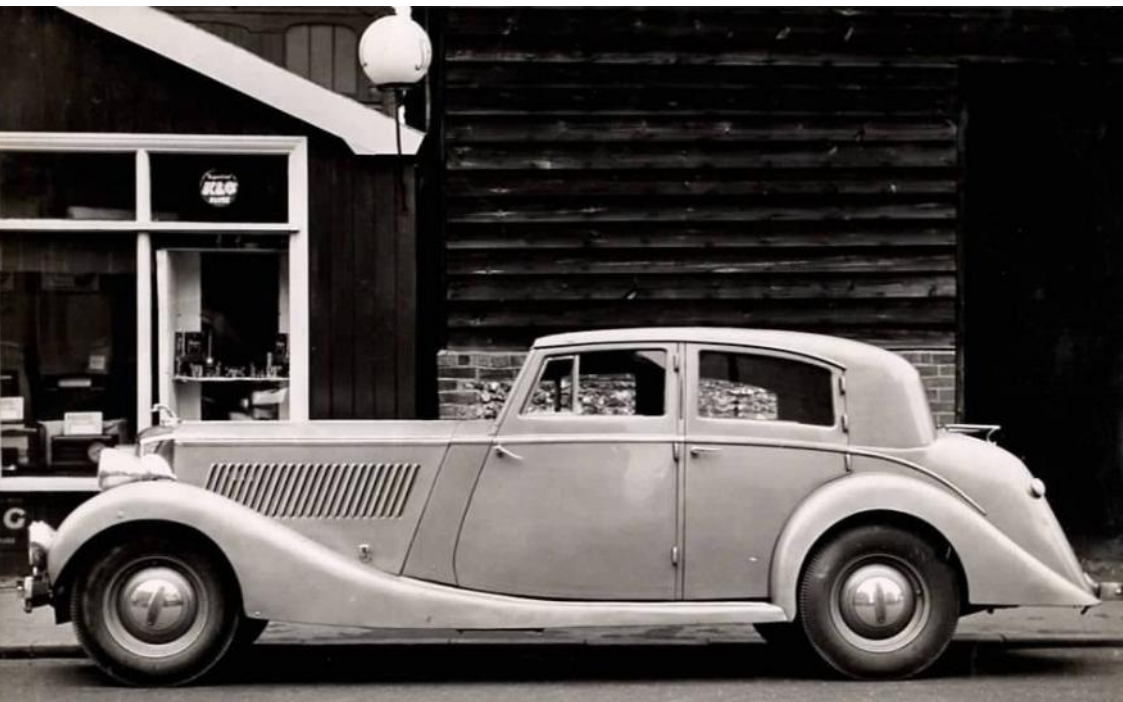
VINTAGE RACECAR | 33

PHOTO DISCOVERIES

Peter Gordon-Johnson of Inverness wrote to Toby Sharp and enclosed the two images below. The car, a 1937 Cobham Deluxe, looks in very good order. It has not been possible to identify the vehicle – can anyone help? It's a trade plate (145 MO) that is visible so that is not much help, but there is a long range lamp on the bumper and a distinctive radiator mascot.

Hello Toby,

I have enclosed the two Railton images. Fine looking cars. I know very little about the photos. They were in my stepfather John Dempsey's archives. I don't believe he owned one but, after WWII – in which he was a prisoner of the Japanese for 3 years – he worked in a prominent central London car business for many years. I suspect he was involved in the buying/selling of the car, but I could be wrong. The photos are certainly not central London. The other name that might be connected is Chubb – his first wife. If you turn up any information on the car I would be very interested.



TECHNICAL TIPS

Several members have recently been seeking replacement gearboxes and have been faced with the question of what the differences were between model years. This Hudson technical note "Mechanical Highlights for 1938" explains some of them.

Improvements

The changes made in the transmissions used on the 1938 models, while in the nature of refinement, are nevertheless important as related to longer life, quieter operation and greater reliability and ease of shifting. Included in the items which have come in for attention in gaining these objectives are the transmission case, mainshaft and countershaft and the mainshaft intermediate gear thrust washer retainer.

Heavier Case

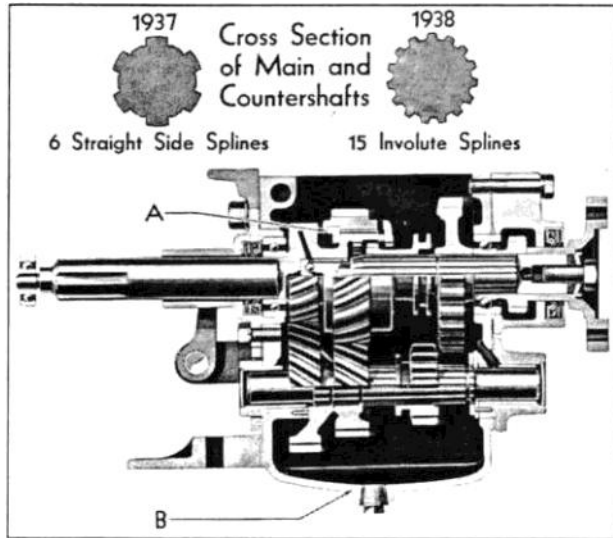
The transmission case has been stiffened and made heavier affording better support and alignment for the main and countershafts and bearings, making for greater quietness. In addition, the lower part of the case has been redesigned as shown at 'B' placing the drain plug at the center and providing a large settling chamber. With this construction, the possibility of metal particles being circulated with the lubricant and causing damage to the bearings or hard shifting is minimized. Lubrication of the transmission is facilitated by the adoption of a larger filler plug.

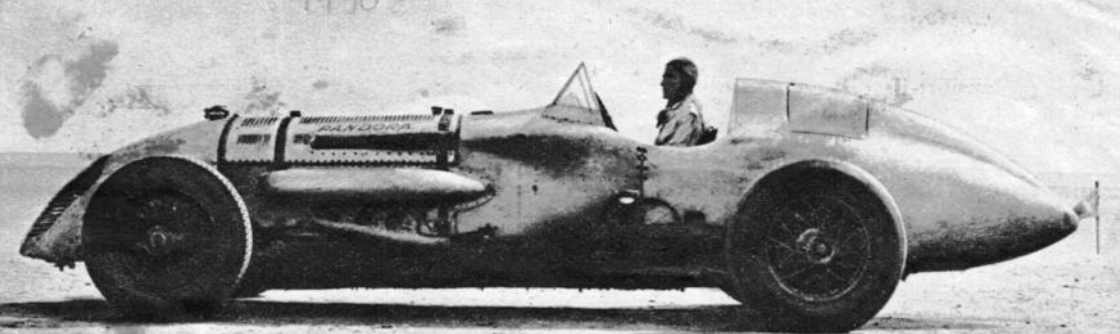
New Shaft Design

In redesigning the main and countershafts and the sleeve and gears which slide on them, an involute design for the splines has been adopted instead of the conventional type. The splines, which are now 15 in number for both the main and counter-shafts, as contrasted to 6 used formerly, are machined with tapered sides and with rounded corners at top and bottom. Features of the old and new designs are clearly depicted in the illustration. By the elimination of straight sides and sharp corners on the splines, the shafts have been made virtually self-cleaning and there is now practically no tendency for chips and metal particles to lodge between the shafts and gears or other sliding members to cause hard shifting or 'hanging up.' Another feature of the new design is that the splines are shallower, thus further contributing to greater shaft strength and rigidity.

Heavier Lock Ring

The mainshaft intermediate gear thrust washer retainer 'A' has been increased in thickness to provide a greater safety factor and the retainer groove in the gear has been made correspondingly wider.





Machine-made Film Star

If you have had anything to do with a racing car there comes a time when the machine seems at the end of its operational career. Maybe the track it used, Brooklands for example, is put out of action for ever. Perhaps the races for which it was built cease. But, whatever brings the end of your partnership – which is in fact friendship – always you wonder what will happen now to the car, whether you two will meet again, and in what circumstances.

As a rule the answer is that the machine just disappears while you pretend not to know that it has been broken up, has become all kinds of kitchen utensils and what not. You see occasionally, for a short while, glimpses of your friend, usually under a dust sheet that fancy makes a shroud, growing a little more dishevelled every time, a little more neglected. This was what appeared to have happened to one of the most thrilling machines with which it has been my good fortune to adventure, the Napier-Railton. This was the Railton-designed, Napier-engined track car, not to be confused with later Land Speed Record cars with the name of Railton.

That car still holds high reputation for it has, so far as I know, never given any mechanical trouble whatever. That is the more remarkable because it has won the 500-mile race twice, beaten the Brooklands outer circuit record, taken the world's 24-hour record and many other world records over shorter distances and times, and all this apart from its ordinary Brooklands career. Doing this it has journeyed to Montlhéry in France, and to Utah in the United States.

That alone is something, but add the fact that it is a beautiful car to handle, that its docility is amazing, that it is all too easy to underestimate its speed (therefore to be caught napping) and that it can almost “go shopping”, and you will gather that it has character.

Very well, then, how much greater the surprise, mixed with joy, when I discovered that the great machine was now a famous film star. It happened thus. Romulus Films, Ltd. wanted a machine which could look like a world's land speed record car of about 1927-30 date, go fast enough to be convincing in the part, yet be able to cruise about on what amounted to a joy

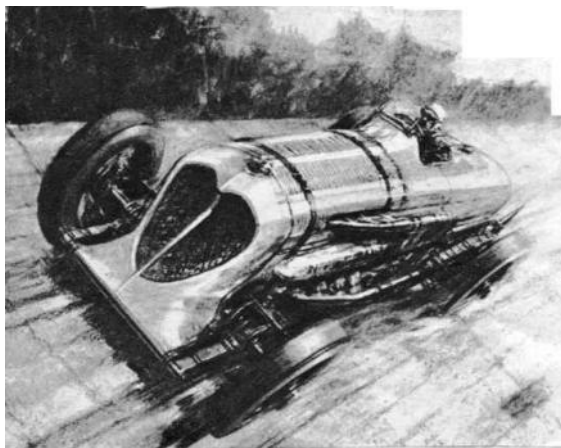
ride with the girl friend, for whom a second seat of sorts had to be possible. Not easy, you see; in fact only the Napier-Railton filled the bill. Once in Thomson and Taylor's sheds, the film people fell in love with the car forthwith, while one of them sketched on the still glistening side where they would cut away the body and what drastic alterations were required. When "Uncle" Taylor had recovered speech from the shock of this sacrilege and had been calmed, negotiations with Cobb resulted satisfactorily.

Then the studio workshop took a hand. When I arrived, the old machine had the smugly cosy expression of those being "made-up" for the first time, and seemed to me a good deal above itself.

Slimming

From a stumpy, rather fat, austerity it had now become long, willowy and slim; shall we say beautiful? With paper the workshop chief had made a taper streamline nose and a long slender tail. A neat little windscreen appeared; someone was painting "Pandora" on the side. That being satisfactory, the paper was replaced with genuine light alloys most expertly done – one of the craftsmen is himself a racing enthusiast – so that the car could be used at full speed.

Part of the body was cut away for the second seat (or sufficient seat for the purpose), instruments were altered, since ordinary folk do not understand revolution counters and, in very fact, here was a land speed car. Tyres were a problem. Those available were thin things with almost paper-thin treads, and there were not enough of them, while all were quite old



The late Gordon Crosby's painting of the Napier Railton high up on the banking at Brooklands. At the top of the article is the old car with the elegant nose and tail added by the film studio.

and several spare covers had stood in the open for a while while partly full of water. Dunlops, as usual, rebuilt the wheels to take available tyres, thus overcoming a crisis when the driver found out what he had on the wheels when he was asked to go very fast indeed; even then, some of the racing tyres had to be used. So there she is, a film star in her own right with a recently acquired temperament, a strong sense of publicity, a pungent power of criticism if what seems a rival appears. And off she has been to Spain in luxurious state – for the film atmosphere – before journeying to Pendine sands whereon, for hour after hour, day after day, she performed, often at high speed, before the cameras on an exact replica of the official mile course, timekeepers, flags, and so on all included. I expect trouble

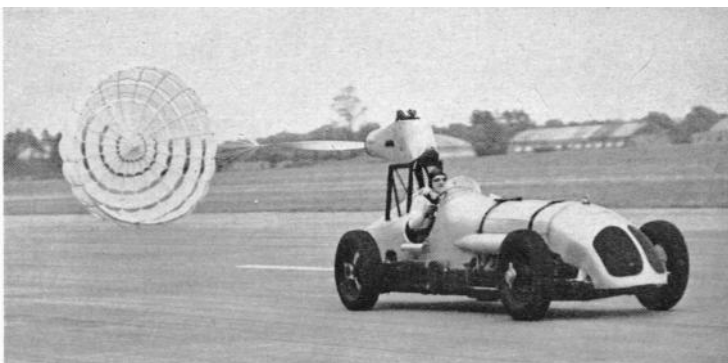
in the future, not mechanical or tyre, simply temperament, but albeit Lewin's film, "Pandora and the Flying Dutchman," in which the car appears, should be fun.

S. C. H. D.

This article, by Sammy Davis, first appeared in Vintage and Thoroughbred Car August 1953. A note by C.L.W. Barker accompanying the file copy recorded that "The Napier Railton belongs to Sir Raymond Quilter who uses it for testing parachutes. His method is to charge across an aerodrome and release the chutes at about 130 mph from a sort of winch arrangement mounted on the tail of the car. I came across the car recently at Brooklands when T&T were fitting more powerful brakes in case the parachutes do not open."

The following article from The Aeroplane of May 28 1954 explains what went on in the structure that tested parachutes. Was the G.Q. mechanism eventually adopted for use on any aircraft?

Added Deceleration by Parachute



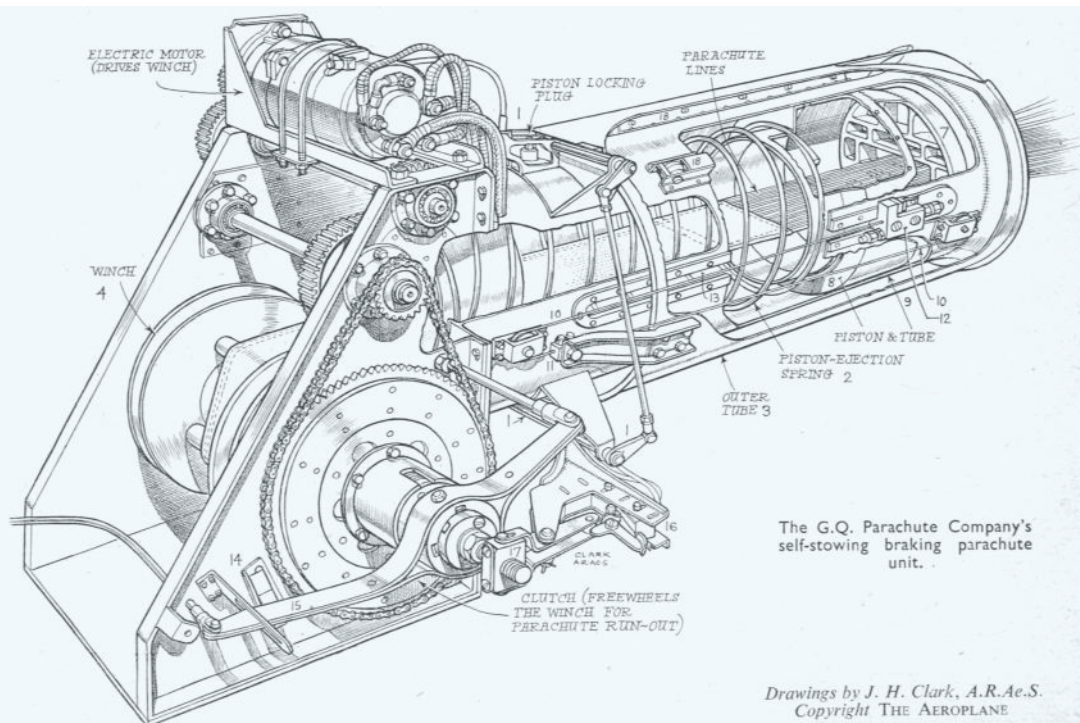
A braking parachute that does its appointed job of decelerating the aeroplane to which it is fitted and then promptly repacks itself ready for further use, would seem to be very much an ideal solution to one of the main problems associated with this type of equipment. This is, in fact, just what the G.Q. Parachute Company have achieved in a new piece of equipment which was demonstrated on May 20 by Sir Raymond Quilter, Bart., with the aid of the late John Cobb's record-breaking Napier-Railton racing car, which is powered by a 450 b.h.p. Napier Lion.

The current trend towards increased aerodynamic cleanliness – even with “everything down” – coupled with the higher touch-down speeds associated with increased wing loadings has added considerably to the problem of keeping landing runs of modern aircraft within reasonable limits. Normal braking methods have had to be supplemented with other devices and braking parachutes have come to be accepted as one relatively simple and efficient means of adding the extra drag that is required.

But in the world of aeronautical engineering, simplicity very often has some hidden drawback. And in this case the problem has been one of the “expendability” of the parachute in question. After doing its job, it has, in effect, to be temporarily abandoned on the runway – a proceeding very likely to lead to damage to the canopy or even, in the case of a stream landing

by several aircraft so equipped, to become a hazard.

G.Q.'s ingenious solution would certainly seem to be a great step towards the removal of these two serious drawbacks. Indeed, it is a most promising project. In point of fact, this development has been under way since 1951 when an official specification was issued. This called for a braking parachute that would automatically stow itself after use when the speed of the aircraft dropped to a given value. Among detailed requirements set out in a later specification also issued in 1951, was that the time taken for the parachute to deploy after the pilot's control had been operated should not be more than three seconds. It was also required that the parachute could be used in crosswinds of up to 20 knots and still be retractable. Automatic stowage should take place when the aeroplane's speed had reduced to 30 knots and be completed within 15 seconds.

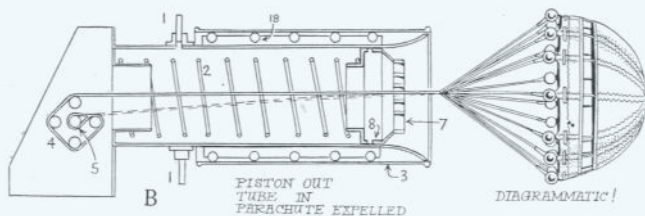


The devices used to meet these somewhat difficult requirements are shown in the accompanying sketches. Basically, the system employed makes use of a telescopic cylinder housing the parachute with the shroud lines and main attachment webbing "strop" taken up on an electrically-operated drum provided with a clutch.

On "pressing the button" the canopy is ejected rearward by a powerful spring-loaded piston. At the same time the rear (outer) housing cylinder telescopes forward over the forward (inner)

portion. This sudden exposure of the canopy speeds and facilitates its deployment and the shroud lines and webbing strop unwind from the de-clutched drum.

When the aircraft speed has been reduced to the required value – which will correspond to a certain parachute drag – the electric motor is switched on either manually or automatically and the parachute is drawn forward. When the strop and shrouds are practically all wound on the drum, large “beads” at the canopy end of the lines make contact with the guide grille inside the housing and cause the outer casing to move aft over the now bunched canopy, so that it is finally stowed again.



DIAGRAMMATIC!

KEY

(A) Ready for action.

(B) Coming in to land, at suitable air-speed, pull cockpit lever 6, thereby withdrawing plungers 1 (freeing piston 8) and freeing the clutch. (Piston shoots out under pressure of spring 2 and outer tube 3 comes in, thereby ejecting parachute). Parachute takes charge and pays out on a free-wheeling winch 4 (disconnected from driving motor by clutch) unto limit, then fetches-up on central anchor-pin 5.

When aircraft speed has dropped to required speed, push cockpit lever 6 forward to engage clutch and switch on motor, thereby winding parachute in.

Just before completion of stowage: Parachute being drawn in against grille 7 of piston 8, piston moves down its tube 9 and inserts resistance in electric circuit to slow motor down.

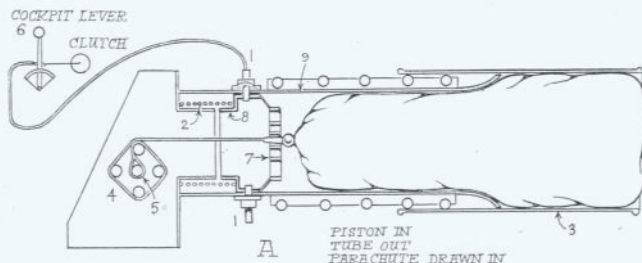
Parachute brings piston right back, tube 3 moves out (piston and tube are interconnected by endless wire 10, connection 11 to tube, and connection 12

sliding in slot 13) incoming piston finally cuts motor out. Clutch remains in. All ready to repeat cycle.

14. Motor contactor operated by clutch lever 15.

16. Motor contactor operated by clutch thread 17.

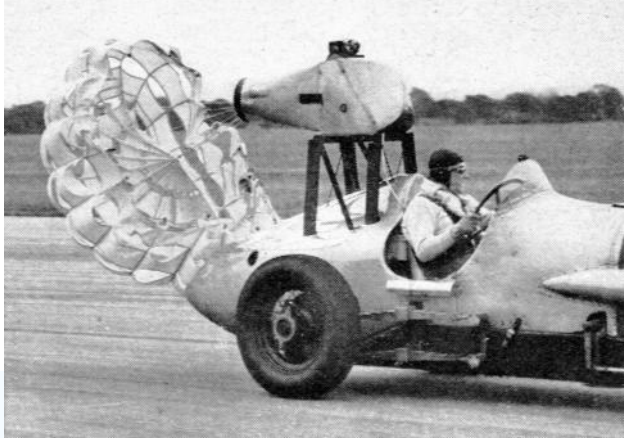
18. Guide wheels.



As we have already mentioned, this gear was demonstrated to us on the Napier-Railton car. This equipment is an experimental version to prove the principle but could easily be scaled up as required for a given aircraft application. The parachute itself was of the ring-slot type having seven rings and a diameter of 8 ft. This is, incidentally, the size of canopy used as an anti-spin parachute on aircraft the size of the Hunter.

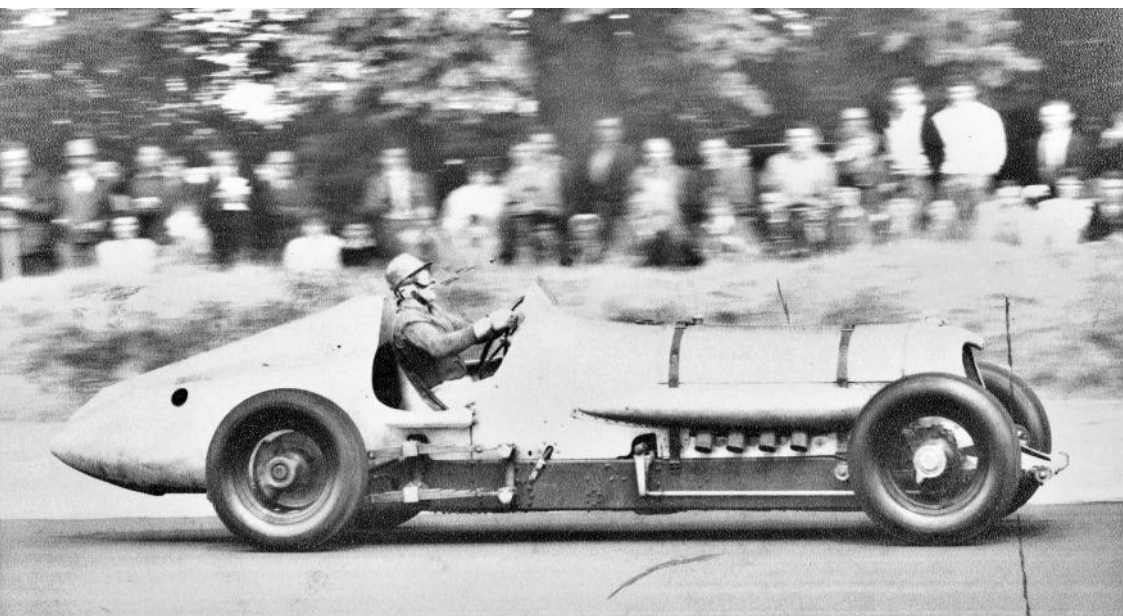
In practice, the complete unit for, say, a modern jet fighter would weigh something of the order of 50 lb. It would be interesting to know how this would compare with the corresponding weight of some of the jet thrust reversers or spoilers that have been developed recently for the same sort of task.

The actual braking effort developed is very much a function of the size of parachute used and the speed at which it is deployed. In the case of that demonstrated, the car – which weighs some 4,500 lb – was slowed up on the parachute alone from around 95 m.p.h. down to about 50 m.p.h. in something like 200 yards..



The G.Q. self-packing aircraft braking parachute being demonstrated on the company's test vehicle – the late John Cobb's Napier-Railton car. In this image, the canopy is on the point of being withdrawn into the container after deceleration.

In the late 1950s, on the death of Sir Raymond Quilter (our first Vice-President) and being no longer suitable for parachute testing, the car was offered at £250. It was suggested that the Club should put up the ante, but the practicalities were insuperable. What an opportunity missed! In the event it went to the late Patrick Lindsay, who kept it at Douglas Hull's garage in Finmere, near the airfield where the R.O.C. used to hold the National meetings for many years. This picture is of a very brave Lindsay competing at Oulton Park in 1962(?) with rear wheel brakes only, albeit converted to discs; a less suitable 'bolide' for circuit racing could be hardly imagined.



MARKET PLACE

Gorringes Auctioneers, 15, North Street, Lewes, East Sussex are offering Railton MG 5336 in their sale on Tuesday, March 25th. It is described as:

A 1937 Railton Fairmile series III Drophead Coupe, reg. no. MG 5335. Completely restored by The Vintage Carriage Company, over many years, to a very high standard. Winner of the John Cobb Cup at the Railton Owners Club National meeting, at Hever Castle, in June 2002.

Estimate £25,000 - 35,000. If interested contact Philip Taylor philipt@gorringes.co.uk



The car, which is reportedly in full running order, was until recently the property of late Club member Hilary Harper. It is not the usual item sold by Gorringes, who normally specialise in high-end Fine Art, Jewellery and Antiques, so it will be interesting to see if the outcome is better or worse than the specialised classic car auctioneers might have achieved.

CLUB SHOP – AVAILABILITY AND PRICES

	Price	U.K. Postage	ROW Postage
R.O.C. Car Badge	£35.00	£1.32	£1.65
R.O.C. Tie	£10.00	£1.25	£1.43
Embroidered badge (approx. 3 inch wide)	£5.00	£0.70	£0.90
History of the Railton	£3.00	£0.70	£0.90
Land Flying – The Terraplane by James Fack	£8.00	£1.25	£1.65
The Lost Coachbuilder – Atcherley by James Fack	£9.00	£1.25	£1.65
Railton & Brough Superior Gold Portfolio (Brooklands Books)	£17.50	£3.50	£7.00

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: Contact the Secretary, Max Hunt. Telephone: 01299 401135.

E-mail: secretary@railton.org

PAYMENT BY CHEQUE: Cheques (sterling only) for the total including postage should be made payable to to **“Railton Owners Club”** and post with your order to: Max Hunt, Secretary, Abberley Cottage, 7 Dowles Road, Bewdley, Worcestershire DY12 2EJ.

VIA THE WEBSITE: Go to www.railton.org and then click on *Club Shop*. (You do not need to log in to the Member-Only pages to purchase items). Scroll down and click on the *Add to Cart* button by the item(s) of your choice. Checkout using PayPal.

PAYMENT DIRECTLY FROM YOUR PAYPAL ACCOUNT: Registered users of PayPal can use the “Send Money” facility but you must send the money to treasurer@railton.org in sterling. Please add the following amounts to the total cost of your order including postage to cover PayPal fees. Total up to £10 (add £0.50); up to £14 (add £0.75); up to £19 (add £1.00); up to £24 (add £1.25). You can either list your order in the “message” area in PayPal or e-mail separately to Max Hunt.

PAYMENT BY BACS: E-mail your order to Max Hunt and make a sterling BACS payment directly into the R.O.C. bank account. **Quote reference of your surname/membership number so that we can identify the payment.**

HSBC Bank Sort Code: 40-17-04 Account Number: 91009877
IBAN: GB52HBUK40170491009877 BIC: HBUKGB4153R

