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An Independent Publication

Kelsey Publishing Ltd, The Granary, Downs Court,
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Subscriptions

Six issues of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*
are published per annum

UK annual subscription price £33.00

Europe annual subscription price £39.00

USA annual subscription price £39.00

Rest of World annual subscription price £42.00

UK subscription and back issue orderline: 01959 543 747

Overseas subscription orderline: 0044 (0) 1959 543 747

Toll free USA subscription orderline: 1-888-777-0275

UK customer service team: 01959 543 747

Customer service email address: subs@kelsey.co.uk

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kelsey.co.uk/myaccount

Digital issues and subscriptions

See www.pocketmags.com

Distribution

Great Britain: Marketforce (UK), 2nd Floor, 5 Churchill Place,
Canary Wharf, London E14 5HU. Tel: 0330 390 6555

Northern Ireland and the Republic Of Ireland:

Newsread . Tel: +353 23 886 3850

Printing Pensord



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Goodbye to 2021...

It is an anomaly of magazine publishing that although this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* carries a Jan/Feb 2022 cover date, it actually goes on sale in early December... which makes it an ideal time to look back on what's been a mixed year for most of us. Here in the UK, we started 2021 enduring the latest pandemic-related lockdown, after which we saw a gradual re-opening of society and a return to some kind of normality.

Everyone in the world of classic vehicles was inevitably affected, with yet more shows and rallies being cancelled early on in the season – something we'd already had to get used to in 2020. By mid-summer, however, things began to change and we were able to enjoy a busy but short season of events. For those of us who'd missed being out and about, meeting fellow enthusiasts and enjoying their company (and cars), it was quite an emotional experience.

As for *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, I'm delighted to say that it's been another reassuringly successful year. Our existing audience has shown amazing loyalty once again, while healthy numbers of new readers have also discovered us and 'come on board'. I'm so grateful to each and every one of you for your continued support – and particularly for the wonderful feedback you've provided throughout the year. With lots more cars photographed and exciting features already lined up for 2022, we're looking forward to building on this success.

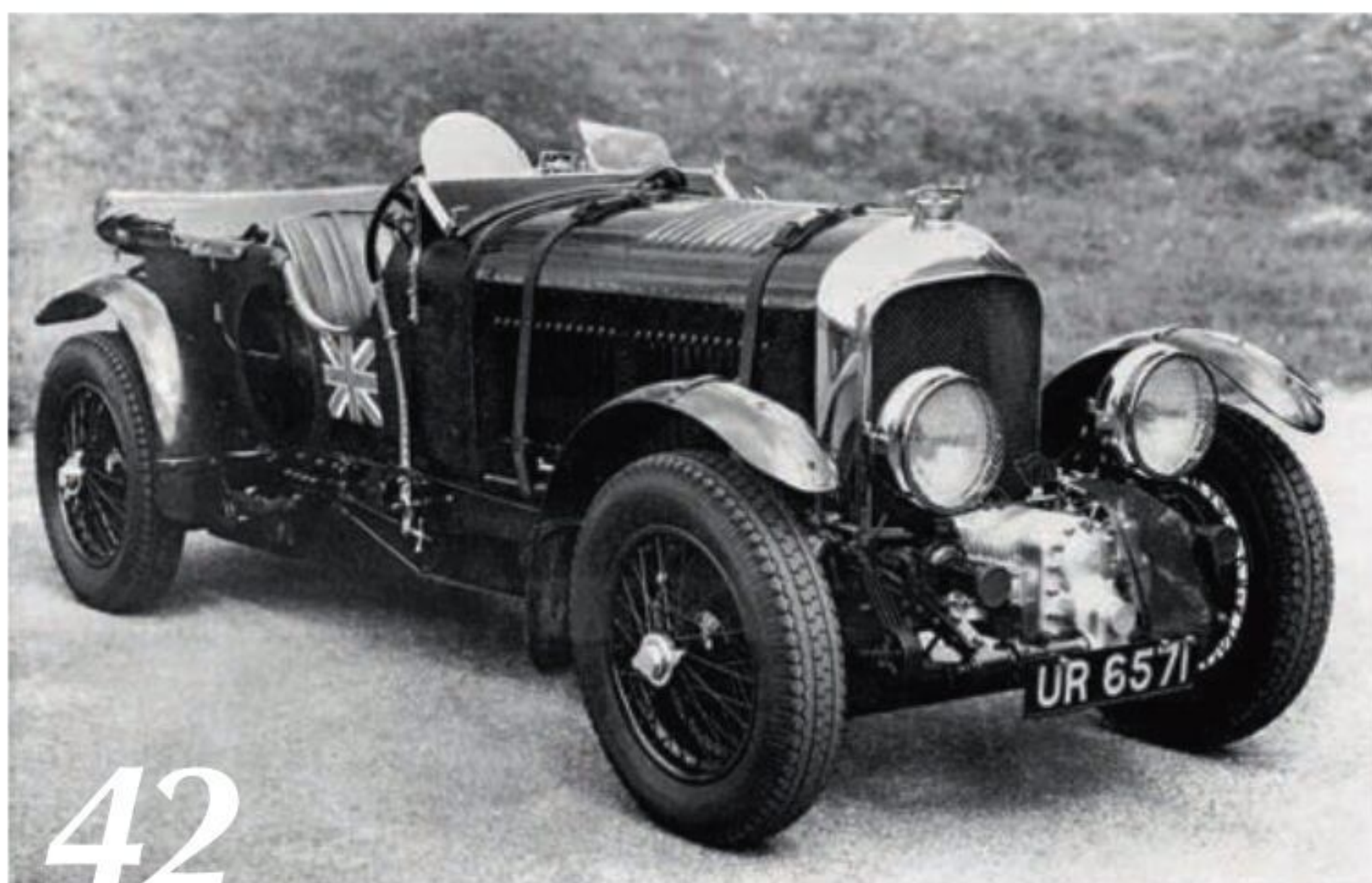
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Paul Guinness

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HYBRID CHALLENGE

Using only energy from waste straw and the power of the planet, an engineering prototype Flying Spur Hybrid has completed a dramatic test as part of the car's sign-off and Bentley's development of renewable fuels. The Flying Spur Hybrid covered the 455 miles required to drive across Iceland in a single stint and entirely on renewable power, through a combination of 100% second-generation biofuel and geothermally-sourced electricity available from the Icelandic power grid.

Bentley claims the journey is validation of both the grand touring range of its latest hybrid model as well as its research into biofuels that can be used without engine modification. The fuel used conforms to the same EN228 standard as regular petrol but is created entirely from waste biomass (such as straw) at no cost to food production or the natural ecosystem. The combination of this fuel and the Flying Spur Hybrid's intelligent electrified powertrain meant an overall reduction of 45% in

CO₂ emissions on a well-to-wheels basis over the course of the adventure.

The Flying Spur Hybrid represents Bentley's next step on a journey to becoming the world's most sustainable luxury car manufacturer, as laid out in its Beyond100 strategy. It will be introduced to most markets in 2022, with all models in the Bentley line-up being offered with a hybrid powertrain by 2024 – ahead of the arrival of the company's first fully-electric vehicle the following year.



AMERICAN COLLECTION

Bentley Mulliner has unveiled a suite of collections exclusively for American customers, reflecting increased demand for special commissions. US retailers have been working closely with Bentley Mulliner to curate a number of bespoke models for their clients, each using Mulliner's Personal Commissioning Guide to create unique Bentleys.

The three new collections each centre around a particular theme. The Mulliner Nauticis Collection includes four Continental GT V8 Convertibles based on a yachting theme, while the Mulliner Skyline Collection celebrates Manhattan's iconic skyline – as well as being Mulliner's first to include all members of the current model line-up. Finally, the Mulliner Miami Collection is said to be inspired by that city's vibrant art scene, colourful lifeguard stations and Art Deco.

The Mulliner Design team has created over a thousand bespoke projects since 2014, ranging from personalised treadplates through to completely unique coachbuilt projects like the Bentley Mulliner Bacalar.



CARBON OFFSETTING

The Historic & Classic Vehicles Alliance (HCVA) has launched a new initiative to help classic vehicles achieve Net-Zero CO₂ emissions. The organisation points out that classic vehicles are already 'environmentally friendly', with average annual usage below 1200 miles per year – which means the typical classic car produces lower CO₂ emissions than a mobile phone or laptop. However, the HCVA is keen to find ways to further reduce the carbon footprint of classic vehicles without impacting on

the heritage or enjoyment of them.

"The historic and classic vehicles sector is a vanishingly small contributor to the UK's CO₂ emissions, yet contributes nearly £3 billion to the exchequer each year," explains Garry Wilson of the HCVA. "Classic vehicles are also an important part of our cultural heritage so we want to ensure that the wider classic sector has the ability to achieve Net-Zero status ahead of the mainstream automotive sector."

The HCVA has teamed up with Net-Hero to launch its Instant Offset project. The easy-to-use platform enables classic car drivers to offset their carbon emissions in three steps, starting at a cost of two pence per mile. The driver of a typical classic car that clocks up 1200 miles per year could offset their carbon emissions from as little as £30. The fee is then channelled towards supporting high quality, ethical carbon credit projects around the world, such as afforestation and the restoration and protection of vital carbon-rich peatlands and grasslands.

Whatever your offset cost, a contribution of £2 goes towards helping the HCVA fund its campaigning to protect the future of classic and historic vehicles, while a further £2 takes care of the administration of the scheme by Net-Hero. Every driver using the scheme will receive a certificate and vignette to demonstrate their status as an environmentally responsible driver. To find out more, go to net-hero.org.



BRAKE HOSE KIT

Among the new additions to the IntroCar range since our last issue is this rear brake hose kit – complete with brackets – for the Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph, plus all versions of the Bentley Arnage and Brooklands coupé not fitted with ceramic brakes. The kit replaces the original steel braided brake hoses to the rear calipers with rubber hoses. The original-spec hoses are no longer available, and this kit provides all the parts necessary to replace them.

Caliper hoses should be replaced every 60,000 miles (96,000km) as part of your car's regular servicing regime. To order the kit, go to introcar.com or call +44 (0)208 546 2027 quoting product code JNV698996.



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FAMOUS 20HP HEADS TO AUCTION

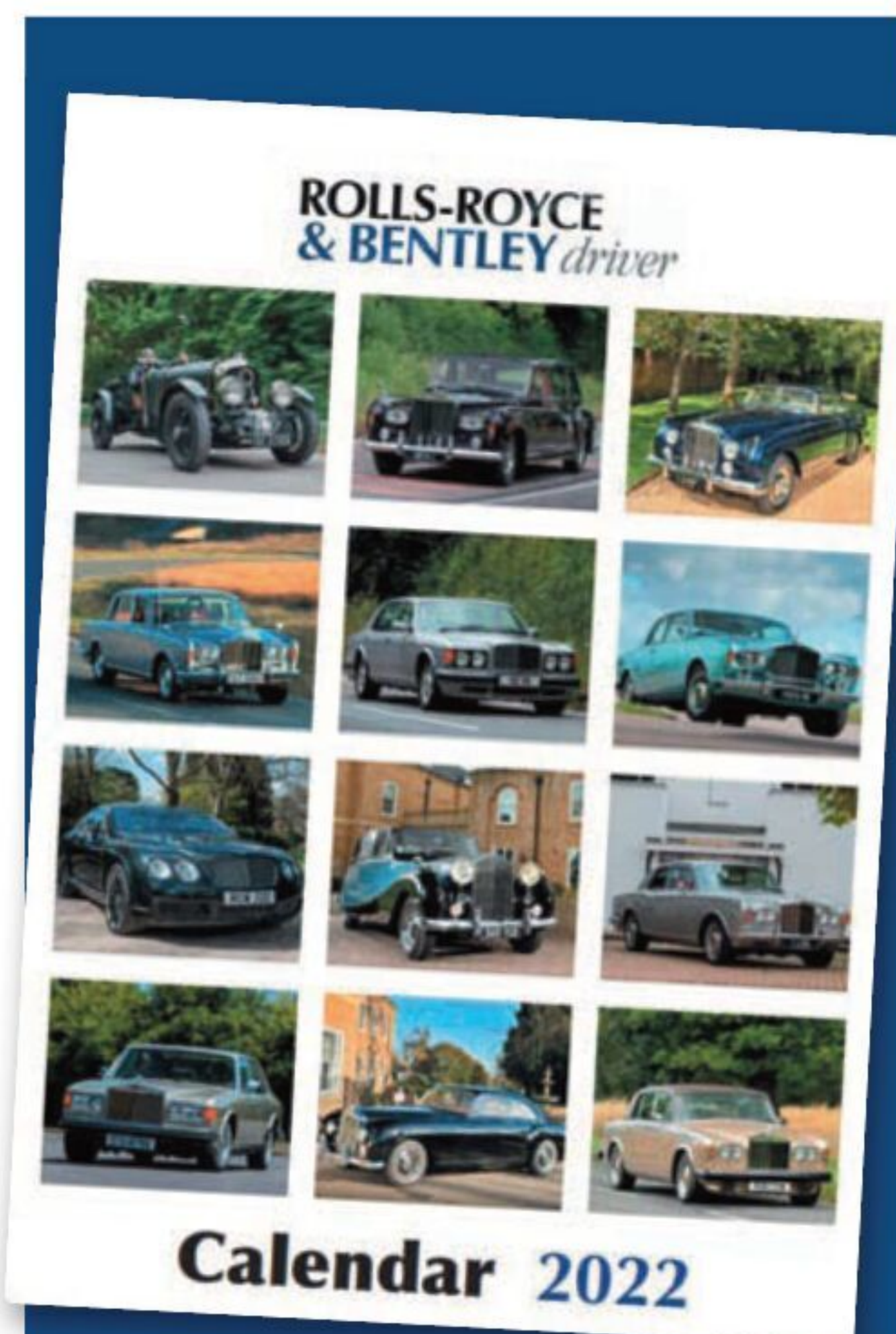
As this issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* went to print, one of the best-known examples of a Rolls-Royce 20hp was set to be auctioned by H&H. The 1926 Park Ward Landalette played a starring role as Pop Larkin's (played by David Jason) family transport in ITV's *The Darling Buds of May*, which first aired in 1991.

The famously yellow car (chassis number GUK71) was originally finished in



Purple Blue with a fine white coachline and matching blue upholstery. Its third owner was Richard Derington-Fenning of the Royal Hotel, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, who acquired the 20hp in 1955 and kept it for 38 years. It was during his custodianship that the Rolls-Royce went on to achieve TV stardom.

The car retains its famous RA 333 registration number as well as an impressive history file, which includes the original order confirmation letter, bill of sale, specification sheets, copies of pre-delivery inspections, plus the original logbook and instruction manual. Despite the 20hp's most recent owner paying £100,000 for it in 2019, H&H has issued a pre-auction estimate of £50,000-£70,000. To find out what the car achieved, visit handh.co.uk.



2022 CALENDAR

Following the success of last year's *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* calendar, the 2022 edition is on sale now – and it's the perfect Christmas gift, costing just £8.99 delivered (or £13.49 overseas to cover extra postage costs). It's A3 in size and features stunning photography of some of the magazine's best feature cars of the last twelve months. Stocks are limited, so don't miss out. To order your calendar, go online to shop.kelsey.co.uk/product/CAL22RRB.



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LATEST BLACK BADGE

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars has announced the latest model in its Black Badge series, based around the four-door Ghost. The Ghost Black Badge is a more powerful, more individual version of the luxury saloon introduced last year and – like other Black Badge models – is aimed at attracting younger Rolls-Royce buyers. It uses a more powerful version of the standard Ghost's twin-turbocharged 6.75-litre V12 engine, boosted by 29bhp (to 592bhp), while torque is increased to a maximum of 664lb.ft. from just 1700rpm.

The Ghost Black Badge adds a new 'Low' driving mode, which sharpens up numerous driving functions, including gearshifts from the eight-speed automatic gearbox that are made 50% quicker, and a tweaked exhaust note. Other upgrades include more voluminous air springs designed to reduce body roll under hard cornering, a bespoke throttle map, plus revised tuning for the all-wheel drive and four-wheel steering systems.

The exterior of the Ghost Black Badge borrows many design touches from its Black Badge siblings, the Dawn, Wraith and

Cullinan. These include a darker chrome shade for the exterior brightwork, radiator grille and Spirit of Ecstasy, plus a bespoke 21-inch alloy wheel design. Inside, there are black wood veneers and a more 'subdued' tone throughout, along with a new minimalist interior clock that's flanked by a redesign of the Ghost's LED-illuminated fascia.

The Black Badge series has been successful in reducing the average age of Rolls-Royce buyers, which has dropped from 56 to 43. Black Badge models now account for up to 40% of all new Rolls-Royces sold – well up on the 15% that Rolls-Royce Motor Cars originally envisaged when it was first introduced on the Wraith in 2016. The Ghost Black Badge is available to order now, priced from £325,000 in the UK.



WINTER WHEEL PACKAGES

Bentley Motors has launched a new range of winter wheel packages for the colder season, aimed at customers who want a fresh new look for their car – via special 21-inch alloys – to match the enhanced winter performance offered by Bentley's Pirelli winter tyres.

There are four 21-inch winter wheel packages now available – one for the Continental GT/GTC and Flying Spur, one for the Continental GT Speed and two for the Bentayga. The specially-developed winter tyres enable owners of all models to enjoy the performance of their vehicles during the worst wintry conditions.

The wheel packages provide the simplest method for swapping between summer and winter tyres, helping to prolong tyre wear when used in their optimum conditions. Winter tyres are far more effective than summer tyres in low temperatures (below 7°C or 45°F) and ensure maximum traction and performance on cold tarmac, snow and ice. Bentley's Pirelli winter tyres are claimed to provide a "comparable experience to driving on a warm, dry day".



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LIFELONG AMBITION

On a recent trip to Suffolk, we met up with the proud owner of this early Rolls-Royce Corniche fixed-head coupé, a car that represents the realisation of a childhood dream

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT WOODS





FEATURE CAR
ROLLS-ROYCE CORNICHE



Gavin Hughes is a proud Corniche owner

“In adult life, Gavin’s ambition to one day have a Rolls-Royce of his own remained, but for many years it wasn’t a practical proposition”

When we hear someone talk about how they developed a love of cars at a very young age, it often brings back memories of our own childhood. Car-spotting as a youngster is something most of us can relate to, an activity that can often influence our choices in later life. And for Gavin Hughes, growing up near London in the 1980s meant one thing: there was rarely a shortage of Rolls-Royces for him to admire, with England’s capital being the place you

were most likely to see a secondhand Silver Shadow, a classic Silver Cloud or a brand new Silver Spirit at that time.

“I had regular trips into the city with my mum and dad and used to spot all the Rolls-Royce motor cars and have my photograph taken standing next to them,” recalls 44-year-old Gavin. “I would visit the London Motor Shows at Earl’s Court with my dad and admire the amazing cars on display on the Rolls-Royce stand. I also remember visiting the showroom in Conduit Street, where I got to sit in a 1928



40/50 Phantom Sportsman Saloon." Needless to say, such experiences had an impact on young Gavin, and he became an avid collector of Rolls-Royce and Bentley models: "I amassed quite a collection over the years. I would even go to Hadley Green Garage in Barnet, a Rolls-Royce dealership, to admire the brand new models for sale and politely ask for brochures to take away, which I still have."

In adult life, Gavin's ambition to one day have a Rolls-Royce of his own remained, but for many years it simply wasn't a practical proposition: "I figured it was an unachievable dream as I lived in London with no parking. I contemplated an R107-series Mercedes-Benz SL at the time, but it didn't seem right to have a classic car parked on a busy London street. Then in 2016 I moved out of London to rural Suffolk, to a house in the country with a very large garage. It was my dad who one

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Gavin Hughes developed a fascination for all things Rolls-Royce at an early age. As a child, he would regularly have his photograph taken next to the cars parked in the street, spotted by him during family trips to London. "I would also visit the London Motor Shows at Earl's Court with my dad," recalls Gavin, "admiring the amazing cars on display on the Rolls-Royce stand."



day remarked that I could get a Rolls-Royce in the garage... and suddenly my childhood dream was re-awakened!"

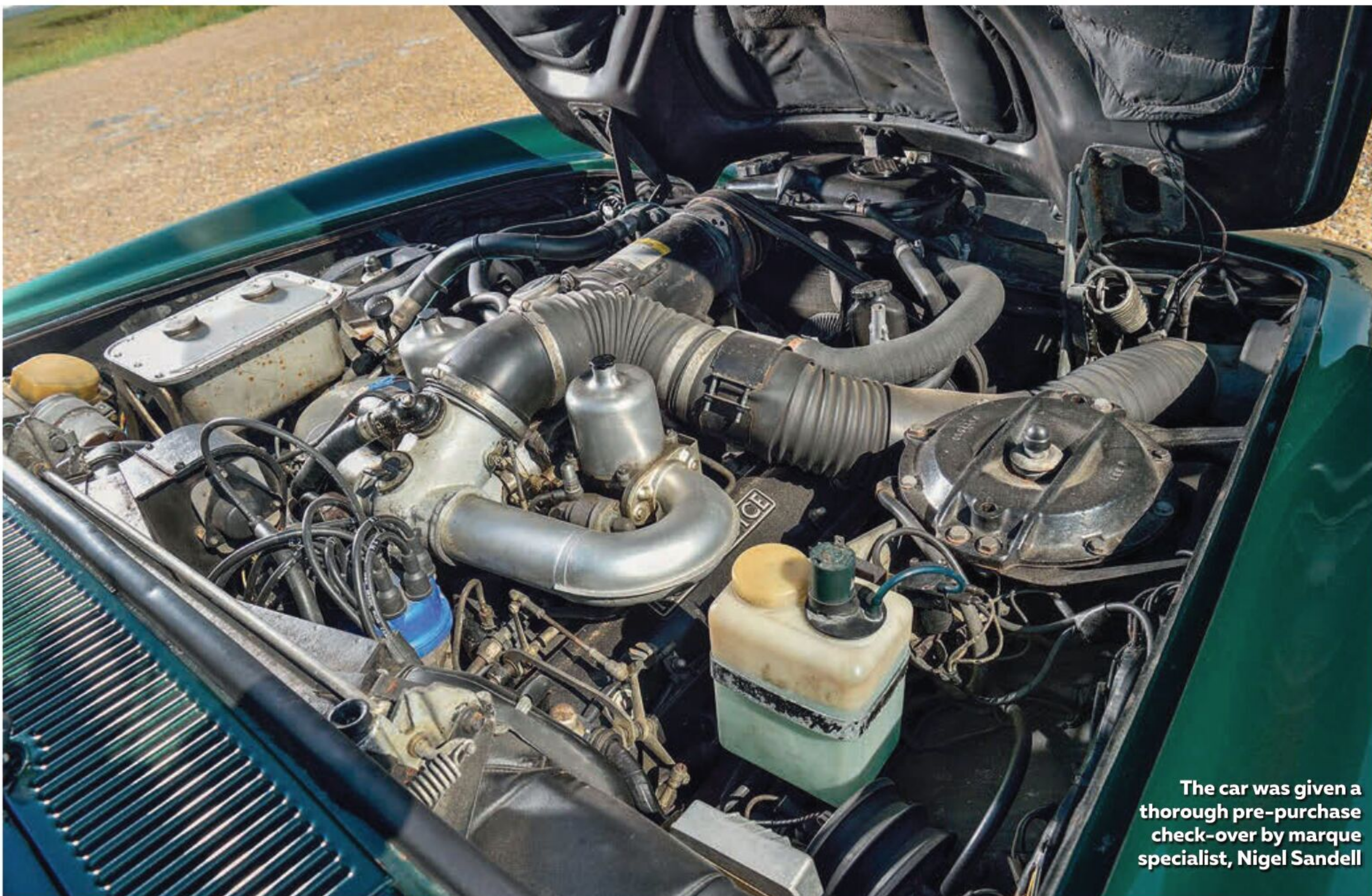
Choosing which Rolls-Royce to focus his attention on wasn't all that much of a dilemma for Gavin: "I always thought the ideal car would be a two-door coupé as it would only be me driving it. I really wanted a car that I could use and which would look right around the country lanes and villages where I live. And I've always admired the styling of the Corniche." The only real challenge was tracking down his ideal example, a process that saw Gavin joining the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club and searching the internet for available cars.

"My first test drive in a Rolls-Royce was via a lovely lady in the

Midlands," recalls Gavin, "although my buying decision was solved when the car sold a couple of days later to somebody else." It was unfortunate, but at least the experience confirmed Gavin's suspicion that a Corniche was the right model for him.

The 1972 example you see in the photographs was spotted for sale in the summer of 2017, advertised by a marque enthusiast who seemed very knowledgeable about the car and its provenance. As it was to be Gavin's first ever classic, he took his time in making a decision, and very sensibly opted to have the Corniche inspected by a Rolls-Royce expert. Isleworth-based Nigel Sandell came to the rescue, giving the car a thorough check-over in his workshops, »

FEATURE CAR ROLLS-ROYCE CORNICHE



The car was given a thorough pre-purchase check-over by marque specialist, Nigel Sandell

and the verdict was favourable enough for Gavin to make a decision by the October: "There were just a few areas that needed attention, as the rocker covers had a leak, the manifold heat shield needed changing, and the battery and tyres all had to be replaced."

A 6000-mile service was also carried out before Gavin finally had the Corniche back home, as he wanted it to be usable and reliable from day one: "Nigel even agreed to deliver the car to me in Suffolk, as I'd only driven it a very short distance at that point, and I didn't want

my first real experience behind the wheel to be a trip around the M25!"

EARLY HISTORY

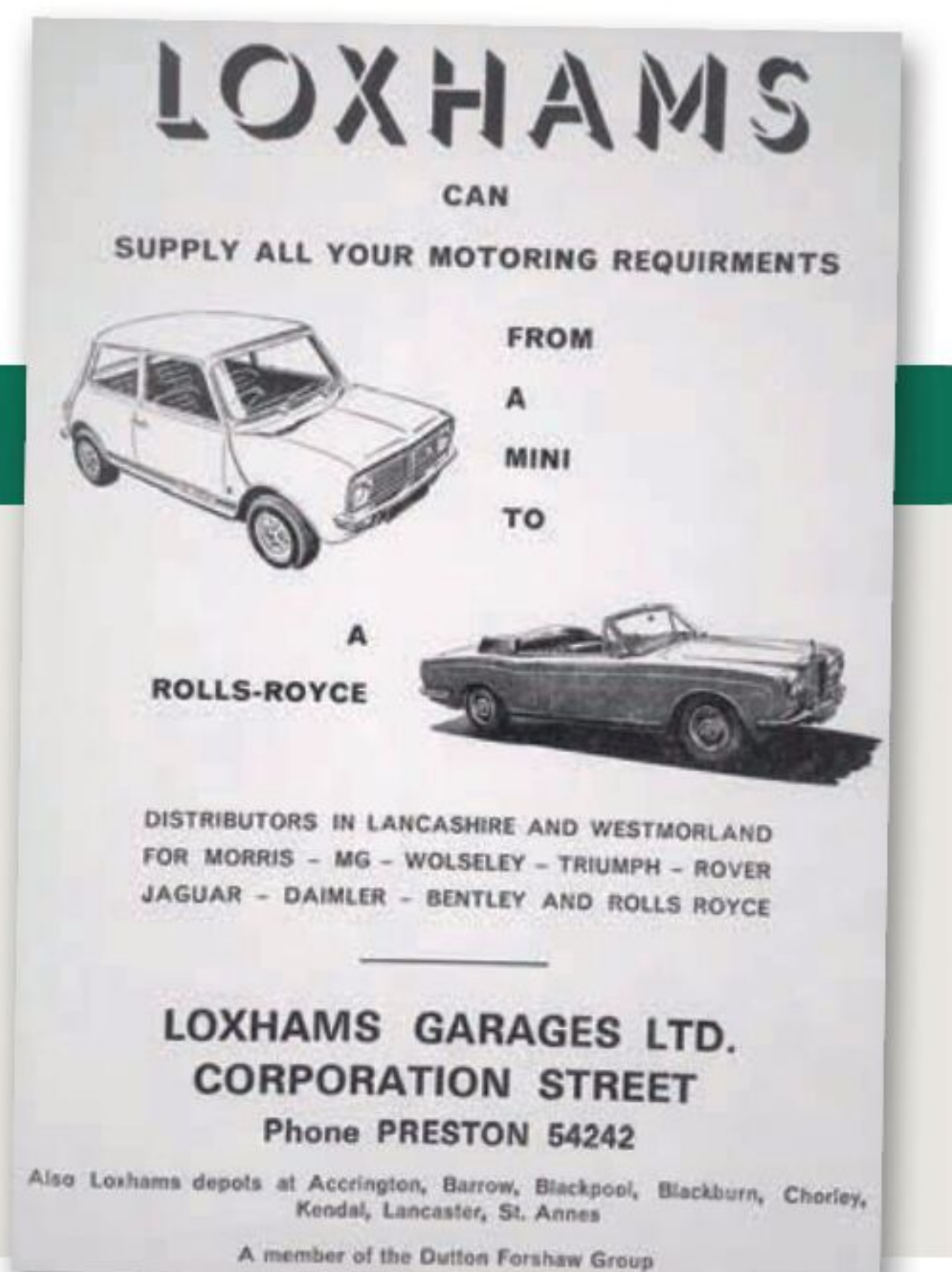
The history of this early Corniche is particularly interesting, with its registration date of 1st January 1973 making it a late-1972 build. It was

ordered from Loxhams of Preston, a Rolls-Royce dealership that by then was part of the Dutton Forshaw Group and had multiple franchises throughout Lancashire selling the entire British Leyland range, including the prestigious Jaguar and Daimler marques. The company's Rolls-Royce showroom took the order for the Corniche from a Mr J Cox of Manchester, a builder and real estate entrepreneur, who collected his new car at the start of 1973.

Sadly, Mr Cox passed away just two years later and the Corniche ended up in the showroom of Jack Barclay's, which is where its second custodian first saw it. "This is where the history gets interesting," explains Gavin, "as the new owner was Terence Frank Kennedy, an American author but more notably the widower of Marks & Spencer retail heir, Mathilda Marks. He purchased the Corniche a couple of years after his wife had passed away. Terence was a very wealthy man and lived at the exclusive Chester Terrace in London, but he spent time travelling to the South of France and Switzerland. I like to imagine the Corniche being kept in the mews in Regent's Park but always ready to drive long-distance across the continent to »

SUPPLYING DEALER

The Corniche featured here was ordered from Loxhams of Preston, a Rolls-Royce dealership that by the early 1970s was part of the Dutton Forshaw Group. The company had multiple franchises throughout Lancashire selling the entire British Leyland range, including the prestigious Jaguar and Daimler marques. The company's Rolls-Royce showroom took the order for the Corniche from a Mr J Cox of Manchester, who collected his new car at the start of 1973.



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FEATURE CAR ROLLS-ROYCE CORNICHE



“The history of this early Corniche is particularly interesting, with its registration date of 1st January 1973 making it a late-1972 build”

It was professionally resprayed and the Everflex removed sometime in the early 2000s, and the car is much more pleasing in its current hue of Balmoral Green with a hint of metallic. It's an extremely well-preserved example and the high-quality paint finish still impresses.

Monaco and the South of France.”

Kennedy ended up living in Switzerland during his ownership of the Corniche, and so the car was registered there for a number of years. It returned to the UK in 1989, however, which is when it was

re-registered with the DVLA.

These days the Corniche looks rather different from when it was relatively new, as Gavin explains: “The car was originally finished in Astrakhan Brown with a tan-coloured Everflex roof – a classic '70s combination!”

CARING OWNER

The Corniche has been in Gavin's ownership for over four years now, having acquired the car in late 2017: “That was a big year for me, as I got married, turned forty, got a dog and bought a Rolls-Royce!” he laughs. “I



The interior of Gavin's Corniche is very well-preserved, with only the cassette player being non-original



named the car Joyce after my husband's late grandmother, who would have loved to have been driven around in her. I also decided that keeping an Instagram diary would be a fitting way to document her history with me and for others to enjoy." Any readers keen to follow the antics of Gavin and his much-loved Corniche should search @joycejoycetherollsroyce on Instagram.

Since buying his first Rolls-Royce – and his first ever classic of any kind – Gavin has been thoroughly enjoying the experience he waited so many years for: "We've been to every RREC Annual Rally since buying the car, as well as some charity shows. But what I really »





“The car was professionally resprayed in Balmoral Green and the Everflex removed sometime in the early 2000s, and it now looks much more pleasing”

enjoy is simply driving the Corniche. I make sure she's taken out at least every other weekend all year round, although she obviously gets more use during the summer. I've always been told that the best way to maintain these cars is to actually use them, and so that's what I do. The driving experience is everything I'd hoped for – and more.”

The Corniche had 38,000 miles on its odometer when Gavin bought it (he assumes the true figure was 138,000),

and it's now showing 43,000. As with any classic, however, there are various jobs that Gavin hopes to attend to over the coming months: “The rear subframe mounts need attention, so she'll be going to Tudor & Black – the company that I now use for my servicing and maintenance here in Suffolk – to get this sorted next year. Oh, and I'd also like to have some re-chroming done at some point. Other than that, I'm simply working my way around the car

ironing out any minor imperfections, such as reinstalling an original-type eight-track player where there's currently a later cassette player.”

Joyce the Rolls-Royce is very much a keeper as far as Gavin's concerned – a car that he waited so long for, he now can't imagine being without. Almost half a century on from its first official on-road excursion, this Corniche continues to delight its latest custodian. ■

HARDTOP CORNICHE

Although both versions of the Corniche – the fixed-head coupé (FHC) and convertible – arrived in 1971, they were little more than mildly updated versions of the previous Silver Shadow two-door by Mulliner Park Ward. The modifications were useful, however, with the famous V8 engine now boasting 10% more power, while the interior was reworked with some extra wood, a rev counter and new-style centre console. The

radiator grille was made deeper and new wheel trims were fitted, which also aided brake cooling.

The upgrades continued throughout the Corniche's career. In 1977, for example, the bulkier (and arguably less attractive) shock-absorbing bumpers of the Silver Shadow II were adopted, along with the same front air dam, slightly flared wheel arches, rack-and-pinion steering and enhanced suspension. Then during 1979 the rear suspension

from the forthcoming Silver Spirit was implemented, notably improving the Corniche's road manners.

With the 1980 launch of the Silver Spirit marking a major change of style for Rolls-Royce, the following March saw the end of the Corniche FHC, which by then was priced at £62,000. But the convertible (costing an extra £4000) continued, eventually becoming one of the longest-lived of all Rolls-Royce models.



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I'm Jonathan a semi-retired motor trader, RREC member and have been involved in classic cars and everyday cars for over 43 years.

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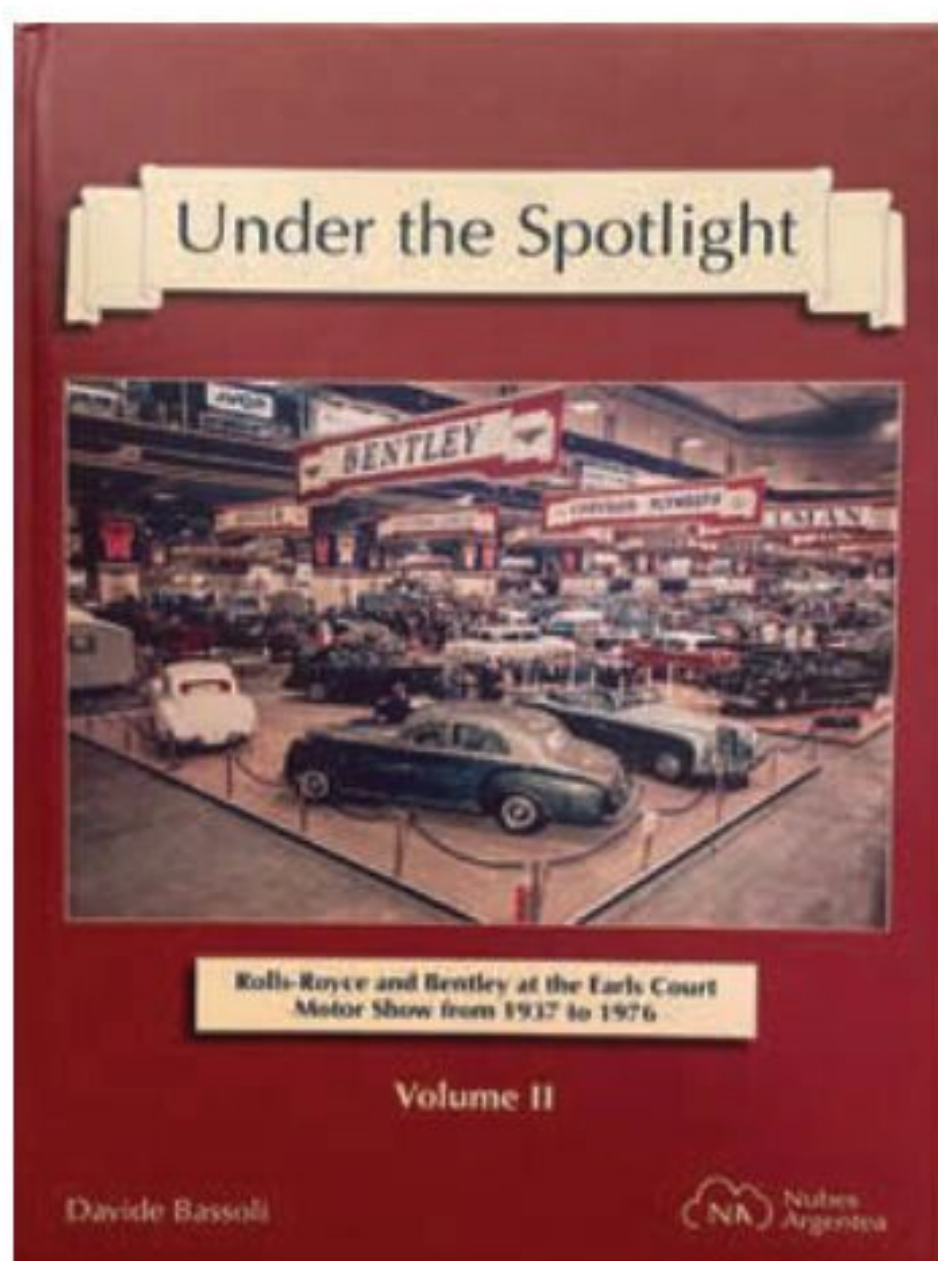
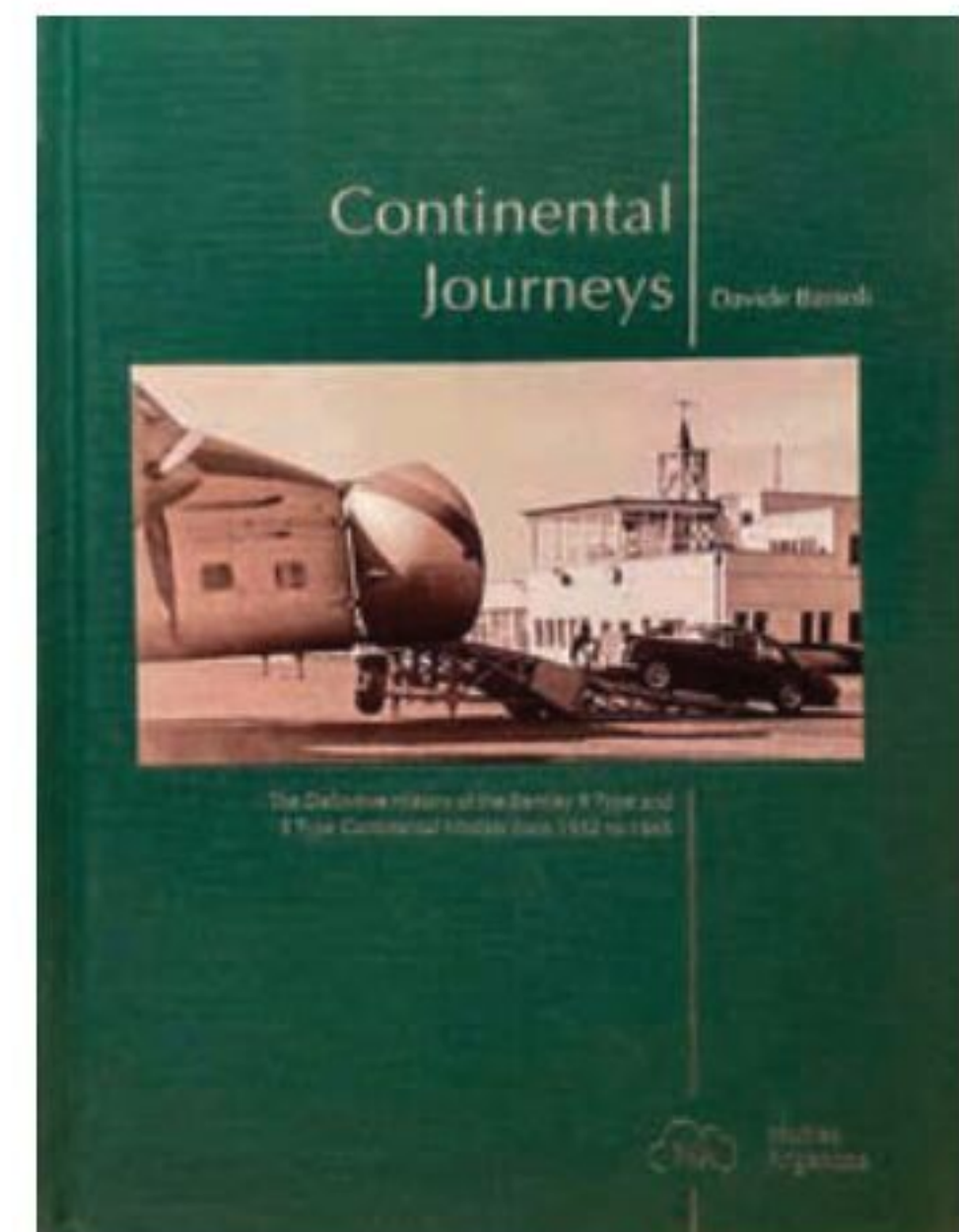
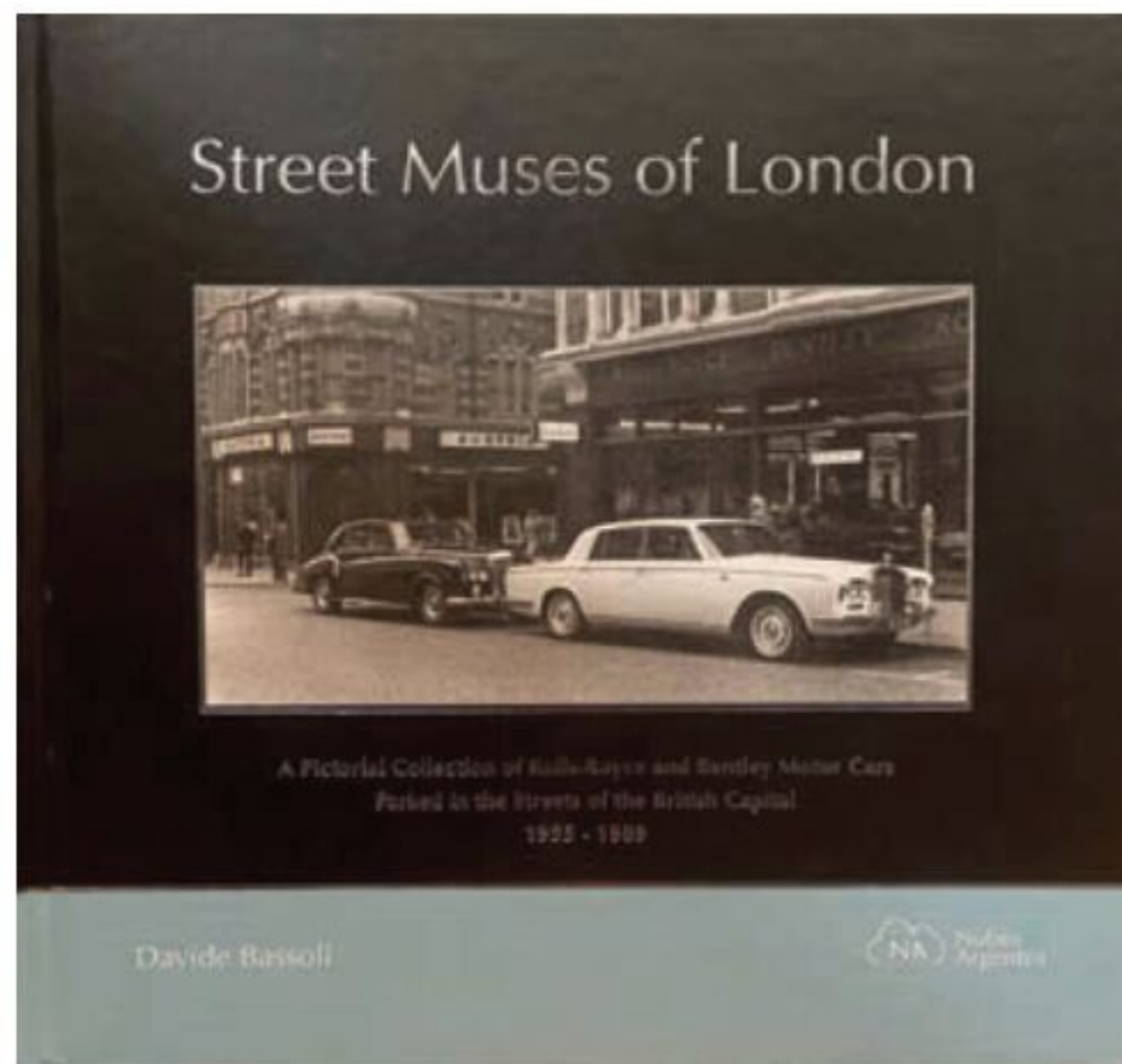
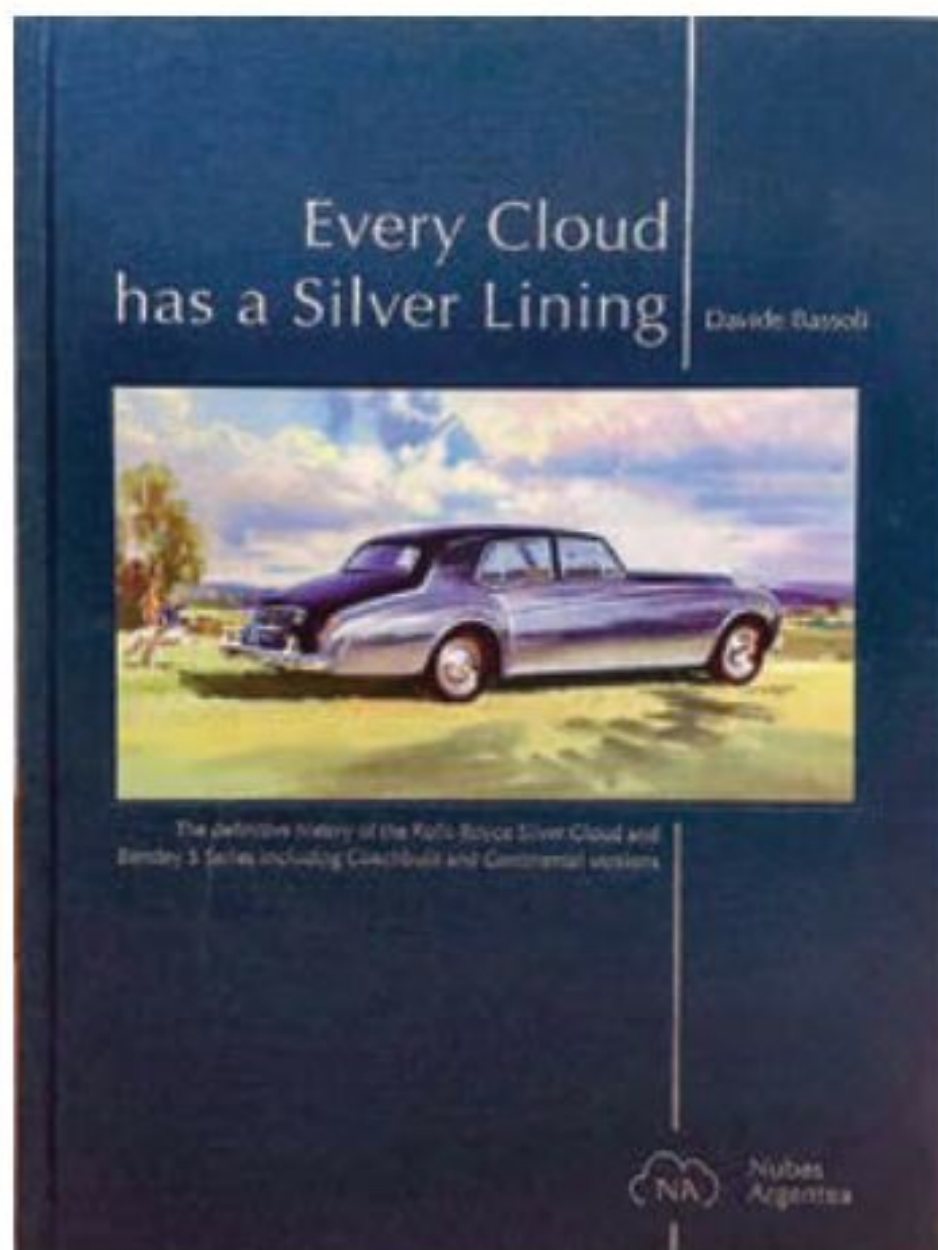
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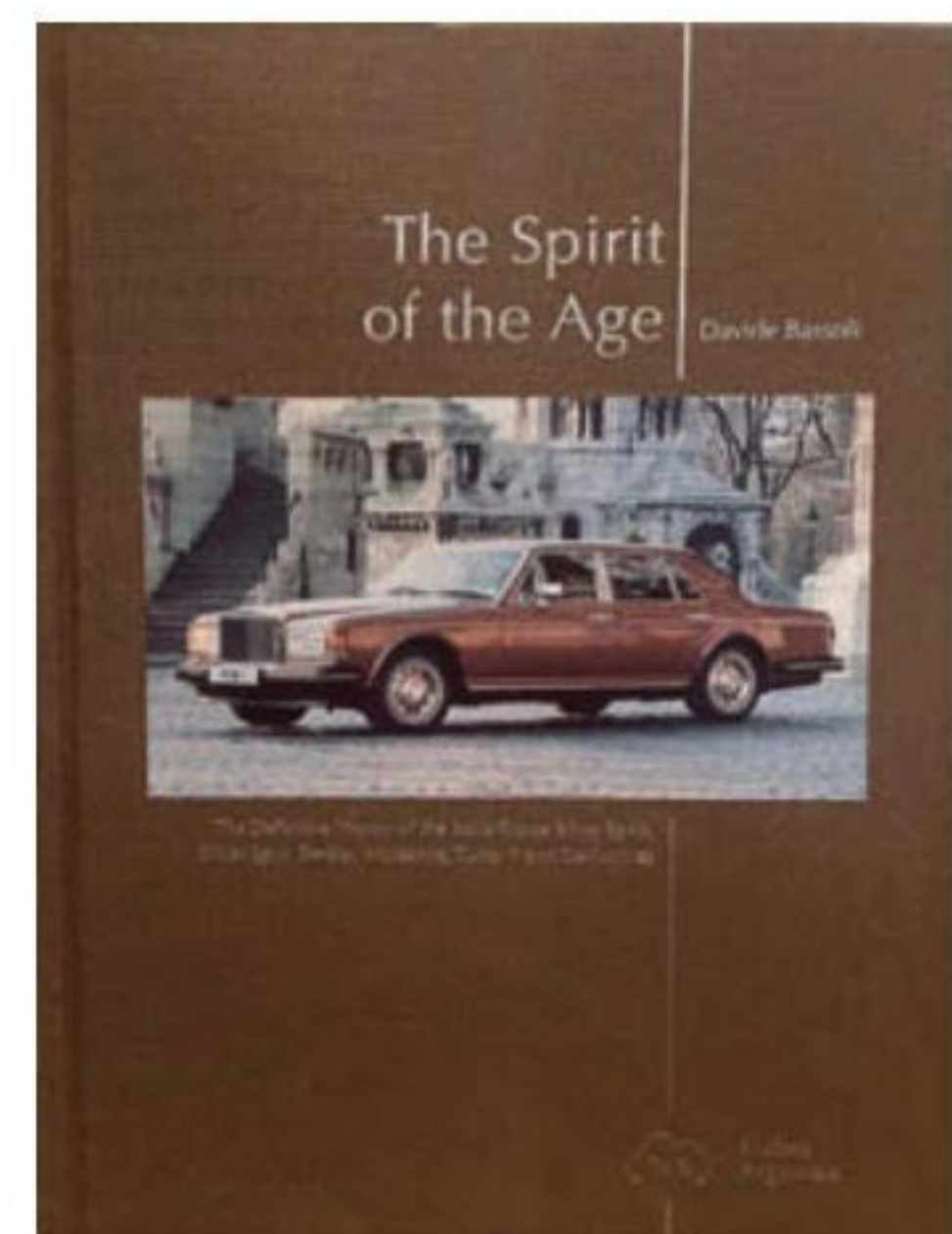


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MARKET WATCH



Each issue, we take a look at some of the most tempting cars for sale and report on others that have sold – covering everything from affordable modern classics through to the most premium-priced gems

HANDSOME HOOPER

If you fancy a touch of pre-war glamour in your life, this 1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25 Sports Saloon by Hooper – a car that's recently had £100,000-plus spent on it, as well as benefiting from a fully detailed engine rebuild – could be yours for a sensible-sounding £68,000. Chassis number GLZ60 is an early 20/25 with elegant four-door coachwork, its yellow and black colour scheme adding further to its head-turning looks.

The green hide interior with matching green carpets is said to be in fine shape, as is the large sunroof that works well and slides easily open. The Macassar Ebony interior woodwork is particularly unusual and in lovely condition.

The Rolls-Royce is described as being in exceptional running order, coming with over £100,000 worth of mechanical rebuild invoices for work completed by Fiennes Engineering. As a result the car is said to drive like new, with an engine that's still in the process of running-in gently. This 20/25 also benefits from overdrive, making it an ideal touring machine with what the selling specialist describes as a "go anywhere" feel to it.

Richard Biddulph calls this Hooper Sports Saloon a "pleasing Rolls-Royce with delicate proportions". If you'd like to find out more, give him a call on +44 (0)7967 260673 or visit vandp.net.





FOUR DOORS OR TWO?

The Continental Flying Spur of 2006-2015 is a model we don't feature a great deal here in *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, with most of our modern-classic saloon focus being on the Arnage, Silver Seraph and their predecessors. There's no doubt though, that the Flying Spur now offers a lot of Bentley for your money – and for anyone who suddenly needs a car more commodious than a Continental GT, it can be a tempting proposition.

Derived from the GT but featuring a saloon-like rear end and all the advantages of four doors and a proper boot, the Flying Spur is the Continental for those who need some extra

practicality. And at the time of writing, Hanwells of London currently has in stock a handsome Flying Spur Mulliner from 2007 – an 86,000-mile car that looks particularly smart in Sapphire Blue with a Magnolia interior. The Bentley is to full Mulliner Driving specification and comes with 20-inch Mulliner alloys. It obviously shares the same 6.0-litre W12 engine as the Continental GT, pushing out a mighty 552bhp when new. And at an asking price of £26,950, the Flying Spur offers excellent value for money.

If you don't need those extra doors, of course, an early Continental GT is more of a head-turning offering –

such as the 2004 car shown below, which has covered just 53,000 miles to date. Finished in Moonbeam Silver with Speed wheels, and with a superb looking interior in Portland with French Navy secondary hide, this attractive example has been known to Hanwells for the last eight years and has apparently been maintained regardless of cost. Described as immaculate throughout, it again offers good value at £24,950 – and like the Flying Spur, it comes with a two-year warranty for extra peace of mind. To find out more about either car, go to hanwells.com or call +44 (0)208 567 9729.





T-SERIES PROJECT

Only the very brave will want to consider taking on this project, which comprises a 1973 Bentley T-series that's said to have covered just 78,000 miles but is described as being in

poor condition and "rusted out". The vendor reckons the car has been parked up for over ten years, and so he's (understandably) not tried to start it.

A huge amount of work will obviously

be required, as well as a healthy budget. If you're tempted at the asking price of £3295, you can give Coventry-based GLR Cars a call on +44 (0)2476 936704. Delivery can be arranged.



SIX-DOOR LIMOUSINE

Anyone looking for an SZ-generation car with a difference might just be interested in this Coleman Milne-converted Silver Spur II six-door limousine, described by its vendor

as being in "beautiful condition" and "very well maintained". With seating for up to eight and complete with glass chauffeur's division, it's ideal for the funeral or wedding

business – or simply as an unusual classic for the larger family. For more information, call Lancashire-based Paul Whittle & Son on +44 (0)1942 247247 or +44 (0)7850 536355.



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FEATURE CAR
GT SUPERSPORTS





QUICKEST CONTINENTAL

We catch up with the proud owner of a Continental GT Supersports, the fastest Bentley of its era and one of the most exhilarating road cars ever to come out of Crewe

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS
PHOTOGRAPHY: GREGORY OWAIN

You might think it takes a very special machine to tempt a self-confessed enthusiast of Italian sporting cars out of his charismatic Maserati and into a Crewe-built coupé. And indeed, the Supersports version of the first-generation Continental GT *is* special, aided by its headline-grabbing 621bhp output and a top speed just a fraction of a second off 205mph. For Hertfordshire-based Mark Finnegan, however, his choice of modern classic just over two years ago had as much to do with its number of cylinders as anything else: “I want to make sure I’ve owned cars with just about every cylinder combination there is,” explains Mark, “and up until 2019 I’d not owned anything with twelve cylinders. I briefly considered a Jaguar XJ-S V12 before suddenly hitting on the idea of a W12-engined Bentley.”

As an ardent petrolhead, Mark had admired the Continental GT since the day it debuted just over eighteen years ago: “When the GT came out, I thought it looked good but a new one was way beyond my budget. To be honest though, I find the standard model a bit too soft for my tastes, so I suddenly hit upon the idea of buying a GT Speed. That’s until I discovered the Supersports after doing some research.”

Mark had suddenly found his ideal Bentley, a version that arrived late on in the first-generation model’s career... although the wait was well worthwhile. First presented to the world by Jay Leno at the Geneva motor show of 2009 »



“With 621bhp on tap, this was the fastest production car that Bentley had ever built, its 205mph top end being matched by a 0-100mph time of 8.9 seconds”

and set to go on sale in the autumn, the Supersports was a limited-run model that took the Continental GT concept to a whole new level. With the aforementioned 621bhp on tap, this was the fastest production car that Bentley had ever built, with its near-

205mph top end being matched by a 0-100mph time of just 8.9 seconds. And thanks to an array of chassis tweaks and suspension upgrades, it was as impressive in the corners as it was on the straight. Never before had a Continental GT been so hardcore, so

uncompromisingly driver-focused.

The more Mark researched the Supersports, the more convinced he became that this was his ideal Bentley, and so the search for a well-preserved example began: “I found this one for sale with a dealer that



The Supersports interior features leather and Alcantara, plus ex-Veyron seats





Owner Mark likes the fact that his Supersports is the rare two-seater version

specialises in prestige and sports cars. It had a sensible mileage and had obviously been very well looked after. It was an early car too, having first hit the road in December 2009."

Mark liked the fact that this particular Supersports was the two-seater version, one of just 103 right-hand drive examples built: "For me, it makes it that bit more special and unusual." Also attracting him, however, was its launch-spec colour of Quartzite, a metallic grey that seems to change its hue according to the light. After giving the car a thorough inspection, a deal was done

and Mark became the latest owner of this Supersports in September 2019.

SPECIAL CREATION

Any Continental GT is, of course, a rapid machine, with the kind of performance to satisfy most owners. But the 2009 Supersports took things further, with its tuned engine being complemented by an upgraded version of the ZF 6HP26A six-speed transmission (featuring a Quickshift set-up, claimed to reduce shift times by half), while a Torsen T-3 centre differential brought

a 40/60 rear-biased torque split to the all-wheel drive system. The GT's Continuous Damping Control was modified, the chassis geometry altered, the ride height was lowered, thicker anti-roll bars were employed, the rear track was subtly widened and carbon ceramic brake discs (an expensive extra-cost option on other models) were fitted as standard. The Supersports also managed to stand out from the crowd thanks to its bespoke alloys, unique bonnet vents, modified front air dam, automatically retractable rear spoiler, black headlamp rings »



FEATURE CAR GT SUPERSPORTS

and other aesthetic enhancements.

Proud owner Mark is also a fan of the Supersports' interior treatment, which features a combination of leather and Alcantara: "The two-seaters are particularly interesting, as the carbon-fibre seats are the same as those fitted in the Bugatti Veyron."

This particular Supersports has covered just 58,000 miles during its first twelve years on the road, and Mark isn't afraid to use it: "For me, cars are built to be driven and enjoyed, not just tucked away in a heated garage. I don't really understand investors who buy interesting cars and then never drive them. Where's the fun in that?"

And, of course, immense fun is exactly what the Supersports provides, something that's as true now as when the first production examples hit the road in late 2009. Back then, the British press seemed in awe of this new GT flagship, with renowned motoring journalist Steve Cropley kicking off his September 2009 road test in *Autocar* magazine with some bare figures: "On first acquaintance with the Bentley

Continental Supersports, it's hard not to be mesmerised by its power and speed. The ordinary Continental GT coupé is impressive enough in the poke department, but this new one has its power boosted by 13 per cent and its kerb weight cut by 110kg, which means its power-to-weight ratio jumps from 238 to 271bhp per tonne, its 0-100mph time is cut from 11.1 to 8.9 seconds, and its top speed climbs from 198 to 205mph. In short, the Supersports is as fast as any of us could want to go."

ULTIMATE TRIBUTE

There was – and still is – much more to the Supersports than sheer power, of course. In his test of the newcomer, Steve Cropley was equally blown away by its handling and grip, proclaiming that "this big, heavy car eats corners like 2200kg coupés almost never do". While the Bentley could be made to understeer slightly on neutral-throttle bends, it was all beautifully controllable: "Give it big power in faster bends and you can

make it tighten the line by increasing the slip angle of its rear tyres, without encouraging the admirably laissez-faire ESP to intrude unless the surface gets slippery or you've made a truly hideous miscalculation. Come off the power and it'll restore you to the line you first thought of."

The drive concluded with perhaps the ultimate tribute from a tester as experienced as Steve Cropley: "By the time my stint at the wheel of the £160,000 Continental Supersports had ended, I hardly cared that this was 'the fastest and most powerful Bentley ever built'. Why? Because the sensations in my hands, feet and rump were telling me that this Supersports was something even more important in the Bentley hierarchy. It was the best."

A dozen years later, the Supersports remains a massively talented machine, one that's just as happy pottering around town as it is blasting its way along an unrestricted autobahn or tackling the challenges of a winding A-road. And Mark Finnegan is one owner who isn't afraid to drive his cars »

"The ordinary Continental GT coupé is impressive enough in the poke department, but this new one has its power boosted by 13 per cent"



Mark Finnegan
has been a Bentley
owner since 2019



BUILDING A BESTSELLER

When Volkswagen took control of Bentley in 1998, it inherited the then new Arnage four-door saloon, as well as the two-door Continental R – a model that still used the old 'SZ' platform that dated back to the days of the Silver Shadow and T-series. What was needed was a new hi-tech model for the 21st century, a car that could show the world that Bentley was back... with a bang.

This arrived in 2003 via the Continental GT, a rakish coupé that cleverly combined the latest in VW Group technology with styling that was modern but with traditional Bentley overtones. The new GT had sharper dynamics than any previous Bentley, aided by a 6.0-litre W12 engine producing 552bhp. The Continental could sprint to 60mph in just 4.8 seconds before going on to a top speed of 198mph, while its clever air suspension (with continuously-adjusting dampers) and four-wheel drive meant there was handling and grip to match. At around the £110,000 mark, the Continental GT even offered good value compared with Bentley coupés of old.

The GT was developed over the

years, with 2004 seeing the addition of the Mulliner Driving Specification, an entirely cosmetic package that added bespoke wheels, two-tone leather and veneer combinations, drilled alloy pedals, quilted door and dashboard facings, and optional piano-black dashboard veneer.

The 2008 model year brought a minor facelift for the GT, which included lighter aluminium suspension components for an improvement in ride quality, while new multi-mode variable-assistance steering injected some extra 'feel' at the wheel. Big news, however, was the arrival of the GT Speed, with an engine tuned to 602bhp – plus a lower ride height, more powerful dampers and stronger anti-roll bars, as well as unique wheels and tyres, stiffer suspension bushes and other performance-related enhancements. The following year saw the unveiling of the GT Supersports featured here.

A second-generation Continental GT range was launched in early 2011 (having made its motor show debut the previous year), this time bringing the option of a 4.0-litre V8 in addition to the big W12.



In Supersports guise,
the legendary W12
pushed out 621bhp

FEATURE CAR
GT SUPERSPORTS



“Mark Finnegan is one owner who isn’t afraid to drive his cars hard, as a quick glance at any of our cornering shots will testify”

hard, as a quick glance at any of our cornering shots will testify. So, what’s the car been like to live with over the last two years? “An absolute joy,” grins Mark. “I keep my cars serviced and maintained well, which obviously helps with reliability. I had to have a new air-conditioning condenser fitted, and a power-steering pipe replaced, but other than that it’s been utterly reliable. Drive it now and you can really appreciate just how well-engineered these cars were when new. There’s not a rattle or a squeak, and everything still feels tight even after all this time. The quality of engineering really shines through.”

Given Mark’s penchant for Italian sports cars (having owned a succession of Maseratis and Alfa Romeos, as well as currently having a Fiat Coupe 20v Turbo project on the go), we couldn’t help wondering after a few hours in his company whether his dalliance with a Bentley would be short-lived: “I must admit, I do usually change my cars every couple of years, as I like to experience as many as possible while we’re all still allowed to do so. But there’s something about the Supersports... I can see me keeping this for a few more years yet.” ■



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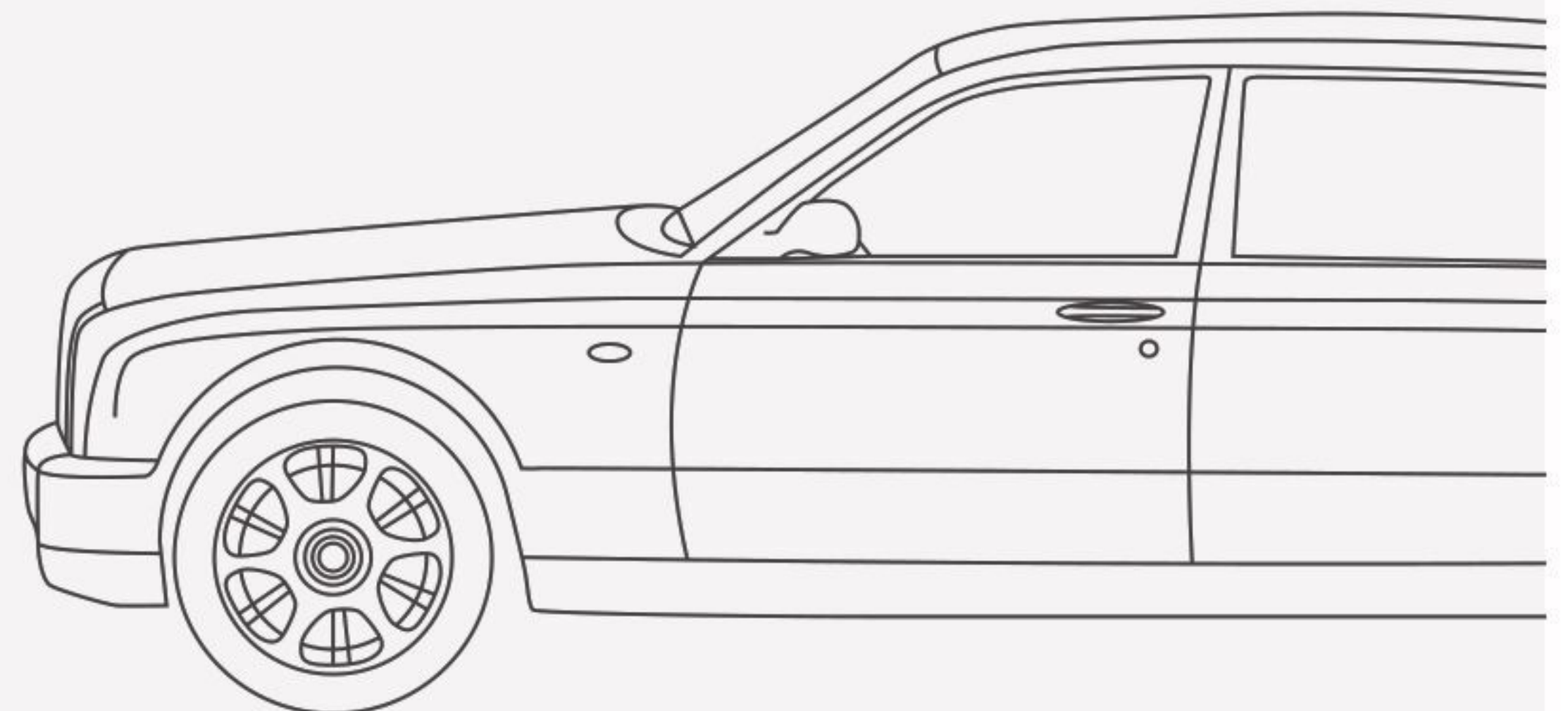
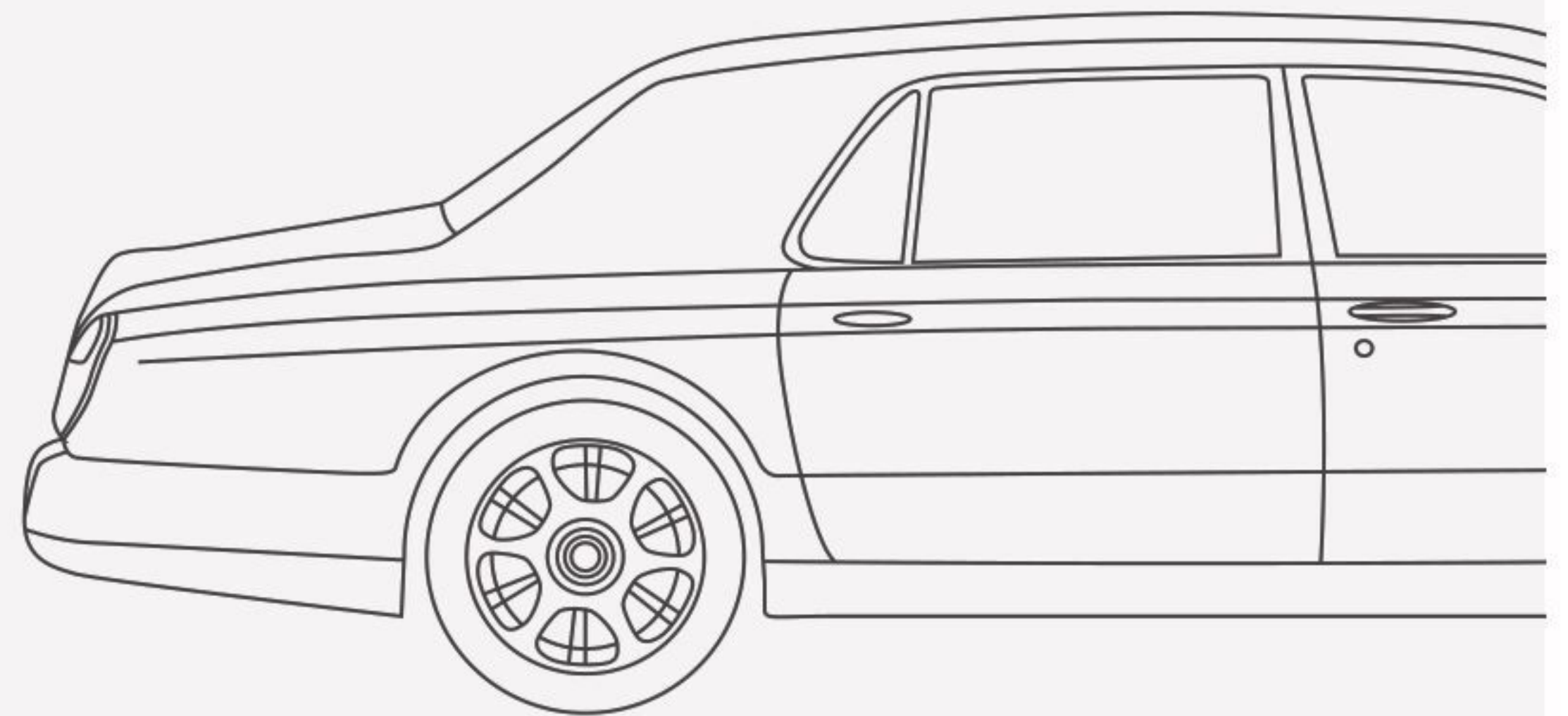
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WORKSHOP REPAIR

BACK INTO SHAPE

A dramatically misshapen front wing was just one of the challenges facing The Beaconsfield Workshop when this Silver Wraith arrived, making the end result all the more impressive

WORDS: GORDON BRUCE PHOTOGRAPHY: THE BEACONSFIELD WORKSHOP

In common with we humans, the lives of our cars can change in an instant – and that was certainly the fate of the Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith you see here. A notably original example featuring Park Ward’s elegant coachwork on the standard 107-inch wheelbase chassis, it has remained in the same family ownership for most of its career, leading an untroubled existence until being assaulted by a brick wall a couple of years ago.

We don’t know how the wall fared, but the Silver Wraith was suddenly a sorry sight. The heavy impact badly damaged the front nearside corner

and inflicted discrete but meaningful damage on the suspension, steering, brakes and even the electrical system. More obvious were the injuries to the radiator and, most evidently of all, the front wing, which was now misshapen throughout its length and bore no relation to the flowing period lines of the rest of the car.

The Rolls-Royce was duly transported to a marque specialist with the expectation that, before too long, it would be fully returned to its original state. For whatever reason, after 18 months the bodywork remained untouched and there was not even

an estimate of what costs would be involved. Clearly a Plan B was required, as a result of which the Silver Wraith was uprooted and entrusted to The Beaconsfield Workshop (TBW). Long-standing specialists in all aspects of post-war Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars, the company is especially known for its ability to repair all types of bodywork, not least aluminium.

On seeing the extent of the damage to LGH 965, TBW’s initial reaction was to explore the cost of installing a whole new wing. However, at somewhere between £6000 and £11,000 before fitting (which, among other things,



The Silver Wraith arrived at The Beaconsfield Workshop with extensive wing damage



The car's collision with a wall had also damaged its suspension, steering and brakes



The Rolls-Royce radiator grille suffered some twisting but was persuaded back into shape



Around a hundred hours of expertise went into restoring the Silver Wraith's front wing

would have necessitated the removal of the front doors), this route was quickly vetoed and plans drawn up to repair the existing panel in situ.

EXPERT ATTENTION

At some stage the car had previously been resprayed, and it transpired that a heavy coating of filler lay below the paint at the point of impact – material that was now cracked and broken. Add to that some seventy years of corrosion, and the fact that much of the beating, cutting, grafting, filing and welding had to be accomplished

while working upside-down, and the scale of the task becomes fully apparent. Nevertheless, the twisted alloy was slowly but surely persuaded back into shape and the path of the swage line accurately reformed until, some one-hundred man hours of expert metalcraft later, Park Ward's distinguished design had been 90% restored. Only then was filler employed to optimise the surface.

The nearside Lucas R100 headlamp had been dealt a glancing blow in the collision, sufficient to knock it out of line and slightly out of shape. Happily, a combination of patience and

expertise returned it to full fitness. The alloy sidelight on the other hand had been flattened beyond repair, meaning TBW had to fashion a new one from scratch. Damage to the iconic radiator turned out to be largely superficial and confined to a few mildly twisted vanes, each of which was relatively easily straightened. Likewise the hubcap, which had been distorted rather than destroyed.

With the wing now repaired, attention turned to the damage beneath – which, as is so often the case, was more extensive than a quick glance would suggest. The front of the »

WORKSHOP REPAIR SILVER WRAITH



It was a painstaking process that few bodyshops would have been able to undertake



Repeated processes of filling, priming and flattening were involved in the finishing touches

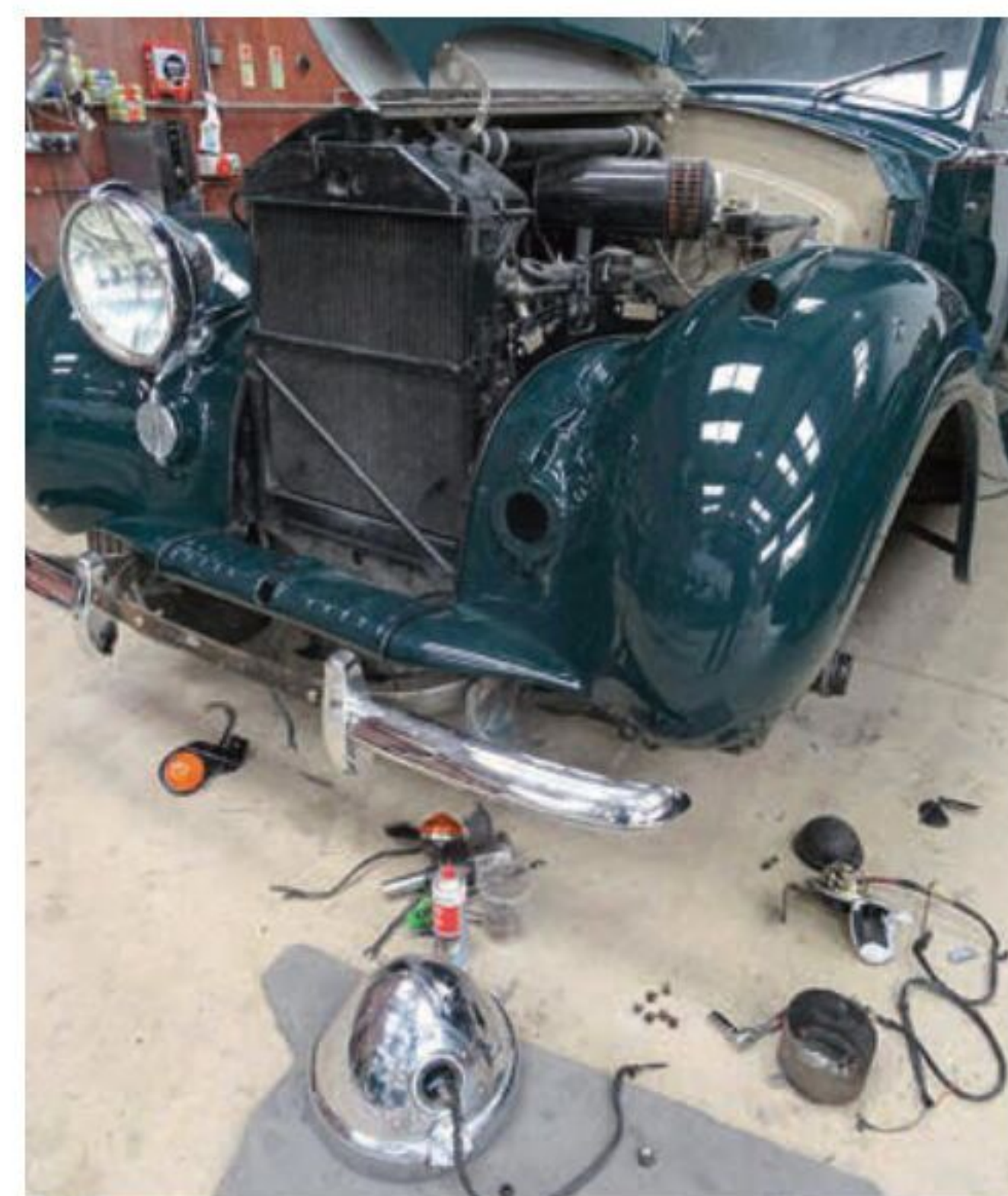
chassis had been deformed and had to be repaired. The upper and lower suspension arms were both twisted and so were replaced with new items, as was the kingpin, damper and elements of the one-shot lubrication system. The coil spring survived unscathed.

Once the wing had been colour-matched to the rest of the car, the remaining body was treated to a cut and polish. The result is stunning and brought tears to the owner's eyes. It's likely that there are very few other UK bodyshops with the expertise necessary to have rescued the damaged panel, and therefore the originality of the car. The other good news is that a substantial amount of money was saved by repairing rather than replacing the damaged wing.

TBW director, Dave Redrup, commented after completion of the work: "Cars like this Silver Wraith are so much more than a mere mode of transport for their impassioned owners, and having them damaged can be extremely upsetting. Being able to restore such vehicles to as-new condition and put a smile back on owners' faces is a privilege and a pleasure, and the very reason we love the job we do." ■



With the paintwork complete, the painstaking process of reassembly finally began



Almost there... including careful restoration of the nearside Lucas R100 headlamp

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YOUR SHOUT

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Send an email to rrb.ed@kelsey.co.uk or write to: The Editor, *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, Kelsey Publishing Ltd, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Yalding, Kent, ME18 6AL

HYTHE ROAD MEMORIES

First, thank you for an excellent magazine; I have every issue starting from the first. Having never owned a Rolls-Royce or Bentley myself, a Jaguar is the closest I have come in terms of pedigree, although I imagine that most people would consider a Jaguar to be closer to a Ford Escort than to a Rolls-Royce!

I have always loved Rolls-Royce, although as a youngster the sight of an Alvis or a Bristol was (almost just

as much of) a reason to be excited. My favourite models are the Silver Cloud I and II, plus the Silver Shadow; I've never particularly liked the reworking of the front of the Silver Cloud that resulted in the III, with the twin round lights that always looked to me more 'angry' than simply glorious.

My least favourite model of all time is definitely the Silver Spirit, which to my eye lacks any appeal in terms of styling. Way too square and box-like,

I think. It reminds me of the Cortina MkII, which was a sad fall from the MkI with its eye-catching rear lights.

One of my Rolls-Royce-related memories is of meeting Eric Barrass from the RREC and being invited to attend one of the club's shows. I think it must have been in 1976, when I would have been fifteen. I can't remember where the show was, but I think it could have been in (or near) Woldingham in Surrey; I imagine it





would have been a South-East Area event. Perhaps there are records that would confirm my thoughts?

Anyway, my main reason for writing is that in 1980 I had the pleasure of meeting John Dodd, the company secretary of Rolls-Royce. He had taken a year's sabbatical and was spending it at Exeter University, where I was a student at the time. John kindly arranged for me to go to Hythe Road in Willesden the following year, to be given a tour of the works. I have attached a series of photographs of the visit, which may be of interest.

The visit to Hythe Road was forty years ago, on 18th September 1981. I believe the factory closed in '82,

but I'm sure your records are more specific on that point. In one of the pictures you can see HM the Queen's 1977 Silver Jubilee Rolls-Royce Phantom VI, which had been out in the rain and so the photo is not the best... but it was definitely there!

In another photo you can see a Phantom VI with the registration number KG 1. This was in the news in 2018 as it belongs to Cardiff Council and bears the earliest number plate issued in the city. I understand they are loathe to sell the Phantom and/or its number plate, even though the car is stored and is not in use. In the same photo is another Phantom VI with the registration LG 10, which I believe

belonged to media mogul Lew Grade.

I look forward to hearing any thoughts you and your readers may have on these photos, plus input to help fill any gaps or inaccuracies in my version of events.

Nick Wermann
Caterham
Surrey

What a fantastic set of photographs from forty years ago, Nick! Thanks very much for sharing them with us. Do other readers recall visiting Hythe Road at around the same time, or perhaps even worked there then? All memories and photographs welcome via our usual address – Ed.



PRIDE OF PLACE

Just thought you would like to have a peep at this. It was made for me by our neighbour, Helen Stephenson, who is brilliant at pyrography. She normally does animals and birds, and I was admiring one of an owl that she had created for her own house. Helen's husband smilingly suggested "Get her to do you one

of a Rolls-Royce", so she said she'd have a go and asked if I could let her have a photograph to copy from

I gave her this print, which was bought for me by a family friend at a car boot sale a number of years ago. I believe it's a 1934 Phantom II. The same picture appears in a Bonhams auction catalogue from

17th June 2006. Does anyone know where the car is now?

This is Helen's first attempt at doing a motor car and I think it looks great. It's now in its rightful place to the right of my garage door, just underneath a Rolls-Royce metal sign.

Chris Wardlow
Via email

ACQUIRED TASTE?

I recently picked up the Sept/Oct 2021 edition of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* at the newsagent and read the letter from Niki Gething about her father's hand-built model of a modified Silver Shadow II. Interestingly, there is a real car like this for sale here in Norway!

It has been listed for a very long time and can't seem to find a new home. I guess it's an acquired taste for the few.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank you for an interesting magazine.

Terje Jacobsen
Via email



TWIN TEST FAN

I particularly enjoyed the Luxury Shoot-Out feature in the Nov/Dec 2021 issue of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*. Whilst it might not have pleased the purists, for me it added a bold new dimension to the magazine. If a Rolls-Royce really is the best car in the world, then why not let the comparisons prove it?

So, are there plans for similar comparisons? Harking back to the 1950s, may I suggest the Silver Cloud II versus, say, the Armstrong-Siddeley Star Sapphire?

Stephen Beetlestone
Moreton-in-Marsh
Gloucestershire

I'm delighted that you enjoyed the Bentley vs Daimler twin test, Stephen. What do other readers think; should we publish similar comparisons in 2022? – Ed.

THERE'S MORE!

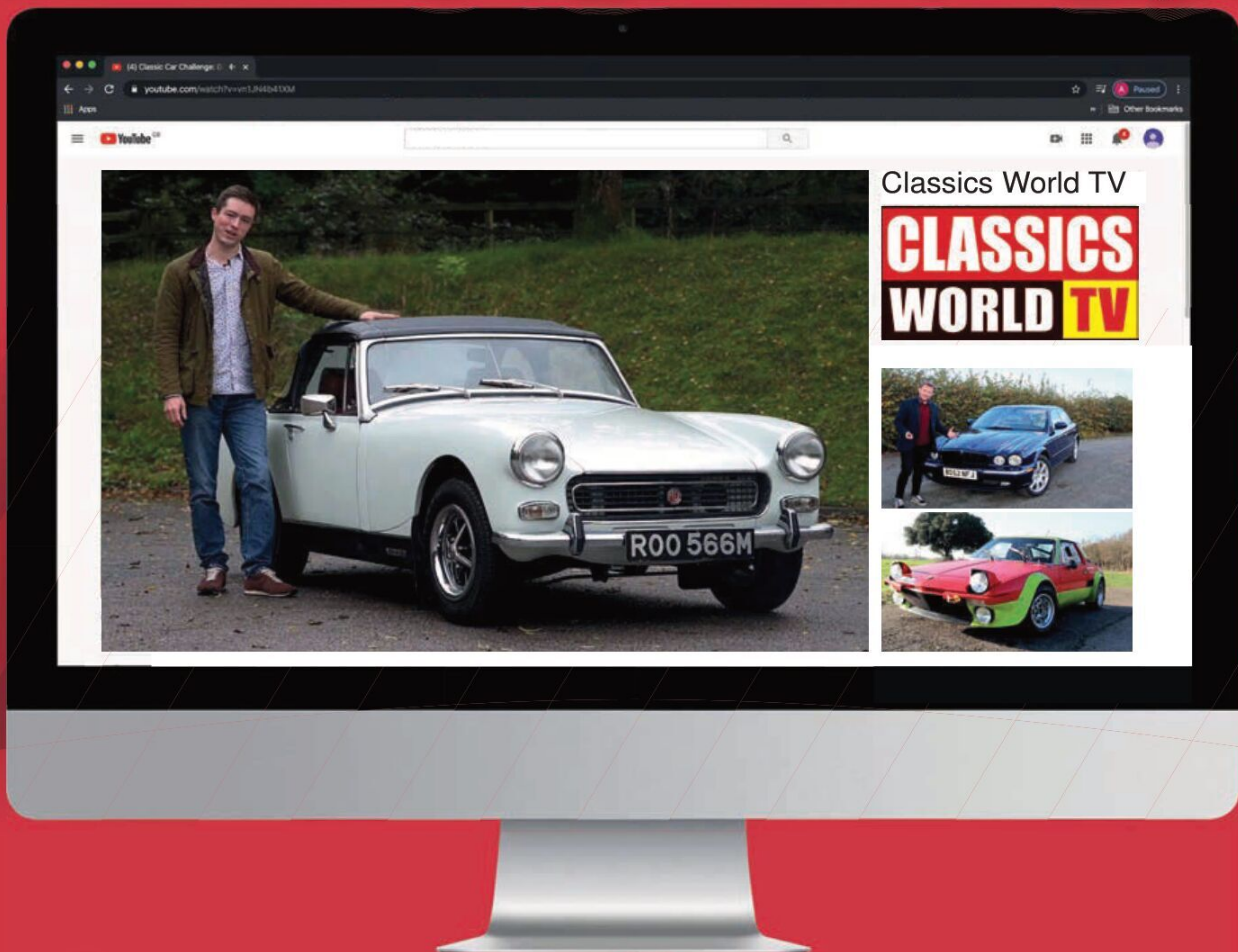
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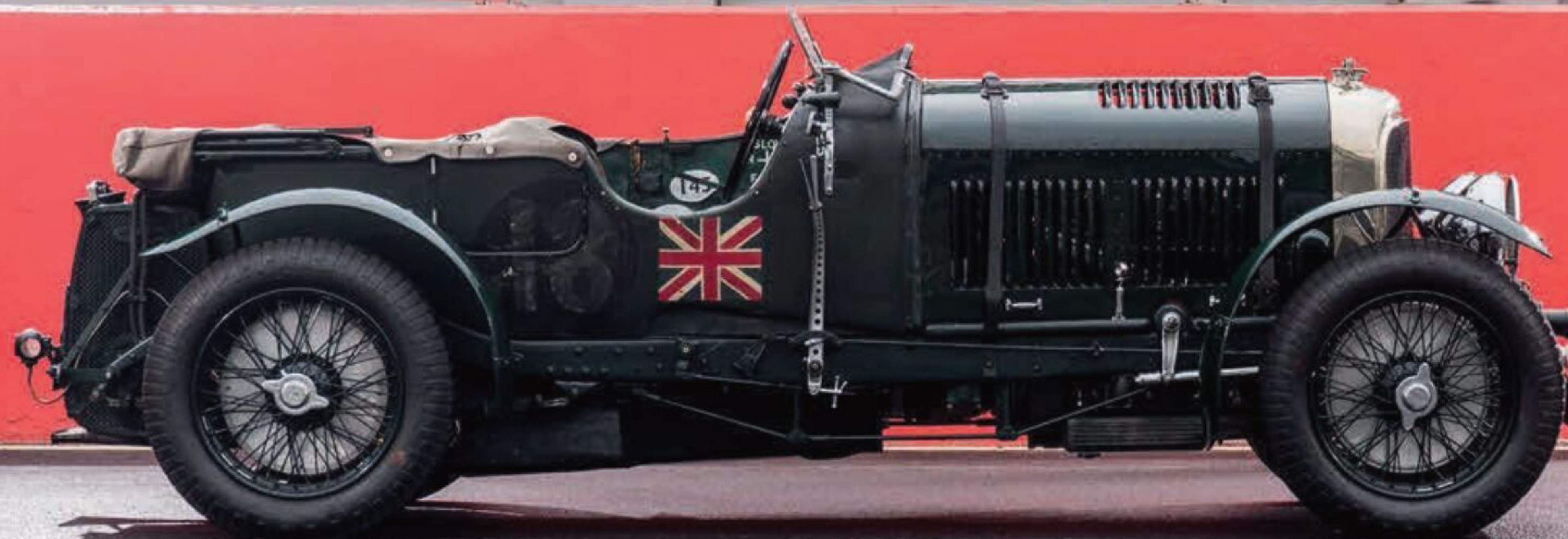
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BENTLEY'S ROARING TWENTIES

Bentley remained independent for only its first twelve years, but throughout the 1920s produced an array of world-famous models for both road and track, as Jeremy Satherley explains

PHOTOGRAPHY: BENTLEY MOTORS

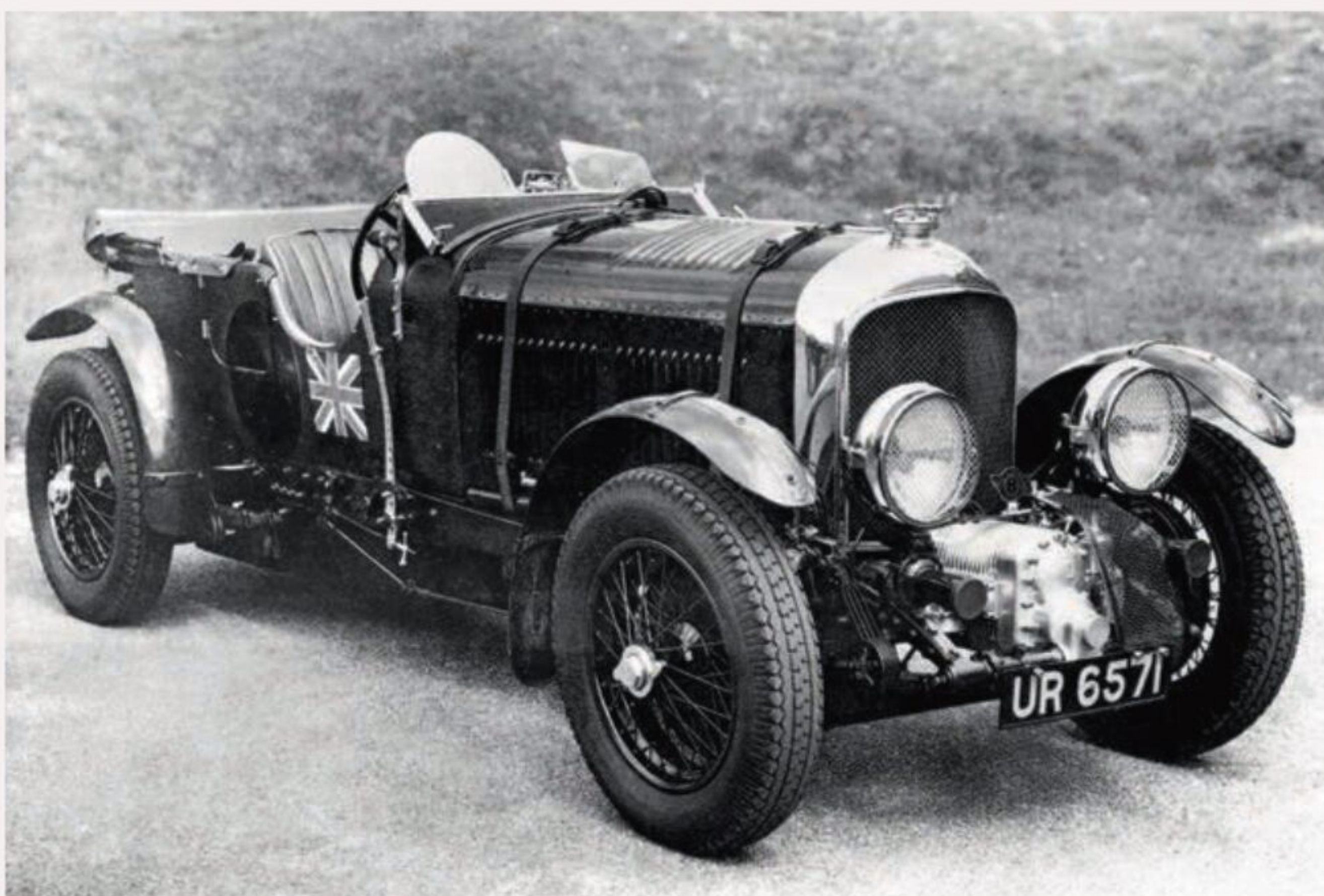
Determined to make a name for himself at the top of Britain's post-war car manufacturing movement, Walter Owen Bentley had one main ambition in 1919: "To build a good car, a fast car". And into the melting pot to create the original 3 Litre went many valuable ingredients, including W.O.'s premium apprenticeship in locomotive engineering, his racetrack exploits on two and four wheels, and a thorough appreciation of the pre-1914 high-efficiency continental Grand Prix engine. Then there was his involvement in the French DFP (Doriot, Flandrin et Parent) 12/15 2 Litre car, both through the London sales agency he'd conducted with his brother 'H.M.' (Horace Milner Bentley) and at Brooklands, where W.O.'s pioneering high-compression aluminium pistons turned the DFP into a Brooklands record-breaker.

In fact, those pistons were to be his contribution to the First World War effort. Serving as a lieutenant in the Royal Naval Air Service's technical department, he sold the idea to aero engine manufacturers such as Rolls-Royce and Sunbeam, and collaborated with Frank Burgess at Humber to adapt the French Clerget rotary aero engine, on which they redesigned everything except the valve gear.

Armed with such credentials, Bentley knew exactly what he wanted for his first car. Employing the best of pre-war continental racing practice, it was to have a four-cylinder overhead-cam engine of three litres, with a crossflow head, four valves per cylinder, pent-roof combustion chambers and the celebrated aluminium pistons. Advanced, certainly. But above all, it had to be a reliable unit for long-distance running, requiring minimum maintenance. Much of the credit for actually committing this design to paper was due to expert draughtsman Frank Burgess, whom Bentley lured away from what Frank called a "damned good job [at Humber] to join this outfit".

SPEEDY ANIMAL

Although raising funds for production delayed the car's launch until September 1921, the original and only car available for demonstrations at the time – EXP ('Experimental Chassis') 1 – was road-tested by Sammy Davis of *The Autocar* in January 1920. He waxed both Wagnerian and lyrical: "As the speed increased to 70mph the landscape leapt



The supercharged 4½ Litre Bentley – the legendary machine best known by its 'Blower' nickname

at us, wind shrieked past the screen... there comes the irresistible urge to burst into some wild war song... but still the silver radiator rushes towards that dark unattainable line of the horizon... done with the air of a lithe, active, speedy animal straining a little on the leash."

Such heady talk certainly had the Bright Young Things of the 1920s straining at the leash, as famed motoring writer L.J.K. Setright later pointed out: "The early 3 Litre Bentley, before it was detuned and castrated for the carriage trade, could be had with gearbox ratios of 1:1, 1.3:1, 1.6:1 and 2.6:1, and Bentley's salesmen used to astonish potential customers by driving it at a steady 60mph while slipping freely from one gear to another of the uppermost three. Most drivers in the 1920s had never done 60mph at all, let alone in second gear!" Early customers prepared to part with a chassis price of £1050, including Prideaux Brune, Arbuthnot Brisco, Major R.H. Sheepshanks, Madame Dracopoli, Sir Frederick Freake and Prince George (Duke of Kent), must have been thrilled by such unprecedented performance.

The 3 Litre soon made its mark in competition. Over in the USA, an example mixing with home-side Duesenbergs managed 13th place in the May 1922 Indianapolis 500, followed a month later by three cars (with W.O. among the drivers) taking the team prize in the Tourist Trophy on the Isle of Man. Then in 1924 came the first Le



W.O. Bentley, the engineer and entrepreneur who created his namesake company in 1919

Mans success, with a win for Duff and Clement. Even in 1927, the by-then-outclassed 3 Litre managed another Le Mans win, after Sammy Davis extricated 'Old Number Seven' from a White House Corner pile-up and drove on to victory with a bent chassis.

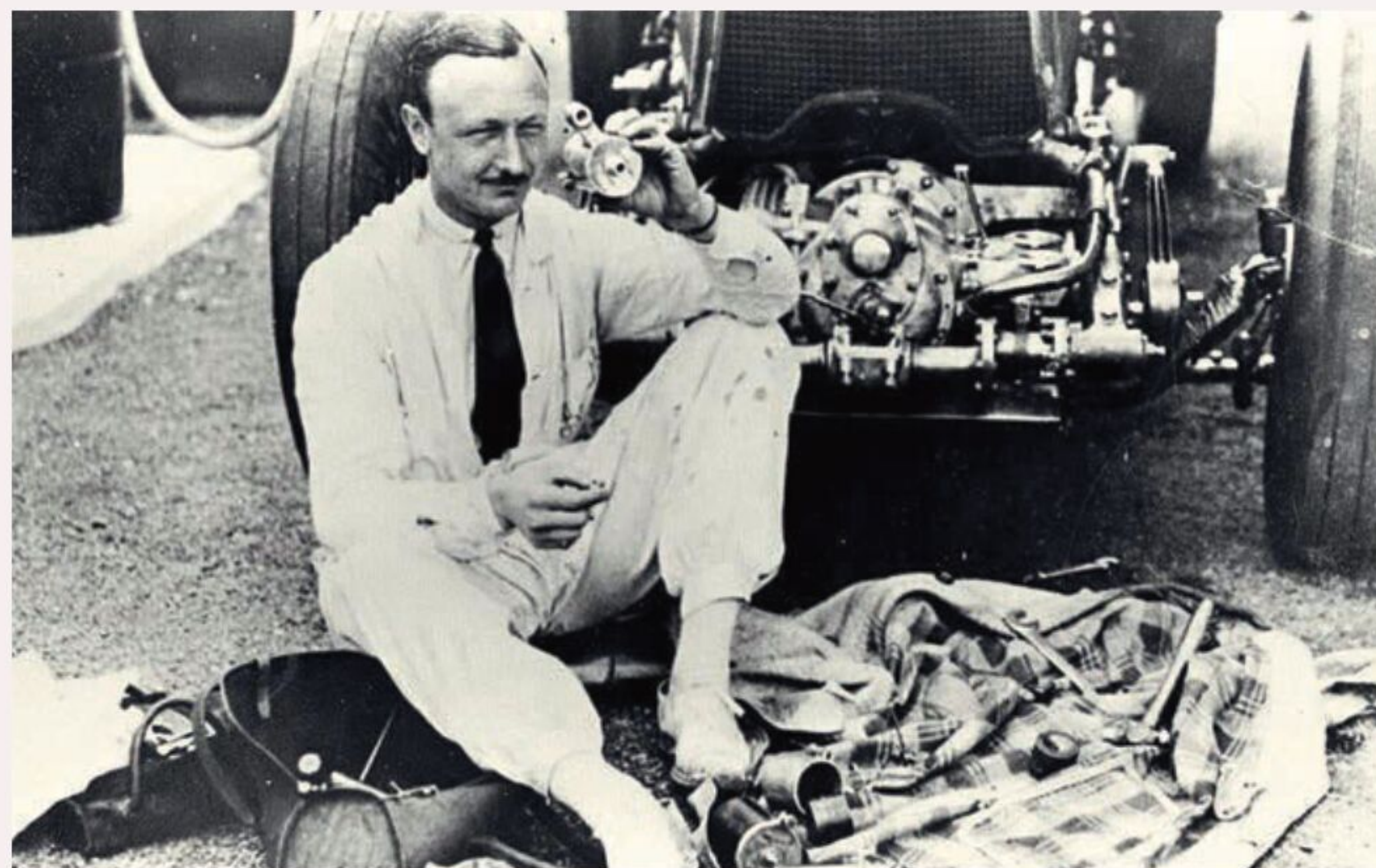
Some 1613 Bentley 3 Litres were built up to 1929, although subtle changes were continually made to satisfy customer demands, reflecting W.O.'s speciality as a development engineer. Four-wheel brakes were added in 1924 »

THE FIRST BENTLEYS TWENTIES' LEGENDS

and the range included the 80mph 1922-25 Short and 1923-on Long Standard (blue radiator badge), the higher-compression 1922-24 TT Replica and 1924-29 Speed Models (red badge) capable of 90mph, and the 1925-27 Super Sports – recognisable by its Green Label radiator tapering in at the bottom, and good for up to the 'ton' on 88bhp. The Long Standard chassis however, with its 10ft 10in wheelbase, reflected the inexorable demands of statelier customers for heavier and more formal bodywork. Allowances had to be made for such cars to take a maximum weight of 35cwt (1778kg), and naturally this blunted the performance. Bentley was therefore aware as early as 1924 that the carriage trade needed a more suitable model.

FLEXIBLE FINESSE

The answer was the 6½ Litre, which started life with a six-cylinder 4½-litre engine installed in a Weymann saloon-bodied mock-up – flaunting an anonymous, truck-like radiator – to transport W.O. and Hillstead to the 24 Heures du Mans of 1924. On their way home through France, they chanced upon the prototype Rolls-Royce Phantom I undergoing continental trials, with the ensuing friendly dice resolving Bentley to up the ante by two litres.



Sir Henry 'Tim' Birkin was the visionary behind the supercharged version of the 4½ Litre

It was a wise decision. Announced at the 1925 Motor Show with deliveries starting in March of the following year, the six-cylinder 24-valve 147bhp newcomer provided American standards of effortless flexibility, with the ability to stay in top gear as long as possible proving invaluable to many in the era of pre-synchro changes. What was more, the car could manage 75-80mph in relative silence when fitted with large

saloon bodywork. The Green Label 3 Litre's style of tapering radiator was standard wear on the original 6½ Litre, but reverted to parallel sides for the Speed Six, introduced in 1928. This version sported a higher compression ratio and twin carburettors instead of the single Smiths, boosting power to 160-180bhp. Depending on its bodywork, it could reach 90-100mph – and the 200bhp team cars won Le Mans

Dating from the early 1920s is this fascinating shot of Bentley's Cricklewood factory





An early example of a Bentley 'production line', with various rolling chassis taking shape at Cricklewood

again for Bentley in 1929 and 1930.

To the 6½ Litre's client list of usual suspects (viscounts, baronets, honourables and princes – the Duke of Kent, Imeritinski of Russia and the Nawab of Bhopal among them) were numerous celebrities of the day from the world of showbusiness. Ambrose the bandleader, who once gambled away the band's wages on the tables at Cannes, owned a 1930 Speed Six by Lancefield, with louvred rocker panels; stage-and-screen actress Tallulah Bankhead had a 1927 Standard Weymann saloon, a car that unfortunately ended up destroyed by fire; and Gertrude Lawrence, performer of Cole Porter's wonderful song *The Physician*, drove a 1928 Gurney Nutting Standard 6½ Litre, taking it with her to engagements in New York with American number plates screwed untidily over its British YV 9345 registration.

Production numbers totalled 362 Standard 6½ Litres and 182 Speed Sixes (the latter being W.O.'s favourite model), although survival rates are sadly low. Depreciation galloped ahead until by 1938 the 6½ Litre bottomed-out in *Glass's Guide* as scrap value only, when even the Gurney Nutting Speed Six coupé – allegedly used by Barnato to beat the Blue Train from the Côte d'Azur to Calais in 1930 – carried a trade price of only £20! These days,

“Over in the USA, a 3 Litre mixing with home-side Duesenbergs managed 13th place in the 1922 Indianapolis 500”

of course, professionally preserved survivors can realise seven figures.

'BLOODY THUMP'

With the carriage trade's needs met and with the 3 Litre at the limit of its development, it was time for Bentley to revisit the enthusiast's pursuit of what early customer and lorry manufacturer J.E. Foden described as “the good old bloody thump”, giving rise in 1927 to the four-cylinder 4½ Litre. Powered by what was essentially two-thirds of a 6½ Litre unit as a larger, smoother and more flexible version of the 3 Litre, it proved equally suitable for sporting or luxury use. Performance belied its heavy looks; in standard trim it was capable of 92mph and, according to a 1928 road test, pulled from 10 to 80mph in just 18 seconds and achieved 16mpg. The 4½ was also much more tuneable than the 3 Litre, persuaded in some cases to yield 160bhp over the standard 104 horses.

The 4½ Litre won Le Mans in 1928. But this was not enough for Sir Henry

'Tim' Birkin, the Bentley Boy who wanted to go his own way with a supercharged version from his Welwyn workshops, proceeding to extract 240bhp in the process. However, W.O. disapproved of supercharging, rating it as a perversion of his design and a corruption of its performance. He was vindicated almost immediately when two 'Blowers' intended for the 1929 Le Mans didn't show because of excessive leakage from the main bearings, plunging oil pressure to just 10psi. Birkin then appeared with a 'blown' 4½ for the 1929 Six-Hour race, but again lubrication bothers most likely forced retirement. Although one of the 'Blowers' re-bodied as a single-seater later broke the Brooklands Outer Circuit record, high placings eluded them in other events and none finished in the 1930 Le Mans.

Despite his objections, however, Bentley had obliged Birkin with the manufacture of fifty 4½ Litre 'Blowers' for Le Mans homologation purposes – possibly in acknowledgement of their friendship, thus demonstrating his »

THE FIRST BENTLEYS TWENTIES' LEGENDS

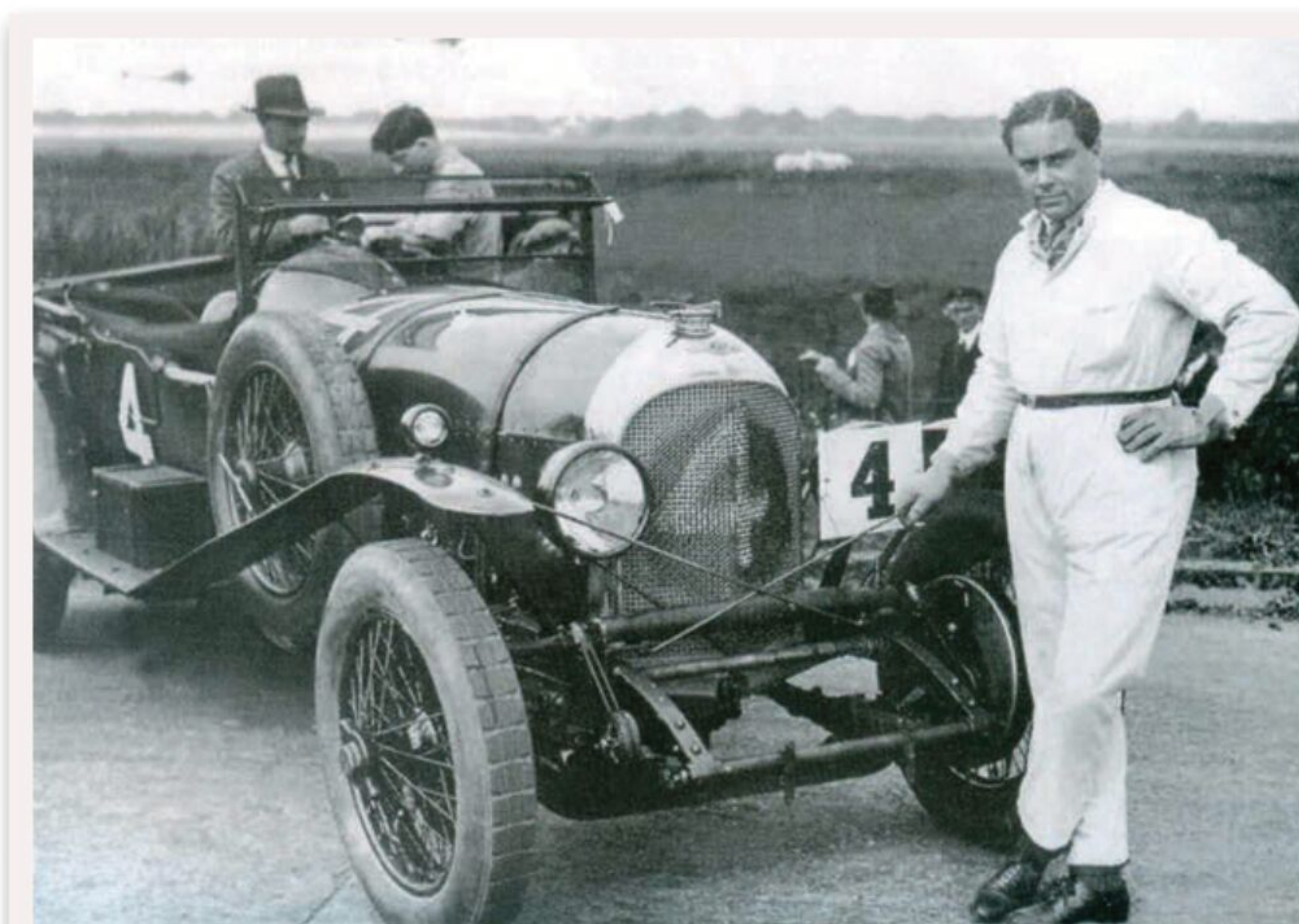
ability to keep business differences apart from personal relationships. Road-spec 'Blowers' managed 103mph, but drank with an 11mpg thirst.

PHANTOM BAITER

If, following on from the supercharging issue, we needed any reminding that W.O. subscribed to the no-substitute-for-litres theory, we may look no further than his final masterpiece, the 8 Litre. To quote motoring author Michael Frostick, it was "the straw which broke the camel's back". But what a straw...

Aiming for "an exceptional degree of refinement, silence and comfort", the 8 Litre stood comparison with the majestic Hispano-Suiza, the biggest Mercedes-Benz, and even Bugatti's Royale. Its mammoth chassis, designed for a lower centre of gravity and equipped with a Tecalemit one-shot lubrication system, could take the largest bodywork, spanned by seven tubular crossmembers to eradicate any of the weaving experienced with the longer 6½ Litre frames. The suspension was massively semi-elliptic all round for a smooth ride; and although initially the front springs were shackled at their forward ends, early problems with serious axle tramp soon had the leaves shackled aft.

The twin-SU carburettor, 7983cc engine was a bored-out version of the 6½, with the usual OHC layout, four valves per cylinder and running in eight main bearings. It produced 220bhp on a 5.5 to 1 compression ratio, enough to propel this huge car – 17 or 18ft long depending on a 12 or 13ft wheelbase



Bentley customer and successful racer Woolf Barnato came to the company's rescue in 1925, albeit on his own terms

– at up to 104mph (compared with the Phantom II's 92 mph maximum), going from 10–100 in 50 seconds and 0–60 in 17.5 (Phantom II, 19.6 seconds). Such figures were an amazing achievement in 1930, when you consider that the chassis alone weighed 37cwt (1880kg). Naturally it meant that the 25-gallon tank emptied at the rate of 10mpg, but for the target market this was of no concern. "A creation evolved from years of racing experience! What more could man ask for?" posed Bentley's sales manager, A.F.C. Hillstead.

With a chassis price at its October

1930 launch of £1850 – pitched just a little higher than that of the Rolls-Royce Phantom II – Bentley's cat must have been stalking the pigeons in the Best Car in the World's garden, and with serious intent.

Barrie Price, founder of the Rolls-Royce & Bentley Specialists Association, rated the 8 Litre highly. Impressed by the efficient breathing of its 24-valve head, he estimated up to a 50 per cent greater power output for the Bentley over the 1930–31 Phantom, so that "road performance was therefore vastly superior" and "the Bentley engine was »



Woolf Barnato and Bernard Ruben were victorious at Le Mans in 1928 at the wheel of Bentley's 4½ Litre



Shown pushing his 'Blower' to the limit on the banked Brooklands circuit is famed Bentley Boy, Tim Birkin

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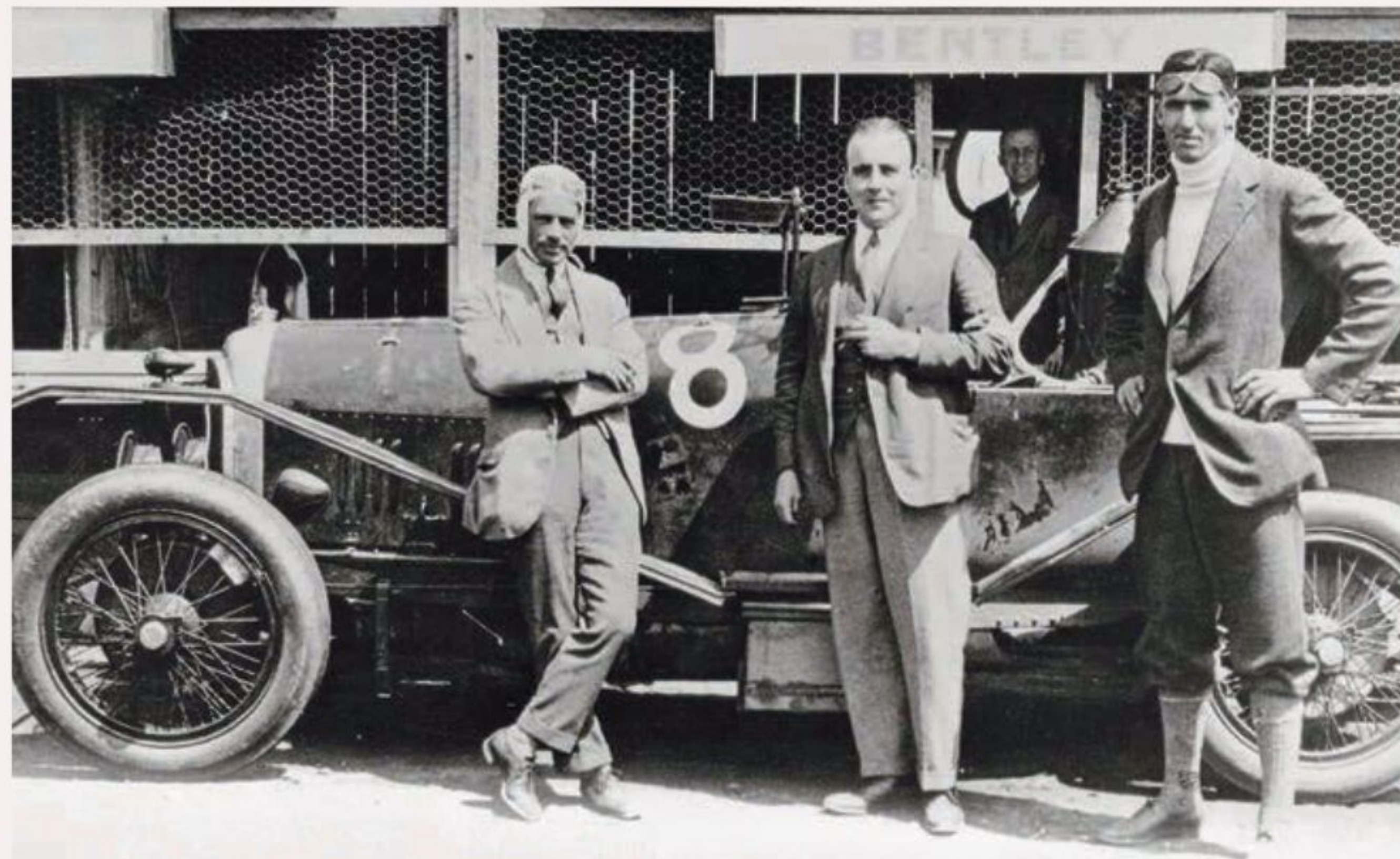


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“To the 6½ Litre’s client list of usual suspects were numerous celebrities from the world of show business”

smoother at the top end”, in contrast to the Phantom’s, of which he said: “To drive one of these large cars in excess of 70mph is definitely not a pleasure”. He also considered the Bentley’s steering to be smoother at speed, if heavier, but the Rolls-Royce gearbox was easier to use. Interestingly, despite the attention given to its suspension, he considered the Bentley’s rear-seat ride to be inferior.

Bentley clients formed a prestigious queue for the 8 Litre, among them song and dance man Jack Buchanan (debonair warbler of *Everything Stops for Tea*), the inveterate gambler Lord Brougham & Vaux (who bought two cars), the loyal Duke of Kent, Sir Alex



W.O. Bentley (centre) had benefited from an apprenticeship in locomotive engineering at the start of his career

Kleinwort and Spanish nobleman Don Dionisio de Cespedes. Sadly, however, the timing of the 8 Litre’s arrival couldn’t have been worse. Effects of the Wall Street Crash had reached Britain, bringing with it the Great

Depression, and sales of the 8 Litre amounted to a mere hundred examples.

As 8 Litre production tailed off through 1931, the Bentley board – completely against W.O.’s wishes – rushed a cheaper car into production to undercut Rolls-Royce’s 20/25. This was the 4 Litre, the engine of which bore little relation to previous units with an untuneable, inlet-over-exhaust, two-valves-per-cylinder head designed by Harry Ricardo. Hastily conceived, relying on a cut-down but still substantial 8 Litre chassis, the 4 Litre – of which only 49 were delivered – was no more than a compromise. Coachbuilders’ schedules delayed the completion of the final car until January 1933, well over a year after the old Bentley company had ceased to exist.

CALLING TIME

The end, when it came, had been a long time brewing. During its first couple of years, the company survived hand-to-mouth on the goodwill of investors, supplemented by a £40,000 mortgage on the Cricklewood plant from The London Life Association. But expanding production facilities for the 3 Litre and developing the 6½ soon exposed underfunding, hence W.O.’s approach to one of his wealthy new customers – Woolf Barnato – in late 1925. Barnato, a flamboyant sportsman and playboy with a family fortune in South African diamond mines, was also a wily City financier. He was certainly



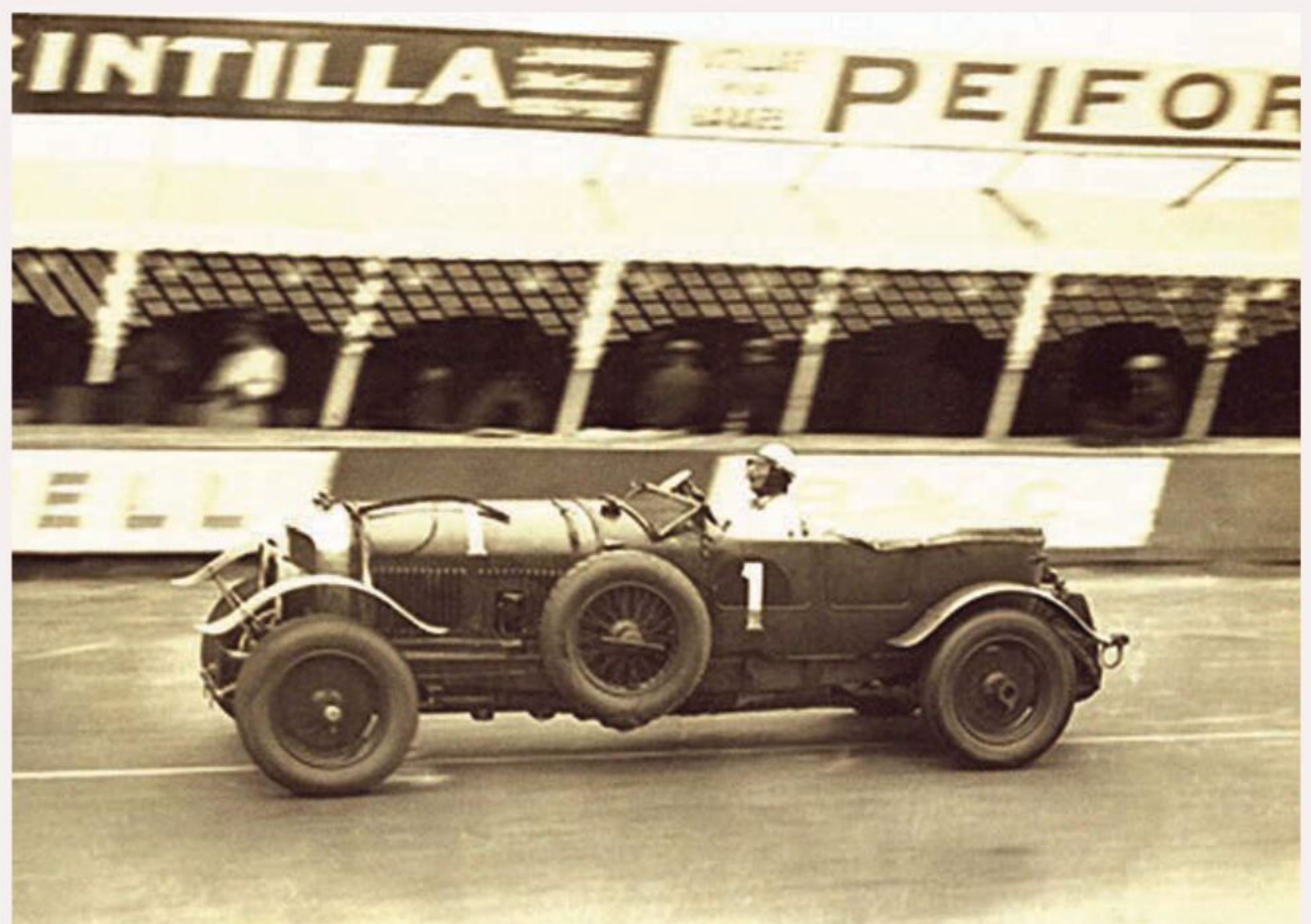


Woolf Barnato is shown at the wheel of his latest Bentley behemoth at Brooklands in 1930

prepared to help, but on his own terms.

The original company was wound up and existing creditors paid off. Barnato installed himself as chairman, devalued the original £1 shares to one shilling, and implemented a restructured share capital of £175,000. With apparent calm restored, the reconstituted firm could better afford to go racing – with the gossip-column attraction of Barnato himself on the team – and continue with its new-model development. But underneath it all, W.O. had misgivings.

Barnato had brought cronies onto the board, prompting the departure of H.M. Bentley and Hillstead, with W.O.'s own sphere of influence being gradually reduced to control of design and racing. Sadly, it wasn't long before expenditure became rampant again and further mortgages were taken out. The crunch came in July 1931, with neither the company nor Barnato in a position to meet mortgage payments, and the receivers were called in. A statement followed in September, »



Winning at Le Mans in 1929 was Woolf Barnato, shown here driving the 'Old Number One' Speed Six to victory

to the effect that "the Company by reason of its liabilities cannot conduct its business... and that the company be wound up voluntarily".

Seeking a lifeline, W.O. conducted useful exploratory discussions with Napier on producing a new Rolls-Royce rival, and receiver Patrick Frere found this reputable Acton-based aero engine and former luxury car manufacturer willing to meet the £103,675 owing to creditors. With the solution so seemingly in the bag, Frere treated the Bentley staff to dinner and a show on the strength of it. But when the hopefuls returned to court to complete formalities, counsel for another contender – the mysterious British Central Equitable Trust – had turned up. The parties were instructed to make sealed bids and the Trust, which turned out to be representing Rolls-Royce, won with an offer of £125,256. It proved how much the Bentley 8 Litre had worried Derby, for Rolls-Royce's managing director, Sir Arthur Sidgreaves, was quoted as saying that "apart from anything else, [the acquisition] was important from the point of view of removing the competition".

Bentley Motors' troubled but glorious independent years were at an end – but could the company's fate have been any different? Hindsight may argue that the company tried to run before it could walk. Perhaps it should have begun by producing fewer cars per week in a smaller plant before mortgaging itself to the hilt, or pruned the workforce when times were difficult. But why shouldn't Bentley and his team, blessed with such an acclaimed product, have assumed that things would only get better? As

"As 8 Litre production tailed off through 1931, the Bentley board rushed a cheaper car into production"



Glen Kidston (left) and Woolf Barnato – two of the best-known names in racing during the early days of Bentley

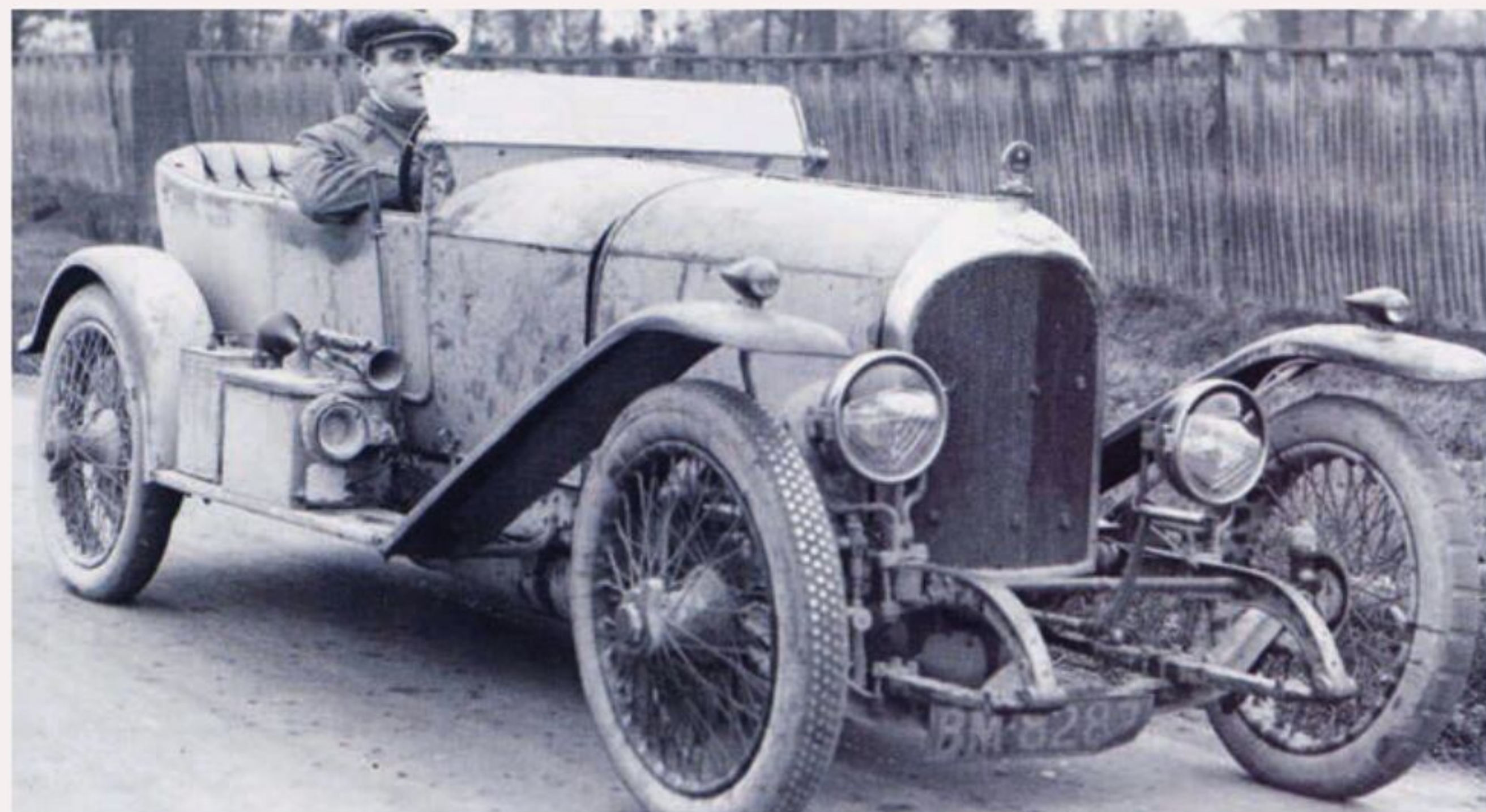
for laying off men, this would have been anathema to W.O. Bentley himself:

"My greatest contribution was that I chose my staff well," he once said. Less time and money spent on racing would certainly have helped. But wouldn't that have affected sales of the catalogued models, as well as the lasting charisma

of the brand – which today owes so much to the Cricklewood era?

There was, of course, little left of the special brew by 1931. Production of the 3 Litre chassis had officially ended in 1927, the last examples leaving the coachbuilders' factories two years later. The noble 6½ Litre was gone by February/March 1930, and as marque authority Michael Hay confirms, "it was becoming increasingly difficult to sell the 4½ Litre, leaving Bentley with only the 8 Litre to sell in the middle of the Depression".

Thus, albeit stretching the point slightly for the 8 Litre, the cars and the aura they created belong firmly to the romantic '20s, bearing the undiluted stamp of one man. The marvel was that when times were desperate, W.O. was able to get finery like the 6½ Litre designed and produced at all, as author Michael Frostick later explained: "In terms of managing on too little for too long, [Bentley] excelled almost everyone in the whole history of the motor car". Bentley's era of independence was at an end, but the legacy left behind was second to none. ■



W.O. Bentley at the wheel of the prototype Bentley 3 Litre in January 1920

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2016 Model Bentley Mulsanne Speed. Finished in unmarked Onyx with 21 inch 5 spoke Speed diamond cut alloys and an electric sunroof. The interior is in quilted Linen leather and secondary leather in Beluga. Superb spec. with only 42,000 miles and full Main Agent history. Amazing value at only **£89,999**



2014/14 Bentley Continental GT Speed. Finished in unmarked Extreme Silver with red brake calipers and 21 inch Speed wheels in Dark Tint. Beluga interior with contrast stitching, trimmed steering wheel and ventilated front seats with massage. Only 38,000 miles with full Main Agent history **£63,950**



2010 Model/59 Bentley Flying Spur Mulliner. Finished in unmarked White Sand Metallic with 20 inch alloys, bright chromed lower grilles and an electric sunroof. Beluga interior with Linen stitching. Adaptive cruise and electric rear seats. Just 44,000 miles with only 2 owners and FSH. Immaculate condition **£36,950**



2002/52 Bentley Arnage R. Finished in special order Oxford Blue with Oatmeal hide interior, French Navy carpets and Burr Oak veneers. Fitted with picnic tables, heated and electric rear seats with lumbar support and rear quarter companion mirrors. Extensive history and in outstanding condition **£24,950**



1997 P Bentley Turbo RL. Finished in unmarked Midnight Sapphire with Cream coach lines and 17 inch alloys. Sandstone interior with French Navy piping and French Navy tops to the armrests, with French Navy carpets. Factory picnic tables and cocktail cabinets. Full history, outstanding value at **£19,750**



1996 N Bentley Brooklands. Finished in Peacock Blue with Magnolia interior piped in French Navy and with French Navy carpets piped in Magnolia. Fitted with front and rear parking sensors. We have supplied and serviced this car for the last 13 years. Maintained regardless of cost. Offered at only **£19,750**



1996 Model/N Bentley Turbo R LWB. Finished in Wildberry with Chrome bumper top blades and Chrome grille, Flying B, 17 inch alloys and Silver Stone interior with electric reclining rear seats, Mulberry carpets and picnic tables. Only 67,000 miles with full history. Known to ourselves, immaculate throughout **£21,750**



1990 H Rolls Royce Silver Spirit MK II Active Ride. Finished in Cobalt Blue with Cream coach lines on its unmarked bodywork. Magnolia interior with French Navy piping and French Navy carpets and picnic tables. Only 2 owners and only 79,000 miles with FSH. Immaculate throughout and must be seen, only **£19,950**



1980 W Silver Shadow Series II. Presented in absolutely immaculate condition. The Chestnut paintwork is completely unmarked and the London Tan interior is almost like new with only 40,000 miles on the clock. Maintained to the highest degree, it is very rare to see a car in this condition. Yours for only **£37,950**



1977 R Rolls Royce Corniche FHC 2 dr Coupe. Finished in Sand with a Walnut vinyl roof and white wall tyres. Cream interior with Cream carpets, with Walnut piping and Walnut veneers, all in perfect condition. Only 48,000 miles, known to ourselves for last 7 years. Lots of history, a superb investment **£69,950**

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CANADIAN COLLECTOR

Enjoying what's thought to be Canada's largest private collection of classic Rolls-Royces, Howard Lengert is an enthusiast with a difference, as we discover when we pay him a visit

WORDS: GARRY MELNYK PHOTOGRAPHY: ROB HISLOP

You would probably expect the largest private collection of classic Rolls-Royce automobiles in Canada to be in a major metropolitan area, right? Maybe Montreal, one of the oldest cities in the nation. Or Toronto, a vibrant cultural metropolis. Or Vancouver on the west coast, which has the ideal climate for all things self-propelled. But the truth is that the biggest collection of this fine automobile marque can be found in a rather less obvious location.

The eighteen Rolls-Royces in question have been gathered over the years by Howard Lengert, a farmer. His collection also includes a trio of Bentleys. Thirteen of his classic

cars are currently displayed at the Leduc West Antique Society Heritage Museum in western Canada, not far from Edmonton International Airport, while the balance of the collection remains at his farm and aerodrome.

Seventy-eight year old Howard – who never married – became passionate about cars and planes early on in life, and he remains an active pilot to this day. His plane is a 1946 two-passenger single-engine ERCO Ercoupe, which has its own hanger on a 2000-foot runway. “I used to fly for business in the prairies, to repair equipment for the carpet and furnace cleaning trucks I had built,” he explains. “The planes were a tool to get me around.”

Howard's property was first homesteaded by his grandfather in around 1912. His parents then worked the 160-acre farm, where Lengert grew up with his three sisters. In addition to the runway, hangers and air traffic tower, there are several buildings on site and most are related to his passion for the automobile.

“The cars are part of me,” admits Howard. “I live, eat and sleep Rolls-Royce every day.” He bought his first example – a 1930 Phantom II – for \$5000 CDN in 1967, when he was just 24 years of age. He achieved this by getting a bank loan and then auctioning the family's collection of early Canadiana (lamps, spinning wheels



Part of Howard's collection is on display at a heritage museum in western Canada



A splendid 1937 Rolls-Royce 25/30 with four-door coachwork by Windovers Ltd



A 1930 Rolls Royce Phantom II Landauette by Hooper – Howard's first Rolls Royce, an unrestored car that he bought in the UK

and so on) to pay off the loan. "That was the first and only time I got a loan to buy a car, and I'm now at eighteen Rolls-Royces and three Bentleys."

AVID COLLECTOR

Howard's passion for the marques took him to the Rolls-Royce factory in the UK, and he's always keen to snap up any Rolls-Royce accessories or memorabilia when he sees them for sale – everything from posh picnic baskets filled with cutlery and dishes to old magazine adverts. "They are a luxury car but its not the cost or prestige I'm interested in, it's the quality," he explains. "The fit and finish is the best of materials, from walnut and other woods to wool carpeting and leather or brocade interiors. And they are bespoke – fully customisable cars with almost unlimited extras. »



The 1936 Phantom III that successfully completed the Peking to Paris rally despite the challenging conditions

SPECIAL FEATURE PRIVATE COLLECTION

I enjoy every aspect of a Rolls-Royce."

Howard once paid over \$100,000 for a 1930 Phantom Town Car, built in Springfield, Massachusetts. Other noteworthy models in his collection include a 1929 20hp Boattail Speedster and a 1939 Wraith – one of just two with the same body style, out of only 491 Wraith chassis in total. "I don't buy the cars to sell them. I repair them to drive them and almost all have been

purchased in original condition." Some have been completely redone, including a Phantom I and a Phantom III V12. Howard's most expensive restoration reached \$200,000 CDN – a Silver Wraith professionally rebuilt by a specialist in eastern Canada, with superb detailing that even includes a special bamboo effect applied to the sides of its bodywork, as specified when new.

Howards admits that "I feel like

I'm friends with each car," but how does he manage to take care of so many? With a little help from two friends, he explains, one of whom is a fellow Rolls-Royce enthusiast. Each car has its own maintenance book, and while Howard sometimes brings parts over from the UK, he usually already has what's needed. And that's because many years ago he bought the entire parts department from a Rolls-Royce dealership that closed in the nearby city of Edmonton.

UP AND RUNNING

All of Howard's cars are driven on a regular basis, with the on-site runway being ideal for 'exercising' them and keeping everything moving and in tune. During our recent visit to his property, it was the 1952 Silver Wraith Park Ward with cane-effect coachwork that he was putting through its paces. Remarkably, however, Howard has plans to further extend his collection, hoping to add at least one of the two Rolls-Royce models he doesn't currently own: "The Phantom IV is out of reach, as only eighteen were built for royalty and heads of state. But I'd like to get my hands on a »

The Silver Wraith's Park Ward-built coachwork features the car's original-spec bamboo-effect finish



Howard gets to work on his latest project – a 1923 Springfield-built Silver Ghost in remarkably original condition

Howard's 1953 Bentley R-Type makes a suitable companion for his Silver Wraith from the same year



A very rare (one of four) and expensive model of a 1931 Rolls-Royce Henley roadster



Howard enjoys his 1952 Silver Wraith, a car that he spent \$200,000 CDN having professionally restored



SPECIAL FEATURE PRIVATE COLLECTION

Howard's extensive collection includes SY- and SZ-generation cars, as well as a superb example of the rare Camargue



This 1959 Silver Cloud 'Standard Steel' saloon is one of its owner's favourite models



Howard has an abundance of Rolls-Royce collectables in his garage, including various picnic baskets

Phantom V. Maybe one day someone will donate one to the collection..."

In addition to the aforementioned Silver Wraith, Howard's garage also houses a 1923 Springfield-built Silver Ghost that's under restoration, as well as a 1959 Silver Cloud in Sea Mist Green and a yellow and black 1954 Silver Wraith by H.J. Mulliner. His main workshop also contains a selection of books, photographs and other memorabilia, including a large model of a 1931 Henley roadster – one of only four built by a company in western Canada.

A 1936 Phantom III that participated in the Peking to Paris rally in the 1980s greets visitors at the entrance to the museum building, a car that benefited from extensive work to prepare it for such an arduous event. A badly damaged spare wheel is a testament to some of the rough treatment that the Phantom endured, but impressively the car did complete the rally.

Howard will sometimes give visiting car clubs or those who discover him online a tour of his collection, but there will inevitably come a day when

the farm has to be sold. Showing great consideration for the future of his collection, however, Howard's will makes it clear who will take care of the cars when he is no longer able to do so: "I'm glad we're able to preserve a slice of Rolls-Royce history."

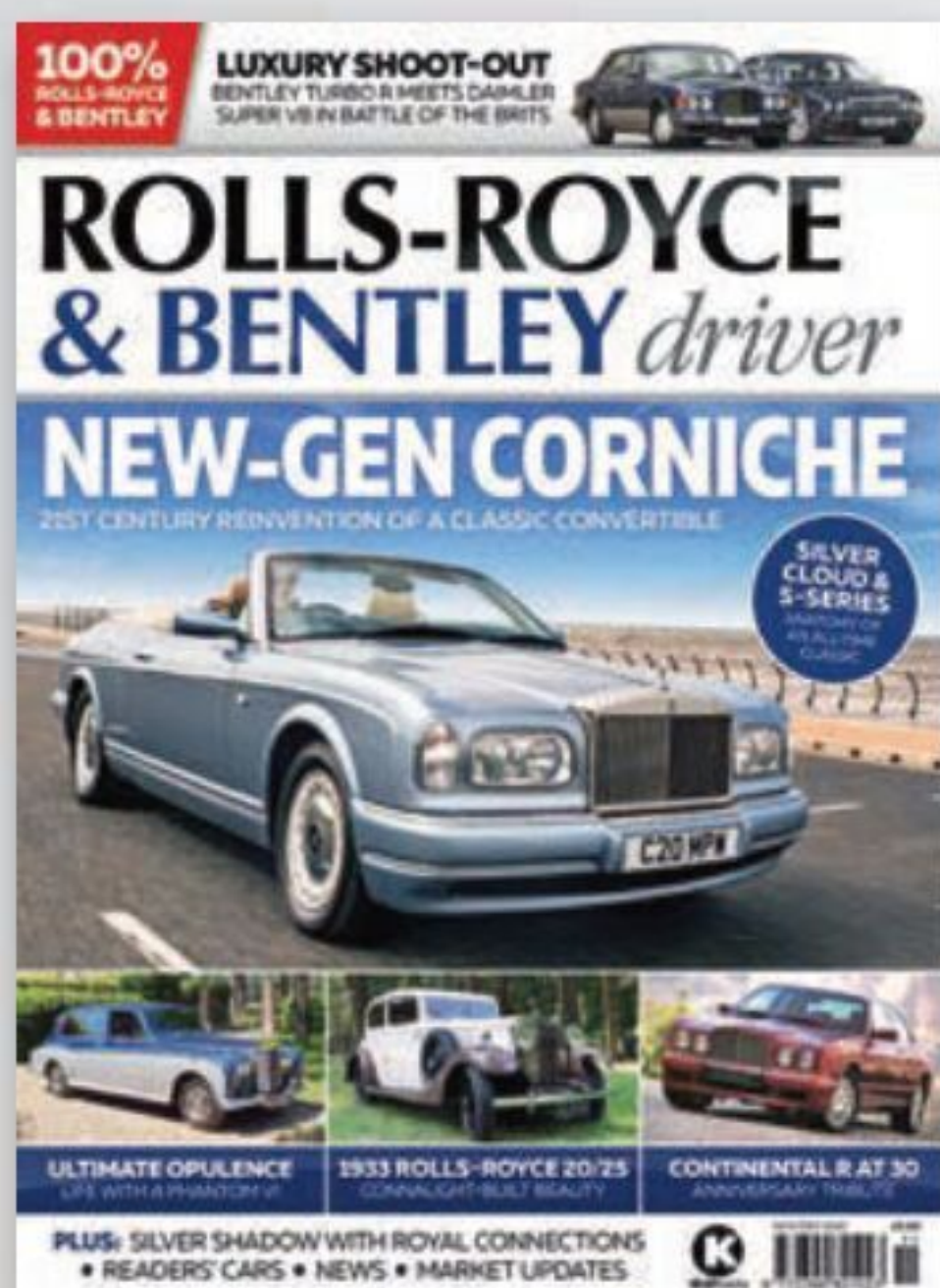
As we get ready to depart, we can't help asking Howard which car out of his entire collection he would keep if he had to choose just one: "The 1959 Silver Cloud. I just like the traditional styling, power brakes and steering." And who can blame him... ■

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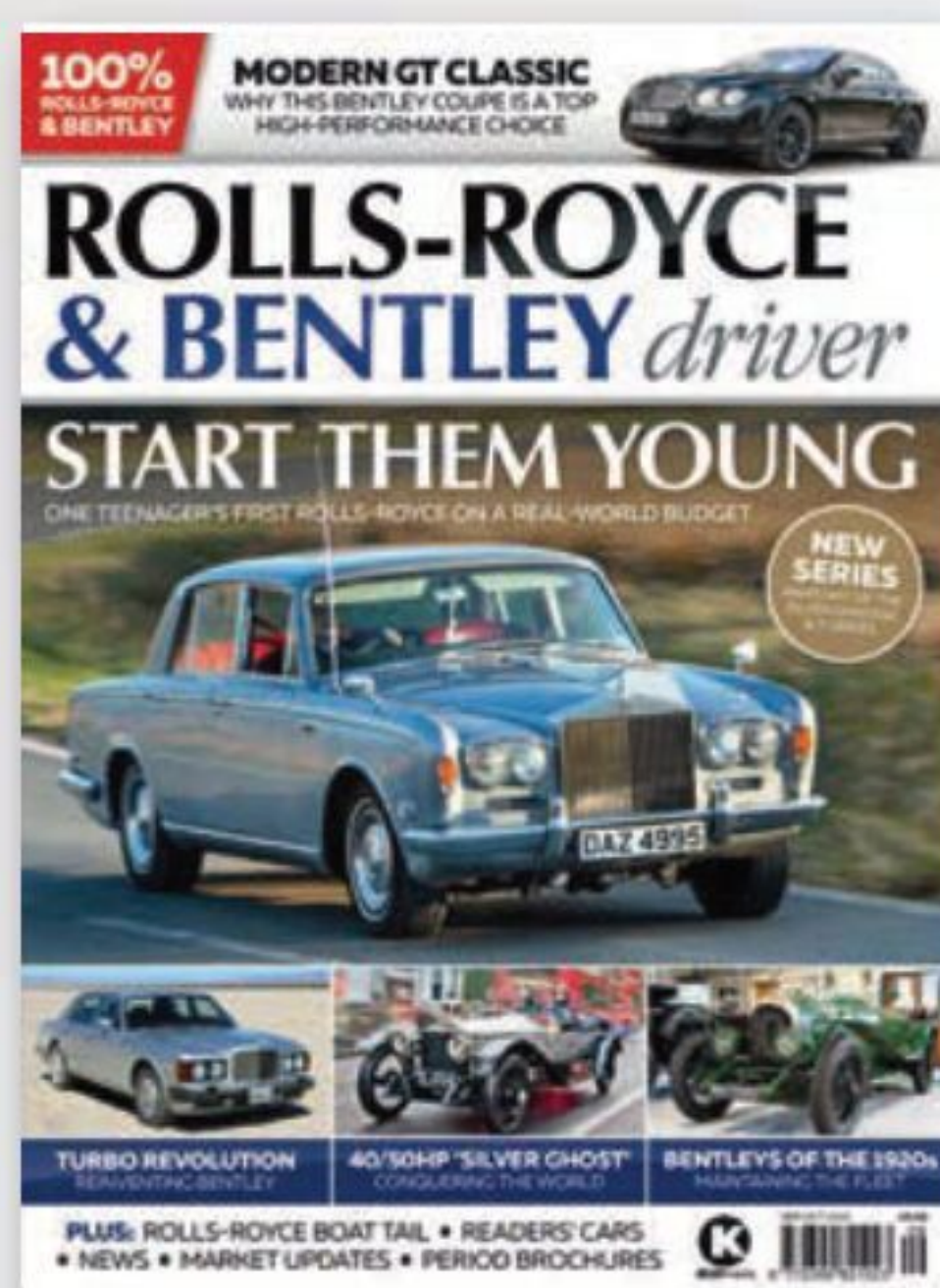
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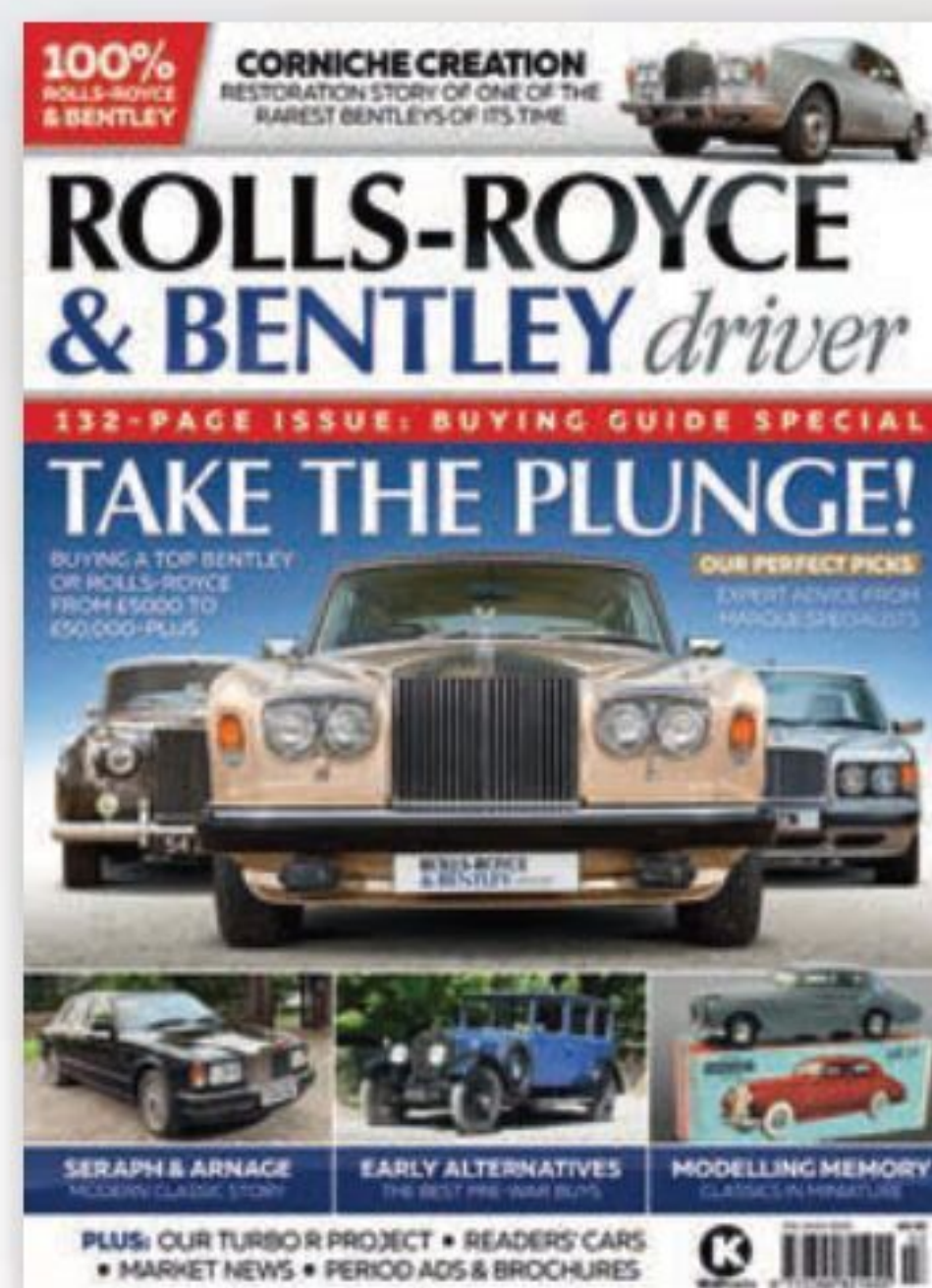
NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER 2021

- Owning a 2001 Corniche V
- Turbo R meets Daimler V8
- Cloud & S-series Anatomy
- Continental R – 30 Years On
 - 1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25
 - Experiencing a Phantom VI



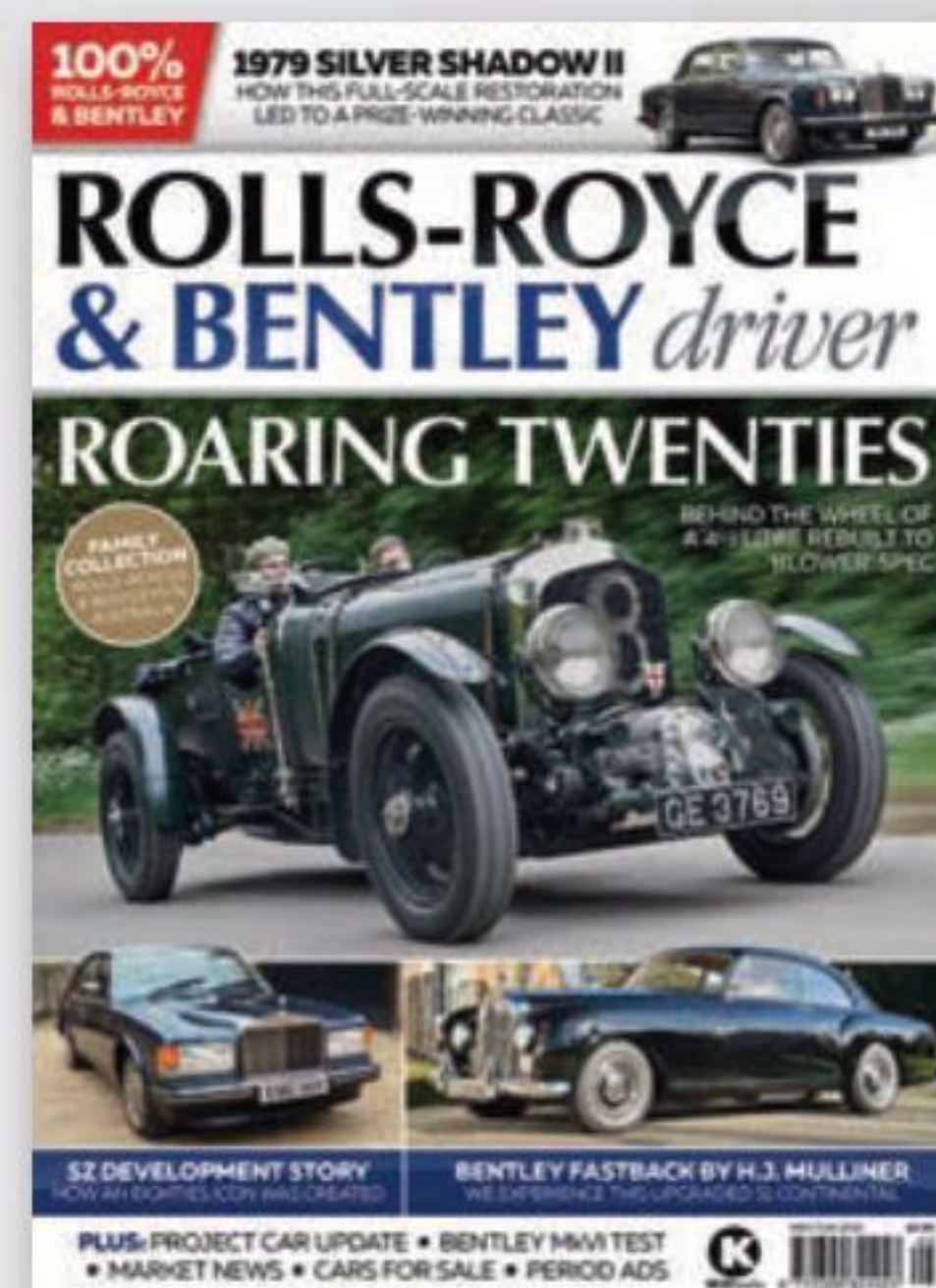
SEPTEMBER/ OCTOBER 2021

- Bargain-Buy Silver Shadow
- Continental GT Ownership
- Tribute to the Silver Ghost
- Bentley's Turbo Revolution
- Shadow & T-series Anatomy
- Specialists: Vintage Bentley



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- 132-Page Special Issue
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- Choosing Your Next Classic
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- Rolls-Royce Scale Models



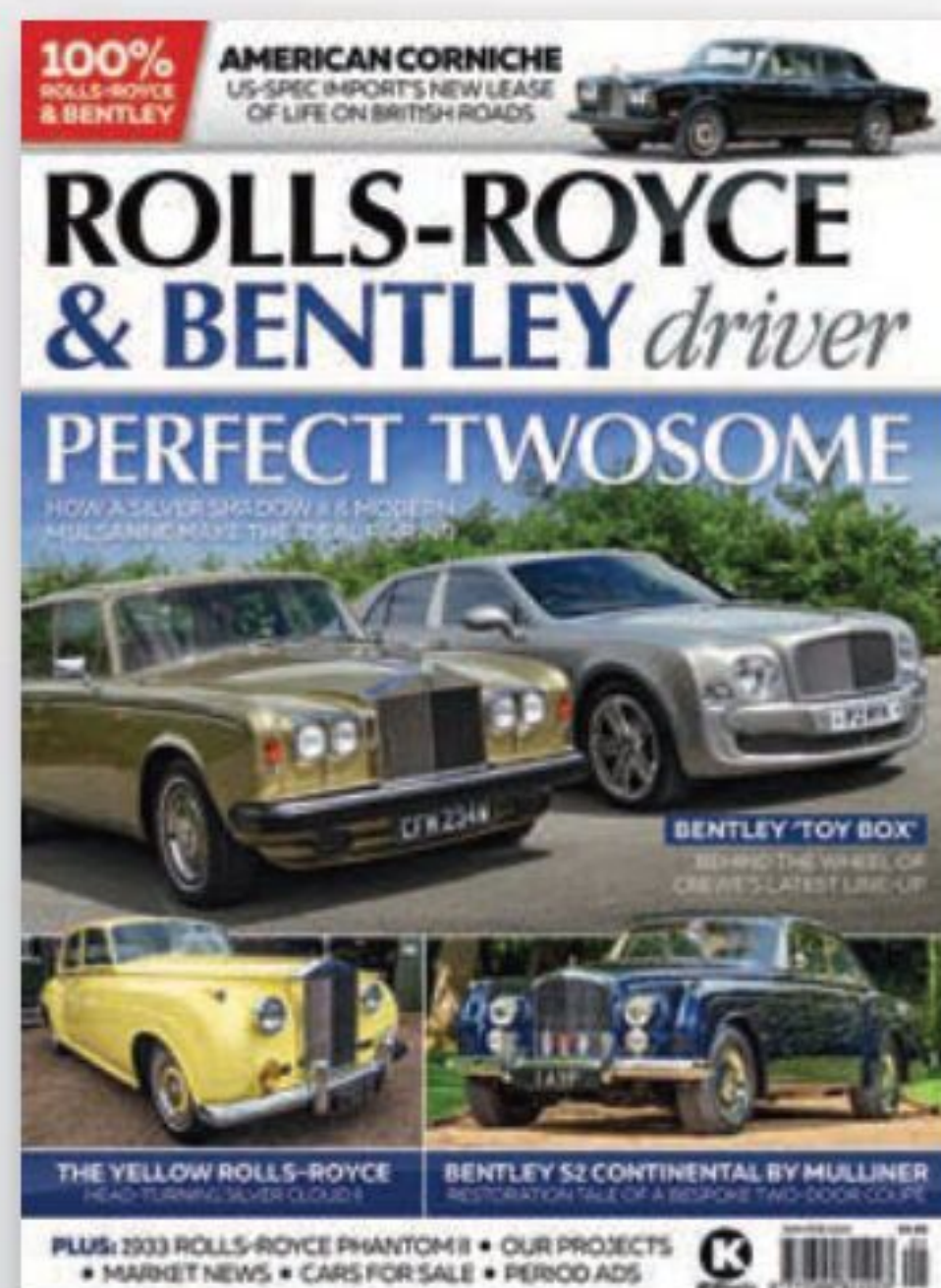
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- Bentley 'Blower' Upgrade
- Restored Silver Shadow II
- Bentley S1 Mulliner Fastback
 - Developing the SZ Series
 - Bentley MkVI Classic Test
 - Australian Family Collection



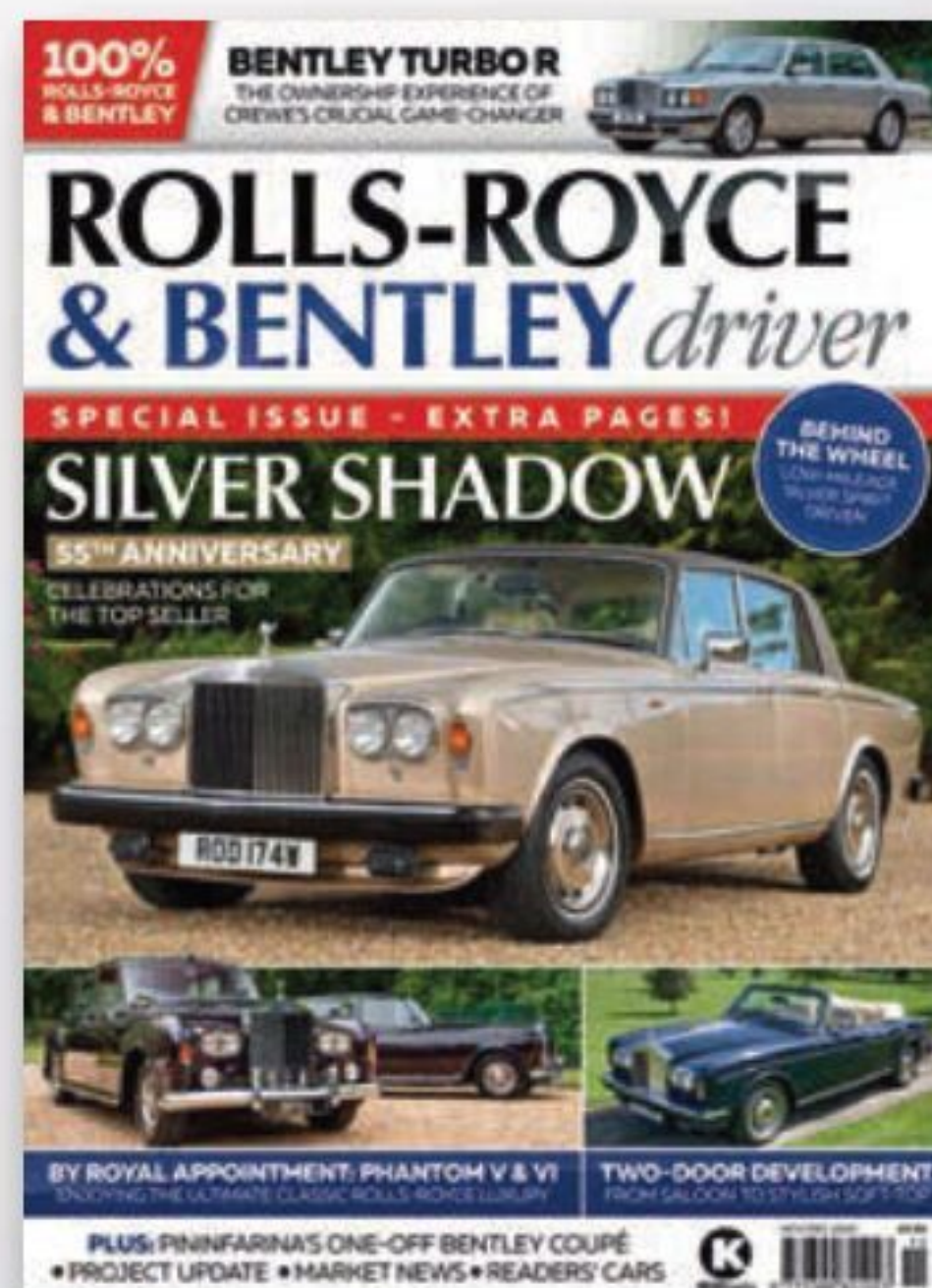
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- Corniche FHC Restoration
- Owning a Silver Spirit & Spur
- Early Bentley Arnage Tested
- Rolls-Royce Armoured Cars
- R-Type Continental Driven
- Silver Cloud Remembered



JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 2021

- Silver Shadow vs Mulsanne
- HJ Mulliner S2 Continental
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AN ANATOMY OF THE...

BENTLEY ARNAGE

In the third instalment of this series, we take an in-depth look at the saloon that Volkswagen inherited and then continued to develop through its first decade of Bentley ownership

WORDS: RICHARD GUNN PHOTOGRAPHY: KELSEY ARCHIVE

As much as this is a history of the birth and evolution of the last Bentley to be designed during the 20th century, it's also (inevitably) a look at the very public battle between Volkswagen and BMW for ownership of the Bentley and Rolls-Royce names. The car was launched in the middle of the takeover tussle between the two German giants. And when BMW snatched the rights to Rolls-Royce from under VW's nose – and at a fraction of the price that VW had paid for Bentley – it would have quite radical repercussions for the new Arnage.

However, we're getting ahead of ourselves, for the origins of the Arnage

date back to the days when Vickers was in charge of both marques. The British aviation, defence, marine and engineering conglomerate had acquired Rolls-Royce and Bentley in 1980, and it was under Vickers' watch that Bentley began to properly re-emerge from the shadow of its parent marque. Restoring a more sporting image to the Flying B, with turbocharged models that looked more than just slightly different to Rolls-Royces, meant that Bentleys rose from representing just 5% of production when Vickers rode in, to 40% by 1986. Five years later it was a 50:50 split between Rolls-Royce and Bentley, with the latter's share still climbing.

Initial work on successors to the Silver Spirit and its various Bentley derivatives (from Mulsanne to Brooklands and Turbo RT) got under way in the late 1980s, with design officially commencing in October 1990 under engineering director Mike Dunne, chief designer Graham Hull and Steve Harper. Management was happy enough with the way things were going to 'freeze' the conceptual design in June 1991. However, after Dunne retired in 1992, his role as project director passed to Tony Gott, a former TI and Lotus engineer. He took over in January 1994, and it was under him that several refinements were made before the definitive design was reached later that year. (Gott, incidentally, would ultimately end up as the overall



boss of Rolls-Royce from 2002 to 2004.) In July of 1995, design patents were taken out for the Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph and Bentley Arnage, based on prototypes machines.

While the angular Spirit's styling had clearly been an evolution of the previous Shadow, the Seraph was much more of a clean-sheet effort, with its body adopting some pleasing curves. Hull had been influenced by both the Silver Cloud and yacht styling for his creation. Aside from the radiator grille, badges and wheels, the Arnage was externally identical to its Rolls-Royce sister. On both cars, more complex electronics were incorporated as standard, including adaptive ride control, anti-lock brakes and digital engine management.

And it was the engine – or rather engines – that proved to be the real talking point. By the 1990s, it was felt that the trusty 6750cc L-series V8 was a little long in the tooth, having been the mainstay of all Rolls-Royces and Bentleys since 1959. There was a desire to come up with something a little fresher. However, Vickers at the time was going through one of its more turbulent financial periods, and there simply wasn't the money to develop a new body and engine. The way forward had been signalled by the appearance of a concept Bentley – the Java – at the 1994 Geneva Motor Show, which



The relatively firm suspension settings of the original Arnage helped to give it a handling advantage over its predecessors

used a BMW 5-Series platform. This partly prompted Vickers to take the controversial decision to buy in engines from another manufacturer – plus it would be making its own bodies rather than having them constructed by Pressed Steel, as previously.

ENGINE DILEMMA

Responsible for pressing the body panels was Vickers itself at its factory in Newcastle-on-Tyne, as well as the engineering contract group Mayflower, using its plant in Coventry.

Rolls-Royce invested £40 million in a new body shop occupying the old engine assembly area at Crewe. Production of the V8 engines for the outgoing models shifted to Cosworth Engineering in Wellingborough, which Vickers had acquired in 1990.

But which engine supplier should Rolls-Royce go with, bearing in mind its constant need to win back the title of 'The Best Car in the World'? A Ford V12 and General Motors' Northstar V8 were both considered... but rejected. Ultimately, the choice came down to BMW or Mercedes-Benz. The latter seemed the best choice; it had on offer V8 and V12 engines that were simply better than the BMW equivalents. However, because BMW had previous connections with Vickers – the Bentley Java concept for starters, as well as a 1992 joint venture to design and develop medium-sized aircraft fan jets – it was Munich that triumphed over Stuttgart. The decision to team up with BMW was taken in December 1994. The German marque also offered to buy a 20% stake in Rolls-Royce, but this was rejected.

For the Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph, the M73 5379cc V12 was chosen, a unit also used in the E38-generation BMW 750. For the Bentley Arnage, however, it was the 4398cc M62 V8, with both engines being mated to five-speed automatic transmissions.

By late 1997, development work on the new Silver Seraph and Arnage was over and pilot production cars began »



The Crewe plant was updated to prepare for Arnage production, with £40m being invested in a new body shop occupying the old engine assembly area

to appear from early '98, with both models making their debut at that year's Geneva motor show. Perhaps inevitably, there was some discontent among traditionalists that two such resolutely British marques should now be powered by German engines, even though both the V8 and V12 offered improvements over the old unit. While both Seraph and Arnage were very similar inside and out, the Bentley had a centre gear selector and more comprehensive instrumentation laid out in a slightly different style. The Seraph had a column-mounted selector and fewer dials.

The Arnage and Silver Seraph weren't the only things for sale that year, as Rolls-Royce and Bentley were also up for grabs, with Vickers having confirmed it intended to divest itself of its car division to focus more on its core businesses in October 1997. BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, Ford and Ferrari were all cited as interested parties, but eventually BMW emerged

“Chief designer Graham Hull had been influenced by both the Silver Cloud and yacht styling for his latest creation”

as the frontrunner. In April 1998, Vickers reached a formal agreement with BMW to sell Rolls-Royce to it for £340m. However, at the last minute VW nipped in with a £430m offer, which Vickers' shareholders voted to accept in the July.

What Volkswagen got for its money was Bentley, the Crewe factory, and the rights to the Spirit of Ecstasy mascot and Rolls-Royce radiator shape. It didn't, however, have the rights to the Rolls-Royce name, which was still controlled by the separate Rolls-Royce PLC aero engine company. It's genuinely difficult to comprehend that VW didn't do due diligence, and it later claimed it had only wanted

Bentley anyway – by then the dominant marque. But the impression was that VW had slipped up, especially when BMW asked the PLC if it could use the Rolls-Royce name on cars, and was handed it on a plate for just £40m.

A major headache for Volkswagen was that the Arnage used a BMW engine – which BMW had threatened to stop supplying while the two were at loggerheads over ownership of Rolls-Royce and Bentley. Eventually, the two German giants did sort out their issues, but having to use such major components from BMW still didn't sit well with VW, and it decided to re-engineer the Arnage to accept the old Rolls-Royce L-series V8

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Bentley had already come up with some pretty exceptional Arnage limited editions, but it pulled out all the stops for the Arnage Final Series of 2009. This swansong model featured many options that had previously only been available by special order. As with the Blue Train, the Arnage T's more powerful engine was used – albeit this time with 500bhp instead of 450bhp – in combination with the R's softer, more comfortable suspension. That was probably just as well given that hard-riding 20-inch polished-alloy five-spoke wheels were fitted. The headlamp and rear light bezels were body-coloured, the radiator and bumper grilles were dark mesh, there were Le Mans-style wing vents and a billet aluminium 'jewel' fuel filler cap, and naturally a proper Flying B mascot proudly decorated the radiator surround... although for reasons of safety and security, it was retractable.

Customers had a wide choice of standard colours (42 in all, plus 25 different interior hides and three wood veneers), although Bentley 'suggested' the combinations of Titan Grey with Anthracite interior,



Royal Ebony with Beluga, Windsor Blue with Windsor Blue, Meteor with Imperial Blue, Burnt Oak with Burnt Oak, or Black Velvet with Burgundy.

The Mulliner-designed interior featured Final Series sill plates, drilled alloy pedals, distinctive chrome trim and a rear cocktail cabinet. So that those occupying the back seats could enjoy this latter feature properly, there were two picnic tables, Final Series-branded stainless steel flask and shot glasses, plus the extra decadence of enhanced rear cup holders in place of the previous somewhat flimsy BMW 5-series items. For even more in-car entertainment,

there was a 1100-watt Naim sound system with ten speakers and a dual-channel sub-woofer – at that time the most powerful production set-up ever fitted in a car. Of course, that could be enough to force any passengers outside if the driver's choice of music was questionable. So, should it happen to be raining at the time, there were four umbrellas mounted on the rear wall of the boot.

All in all, it was quite a way to commemorate the passing of the Arnage, as well as the 50th anniversary of the L-series V8 engine – a powerplant that had come quite a long way since 1959.



Aimed at the chauffeur-driven sector, the long-wheelbase model was renamed the Arnage RL for 2002

after all. The official line was that customers just weren't keen on a BMW engine in a Bentley, despite sales of the German-powered cars being perfectly respectable.

To differentiate between the two versions, 2000-model-year cars with BMW engines were rebadged as Arnage Green Labels, while those with the newly reintroduced traditional British V8s (which were effectively the same single turbocharger units as used in the Turbo R) were dubbed Arnage Red Labels. Their debut came

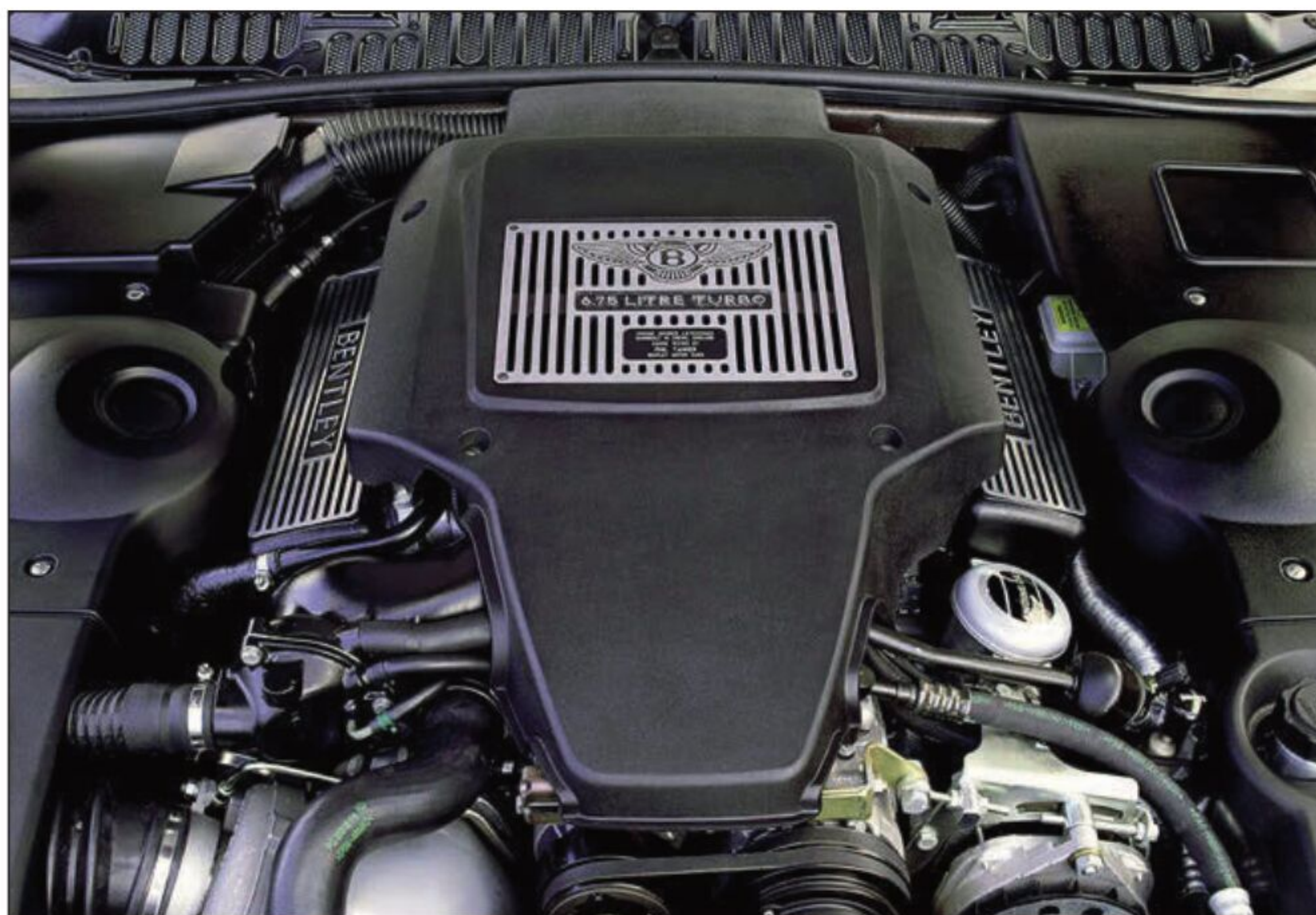
in October 1999, with both variants receiving a stiffer bodyshell and larger wheels and brakes, plus an Alpine pop-up navigation system, parking sensors, modified seats to improve their rear legroom, folding electric door mirrors, a modified steering rack and plastic headlamp covers in place of glass.

BYE-BYE BMW

The final 52 BMW-powered Arnages were constructed during 2000 as Arnage Birkins, referencing one of

the most prominent 'Bentley Boys' of the 1920s and '30s, Tim Birkin. One of the differences was that, instead of five gauges in the centre of the dash, there were just three. These cars were sold into 2001, after which the BMW-powered Bentley was no more. The Red Label tag was now no longer needed for differentiation and was dropped in 2002, shortly after a long-wheelbase model – with an extra 250mm of length in its middle – had been unveiled.

Alongside that was the normal-sized Arnage Le Mans Series, commemorating Bentley's return to the Le Mans 24-hour race after 71 years. Just 153 of these appeared, with distinctive features such as quad exhaust pipes, front wing vents, five-spoke alloy wheels with red calipers visible through them, wider »



To the delight of Bentley traditionalists, the British-built L-series V8 was reintroduced for the 2000 model year

PRODUCTION FIGURES

Arnage (1998-1999)	1123
Arnage Green Label (2000)	7
Arnage Red Label (2000-2002)	2273
Arnage Birkin (2000-2001)	52
Arnage Le Mans (2001)	153
Arnage R (2002-2009)	1365
Arnage T (2002-2009)	2100
Arnage T24 (2003)	40
Arnage Blue Train (2006)	36
Arnage Diamond Series (2006)	59
Arnage Final Series (2009)	96

wheelarches, remodelled bumpers, dark racing green instruments with Le Mans lettering, drilled pedals, darker burr walnut veneer, and chrome and leather-clad gear levers. The exterior colours were Silver Storm, Black Oriole and Le Mans Racing Green.

Replacing the Red Label, meanwhile, were the Series Two Arnage R and Arnage T. Bentley claimed that the Series Two had been completely re-engineered, which was overstating things somewhat, but more stiffening was added and there were suspension

“Volkswagen later claimed that it had only ever wanted Bentley, which by then was the dominant marque anyway”

upgrades as well. Under the bonnet, two smaller Garratt T3 turbochargers replaced the previous single T3 item. What wasn't mentioned in the Series 2 publicity was that the engine was also slightly modified to try and

reduce the number of head gasket failures that had been besmirching the Bentley image. Visually, new bumpers, tailpipes and side sills (plus a reduction in chrome) made the cars stand out from their predecessors. Inside, the seats were made more comfortable.

The R was the more laid-back of the Bentley bunch with 'just' 399bhp, the T being further tweaked to an impressive 450bhp to offer a top speed of 170mph and a 0-60mph time of just 5.5 seconds. At this point, the LWB model became the RL. Another very exclusive model of 2002 was the Bentley State Limousine, which was developed from the Arnage for the Queen's Golden Jubilee; just two were built, and they remain in use for state duties today.

Bentley's win at the 2003 Le Mans 24-hours led to a very limited run of forty special cars created by Mulliner. These T24 Bentleys shared similar features to the earlier Le Mans models, but also had Union Flag badges, 19-inch split-rim polished alloy wheels, and carbon fibre in place of the usual wood.



While the Seraph and Arnage were similar inside, the Bentley had a centre gear selector and more comprehensive instrumentation



Early examples of the Arnage were criticised for their lack of legroom and rather tight headroom

FURTHER UPDATES

In 2005 came a further facelift, with different headlamps and bonnet line, new wheels, enhanced suspension and new switchgear – the latter doing away with anything from the BMW parts bin in favour of Volkswagen controls instead. A drophead coupé was shown off at the 2005 Los Angeles Auto Show but wouldn't make it to production until 2007.

More limited editions followed, including 2005's Arnage Blue Train to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Wolf Barnato's famous race against the French Blue Train Express between Cannes and Calais. The 36 models were based on the Arnage R, but with the T's 450bhp engine. Among the features were a dash-mounted plaque that had a silhouette of the Gurney Nutting coupé that was

THE MOTOR FROM MUNICH

Compared to the old Rolls-Royce L-series, BMW's M62 all-aluminium double overhead-cam V8 was (technically) an improvement, having been designed in the 1990s rather than the 1950s. But when Rolls-Royce engineers assessed it, they were concerned about its pulling power at lower speeds, even with twin turbochargers bolted on. (The M62 in standard form, as used on 5-, 7- and 8-Series BMWs, was normally-aspirated). Fortunately for Vickers, having

engine specialist Cosworth in its armoury paid dividends.

Its experts were able to take power for the 4398cc unit from 282bhp to 349bhp by dint of adding two Garratt turbochargers and many other modifications, even if torque stayed roughly the same at around 310lb.ft. In such form, the M62 was far more appropriate for a big Bentley bruiser. Incidentally, the 4.4-litre BMW V8 found more than one British home beyond Bentley; it was also used in the Morgan



Aero 8 from 2000 and the Range Rover from 2002, albeit without the benefits of turbocharging.



believed to have been Barnato's car. It was only some years later that it was discovered that a Mulliner-bodied saloon had been used instead, thus meaning every Arnage Blue Train portrayed the wrong car.

Bentley's sixty years of production at Crewe was marked by the Arnage Diamond Series, with sixty cars planned – although it seems the company fell one short. Diamond-quartered wood, diamond-quilted leather, a mesh front grille, stainless steel bumpers and 19-inch alloy wheels were standard fitment. But what »



Just forty examples of the Arnage T24 were built to celebrate Bentley's win at the 2003 Le Mans 24-hours



The steadily-updated Arnage remained in production at the historic Crewe plant for more than a decade



Unlike previous models, bodyshells for the Arnage (and Silver Seraph) were produced in-house at Crewe

enthusiasts probably appreciated most was the reappearance of a Flying B mascot topping off the radiator surround – the first time one had been used on a series production Bentley since the 1970s.

In 2007, there was another update, albeit with most of the changes being under the skin. The Arnage T saw power rise to 500bhp, which made 179mph possible, while the Arnage R's output rose to 450bhp. It was the fitment of new Mitsubishi low-inertia turbochargers that helped make

these surges in power possible; they spooled up to maximum speed in half the time of the previous Garratt units, although a reprofiled camshaft and revamped electronics also played their role. Remarkably, the 2007 version of the 6750cc V8 had around 300bhp more than its 1959 incarnation, yet only 60% of its fuel consumption.

Bentley announced in September 2008 that it would cease building the Arnage the following year, by which time it would have outlived Rolls-Royce's Silver Seraph by seven years.

The last 96 cars were dubbed the Final Series models and were really quite special indeed – so much so that they deserve a more in-depth examination, which you'll find on page 60. The replacement for the long-running Arnage was to be the Mulsanne, marking the revival of a name from the days when both Bentley and Rolls-Royce were still married. However, for the first time in many decades, there would be no commonality with the marque that was now one of Bentley's biggest rivals. ■

THE
IC IntroCar
VIEW

John Tupper,
managing director
of IntroCar, says:



The introduction of the Bentley Arnage represented both a departure and continuity. Use of a BMW-sourced 4.4-litre twin-turbo powerplant marked a major change, while the entirely different (and modernised) suspension and subframe altered the character of the car compared with its predecessors. However, production numbers remained similar to those of earlier years and the character of a grand, powerful and quiet limousine was still intact.

The BMW engine was soon replaced by the traditional 6.75-litre V8 used in the Turbo R models, albeit with

an enlarged throttle and enhanced performance. This was after howls of protest from the Bentley faithful, who often referred to the BMW engine as a 'sewing machine'. This is possibly unkind. The BMW engine is hugely reliable and, if you can do without the characteristic 'thrum' of the original V8, a good early Arnage remains ridiculous value for money.

The Arnage's style was based around the S-series Bentleys of the 1950s and '60s, and I think it was a great success. It doesn't seem to date particularly, with a look that's distinct, flowing and refined. I own and drive an Arnage Red Label and cannot think of a car that is more comfortable. I regularly drive for hours at a time and never get tired.

Bentley owners who are used to earlier models will find the ride much tauter. My Turbo R eats speed humps like a boa constrictor consuming an antelope, but in the Arnage I approach these things with a little more discretion. The benefit is in cornering, and a well-

maintained Arnage can be pointed confidently at corners without displacing the occupants.

This car is heavy – nearly three tonnes – and eats suspension. Front and rear bushes and ball joints need maintenance or slack, noisy suspension will result. Rust is also now becoming apparent, as Bentley didn't corrosion-proof the car underneath, so this can need attention and a watchful eye by an experienced technician who knows what to look for.

The expensive job that often happens at around 60-80,000 miles (96-130,000km) is replacement of the head gaskets, as that is how long the original ones seem to last. If the car you buy has had them done, all well and good; but if not, you should consider this in your maintenance budget as you will be lucky to have this work done for less than £6000. Ouch. Other than that, my usual recommendations regarding regular driving and maintenance hold well here if you want a reliable car.

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SEMINARS RESUME

The Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club explains some of its plans for 2022, including the resumption of its Technical Seminars covering all the major model ranges

As we head towards 2022 and hopefully a steady return to normality, we are very much looking forward to resuming our fantastic program of Technical Seminars. Held at our headquarters in Paulerspury, near Towcester, these popular weekend courses provide what is probably one of the greatest benefits of club membership.

Our workshop has, amongst other teaching aids, a vehicle lift allowing members and instructors to inspect their cars, a Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III chassis (displayed at the 1965 Earl's Court Motor Show) and our infamous cutaway Silver Shadow II. There's also a 1929 Rolls-Royce 20hp with limousine coachwork by Thrupp & Maberley, which has been sectioned so that you can see the construction of the ash frame, the roofing fabric and window lift mechanism; the removal of some of the interior material shows how the fabrics were originally put together, while the engine, braking system and so on are all in fully working order.

Over 5000 RREC members have taken part in our rewarding educational seminars to date, all of them learning more about their cars over the course of the weekend than they would ever dream possible. The goodwill and exchange of information is a key feature. Instructors are all Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialists, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge that they so freely impart on attendees.

Model groups covered include small horsepower (20hp, 20/25, 25/30 and Wraith), large horsepower (Silver Ghost, Phantom I, Phantom II and Phantom III), early post-war (MkVI, R-Type, Silver Wraith and Silver Dawn), Silver Cloud and S-series, the Silver Shadow



The club's workshop houses this Thrupp & Maberley 20hp with sectioned limousine coachwork



The RREC will be resuming its ever-popular Technical Seminars in 2022



Visiting the trade village at the club's Annual Rally is always a fascinating experience

family and the Silver Spirit and derivatives. Dates for the 2022 seminars will be announced via our members eBulletin shortly... so why not join the club to make sure you don't miss out?

Looking further ahead, plans are well under way for our Annual Rally & Concours d'Elegance, which will be held at Burghley House on 1st-3rd July 2022. After a two year hiatus, we cannot wait to once again fill the grounds of England's finest Elizabethan house with a sea of glorious Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars. A key attraction at the event is our extensive trade village, featuring a number of Rolls-Royce and Bentley specialist restorers, dealers and parts traders. Our smaller stands also offer a plethora of parts for sale – you never know what you might find! Be sure to make a note in your diary now for what promises to be an outstanding weekend for all marque enthusiasts. ■



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SHOWSTOPPERS!

The Bentley Drivers Club details its Summer Concours extravaganza and 1922 Isle of Man TT centenary celebrations, as well as a clubhouse display of the legendary EXP2

The BDC's annual showpiece Summer Concours & Party will be bigger and better than ever in 2022 – a three-day long-weekend spectacular, taking place from Friday 17th to Sunday 19th June. The location is the picturesque Cubberley House, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, an idyllic 100-acre country estate that's home to BDC member and 2019 Concours Best in Show winner, Dean Kronsbein.

To ensure the 2022 event will be one to remember, the superb programme begins on the Friday, followed by a host of exciting activities (including tours and excursions) on the Saturday, a highlight being a sumptuous champagne reception and five-course gala dinner. The weekend's festivities will then climax on the Sunday with the eagerly awaited concours, when the cream of the club's members' cars will be judged, to see which will be named Best in Show as well as announcing the various classes.

Cars from the superb Bentley Motors Heritage Collection, and entertainment in the form of a brass band and singing girls, will add extra spice to the day's cracking summer party ambience. The Summer Concours & Party weekend will be supporting both the RAF Benevolent Fund and Help for Heroes charities.

The fun doesn't stop there, as the following weekend (from Friday 24th to Monday 27th June) sees the club celebrating the centenary of the 1922 Isle of Man Tourist Trophy. This was the momentous and hugely significant occasion when Bentley Motors' works 3 Litres – including one driven by W.O. himself – historically finished in second, fourth and fifth places, a performance that spawned the birth of a racing legend. Indeed, the club is encouraging members to make a memorable double weekend of it by attending both magnificent events – along with the BDC Silverstone Race Day, among the most prominent on the club's calendar next year.



The 2022 Summer Concours & Party takes place at Cubberley House
(photo: BDC archives)



The club celebrates the centenary of Bentley's outstanding performance in the 1922 Isle of Man TT next year
(photo: WOBMF archives)



Bentley's first race winner, EXP2, is currently on display at the BDC clubhouse
(photo: Bentley Motors)

Talking of BDC Silverstone, the club's annual Competitions Day will take place on Saturday 29th January at the clubhouse in Wroxtton. All drivers, officials and marshals involved in BDC events are invited, and the winners of the various motorsport trophies and awards from 2021 will be revealed.

Also taking place at the clubhouse is a brand new series of fascinating events, including presentations,

exhibitions, displays and talks, organised by the Bentley Memorial Foundation (WOBMF). The first of these took place on 24th November, when the star of the show was the legendary EXP2, Bentley's very-first race winner at Brooklands in 1921, kindly loaned by the Bentley Motors Heritage Collection for display until mid-December. A further event, featuring a talk from Jaguar saviour Sir John Egan, is set for next April. ■

Bentley

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Founded by enthusiasts for enthusiasts. The Bentley Drivers Club is proud of its ethos: a club of friends who share a love of all things Bentley. It's also the only club directly affiliated with Bentley Motors.

While some follow in the tyre tracks of the iconic 'Bentley Boys', competing in races and rallies, others take pleasure watching their modern-day counterparts in the latest GT3 race cars.

Off track, some simply enjoy driving their Bentley on the road, frequently in the company of other enthusiasts.

No matter what your inspiration, the BDC can help enhance your Bentley ownership and take your appreciation of this classic marque even deeper.

A great feature of our club is the excellent events we hold, both at home and abroad. These include our annual long-established Concours d'Elegance and Silverstone race meeting plus numerous tours and social occasions organised by our ever active Regions worldwide.

So, with lots of activities to look forward to in the future, what better time is there to join us?

Members enjoy a range of benefits with the BDC:

- Bi-monthly Review and monthly Advertiser & Diary publications plus frequent e-newsletters
- Access to comprehensive archives through the club's association with the WO Bentley Memorial Foundation, providing a deep insight into the marque's history
- Access to the spares schemes, covering the three key eras of Bentley production
- Favourable insurance rates and service plus undisputed valuations (for insurance purposes)
- Club forum offering the chance to discuss all things Bentley.



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SILVER LINING



We test what is surely one of the most original Silver Clouds still around, to discover how the last of the traditionally-styled Rolls-Royces helped to usher in a new era of owner-driver

WORDS: SAM SKELTON PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL WAGER



Tony Bennett. John Lennon. Elvis Presley. Frank Sinatra. These are just some of the names to whom Rolls-Royce dealers issued invoices for Silver Clouds. By the end of production in 1965, the Silver Cloud III's £5500 list price would

have bought you a seven-bedroom house, or ten Minis with almost change for an eleventh. By no standards was this a cheap car, and yet its clientele were changing. In a gradually easing social environment, the Silver Cloud had begun to appeal to the self-made

owner-driver. And its replacement, the Silver Shadow, was deliberately tailored towards this market, with its relatively low-slung styling and monocoque construction being the height of modernity by Rolls-Royce standards. The Silver Cloud would therefore be »

CLASSIC TEST SILVER CLOUD



The straight-six in the first of the Silver Clouds still gives pleasing performance

the company's final separate-chassis saloon, and thus the last to offer significant appeal for coachbuilders.

The Silver Cloud marked the end of an era for Rolls-Royce, a car unashamedly aimed at the company's traditional customer base. Designed for the well-heeled to enjoy with the assistance of a chauffeur, it was conservative in design and appealed to the 'better classes'. The royal family's recent shift of allegiance from Daimler to Rolls-Royce certainly helped what was already a buoyant image, and the car was well received when new.

But beyond the pomp and ceremony, what was the Silver Cloud like? What exactly were the qualities of this patrician delight, the factors which

ensured that it wasn't left behind in a changing world? And why, despite its inevitable appeal to the traditional chauffeur-driven market, did owner-driver buyers also take to the Silver Cloud in their droves?

To find out, we borrowed this six-cylinder Silver Cloud from Snettisham-based classic car specialist, Kim Cairns. It's a relatively late example, registered in 1958 to W.A. Sutton of Rainhill, Lancashire, whose family kept the car for an impressive 62 years. Parked up in 1987 in a dry warehouse, it was returned to the road for a family wedding in 1997 before going back into long-term storage once again. It's covered just 35,000 miles from new and has never

been subject to a restoration in the accepted sense. It even retains its original toolkit, torch and jack alongside the unused spare wheel in the boot.

ORIGINAL APPEAL

When the car was recommissioned by its second owner in 2020, it needed no paintwork attention; nor did it require any major leather restoration or polishing of the wood. Everything was in perfect and untouched condition from the factory – it simply needed a thorough clean, and that's what it was given. Days of cleaning and meticulous hand-polishing restored a shine to the original paint, and a thorough feed saw the leather as good as new. In



deference to its thirty years off the road, the Silver Cloud was also treated to a thorough mechanical service, plus the replacement of any rubber componentry that may have perished, including brake hoses and coolant hoses as well as the tyres. The brakes were also thoroughly overhauled, with new shoes and cylinders all round. In short, it's as close to a new and unrestored Silver Cloud as it's possible to get, making it the ideal car to assess.

Reading through its paperwork is like a passport to another age, when the chauffeur-driven market was still of major importance to Rolls-Royce. A purchase order for works completed states: "We beg to advise you that your driver has instructed us to carry out the work shown hereunder, which is a copy of the order signed by him on your behalf, and which we presume is in accordance with your wishes". The delivery receipt states that the car was delivered to a representative of the supplying dealer chain, W. Watson and Co of Liverpool.

A note in the owner's handbook advises of seven coachbuilders, the services of whom Rolls-Royce customers may wish to engage. But of »

"The Silver Cloud would be the company's final separate-chassis saloon, and thus the last to offer significant appeal for coachbuilders"



CLASSIC TEST SILVER CLOUD

course, this particular Silver Cloud is of the 'Standard Steel' variety, complete with factory-supplied (but Pressed Steel-built) coachwork that represented the model in its purest Crewe-assembled form. As with its Silver Dawn (and Bentley MkVI) predecessor, Rolls-Royce was embracing the practice of supplying complete cars rather than rolling chassis, and was reaping the rewards via increased sales.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

Finished in Sage Green over Smoke

Green with complementary green leather trim, 707 ETB both looks and smells the part. Before climbing behind the wheel, we try out the rear quarters, where beautiful marquetry and rich leather abound. Your feet sink into the softest lambswool rugs. There's ample space for the tall, in seats shaped more like the perfect sofa than anything else. If we had a criticism, it would be that the rear door apertures are perhaps a shade too small to permit graceful egress – a problem Rolls-Royce was happy to solve with its long wheelbase variant, and one which was

unlikely to perturb the sort of owner-driver to whom the Silver Cloud was becoming increasingly appealing.

Slide into the front and there's more of the same – beautiful woodwork to the dash, and soft leather to your posterior. The only differences are the view and the amount of effort you need to put in during your journey. If you're more interested in the car than in the contents of the *FT*, it's easy to see why this is the more desirable seat. There are few bonnet views better – it's almost a perfect study of linear perspective toward a radiator grille that



The remarkably well-preserved interior is as original as the rest of the car



“Finished in Sage Green over Smoke Green with complementary green leather trim, 707 ETB both looks and smells the part”



dominates from any angle, drawing your eyes forward to the wings of Spirit of Ecstasy. The peak of the grille showing above the bonnet line jars slightly, but if that's a problem there's always the equivalent Bentley S-series with its lower, more rounded facade.

Put the ignition key into the centre of the dash, turn it, and the near-silent 4.9-litre straight-six hums into life. You'll find the gear selector to the right of the steering column. Knock it down from Neutral into 4, release the parking brake, and you embark upon an experience calculated to make you feel special.

There's a sense of majesty to a good Silver Cloud or Bentley S-series. The size imbues a sense of weight to it, and yet the car never feels cumbersome in the way that a lower model of similar proportions might – say, the 'spiv's Bentley' that is the Jaguar MkX. As you guide the prow forwards, aiming through the sights created by Ecstatic wings, you begin to relax and feel any stress melt away. Life is good, and this is exactly the sort of car you could drive until you ran out of land, assuming you could afford the circa-12mpg thirst. The Silver Cloud isn't a fast car, though 0-60mph in around twelve seconds was respectable enough in 1958, and

at anything up to the legal limit it feels composed and comfortable. The power output was never quoted, Rolls-Royce inevitably preferring the somewhat evasive "adequate" when asked, but it certainly feels up to the job.

STRONG PERFORMER

Intriguingly, Rolls-Royce published a brochure in 1964 written by racing driver Tony Brooks, documenting his experiences of driving the Silver Cloud

from Cap Ferrat to Le Touquet, flat-out up part of the Monte Carlo Rally route, and some hard testing at the Goodwood circuit in Sussex. His sole complaint was that he needed to cross his arms to make progress through the Goodwood chicane. Meanwhile, his summary was high praise indeed: "As a big, luxurious car that can nevertheless be driven in a highly sporting manner, there is nothing quite like it."

We wouldn't want to throw the Silver Cloud into a corner given that few have »



“As you guide the prow forwards, aiming through the sights created by Ecstatic wings, you begin to relax and feel any stress melt away”



the requisite skills of a racing driver, but it certainly handles with more prowess than you might reasonably expect. Not that we'd make a habit of pushing the Silver Cloud hard; it's unseemly to make a car like this lurch and lean, as indeed it would given the compliance of its suspension and its overall weight. Moreover, the steering wheel is far too large for such undignified antics to be carried out in comfort. Better to rest your arm atop the door on the finely polished walnut, settle back and enjoy the silence.

So many classic car buyers today overlook the Silver Cloud in favour of its newer siblings, under the illusion that it's the last model from an old era

in which cars with pomp and ceremony were so hard to drive that they required a chauffeur. This in turn means they're perhaps less valued than they should be outside the confines of the Rolls-Royce and Bentley enthusiast communities. It's still just about possible to buy one (particularly at auction) for under £30,000, which seems almost criminal in a world where many later models command vastly larger sums. And then, of course there's the Silver Cloud's

other advantage: not only is it a more driveable car than you might expect, to me it also feels far more special than any Silver Spirit or Silver Shadow. That high driving position with those soft, deep seats, the way other drivers show deference on the road, the smell... everything conspires to make the Silver Cloud one of the most compelling modes of transport in history. The one disappointment for the owner-driver is that every journey feels far too short. ■

BUY THE CAR

In the ownership of just one family until 2020, this low-mileage Silver Cloud 'Standard Steel' saloon is superbly presented and remarkably original throughout. More affordable examples are available, but this is a very special survivor – and its £69,995 asking price is easily justified. For further details, go to kimcairnsclassics.co.uk or call Kim Cairns on +44 (0)1485 541526.



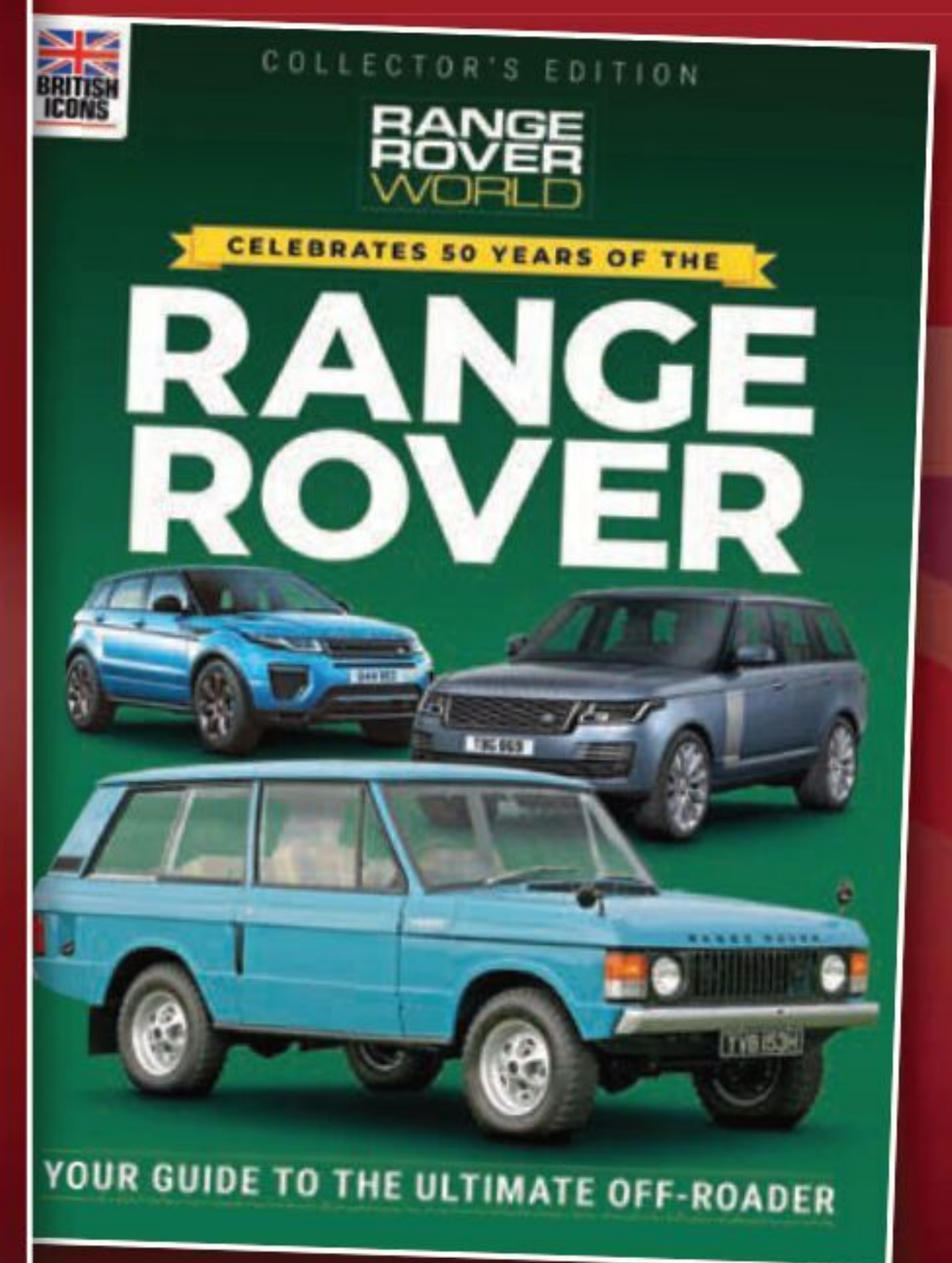
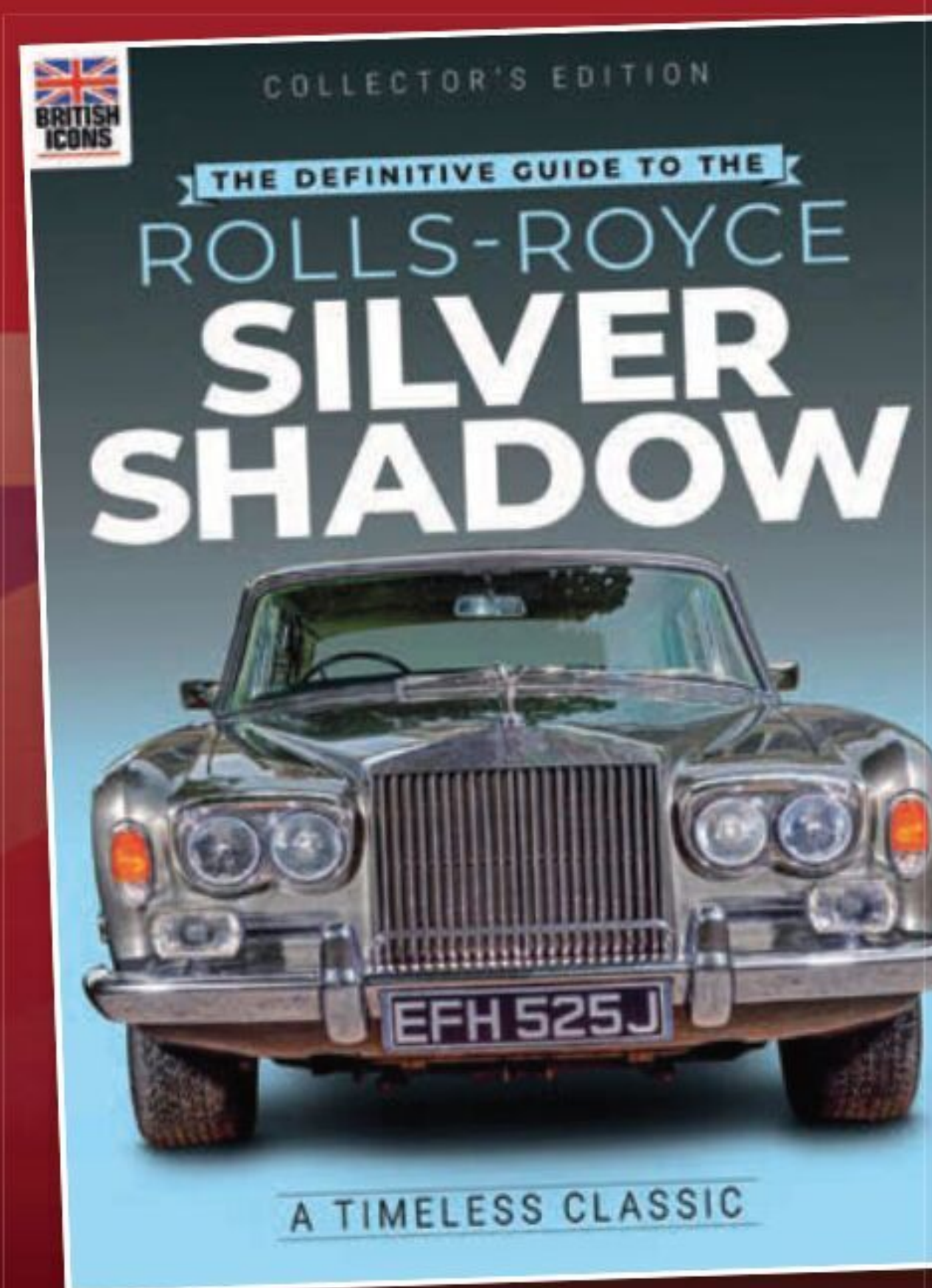
Contributor Sam Skelton at the wheel of this low-mileage Silver Cloud

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OUTSIDE THE NORMAL FRAME OF REFERENCE

That's the way Bentley described the sensation of driving the Turbo RT when it launched in 1997... and Richard Charnley, the current owner of this superb example, can appreciate why

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD CHARNLEY





The 400bhp turbocharged 6.75-litre V8 is a direct descendant of the 1959-on Silver Cloud II and Bentley S2

The Turbo RT features five-spoke 17-inch alloys and Continental T twin-caliper ventilated front discs

I set out with a straightforward shopping list in April 2013 when I decided to stop dreaming and actually buy an SZ-generation car. It had to be a Rolls-Royce and it had to have picnic tables. My wife added just one caveat: "You can choose any car you like... as long as it's black." And that's how I came to be driving home in a dark blue Bentley with no picnic tables.

It wasn't exactly love at first sight. A cold snap meant that my first glimpse of the car was as an anonymous lump under several inches of snow on the dealer's forecourt. The Bentley had to be dug out before anything could be seen and all attempts to start the engine were thwarted by a flat battery. However, I could see that

the Champagne leather interior was absolutely unmarked, complemented by highly-figured burr walnut. The eye-wateringly expensive Avon CR227 255/55R17s were virtually unworn, and the Black Sapphire coachwork was as close to black as blue paint can get. Overlooking the small detail that the recorded mileage of 71,211 (supported by the service history) was 10,000 higher than the figure mentioned in the advertisement, I returned the following week for a test drive. It was love at second sight and the deal was done.

The model year 1998-99 Turbo RT remains under the radar for many Bentley enthusiasts, with only 250 long-wheelbase examples (plus two standard-wheelbase cars built to special

order) leaving the factory at Crewe. Conceived as a means to maintain sales while customers waited for the all-new Arnage to appear, the RT could be regarded unkindly as a run-out special – rather like Bentley's answer to the Ford Capri Laser. However, the performance and specification tells a different story.

The RT is essentially a long-wheelbase Turbo R fitted with the remapped 400bhp engine and upgraded twin-caliper ventilated disc brakes from the outrageous 170mph Continental T coupé, although the top speed of the saloon is electronically governed to 150mph. Power output was only 15bhp up on the previous model's 385bhp but Bentley now quoted a 0-60mph acceleration time »

OWNER'S TALE BENTLEY TURBO RT

of 5.8 seconds, putting it firmly in the supercar league. Contemporary road testers couldn't quite match that figure and the best that *Autocar* could manage was a still-thundering 6.7 seconds; but what impressed them more was the huge increase in torque, up from 553 to a gigantic 590lb.ft. (produced low down the rev range between 2000 and 3450rpm). Compare this with the 'mere' 490lb.ft. produced by the 8.0-litre Dodge Viper GTS at the time. "Put simply," said *Autocar*, "the RT is the torquiest production car in the world, bar none. Nothing else on the planet gets to 30mph in two seconds with such deceptive ease."

There is, of course, a price to pay for all this performance in a car that weighs in at a whopping 2470kg unladen (to put this in perspective, the heaviest contemporary Range Rover 4.6 HSE tipped the scales at 2049kg). You're

unlikely to see over 20mpg, with around 15mpg being a realistic overall figure under gentle driving. Filling the 108-litre tank with super unleaded can

"The RT is essentially a long-wheelbase Turbo R fitted with the remapped 400bhp engine from the outrageous Continental T"

now cost up to £170, giving a range of 350 miles if you're very lucky.

Press on to enjoy the performance, and fuel consumption inevitably takes a sharp turn for the worse. *Autocar* proclaimed that the Turbo RT "smashed our existing record low by gulping down a gallon every 5.1 miles during performance testing."

In addition to its enhanced performance, the RT featured a number of subtle styling differences that set it apart from the outgoing Turbo R. Most

notable were the 'natural finish' five-spoke 17-inch alloys that were more of a metallic light grey rather than bright silver, and the 'Blower' Bentley-inspired stainless steel mesh grille first seen on the entry-level Bentley Eight in 1984. Some customers still ordered the regular, vanned Turbo R grille as an option but this no longer matched the special mesh inserts in the front bumper. Similarly, the

RT's standard big-bore, oval Mulliner tailpipe could be exchanged for the twin finishers from the previous Turbo R.

The interior of the RT was carried over unchanged from the model-year 1996-97 Turbo R. Therefore, it shared the revised dashboard layout that did away with an outside temperature gauge (although an ice warning light still featured in the warning panel cluster), the storage compartment between the front seats that contained the front telephone and six-disc CD-changer



Post-1994 model-year cars have an airbag behind the veneered panel and a smaller glove box beneath the dashboard



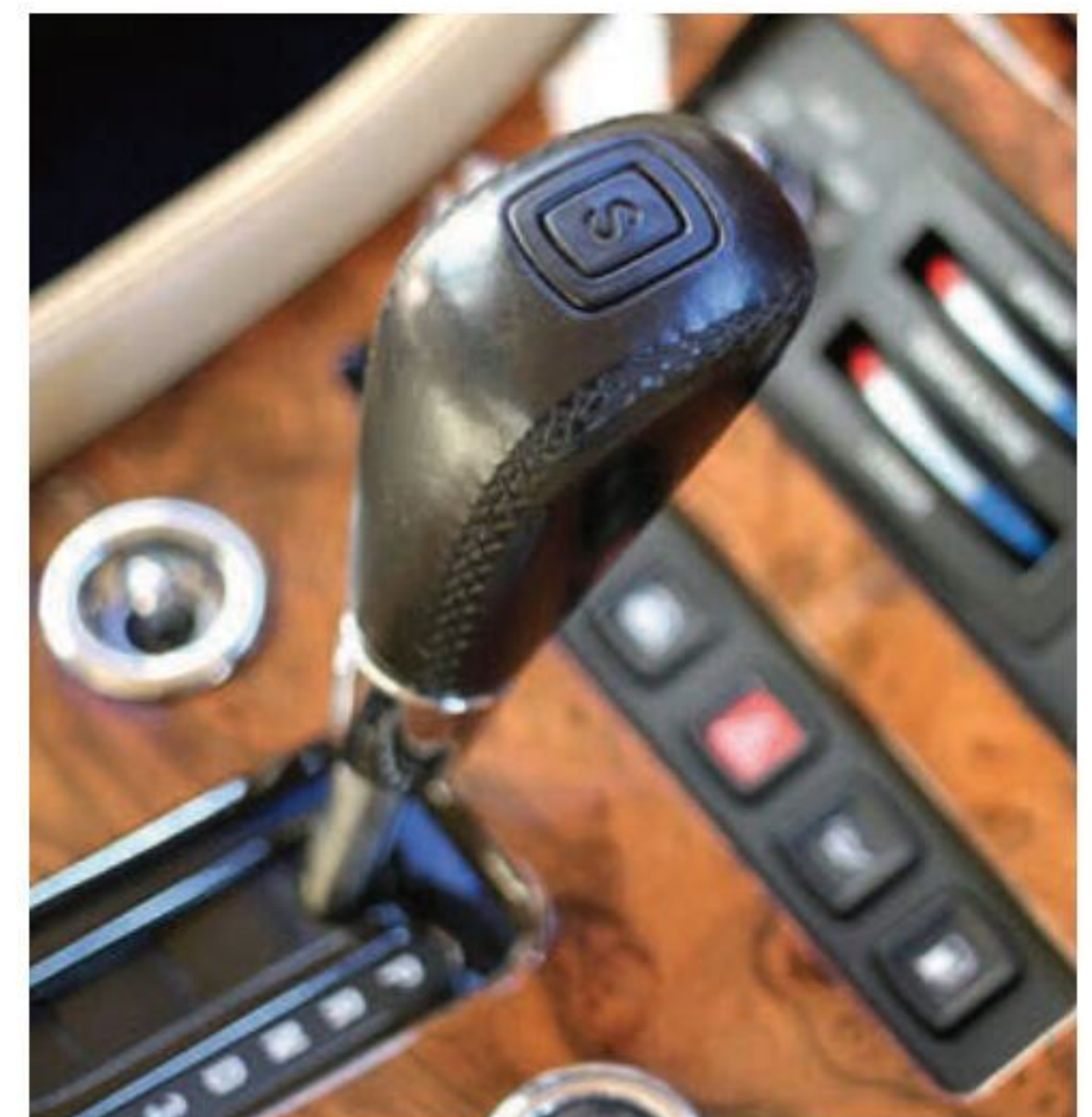
Post-1996 Bentley SZs had a redesigned centre console, with a veneered flap below the dials concealing the stereo



Storage compartment beneath the hinged front armrest contains the hands-free telephone and six-disc CD changer



Bentley SZ models have the ignition and light switch set in an oval panel, whereas Rolls-Royce models have a circular aperture



Turbo R and RT models added a Sport mode to the four-speed automatic gearbox

(previously fitted inside the boot), plus the individually controlled air-conditioning outlets for rear seat passengers, who might also have benefited from electrically heated and reclining rear seats as an option.

EARLY EXPERIENCES

I entered into Bentley ownership having previously had a 4.0-litre Jaguar 'XJ40' Sovereign and a 3.2-litre 'X300' XJ Sport, so I thought I was prepared for some pretty hefty running costs. But just like its shattering performance, the routine maintenance of a Turbo RT is not for the faint-hearted. For example, an oil change for the 6.75-litre V8 requires ten litres of 5W-40 engine oil (£120), while the auto gearbox swallows a further five litres of Dexron TQ (£50) even without changing the filter. A basic small service by a specialist costs £250-300 but it seldom stops there.

Early on in my experience, one of the air-conditioning pipes came adrift under the bonnet and needed a new mounting. This is basically a Bentley nut and bolt with a small bracket – £59 for the part, please. The following year the condenser itself gave up, taking the costs on to another level; a new condenser, pipe, re-gas and various seals left little change out of £2000.

Then back in 2015, the ABS and traction control warning light came on. No immediate cause for concern because it was only a £250 wheel sensor that had failed. But while the car was up on the ramp, it revealed that the pristine coachwork was concealing a pair »



Dashboard looks exquisite, although minor dials are hard to read and wiper control isn't easy to locate in a hurry



In top gear the Turbo RT does 40mph per 1000rpm, meaning the engine is barely above tickover (at 1500rpm) when travelling at 60mph

OWNER'S TALE BENTLEY TURBO RT



of severely corroded rear suspension spring pans – a common failing with these cars and easy enough to replace with new parts, albeit at around £1600.

Other work has involved replacing a number of leaking hydraulic seals (including the rear brake pump and a few other parts replaced at the same time as a precaution), while the top of the engine was stripped to gain access. Parts: £384... ouch! Labour: £1315... double ouch!

In my first eight years of ownership, the car has covered just shy of 11,000 miles. These have cost almost £15,000 for maintenance, plus a further £3000 or so for fuel, about £2100 for insurance and a further £1800 in Vehicle Excise Duty. That's a little

over £3000 a year. (Say it quickly and it doesn't seem so bad.) But it's been worth every penny for the sheer pleasure of driving the Turbo RT.

It sounds counter-intuitive but a slightly older, cared-for car might have been less expensive to run. Most of the work I have had done is as a result of the age of the car as it approached and passed the twenty-year mark rather than as a result of abuse or neglect by previous owners.

KNOWN HISTORY

H.R. Owen delivered my car new on 4th August 1997 to Nicholas Sibley, boss of Cardale, the company then responsible for manufacturing more

than 40% of the UK's residential garage doors. He went on to cover 7000 miles in it in two years. It was registered at Kimpton Grange, his 18th century Hertfordshire manor house that was later sold to Harry Potter actor Rupert Grint for a reputed £5.4 million after Cardale fell on hard times. The £150,000 car was completely standard, the only option specified being a graduated tint on the windscreen.

The car's next owner, Donald Alcorn, kept the RT for five years and 29,000 miles, after which it spent five months unsold in the Dunedin Bentley showroom in Edinburgh waiting for its next owner. Alistair Higgins of Torness Motors in East Lothian bought it for his own use in December 2004: "Yes, I remember the old car," he told me. "I traded in an old Bentley Turbo that I got good money for and bought the RT for £39,995. Two years later I traded it in at Bentley Edinburgh for a Continental GT Speed."

The history of the car then becomes a little hazy until it was registered in 2010 to an address in Oxford, although this owner apparently exported the Bentley the following year and garaged it at his house in the South of France

TURBO RT BY NUMBERS

- 5.1mpg consumption when performance-tested by *Autocar*
- 150mph top speed, 5.8 seconds from nought to 60mph
- 400bhp engine power, 590ft.lb. of torque
- 4 x 30 watts output of standard stereo
- 138 examples still known to DVLA (68 taxed, 70 SORN)
- Total production of 252 cars
- £148,990 price at launch in 1997

“When I bought the Turbo RT, I was excited to discover that I could afford an SZ that was relatively ‘new’ – it was just sixteen years old at the time”



before returning to the UK. This episode in the Bentley's history only became apparent when the application to transfer my 'cherished' registration number was withheld pending the outcome of an inspection by the 'Kits & Rebuilds' department of DVLA, which had flagged up the need to confirm the vehicle's details. This 'Kits & Rebuilds' letterhead brought me out in a cold sweat, wondering what I had just bought, so it was a huge relief to learn that this department also inspects re-imported cars and everything turned out to be above board.

LIFE WITH THE RT

Living with the car is easy, with every outing becoming a special occasion. It feels a lot more special to drive than a newer Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph, a model that was top of my original wish list. On smooth and undulating surfaces the ride is sublime, although those expecting a cossetting Rolls-Royce experience will be surprised by the firmness. Hit a pothole too hard and you soon learn to brace yourself as a Mexican wave of vibration passes along the aluminium bonnet and up »



An additional plug-in Motorola GSM 2500 handset is fitted inside the rear armrest



SZ chief stylist Graham Hull said its door handle was a "microcosm of Rolls-Royce design", with the requirement that a doorman "must be able to quickly master it"



From model-year 1996, cars had individually controlled rear air vents; a credit card-sized remote controls the stereo



your arms (new front shock absorbers are on the shopping list). The interior is to-die-for with every inch that isn't walnut being swathed in leather that still retains its characteristic smell, and the silky-smooth feel of operating the indicator stalk is an absolute pleasure.

When I bought the Turbo RT, I was excited to discover that I could afford an SZ that was relatively 'new' – it was just sixteen years old at the time. But you don't have to drive one very far before you realise it harks back to an earlier era of motoring. The original SZs are now over forty years old, while work on the cars' Silver Shadow underpinnings took place in the early 1960s.

Step out of a modern car and slide into the driver's seat of the RT

“That's a little over £3000 a year... but it's been worth every penny for the sheer pleasure of driving the Turbo RT”

and you can't believe how close the upright windscreen is to your nose. The switches to operate the lights and wipers bear more than a passing resemblance to those you would find in a Silver Cloud from sixty years ago, and the first time you reach for the exquisite bank of unlabelled electric window controls it's a case of "I wonder which window this one will open?"

Forget intuitive positioning and

fingertip control if you need to operate something in a hurry. But when you do locate the switch you want, the tactile pleasure is unbeatable. As is the layout of the work-of-art, flat-fronted dashboard – just as long as you don't mind not being able to read the time when the hands are between twelve and three on the clock face, or not getting a clear indication of how much fuel is left in the tank because the gauge is positioned at the far end of the cluster. And take care when backing it into a garage – the door mirrors are strongly spring loaded but do not fold in, and the RT is 6ft 11in wide from mirror to mirror, while most UK single garage doors are just 7ft wide.

It is a paradox that the best way to truly appreciate the charms of this 2.5-tonne supercar and experience what it's really like is to take your time, sit back, relax and let the rest of the world pass you by. I can't say it better than the words of Holly Golightly in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*: "It calms me down right away, the quietness and the proud look of it... nothing very bad could happen to you in there." ■

MULLINER: BEYOND THE RT

For those who wanted a greater degree of personalisation, Bentley also produced the Turbo RT Mulliner in 1998-99. These cars were available with a huge range of enhancements and were offered to selected customers only. A production run of fifty vehicles was originally planned, but in the end 55 were built – with 39 being left-hand drive, the majority destined for the US market.

The most notable upgrade compared with the regular RT was

that engine power was further increased to 420bhp and maximum speed to 160mph. Wheels, bumpers, skirts and wheel arches were restyled, as were the seats and dashboard layout. Interior options were almost limitless and included hide trimmed waist-rails, engine-turned aluminium dashboard, push-button starter, an additional binnacle of three roof-mounted dials and a separate speedometer for rear seat passengers.



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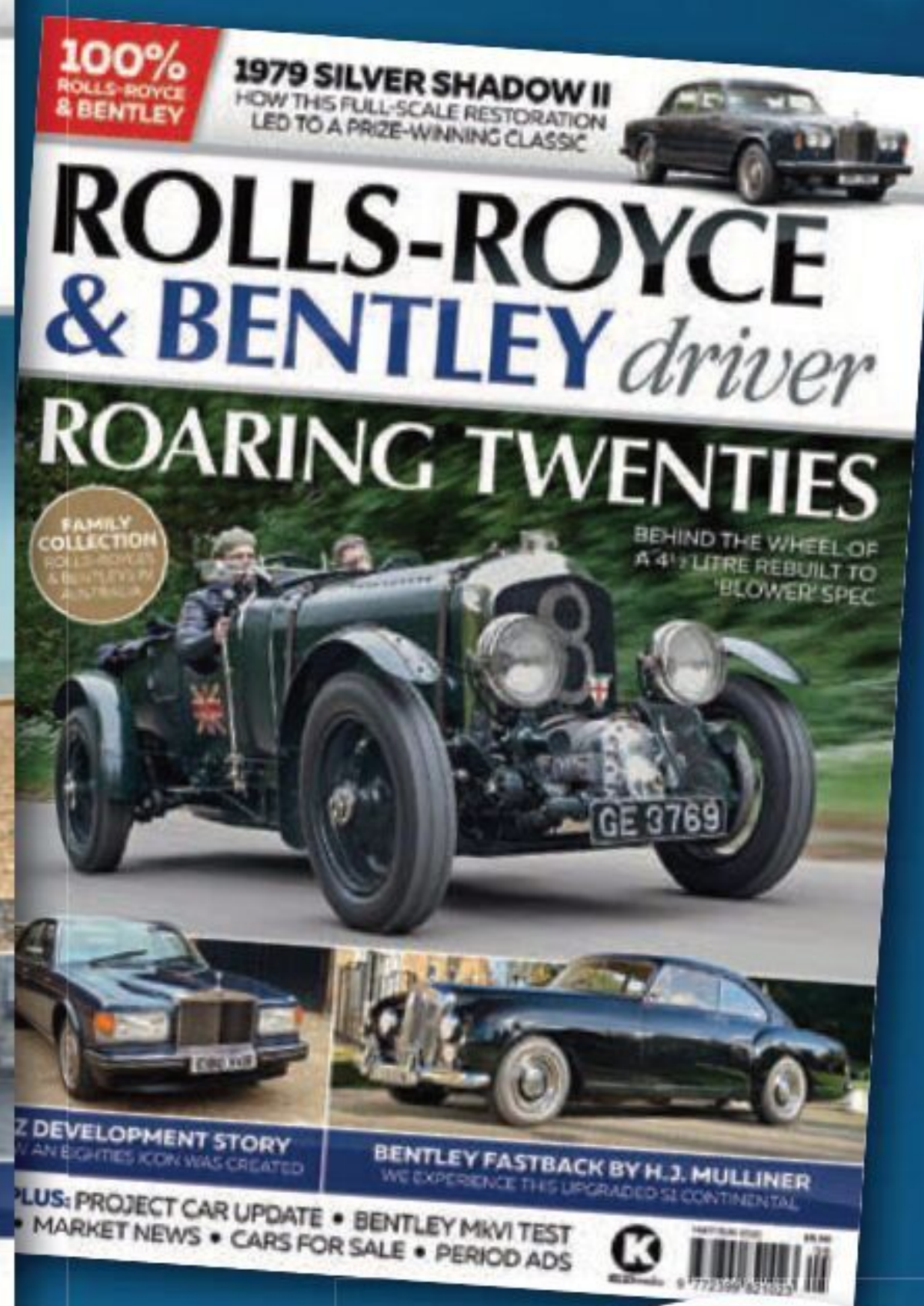
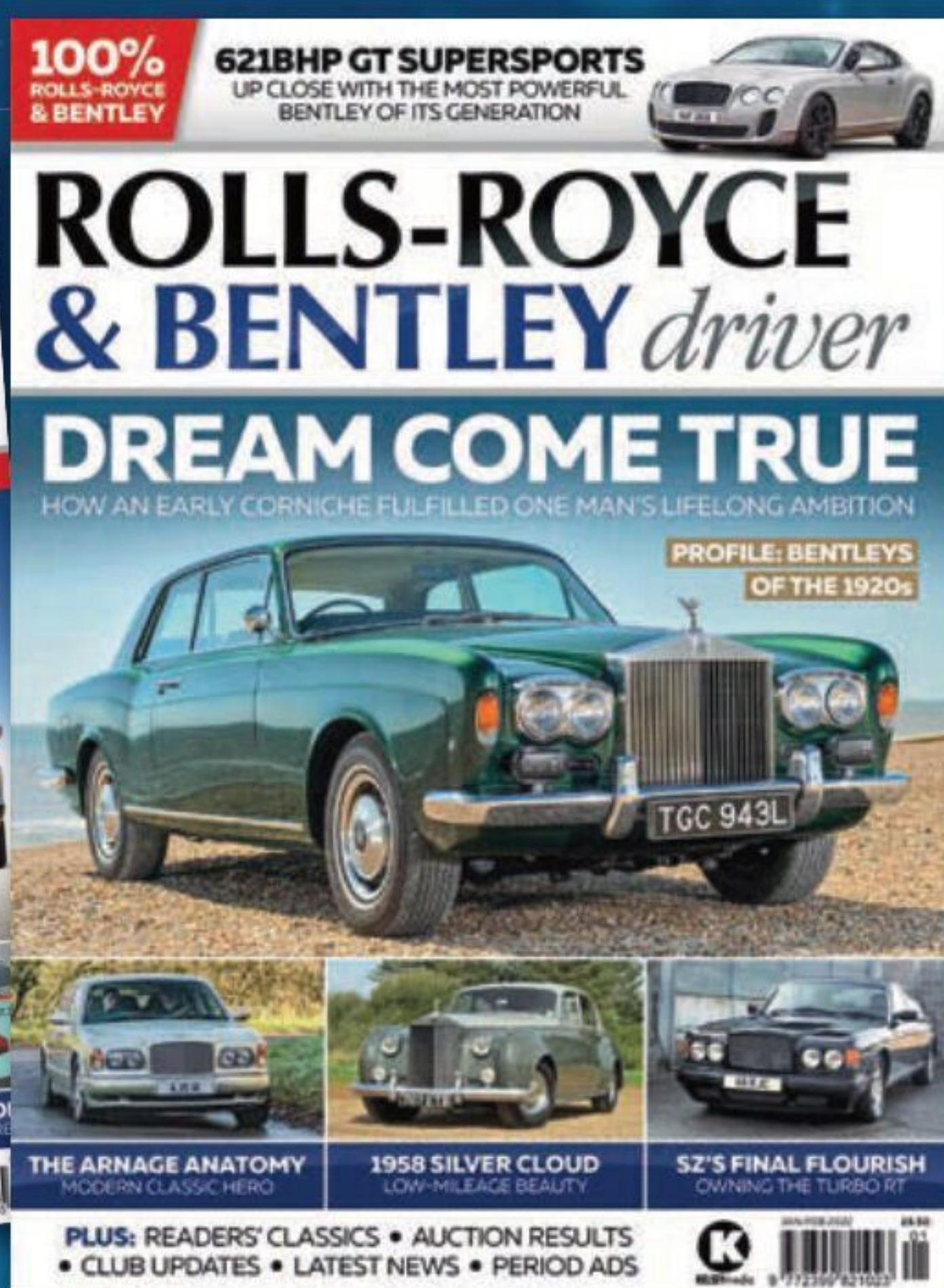
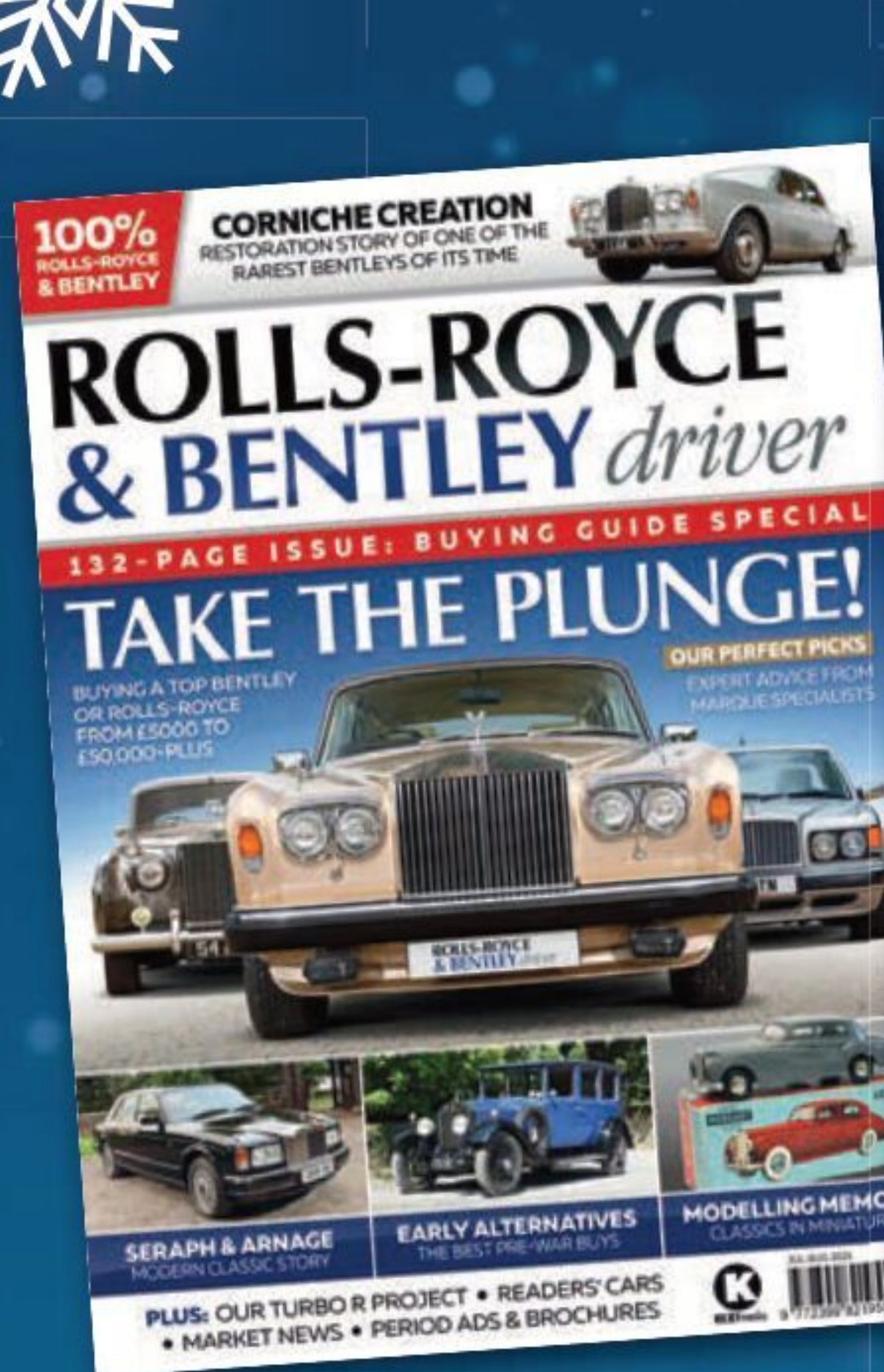
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PERSONAL CHOICE

Here at *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, we invite readers to share photographs and stories of their much-loved cars. Check out this latest arrival...

2001 BENTLEY ARNAGE

OWNER: JOHN POLLOCK, COATBRIDGE

My interest in Rolls-Royce and Bentley began in late 1967, when I'd not long started my auto-electrician apprenticeship at a local garage, before moving to a Vauxhall dealership within a year. During my walk to work I would pass Hunter's Transport, where in the window was a 1965 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III. I would look at it every working day, appreciating that this was a car to covet. As an apprentice though, any idea of owning such a machine seemed a million miles away... a head-in-the-clouds fantasy.

In later years, my business partner and I worked hard as auto-electricians, running a business in Coatbridge (a small town ten miles from Glasgow) for over forty years, during which time we worked on a few Rolls-Royces and

Bentleys. One memory that sticks with me is having a Silver Shadow II in to fix its window faults. A different customer then brought in his Shadow II, noticed the first one and asked if we were dealers in Rolls-Royce. This gave me a chuckle as we were working out of a 'hole in the wall' building in all sorts of weather. I think my answer was "I wish", and the dream was further cemented.

Every time I worked on a Rolls-Royce or Bentley, I was in awe of the craftsmanship that had gone into it. The smell of the leather, the stitches (knowing they're all stitched by hand), the walnut dashboards and their beautiful dials... there's just something special about them. Working on all the different models that came through the business meant

I could test drive them, yet again reinforcing the notion that one day I might just have one of my own.

In 2017, my wife and I were going to our house in Spain when I spotted a magazine called *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*. After buying it, I noticed it was the very first issue – and it was because of your magazine that I bought my first (and probably my last) Bentley Arnage, having now been a subscriber since the early days.

MAGAZINE EFFECT

Throughout my years of reading *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, the dream of owning such a car grew stronger, and I began a nightly ritual of looking for my ideal example online.

After decades of yearning, John Pollock finally owns the Bentley of his dreams



Hours upon hours of searching finally brought me to a high-end used car dealership in Edinburgh, George McKay, whose website featured a 2001 Bentley Arnage with only 35,055 miles recorded. It was being offered with a full service history, plus all the documents that should come with a car in this condition. The owner had a fleet of fifteen cars and simply wanted to downsize. I arranged to visit the dealer, initially just to view the car and maybe take a test drive.

The problem was that once I'd seen and driven the Bentley (which had benefited from £3500 worth of recommissioning work), I was smitten. Not wanting to jump in, however, and listening to my better judgement, I organised another visit. I carefully went over the car again and noticed that the wheelarches were bubbling slightly. I needn't have worried though, as the salesperson agreed to have them fixed as part of the sale. So, with a gentleman's handshake, a deal was agreed and I was finally the proud owner of one of my dream cars.



John's Arnage had covered just 35,000 miles when he acquired it in March 2021

After a few weeks, on 1st March 2021, I received the phone call I'd been waiting for: my Bentley was ready to be collected, and just in time for my birthday. Happy 69th to me! My daughter drove me to Edinburgh,

the purchase was completed... and I was finally able to climb in and drive my new car home to Coatbridge, cruising at a leisurely 65mph with a huge smile never leaving my lips.

My only dilemma was where to keep the Bentley. I have a garage where my Jaguar XF normally stays, but I needed to see if the much larger Arnage would fit. Fortunately, thanks to a combination of my daughter's guiding skills and my light foot, we eventually managed to get the Bentley into the garage with enough space for me to get out... just. It took us an hour and lots of shifting of things that we store in there, but it went in! It does mean that my Jaguar is out of its bed, but sometimes needs must.

To sum up, you're never too young (like Finlay in your Sept/Oct 2021 issue) or too old (like me at 69 years of age) to get the car of your dreams. My plans for the Bentley are to keep it in the lovely condition I bought it in. And I'm also looking forward to researching its history and finding out who originally ordered the car. One day, I even hope to drive it over to our house in Spain... once things fully return to normal. ■



The beautifully finished interior still looks superb after two decades of careful use

SHOW US YOUR PRIDE AND JOY

If you fancy seeing your own Rolls-Royce or Bentley within these pages, it couldn't be easier! We're interested in any model of any age – and even its condition isn't important, as we're just as keen to see ongoing projects as we are potential prize-winners. All you need to do is email us a small selection of

good quality jpeg images – and we'll do the rest. Within your email, don't forget to tell us a bit of history about your car, details of any work carried out, or perhaps your future plans for it. The more information, the better!

Email us at rrb.ed@kelsey.co.uk – and don't forget to send your photographs full-

size. The higher the resolution, the larger we can use your images. If you'd prefer to send non-digital photographs by post, that's also no problem. Simply write to: The Editor, *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver*, Kelsey Publishing Ltd, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Yalding, Kent ME18 6AL.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

We take a look at some of the most fascinating, most innovative and most successful Rolls-Royce and Bentley models via an array of period brochures, adverts and images

WORDS: PAUL GUINNESS



WORTH THE WAIT ▲

Published for the 1987 model year was this all-model Rolls-Royce brochure, a full-size fold-out promotion featuring the latest versions of the Silver Spirit, Silver Spur and long-running Corniche – the latter having been available solely in convertible guise for the previous six years. Throughout the publication there was an emphasis

on the exclusivity of each model, with the opening page announcing: “Quality always takes a little longer”.

The brochure went on to explain that “the engineering philosophy which makes the Rolls-Royce marque unique has been developed, refined and upheld for over 80 years”. At the core of this was the company’s “superlative craftsmanship and

the use of the finest materials”, ensuring that the “traditional skills of the coachbuilder blend well with forward-looking engineering in the craft of building the best car in the world”. Even more reassuring was the fact that it took “up to three months to build each motor car to standards that have never been achieved in volume production”.

The world's most advanced safety windscreen now fits Rolls-Royce as standard.




Rolls-Royce are fitting Triplex Ten Twenty Super Laminated windscreens as standard to all Camargues. Now, the world's most advanced safety windscreen and the world's most meticulously engineered car are in partnership.

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PROUD ASSOCIATES ▲

There was a time when component suppliers would be happy to advertise in the national motoring press whenever a major car manufacturer was launching a new model or celebrating an anniversary. And that was certainly the case in 1979, when this trio of ads appeared to help commemorate the founding of Rolls-Royce 75 years earlier. There was obvious prestige in being associated with Rolls-Royce, something

that could only enhance a supplier's reputation. That explains why Triplex, Castrol and Rockwell-Thompson were all keen to get in on the action, with the windscreen manufacturer's advert showing a close-up of the latest Camargue: "Rolls-Royce are fitting Triplex Ten Twenty Super Laminated windscreens as standard to all Camargues. Now, the world's most advanced safety windscreen

and the world's most meticulously engineered cars are in partnership." The Castrol advert, meanwhile, suggested that its oils were "for every Rolls-Royce ever made", while Rockwell-Thompson proudly explained that it had "produced the chassis frames and frame components used by Rolls-Royce on successive models from the Silver Ghost to the Silver Shadow for over 75 years."

STILL GOING STRONG ►

Complementing our other adverts from 1979 is this unusual offering from Hooper & Co, a company that was once one of the major suppliers of coachbuilt cars using Rolls-Royce chassis. By the time this ad was published, Hooper was an official Rolls-Royce dealership. However, the advert did explain that the firm had been associated with Rolls-Royce for more than seventy years and was still a specialist in "all aspects of coachwork, trimming, woodwork, leatherwork and carpets." It could also "install individual fittings to customers' personal requirements."



Perfection perfected by Hooper

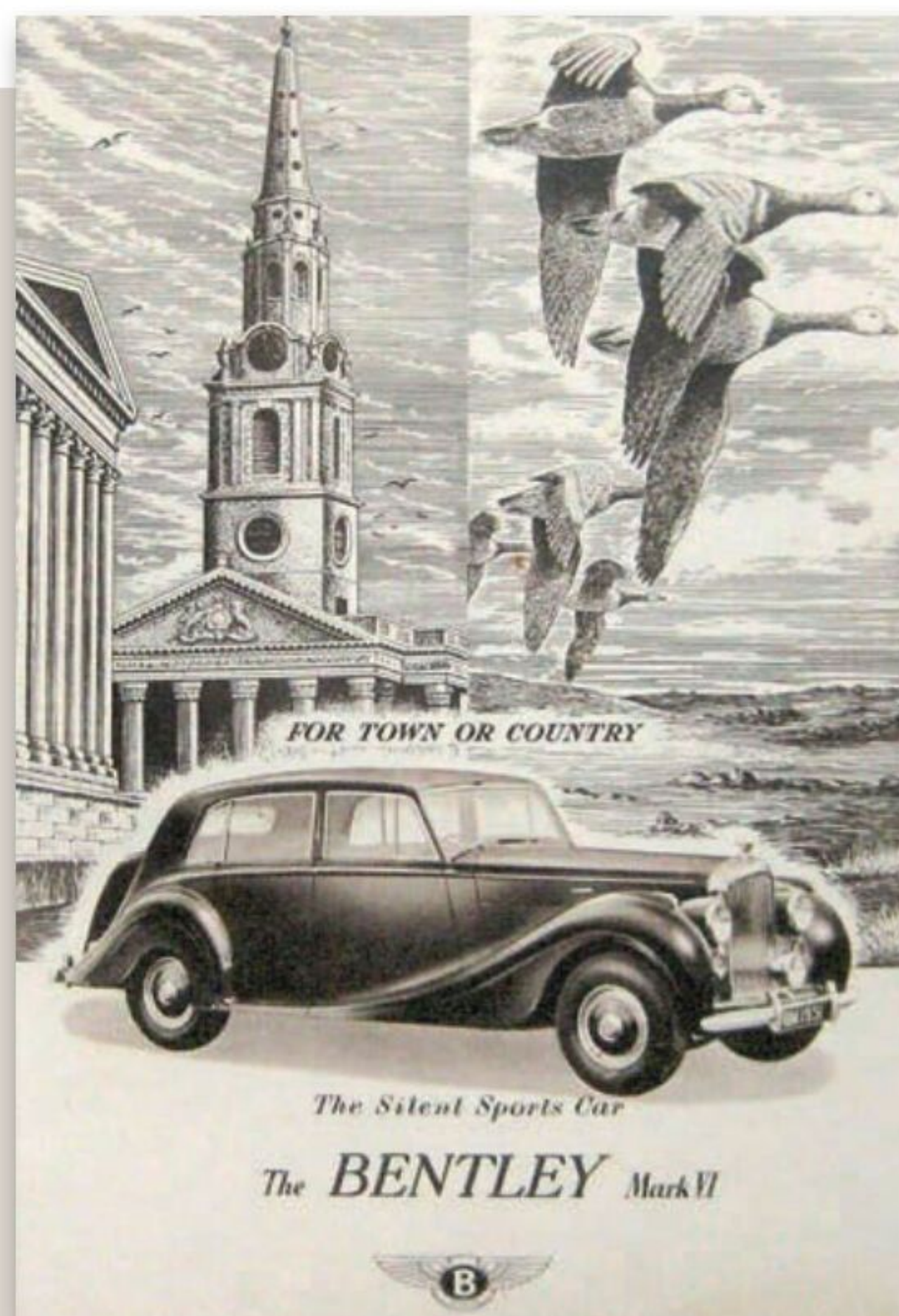
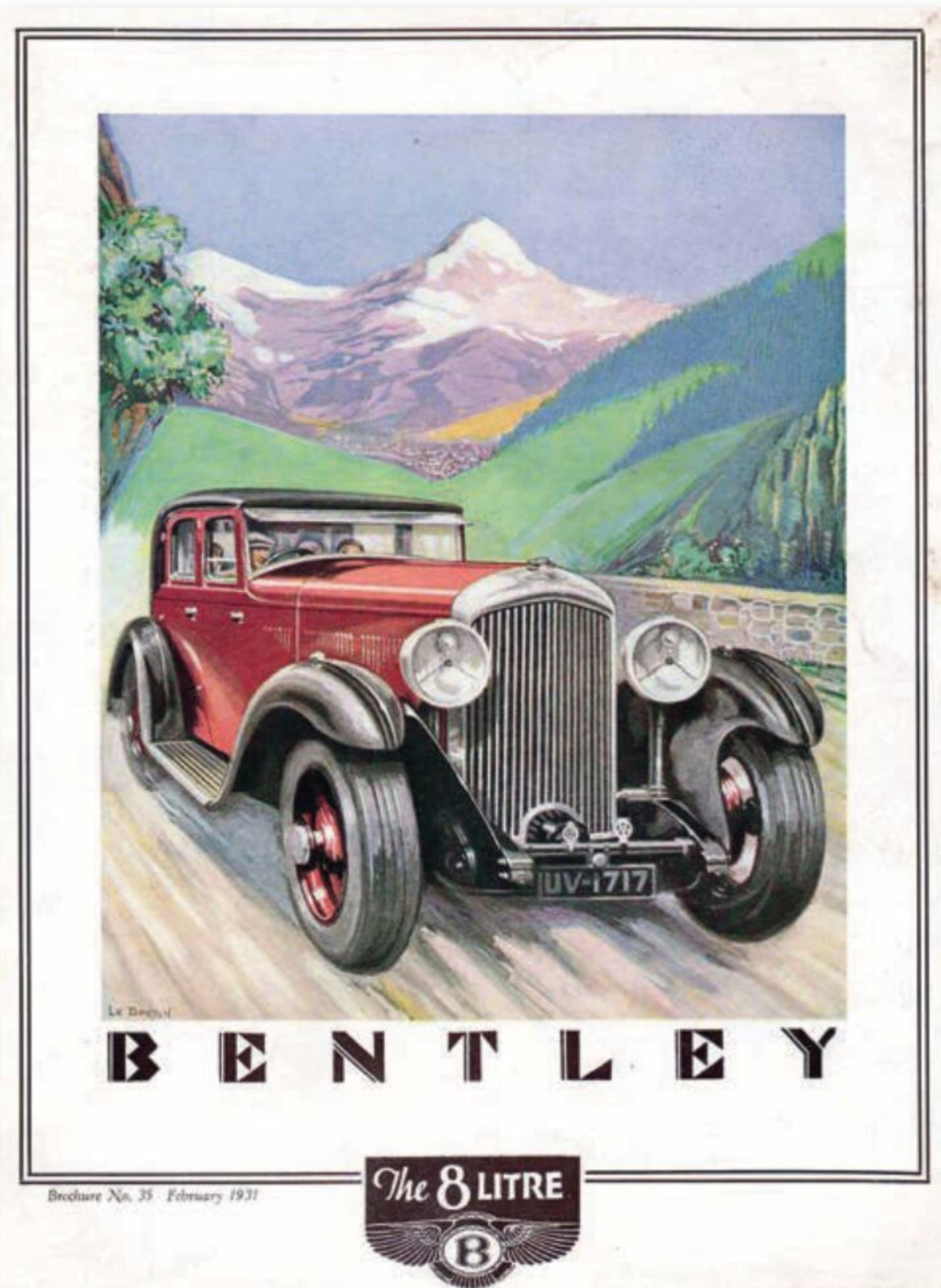
The name Hooper represents a tradition in coachbuilding. A tradition maintained to this day.

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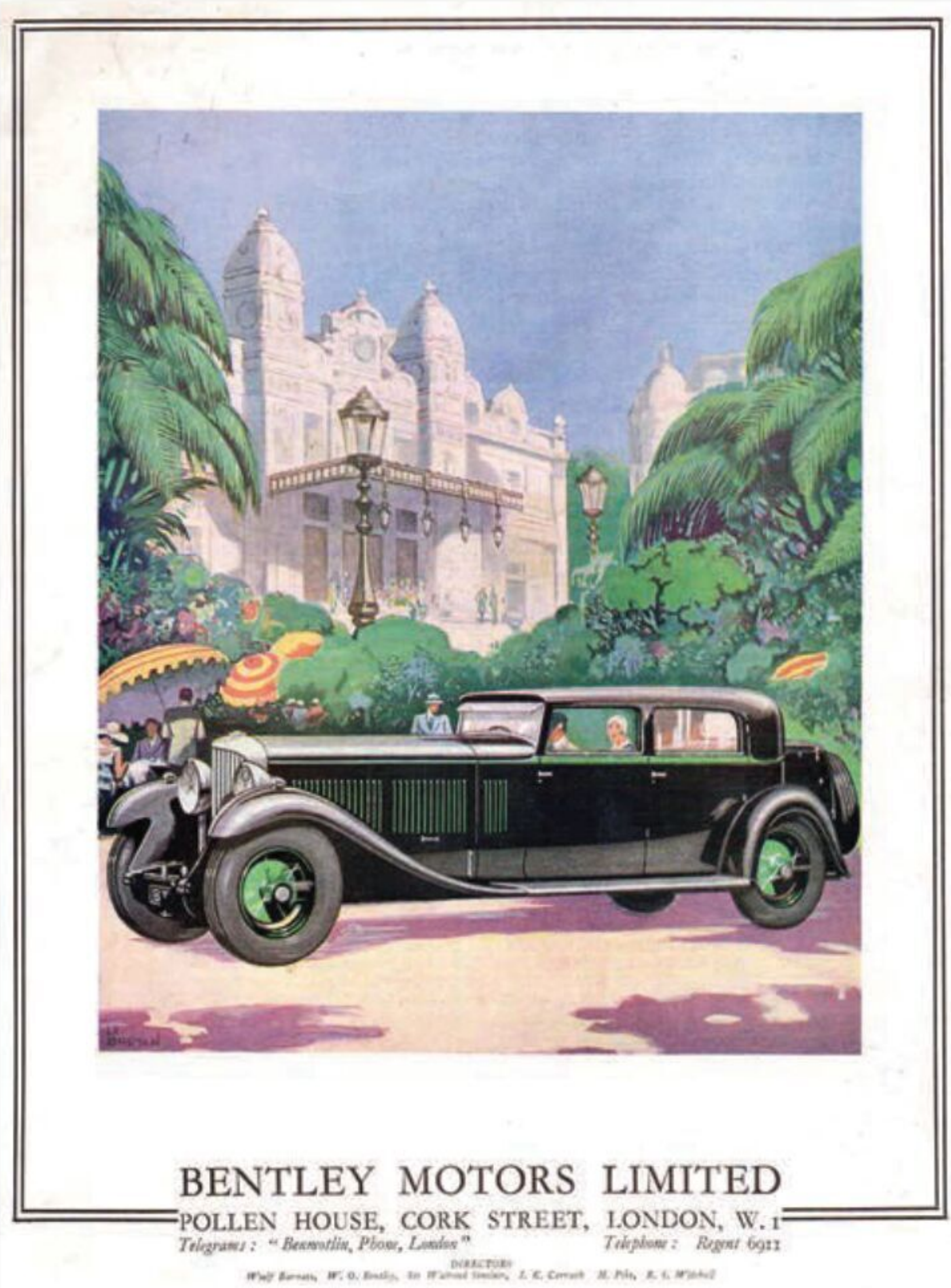
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TOWN OR COUNTRY ▲

Issued in 1951 was this hand-drawn advert for the Bentley MkVI featuring H.J. Mulliner saloon coachwork and the oft-used strapline of *The Silent Sports Car*. The MkVI was regularly advertised as the ideal car "for town or country", and this ad was no exception – showing two separate illustrations to stress the MkVI's dual purpose. From around 5200 Bentley MkVIs built between 1946 and 1952, just over a thousand were coachbuilt models, with the rest featuring Standard Steel bodywork and supplied to Bentley customers as complete cars.



◀ THE RISE AND FALL

The final model launched by Bentley before the company's collapse in 1931 (and its subsequent rescue from receivership by Rolls-Royce in November of that year) was the 8 Litre, a behemoth of a saloon boasting 7983cc straight-six power. With an overhead camshaft, four valves per cylinder and twin-spark ignition, the engine itself was a highly advanced design for the time; and it offered extreme flexibility too, with enough torque for the 8 Litre to accelerate effortlessly in top gear from a walking pace.

When the 8 Litre made its debut at the London Motor Show of October 1930, its output of 220bhp was hugely impressive by standards of the time. The newcomer's list price of £1850 also generated headlines, as this was one of the most expensive cars on sale that year. The 8 Litre's timing could have been better, however, with the onset of the Great Depression (following the stock market crash of October 1929) having a major impact on worldwide sales of luxury cars.

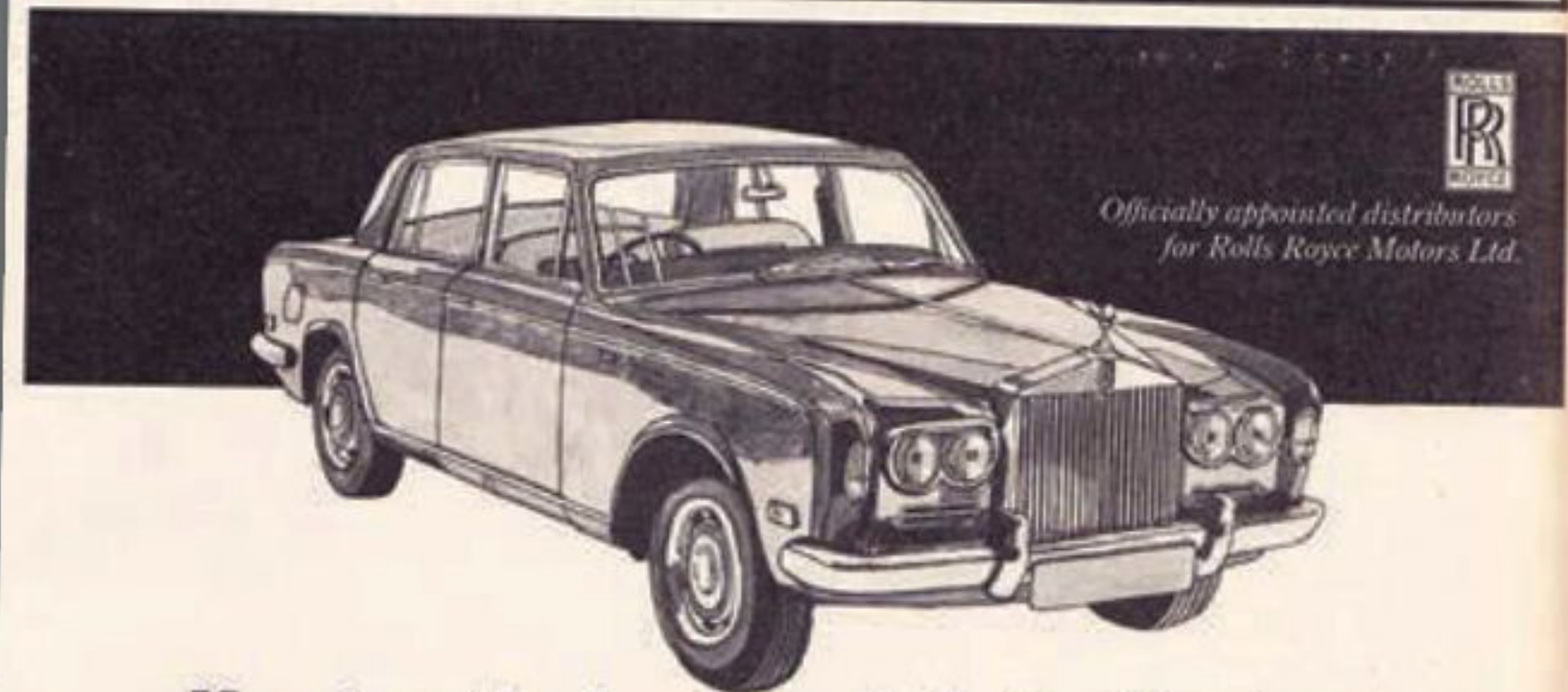
This particular brochure for the 8 Litre dates from February 1931 – a rather eye-catching publication thanks to its Art Deco look and the stylised illustrations by famed motoring illustrator, Jack Le Breton.

SPECIALIST DEALERS ►

The motor show debut of the Silver Shadow at Earl's Court in 1965 was of crucial importance to Rolls-Royce, with the future of the company hinging on the success of this ultra-modern newcomer. But where could potential customers go if they wanted to place an order? This particular dealer listing (or rather, a page full of Rolls-Royce dealer adverts) provided a few suggestions.

The biggest ad was issued by the Kenning Motor Group, which boasted that the new Silver Shadow was "everything you'd expect the ultimate motor car to be", aided by its "independent suspension with automatic ride height control". Below that, meanwhile, was an eye-catching advert for Eastbourne-based Caffyns Ltd, featuring the new Silver Shadow with the world-famous Seven Sisters coastline providing a fitting backdrop.

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75 years of quiet achievement



◀ 75 YEARS OF SUCCESS

Back in 1979, Rolls-Royce Motors was celebrating the 75th anniversary of the first meeting between Charles Rolls and Henry Royce – the event that laid the foundations for the company that would bear both names. And so this advert was issued to mark the occasion, boasting of Rolls-Royce's "75 years of quiet achievement" and featuring the latest Camargue along with one of the company's earliest creations.

The Camargue was the obvious choice for the ad, as this was the model that sat at the top of the Rolls-Royce range (aside from the hand-crafted, built-to-order Phantom VI), carrying a 1979 list price of £56,757 in the UK. This made it the most expensive production car of the time, costing almost £6000 more than the second-dearest model – the Panther De Ville Convertible. It also managed to make Rolls-Royce's other two-door hardtop coupé – the Corniche – seem almost bargain-like at £46,578.

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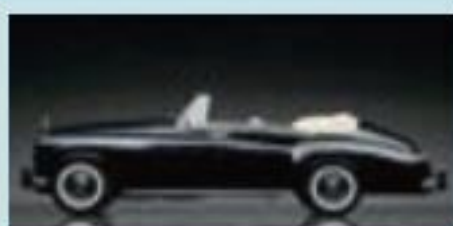
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BENTLEY ARNAGE



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111230

BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT



2004, 33000 miles, £23,950. Finished in moonbeam silver with Portland and Nautic leather interior. A stunning low mileage example with only two former keepers. Known to us for several years, this Bentley GT comes with 2 keys, correct service book pack and a private number plate, which is included in the sale. Please call 01132 842780, Yorkshire and the Humber. (T)

111238

BENTLEY S1 JAMES YOUNG TWO DOOR SALOON COUPE



£59,500. Very elegant, unusual & one of only three built to this design. One owner for over thirty years – driving very well; Please call 01248 602 649

BENTLEY S3 SPORTS SALOON WITH FOLDING REAR SEAT



£45,000. Very appealing in the original colour of Dawn Blue, excellent Blue/Grey leather, lovely veneers. Good history - all MOTs since 1968! Very sound, drives really well, ready to enjoy! Please call 01248 602 649

BENTLEY TURBO



1996, 58000 miles, £19,950. Turbo R SWB. In red pearl with magnolia piped red leather interior. Birds eye maple dashboard and door cappings. Car has been maintained regardless of cost and is in stunning condition, near concours. Please call 01767 631340, East of England.

111358



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BENTLEY 4¼ THRUPP & MABERLY SPORTS SALOON



£55,000. Fitted at some stage with a slightly earlier 3½ litre engine which is running well with lively performance. Very attractive with excellent Reddish Brown leather & nice registration! Please call 01248 602 649

PARK WARD 'D' BACK FOUR DOOR SALOON



£39,500. Handsome & spacious - re-trimmed in Brown Hide to a high standard, excellent new carpets, headlining, recent Cylinder Head, along with new pistons, clutch, radiator & much more! Please call 01248 602 649

25/30 PARK WARD 4 DOOR 'ALLWEATHER' CABRIOLET



£120,000. Very stylish, handsome & believed unique – advantages of both open & closed car with wind up windows & easy to operate roof. Recent cyl. head, twin spares. Please call 01248 602 649

ROLLS-ROYCE CORNICHE



1981, 53000 miles, £79,950. This Corniche II FHC is a 5000 series model finished in Athenian Blue with Magnolia hide, Dark Blue top roll, dark Blue lambs wool over rugs, rear seat belts, N/S door mirror and factory alloy wheels with white wall Avon tyres. Just had a Hydraulic service, this must be the finest example available. Please call 01737 844999, South East.

111231

ROLLS-ROYCE CORNICHE



1974, 18000 miles, £125,000. This Beautiful car was fully restored between 2013 and 2014. Its updated colour scheme is now Blue Diamond Silver with contrasting Cotswold Beige hide and a dark Blue mohair hood. Upgrades include HBE roll bars and CD head unit. Please call 01737 844999, South East.

111236

ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SPUR



1986, 33000 miles, £20,950. Roll-Royce Silver Spur finished in Royal Blue with contrasting Magnolia hide piped dark Blue. Rear Picnic tables, W/W tyres and updated HIFI. Please call 01737 844999, South East.

111233

ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SPIRIT II



1990, 35800 miles, £25,995. Finished in immaculate Graphite with black Everflex roof. Silverstone hide piped in slate, grey Wilton carpets and dark grey lambs wool rugs. Please call 01485 541526, East of England. (T)

111308

ROLLS-ROYCE SILVER SPUR



1987, 35000 miles, £21,950. This is a one family owner car from new and is finished in Royal Blue with light Blue hide piped dark Blue it also has cloth inserts to the rear seats electric sunroof and rear picnic tables. It is in beautiful condition and a very low mileage. Please call 01737 844999, South East.

111234

4¼ OFFORD DESIGN 4 DOOR TOURER BY STEVE PENNY



£155,000. Re-bodied in 2006 to a very high standard on a restored chassis, excellent quality hood, tonneau cover & blue leather interior. Overdrive, drives exceptionally well, lovely! Please call 01248 602 649



PAUL GUINNESS

A couple of months spent with the company's Turbo R as his (almost) daily driver has proved to be an entertaining experience for our editor

Regular readers will no doubt recall the 1990 Bentley Turbo R that's regularly appeared within the pages of *Rolls-Royce & Bentley Driver* in recent months. It's provided several members of our *Classics World* team with some welcome luxury, as well as keeping the readers of *Classics Monthly* (our sister magazine) intrigued

with its progress as a rolling project. Finally, as our Nov/Dec 2021 issue was about to go to print, it was my turn behind the wheel, as I revealed last time.

I felt I was already familiar with the car, having seen it featured in a number of videos (search the *Classics World* channel on YouTube if you fancy checking them out), as well as having driven many other Turbo Rs over the years. This, however, was

to be my first time as custodian of such a beast – and I was keen to find out more about running the Bentley on a regular (almost daily) basis.

Not surprisingly, our Turbo R has been a joy to live with... except for those times when I used it simply for my own pleasure and therefore paid the fuel bill. Still, what price can you put on fun? And that's something a mechanically-sorted Turbo R provides in abundance. With so much power at the driver's disposal, complemented by a fascinating combination of opulent ride comfort and sharp (by Rolls-Royce standards) handling, it's a car that never fails to entertain.

A few weeks after taking on the Bentley, however, I discovered it was due an MoT test, and so it was booked in for a check-over at Nigel Sandell's Isleworth-based workshops. My main concern was that the airbag light was permanently on – and despite there being no airbags in a Turbo R of this vintage, it would still be deemed an MoT failure. Ordinarily, Nigel's team would have dealt with this quite easily. But our Bentley was suffering from a few other issues with its dash lights (the instrumentation was barely lit at night), making it impossible to sort the airbag light without first removing the whole instrument pack and sending it off to specialists for refurbishment. Two weeks later, the instrument pack was refitted and the airbag light 'extinguished'. And much to my delight, the newly-lit dashboard meant I could finally see the instruments perfectly clearly at night... including the all-important fuel gauge needle.

My time with the Turbo R saw me taking it on several long runs, including a trip 'back home' to Crewe (where we were treated to a fascinating tour of the Bentley plant) and a jaunt to Birmingham's NEC for the recent Classic Motor Show, where the car took pride of place on the *Classics World* stand. It was a fine way to part company with a machine that had provided so much enjoyment during its few weeks in my care. ■



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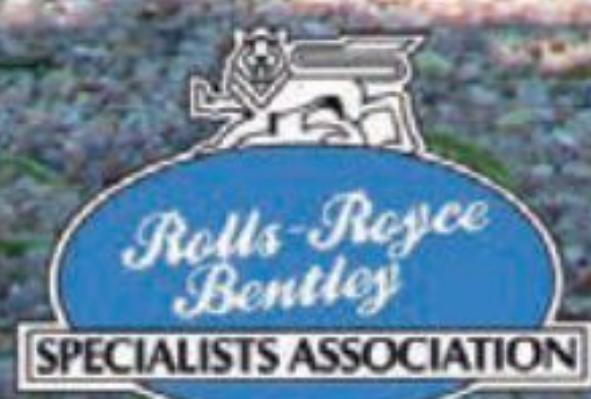
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