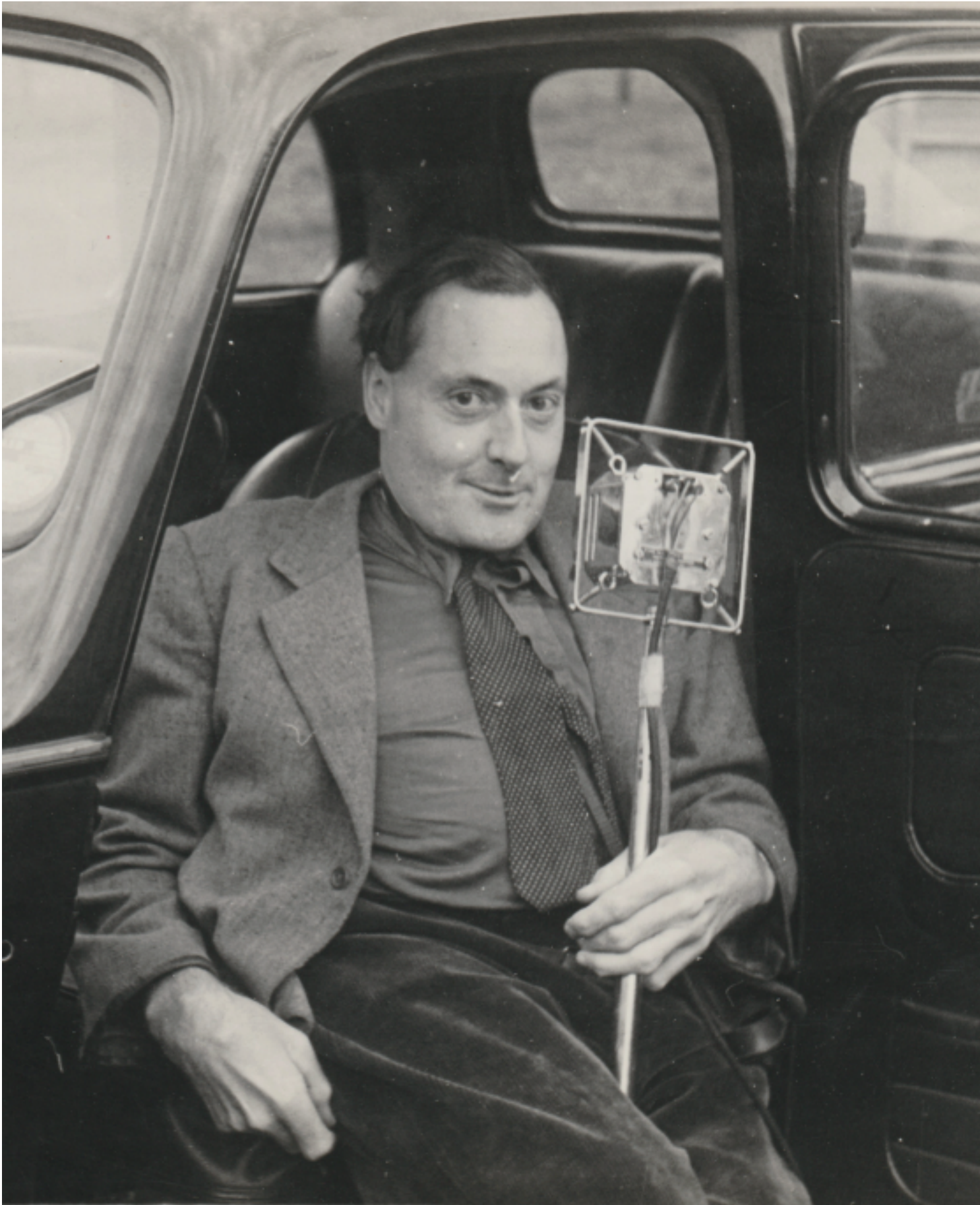


THE



TUBBS

Christmas 2025



DB Tubbs -DBT - Bunny

The 2025 issue is mainly devoted to the published works of Bunny, DB Tubbs. For those who are not interested in motor cars much of it might be ignored.

Other family stories also centre round motor cars.

Two credits are due in respect of the cover photograph. One is to Alison for providing a very good scan of the original print and the other is to the owner of the copyright, presumed to be the successor to Temple Press.

It is one of two pictures taken while Bunny was in the course of contemplating a joke then sharing it.

It was taken at a VSCC (The Vintage Sports Car Club) event in 1948, right at the beginning of postwar racing activity.

Blandford Forum like most postwar racing circuits had its origins as a military establishment. Motor car events there were short lived but bike racing continued until 1961.

Bunny provided commentary at VSCC events from then until the 1990s, often from a car as here at Blandford Forum and regularly at Prescott and later Donington Park, from the mock castle at Starkey's Bridge.

In theory it is easy these days to google a name and all the related answers will tumble out one after the other. While I am no bibliographer I know that a complete bibliography of some authors has taken many years of scholarship involving private papers, arcane periodicals, anonymous publications and goodness knows what else that is not online.

In the case of Bunny who wrote as DB Tubbs no online bibliography is anything like as complete as the one presented here and a few surprises on the way lead me to suspect that my list is not complete. Further suggestions are welcome. I note that there is a significant corpus of work to be found in his King-Pin columns in *The Motor*.

Were there time and opportunity a fuller selection of his King-pin articles would give a splendid overview of the failings and eccentricities of the motoring world.

However I do have a few back number of *The Motor*. Here are some examples of his style:-

Column Gear Change v direct floor mounted gear

lever (5 January 1955) 'In place of the orthodox linkage below the steering column with its arrangement of universal joints, chewing gum and tin string which has done duty for so many years ...'

Same issue. 'Malaprop Motors Ltd are suffering from an inadvertent fire. ... "OK" said Ham "I'll be with you in a flash" - and of course he was'.

Malaprop Motors featured regularly in King-pin columns.

What no column jokes Bunny! I don't think anybody these days would use the hyphen in such a name.

There are nuances in the case of translated technical work where straightforward translation, adaptation and original contributions can and do easily merge. This is not usually the case with works of fiction which are translated by a single person in close cooperation with the author, if the author is available of course. Translation and adaptation by humans is not an inferior art; long may it continue to be so in the age of AI. One of our greatest English novelists George Eliot (Marian Evans) translated philosophical work from the German. Liszt enhanced the reputation of countless composers with his piano adaptations. Ravel's orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* is sublime, along with numerous other composers whose work he arranged. Schiller's German translations of Shakespeare have always been highly acclaimed and often performed. The versions of Homer that have been produced would fill a modest library. Englishmen were executed for translating *The Bible* into their native language.

Bunny enjoyed most of life's boys' toys and hobbies from aeroplanes and cars through cameras, maps, clocks, pubs and guns. I know of no writing on guns, but I would be surprised if there is nothing. What set him apart from the macho element was his profound interest in art which informed almost everything he did and resulted in what I have come to regard as his most important work, in Bonnard – *Sketches of a Journey*. Most would say it had to be *Art and The Automobile* an original work, though he confessed it was not the book he would have liked to produce.

DBT Bibliography

I am still in the process of trying to compile a complete bibliography of works written or translated by D.B Tubbs.

There is an online autogenerated bibliography already but it is missing items I know of and I think there will be others of which I do not know.

Reviews of all books to hand not previously reviewed are reviewed elsewhere in this edition.

I will refer to him here as DBT conforming to long-standing family practice starting with HTT, DBT's grandfather. His full name was Douglas Burnell Tubbs (1913-1999). Burnell was a family surname coming from HTT's wife and was given as a second name to numerous members of the next two generations.

In the family, motoring world and many others DBT was known as Bunny Tubbs, where the nickname is probably a contraction of Burnell.

Notes

An * asterisk after a listing indicates the edition is on the index of The British Library directly linked to DBT.

A plus sign + before a title indicates that no copy has been seen or owned by me.

The SBN Standard Book Number system started in the UK in 1966, the ISBN from 1970. These are given where available.

The Motor

Before going into books and pamphlets his most voluminous writings were in various roles on The Motor, the standard weekly motoring journal which first appeared in 1903, variously titled Motorycling and Motoring, The Motor, Motor. It was taken over by Iliffe Press. In 1968 the title was merged with The Autocar as Autocar and Motor. A similar merger of Temple and Iliffe aerospace publications took place at the same time. . If ebay is to be believed back numbers are now over £10. £3 is the usual autojumble price.

Temple Press was founded by Edmund Dangerfield in 1891 in Bouverie Street. It headed Fleet Street's charge to east London before WW2, settling in

Bowling Green Lane, Clerkenwell. (<https://www.londonpicturearchive.org.uk/view-item?i=62571&WINID=1750075519908>), where publications were also printed. Its chief topic was cycling at the peak of the cycling craze before that was overtaken by motoring and motor cycling. Temple Press covered most aspects of transport. Roland (Roly) Dangerfield (1897-1964) took over the business in 1933. He had been at St Cyprian's preparatory school in Eastbourne, a near contemporary of CBT. He was a fierce supporter of editorial independence without which DBT would have been gagged. DBT joined The Motor some time after he returned from a year as a postgraduate student in the USA during which he became thoroughly familiar with the car industry in America and remained critical of the lack of progressive car design in the UK.

He wrote a weekly column in The Motor under the nom-de-plume of King-pin.

Memoir

At the insistence of his family he wrote a memoir which remains unpublished.

Books and Monographs

Vintage Cars in Colour, (1966. Batsford)

Lancaster Bomber, Ballantine (UK and US editions)

Zeiss Ikon Cameras (1926-1939), Hove Cameras *

Kent Pubs (1966, Batsford), illustrations by Alan F Turner. In a series of Batsford regional pub guides. Art and **the Automobile** (1978, Lutterworth Press, ISBN13 978-0718823856) *

The Phantoms (1961, Hamish Hamilton)

Horseless Carriages (1968, Edita Lausanne, UK Patrick Stephens), illustrations anon, text by DB Tubbs. Limited edition of 3,000.

The Age of Motoring (

Profile Publications

Rolls-Royce Phantom I
 Jowett
 Austin 7
 Talbot
 Lancia Lamda
 Wolesley Hornet

Translations and adaptations from French

Bonnard - Sketches of a Journey.

Bugatti - Evolution of a style with Paul Kestler *

The Golden Age of Toys (1967, Edita Lausanne, Jac Remise and Jean Fondin, Library of Congress reference LC 67 27069) translated by DB Tubbs. In slip case.*

The Supercharged Mercedes with Halwart

Schrader *

The Great Classics, Automobile engineering in the Golden Age with Ingo Seiff and Peter Roberts.*

The illustrated history of the camera from 1839 to the present. (1975. Fountain Press. ISBN 0852424459) This is variously attributed to Michel Auer translated by DB Tubbs, DB Tubbs, and Michel Auer translated and adapted by DB Tubbs (which I believe is the correct attribution based on the title page in the book).

Photographs

+ Prints of photographs attributed to DB Tubbs have been circulated but I do not know if they were officially published, whether they are in breach of copyright etc. One in particular has been seen on several occasions of Earl Howe sitting in a racing

Destination Ullesthorpe



Pictures by Carolyn of the dinner and the youngest generation (page 7). the clubhouse (right) stands almost exactly where The Cottage was.

Two views of the Court. The modern clubhouse stands almost exactly on the site of The Cottage where we lived in 1954. The drawing is from The Builder of 1903. The plan shows the museum

upstairs. I do not know of any convincing photographs of The Cottage. The gent on the putting green was happy to pose for a snap.



On October 4th just before your editor's 75th birthday many of us gathered at The Court, Ullesthorpe for dinner. While some stayed at the hotel, others went home to Nottinghamshire and The Hendersons returned to base with AJ. Many of us had foregathered at The Old Byre earlier in the day. The choice of venue was the result of my casting around for a suitable one when I remembered that we had lived in the grounds of The Court in 1954, that there is now a golf course with a hotel and so three of us had lived in The Cottage there, though I am the only one who can claim to remember doing so. The Stones family stayed with us for Christmas 1954 which must have been a bit of tight squeeze. That was the return match from our stay with them in 1953 where Father Christmas had distributed gifts. CBT wore a beard for the first time in a while!

My interest being piqued by the somewhat exuberant embellishment of the main building I hoped to find out a little more about it and its builder.

Fortunately some pictures in the hotel gave us a clue. The main building was completed in 1903 to designs by W Harrison of London. There is a drawing including a plan which was published in the Builder, a weekly magazine. Previously the buildings were known as Four Elms, or possibly just The Elms. Alas elms are no more in this land..

The next step was to find out for whom it was built. I am still not certain but the sole owner occupier I can identify is Hugh Goodacre who was born in Wilby Norfolk in 1866. His father was the rector whose wife was born Harrison, the family name which occurs both as architect of The Court and partner of Hugh as a solicitor. His grandfather was a banker in Lutterworth and lived in Ashby Parva. Hugh qualified as a solicitor and was married in Paddington in 1898 and in 1901 lived in some style with six servants at 78 Gloucester Terrace in Paddington.

By 1911 the family were living in Ullesthorpe at The Court. Their one child John was born in 1905 and lived until 2002. Mrs G died in 1941 and Hugh installed a stained

glass window to her memory in the church at Ashby Parva which is adjacent to Ullesthorpe. It is known as The Devil's Window because it features St Michael and The Devil, the opposing forces representing the choice a young person has to make. Hugh was much preoccupied with good and evil.

He left The Court some time between 1939 and 1941. He shared the rectory with the rector of Ashby Parva. His private museum was moved there and was open on at least one occasion. He died in 1952 leaving estate of £67,000, a substantial sum in those days.

Hugh certainly became a dedicated countryman. I don't know how much land he owned but the estate included at least one farm and some woodland. He supported the local hunts, though it is not known if he rode to hounds.

He was also an antiquarian. The 1903 plan shows there was a museum upstairs at The Court. Hugh was an authority on late Roman and Byzantine coins and once exhibited a complete set of proof medallions of a long series of Popes, though he was clearly still Anglican. He published A Handbook of the Coinage of the Byzantine Empire in several volumes published by Spink.

Another abiding interest was Scouting. The Scouts were formed as a national institution in 1908, inspired by Baden-Powell's experience in The Boer War. Hugh was the first Commissioner of Scouts for the County of Leicestershire and remained in post until 1935. Almost all mentions in the local newspapers relate to his scouting activities.

During The Great War he made room for 20 war casualties at The Court, under the VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) scheme. The Government paid 14s per week towards the upkeep of each man. Meanwhile The Scouts were collecting newspapers and magazines to be sent to the troops abroad.

Hugh was President of the Ullesthorpe Conservative Association and Commissioner of The Poor.

He was also a literary man. He was involved in a minor spat over the place in which Philip James

Bailey wrote Festus, a considerable poem well received in its day and now forgotten. Bailey was originally commemorated with a Holbrook Plaque in Weekday Cross, Nottingham. I seem to be the only person who has noticed the plaque has been stolen. He contributed hymns to local pageants and published a book of verse on moral themes.

It is thanks to Carolyn that I started to read about the Holbrook Plaques and have photographed all the ones I know of to exist.

He wrote a novel Mr Justice Byrd which was serialised in part in a local paper. The internet knows nothing of it, other than what is buried in the newspaper archive. Proceeds were for the Scouts. It is a morality tale of derring-do, highwaymen and corrupt lawyers, all reminiscent of Doctor Syn of

Romney Marsh and similar boyhood thrillers.

We know of three residents of The Cottage which is quite probably the cottage we rented in 1954. It was still known as The Cottage at that time.

In 1911 it was the farm manager and in 1939 it was the butler and housekeeper.

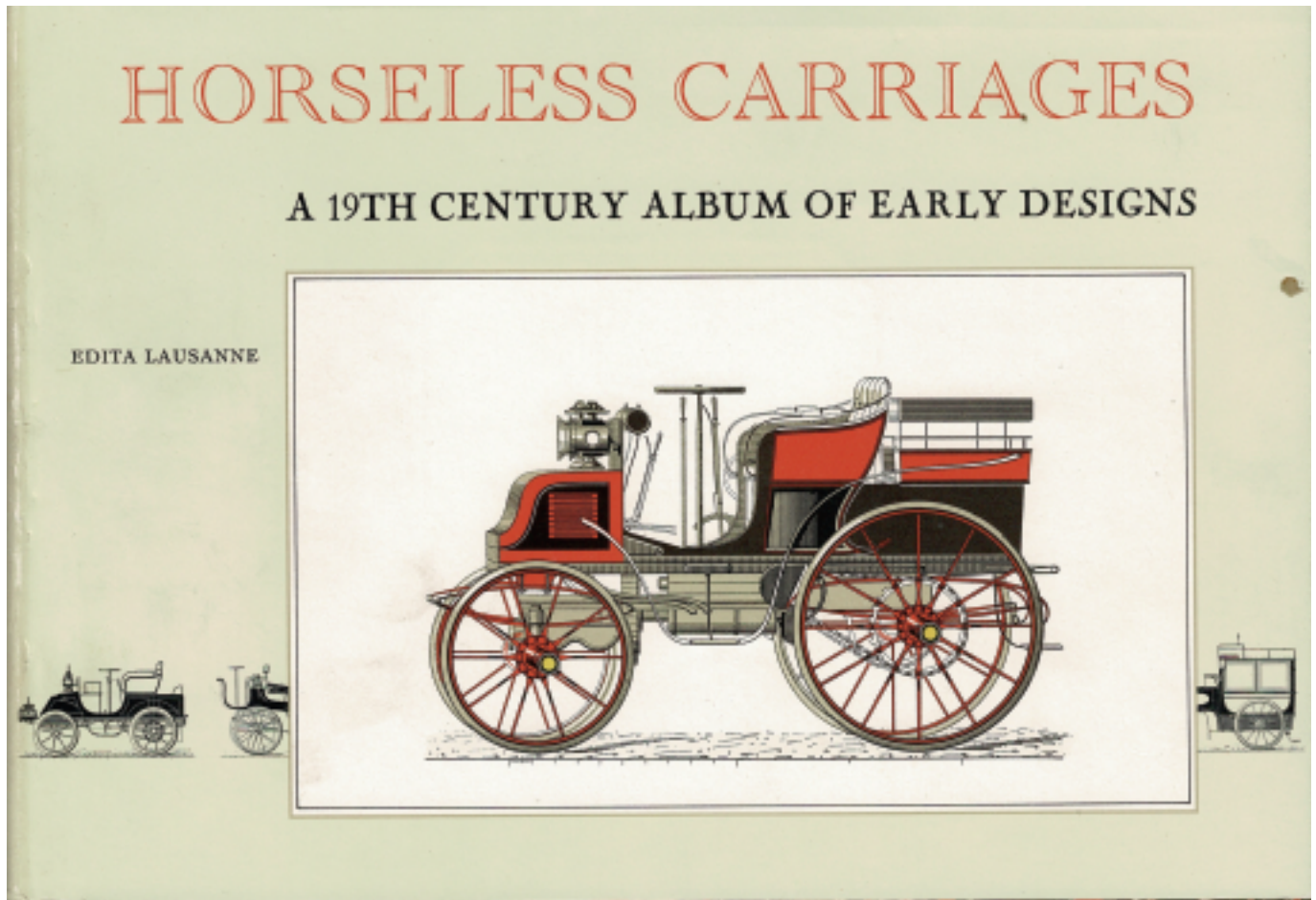
Thought you would like to know! A more detailed version of this will be posted to my website.

The Goodacres had already been associated with the Lutterworth area for at least three generations. There was a long line of clergymen in the family. Hugh's wealth may have come from his own professional work or been inherited from his grandfather, John the banker of Lutterworth.



The Holbrook plaque for Philip James Bailey when it could still be seen at Weekday Cross in Nottingham. It has mysteriously disappeared.

The Tubbs Review of Books



Horseless Carriages

Illustrations by anon, published by Edita Lausanne, Patrick Stephens in UK, English text by DB Tubbs. SBN 85959 027 2.

Curiously the illustrator is not credited but this is no cut and paste, the style is uniform.

Thirty two exquisitely drawn illustrations lithographed in two or three colours with introductory text and followed by a short description of each style illustrated. This is fine printing on good quality cartridge type paper, bound with a cloth cover printed to represent a marbled effect, and supplied in a slip case. It is a lovely thing in its own right.

This was published in a limited edition of 3000 of which my copy is No. 990, and was ridiculously cheap. It just passed the Amazon letter box challenge. I hope nobody has ever been tempted to chop one of these up and sell the illustrations

separately.

It illustrates the gradual development of the horseless carriage during the last seven years of the 19th century. At first the very wealthy hippophile buyers of carriages wanted nothing more than a carriage which looked exactly like their existing hippomobiles.

Levasseur's first attempts as an engineer to develop a carriage with a more logical layout was rebuffed and for a short time he had to emulate the Benz design with a rear mounted engine that was as discreet as possible.

All the early styles were directly taken from the horse-ful age, phaetons, landaus, coupes, voitures de voyage, limousines and a dozen others. France was the dominant nation of fashion in all things from Louis XIV through to the motoring age.

As engines became larger and more powerful the lust for power, speed and reliability slowly began to take

The Great Classics

Automobile Engineering in the Golden Age.
First published in the UK by Orbis Books

First published in USA by Gallery Books, an imprint
of WH Smith Publisher Inc
280pp - Ingo Seiff



This is a bit of a publishing problem.
I have obtained a hardcover copy published in 1986.
It is the Gallery Books American edition but there
can be no reason to believe that it varies in any
substantial way from the English edition. Can there?
While Seiff acknowledges contributions from DB
Tubbs in the preparation of the book there are no
credits for translation.
Almost all the colour photographs are credited to
Seiff who must have had a good command of
English to fare so well at English motoring events.
Not all Brits are fluent in German.
Seiff's other German publications are single-make
works on Mercedes, Porsche and BMW.
He also wrote
Das grosse Buch der Oldtimer Männer und Marken

The full translation of that shows that Seiff was

totally and romantically obsessed with the whole
world of motoring from victors' laurels to the
women in the shadows. The big book of the men of
yesteryear and their cars.

The VSCC was founded in the certainty that the
cars of the vintage age were actually better than the
mass of cars of the 30s, not merely due respect for
the genius of a past age.

It is therefore not possible to identify the details of
the content that was contributed by DB Tubbs or the
extent to which he translated the German version but
I am going for substantial. Art and the Automobile is
also credited in the select bibliography.

It is clear from the text that Seiff came late to
enthusiasm for classic cars but spent a great deal of
his time travelling between his home in Hamburg
and vintage and veteran events in England at
Silverstone, Prescott and elsewhere.

The original 1982 version of the book was published
in German in Germany by Hoffmann und Kampe
Verlag..

There is a 1986 paperback publication in English
with the same title but a different subtitle.

Veterans of the Golden Age of Auto Engineering
That edition credits Peter Roberts (as editor), DB
Tubbs and Peter Hull. It has 280 pages, as does the
hardback edition.

Roberts wrote widely on vintage and veteran cars
and motor racing. Hull wrote a biography of Lord
Nuffield (William Morris) and wrote on vintage and
veteran matters.

While seriously researched and expertly written this
is a full blown coffee table book of heft. The cars
discussed are the usual suspects ranging through the
grand marques, Daimler, Mercedes, Renault, Rolls-
Royce, Bentley, Bugatti, BMW, Hispano-Suiza,
Cadillac and others. The book also discusses some
of the most important competition venues,
Nurburgring, Brooklands and Indianapolis and some
of the key names in the development of the motor
car, Leland (of Cadillac), Claude Johnson of Rolls-
Royce, Maybach, Ettore Bugatti and others.

The Rolls-Royce Phantoms - DB Tubbs

Just as Bunny was introduced to the delights of very early motor cars when he sat in his grandfather's Charron, he was frequently fortunate enough to travel in his father's Rolls-Royce 20 which was built to emulate the style and quietness of its larger Phantom stable mate.

The future of the company was saved twice in a few years. The praise for the Ghost by TE Lawrence boosted the postwar sale of the 40-50 car. The only cars built at Derby during World War I were for the military to complete as armoured cars. Many manufacturers competed for the market in armoured cars over the years but only Lanchester and Rolls-Royce built a reputation for total reliability. There was little demand for armoured cars on the Western Front after it stabilised in late 1914. The Duke of Westminster used Rolls-Royce armoured cars in Egypt and The Desert Campaign in the Near East evinced the comment from Lawrence that his Rolls-Royces had been more valuable than rubies, in the desert. After The Great War some were used by Michael Collins the Irish Nationalist.

As the postwar years passed trade became difficult. There was no demand for aero engines from Rolls-Royce any more and sales of the 40-50 waned. The small car, a 20hp 3 litre, saved the company but they still saw a market for the bigger chassis for the wealthiest customers.

The New Phantom emerged in 1925 with an overhead valve engine.

Its successor the Phantom II appeared in 1929 with many improvements, but was the last Phantom to have been finally approved by Henry Royce.

The Phantom III was novel. In response to the competition the company exploited its expertise in building V12 aero engines which had already been adapted to speed record cars, they produced a car in 1935 that was a departure. The body styles were also changing with the fashion.



The most exclusive of all Phantoms was the postwar Phantom IV which was available only to heads of state.

The most visible of the few Phantom IVs is in the Royal Mews. The model emerged as the toned-down limousine inspired by an 8 cylinder Bentley special much admired by Prince Philip but it would not have done for 'The Scalded Cat' to be seen on ceremonial occasions. Sadly the V12 relied on scrupulous maintenance, failing which the irreplaceable engines would be destroyed.

Several of the 700 or so Phantom IIIs now have the postwar B80 engine which was built in large numbers for commercial vehicles.

Bunny and his brother-in-law Anthony Bird both wrote Phantoms about Rolls-Royce cars.

It must always be remembered that Derby supplied only a rolling chassis. The cars were tested while fitted only with a temporary wooden seat bolted to the chassis. What you see apart from the wheels and the radiator is all the work of the coachbuilder.

Books on the subject may concentrate on the engineering and performance of the cars or on the elegance of the coachwork or the social history attached to their owners. There are many publications covering the whole story of the cars and the company.

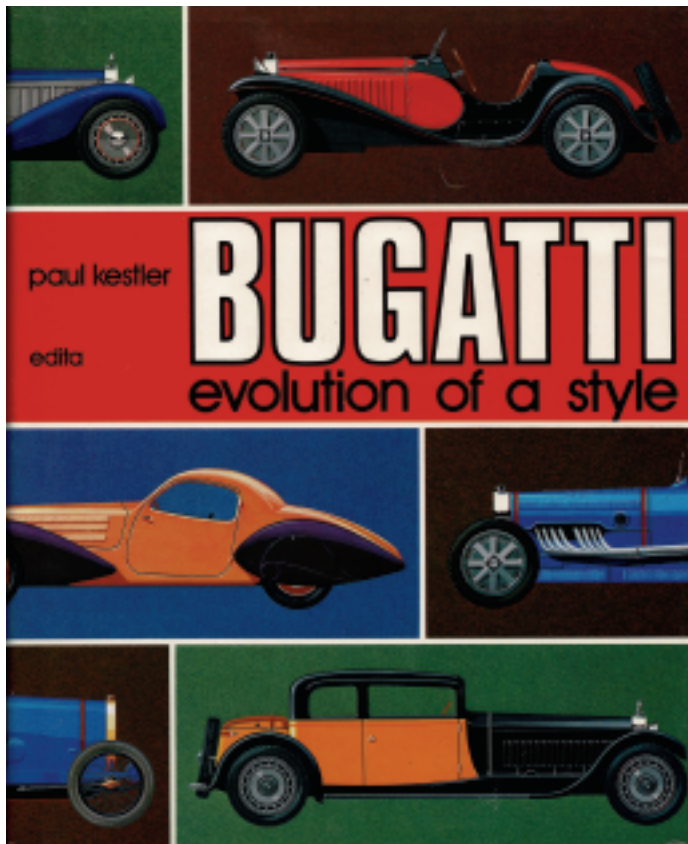
The Phantom V was based on the contemporary Silver Cloud, with their new V8 engine which lasted the rest of the century, with some development. Perhaps the most famous phantom of all is a Phantom V that was painted for John Lennon. There are now replicas of that car as well. DBT's book was published in 1964. It has but 64 pages but gives all the basic specifications of the cars, lists the chassis series and is well illustrated. Rolls-Royces are identified by their chassis number which defines them. Engines, Registration numbers and even coachwork can be changed.

He surmised that Rolls-Royce would be developing yet another Phantom.

The Phantom VI was a facelifted version of the V. The Phantom VII was introduced after the BMW takeover.

Bugatti Evolution of a style

Paul Kestler – translated by DB Tubbs



There are things that nobody can deny, and there are songs to prove it. One of those is that Ettore and his son Jean consistently designed and built some of the most beautiful cars of all time to combine form and function seamlessly.

Lucky is the man who immerses himself in that world especially so if he can afford to indulge himself in owning and driving one. (Why stop at one. Fritz Schlumpf owned 123. ed) All the above applies to people who use other pronouns, apart from the bit about owning 123 all at the same time.

Bugatti Type 35B doing what it was built for in the Mad Jack race at Donington on 1st May 2022.

Mad Jack was Richard Shuttleworth who won the first Grand Prix at Donington in 1935. He was the pioneer collector of veteran cars and aeroplanes. The Shuttleworth Collection is housed at Old Warden, the Shuttleworth family estate. Mad Jack was killed on a night training flight in August 1940.

It may be said that Ferraris reached the same pinnacle but they are not the achievement of one man. Enzo always relied on his engineers for engine design, and his mind was always turned towards racing whereas Ettore built cars for all purposes.

Modern super cars and hyper cars achieve a sort of beauty but with a different aesthetic and they are invariably the product of very large teams even where there is a presiding genius and they use a lot of computing power which was not available to Enzo.

Oh all right. There are people who deny it, but there are precious few other candidates.

Books about Bugatti tend to drool over the minutiae of crankshaft design or suspension configurations and the like, or those of racing events. All these are relevant to Bugatti as well but a focus on style was considered to be a novel approach at the time.

Few authors on style could have been as fortunate in their translator as Kestler. Bunny was as much an aesthete as he was a rivet counter and he had wanted a Bugatti as his very first car, a Brescia Bugatti which would then have been 15 or 20 years old and admired by few. GBT his guardian would have none of that, but Brescia Bugattis are handsomely ahead of the MG Midget that was Bunny's lot.

Bugatti made cars of most types, tourers, racers, sports cars and luxury designs throughout the life of the company, though the latter really fell to Jean. The family is equally renowned for the sculpture and designs of Rembrandt Bugatti whose forename betrays a family tradition of reverence for the arts.



The Book of Auers

The Illustrated History of the Camera from 1839 to the present

by Michel Auer

Translated and adapted by DB Tubbs

Available copies of this book variously detail the author as Auer or Tubbs. Without consulting an original French version the extent of the modifications for the English market is unknown.

Fortunately for concord both France and England can claim to have invented photography. Though there was much experimental and preparatory work 1839 is generally agreed to mark the start.

Nicephore Niepce is credited with having obtained a permanent image in 1826 but his method was not the way forward. He died in poverty..

The Daguerre process creates a detailed single image on a polished metal plate. Fox Talbot's process created a negative on paper from which any number of positive prints could be made. The negative+positive principle reigned until the age of Kodachrome slides and then digital photography; only the techniques have changed.

The greatest improvement after 1839 came with the disclosure of the wet collodion process in 1851. That had the huge disadvantage that plates had to be processed within minutes of exposure, but carried the compensating advantage of being on glass. Sticky collodion was the backing medium which held silver nitrate which reacted to light. Scott-Archer announced the system free of patents and died in poverty.

The next major developments were dry plates which kept until they were developed in a darkroom and then film, which offered a huge saving in weight. It also opened up the realistic prospect of cinematography.

Gradually the performance of dry plates was

improved to render the entire visual spectrum in representative monochrome and could be exposed briefly to freeze movement. That required accurate shutter control. There are also systems which record wavelengths outside the visible spectrum, mostly infra red. The James Webb telescope records only infra red.

There are rival claims to have perfected cinematography. It is now almost certain that the real winner who lived in Leeds was murdered. Edison was briefly a suspect but the real villains were his family in his native France who wanted his share in some property.

The Lumiere brothers made two huge advances. They introduced a realistic working system of both recording and playing moving pictures. In 1907 they also launched the first practical single shot colour system, producing lantern slides.

All of these developments required new ingenuity in the design and manufacture of cameras and lenses. Wood gave way to steel, steel to bakelite and plastics. The relative size of 'miniature cameras' changed several times over. There were small wars over the relative merits of press cameras taking plates of 4"x5", medium format cameras of 6cm x 6cm and miniature cameras taking 35mm film. Sub miniature cameras have often used 16mm cine film and there have been hundreds of other different film and sensor sizes.

The story of these developments is familiar to historians of photography from the study of instruments, of periodicals and of the surviving photographs. Auer concedes that may be a limited audience but hoped that his book would widen interest in the history of one of the most influential inventions of the 19th century. Only the railways, antiseptics and the motor car which came right at its end has had more. Inoculation, steam power and the factory system were all products of the previous century.

The present day in the title was approximately 1975. That is the year in which a Kodak laboratory invented a digital sensor for photography. It was suppressed. Kodak made their money selling film. Before film admitted defeat Big K invented

increasingly bizarre ways of packaging it, on discs, in cartridges which could only be opened by specialists who refused to pay for the requisite equipment, and of sizes too small to render images well. Big Yellow went bust in 2012 but have been dragged back into existence. By the end of the 20th century almost anybody could afford a digital camera, but only the wealthy could afford one that was of any great practical use. Now everybody has got one.

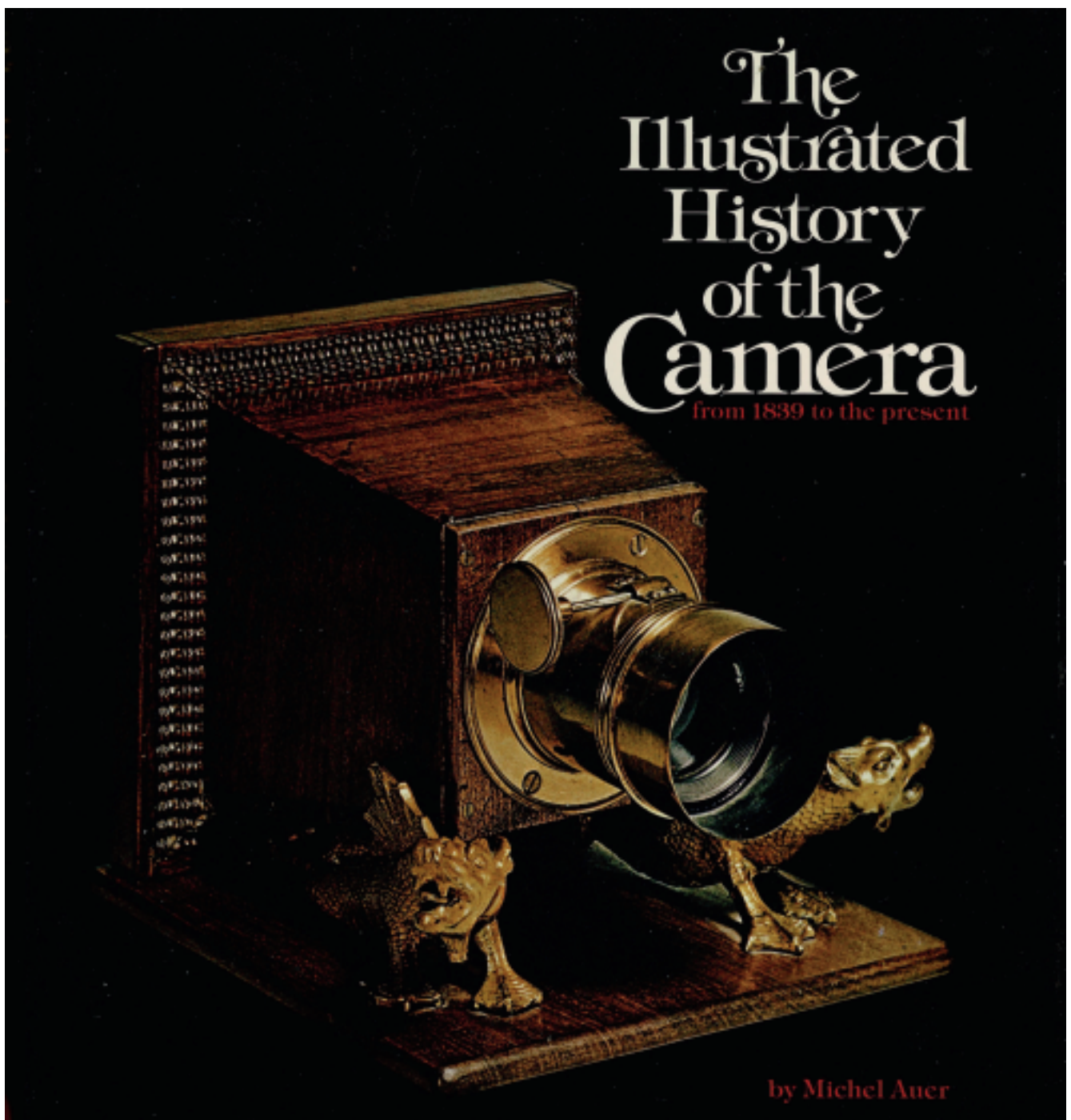
Its partner in greatness was the mass print media. The means of accurately and rapidly reproducing photographs on newsprint did not take long to join

the party. Colour printing began around 1912.

The book is arranged thematically, so that each chapter discusses a class of camera through the ages.

My friend David Garner is a verified purchaser of this book. His online critique mentions several omissions. Fair comment but nobody is going to cover it all. The topic is immense.

Warfare between the Art and Craft schools of thought started immediately. There be dragons!



The supercharged Mercedes.

While the history of the marque goes back to the very origins of motoring the full name of Mercedes-Benz did not emerge until 1926 with the merging of the interests of Daimler and Benz. The Mercedes name came from Mercedes the intrepid daughter of Emil Jellinek who later attached the Mercedes name to himself as Jellinek-Mercedes and raced as Monsieur Mercedes. The first cars to be branded as Mercedes appeared in 1901, Mercedes-Benz in 1926. The Zeiss Ikon camera grouping took place in the same year. There was a strong tendency for German companies to group together in the face of a weak economy and political uncertainty. IG Farben grouped in late 1925. Britain had to wait for nationalisation. Discuss!

For technical detail we will here go little further than recall that a supercharger is a pump driven by the engine which increases the amount of air entering the combustion chamber. That allows more fuel to be mixed with it, resulting in a power increase greater than the power required to turn the supercharger. A turbocharger has the same purpose but is driven by exhaust gases and is generally preferred by present day designers. An appendix to the book listing all the designs included in the category fills a whole page. It encompasses engines with 4 cylinders up to 12, with cubic capacity ranging from 1495 to 8020cc, and six different valve configurations, side, sleeve, overhead, single, double and quad overhead camshaft. Take your pick. They must have forgotten to try F-head overhead inlet/side exhaust as used by Rover and Rolls-Royce for example who did not like the extra noise created by overhead camshaft mechanisms. With sporting motoring in mind noise reduction is not a primary consideration, but it is a symptom of inevitable power loss all the same.

Two factors are noted as influencing the rapid development of sporting and racing cars in Germany after the Great War. The first was the limitation on other forms of machinery imposed by the Treaty of Versailles which led to a focus on cars. The second was the development of supercharging in aero engines during that war; for effective internal combustion engines to work at high altitudes supercharging was an absolute necessity,

but the principle was found to work in motor cars at street level. Few British manufacturers adopted supercharging as standard, least of all WO Bentley, but there were countless aftermarket options of various different types.

Inevitably the story of Mercedes-Benz is tarnished by the association of the grander cars with the Nazi leadership. Meanwhile the racing teams were directly backed by the Government. When this is contrasted with the origins of the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine as the PV12 the difference is stark. PV stood for Private Venture because there was no Government money until the prospect of war became obvious even to The Government. Well done Sir Henry!

Mercedes-Benz was not the only manufacturer who accidentally attached the name SS to their cars. For them it stood for Super Sport. For William Lyons it meant Swallow Sidecars. Bad luck chaps! The third initial often associated with the cars was K as in SSK. That simply stood for Kurz, ie short wheelbase, not Kompressor as it did later.

Richard Seaman is one of the great tragic figures of pre-war motor racing. Only with Mercedes could he get to drive winning Grand Prix cars. No British maker won a World Championship Grand Prix between Sunbeam in 1922 and Vanwall in 1957. By the time of his death at the 1939 Belgian Grand Prix Seaman was much reviled in British circles.

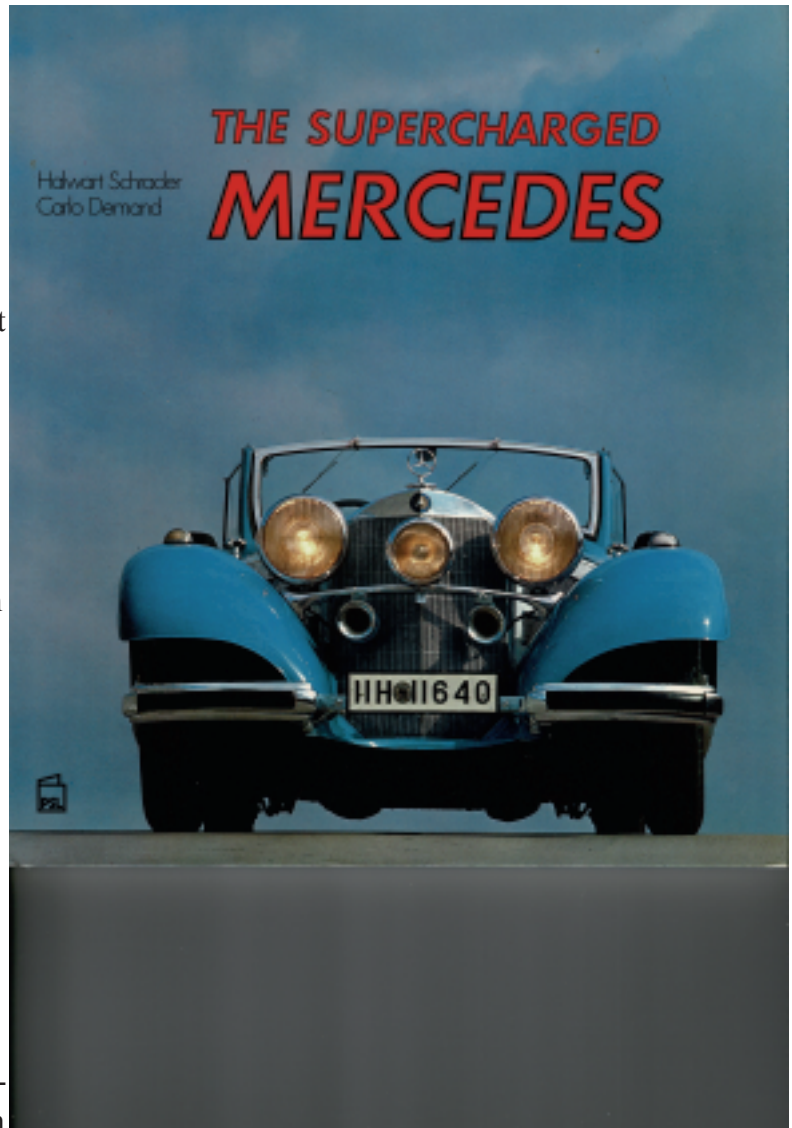
Though it may be hard to separate the politics from the enduring engineering triumphs when that is done the series of supercharged cars built between 1919 and 1939 dwarfs even the estimable achievements of Sunbeam, Bentley, MG and ERA across the board of expensive, powerful, beautiful and highly competitive cars in all fields of motor competition as well as for road use. The leading British marque ERA was initially employed in hill climbing but as a Voiturette was never successful or even intended as a Grand Prix racer. Bentley were long past the days of competition cars in the tender hands of Rolls-Royce. Even MG were moving away from really competitive cars but were never in line for Grand Prix racing. Seaman, Howe and others had little option other than to buy into Germany or Italy.

At the root of it all is the starriest name of German automotive engine since Gottlieb Daimler, one Ferdinand Porsche who did not put his name on his own cars until after WWII. By then he had worked for almost all the others and launched the Mercedes supercharged engine family. That tally included Auto Union (later Audi) who became the great German racing rival of Mercedes-Benz. Alfred Neubauer was in at the beginning as a driver, much better known as the stout supremo of the Mercedes racing team, When Mercedes-Benz withdrew from racing during the depression they continued to back their star driver Rudolf Caracciola.

Mercedes-Benz, like many another manufacturer, used racing as the spur to the sale of road cars to the general public. In general those cars were not supercharged but the old clichés were at work. Racing improves the breed. Win on Sunday, sell on Monday. The cover blurb records the anonymous salesman's comment that the sex appeal of the exhaust note made the cars worth twice the price. They still do it, and if that is not sexy enough you can get an aftermarket go-louder kit which will annoy you, me, the dog and the gatepost. Gone are the days when you do it with a broom handle; that was supposed to break the silencer baffles. In the racing cars the movement to add lightness grew though Porsche left M-B in 1929. As the authors note, Rolls-Royce was one of the few prestige manufacturers to eschew competition, after a brief dalliance in the first years while Rolls was still alive. As with Rolls-Royce pre-war so with Mercedes-Benz. What you see is mostly the work of an

independent coachbuilder.

The Supercharged Mercedes by Halwart Schrader is a coffee table sized book of 100 beautifully printed pages with drawings by Carlo Demond and an excellent translation by DB Tubbs. There is also a profusion of photographs.



Grand Prix. ERA R7B is said to have won a 1946 French Grand Prix (there were several) driven by a driver named Brookes. Then Tony Brookes (different person) won the 1955 Syracuse Grand Prix in a Connaught, but neither event counted as World Championship races.

All the books discussed in this edition are copies I own. They are available for loan to anybody who would like to read them.

BOOK OF THE YEAR

La 628-E8

Bonnard

Sketches of a Journey.

A motor car, the irrepressible Charron, a make of motor car now as long forgotten as those who wrote of its exploits but hush!

A half remembered comment by the equally irrepressible DB Tubbs many years ago once led me to seek out the motoring writings of Octave Mirbeau online and in French. Most entertaining. But did DBT not say he had done work on those writings. Indeed he had. He is credited with the translation of a book which is described therein as the only motoring book ever to have been illustrated throughout by a major artist.

During this year I was prompted to seek out a copy. Only one likely edition showed up and the excellent translator is not mentioned in the sales blurb.

The book containing drawings by Pierre Bonnard was first published in an edition of only 225 copies and was never republished until the 1980s. The English translation by DB Tubbs was published in 1989. Bonnard was a major artist in the period when Impressionism gave way to Modernism. He was a member of an early Post-Impressionist group Les Nabis, and was noted for the use of strong colours. The text is a series of extracts from the original book which accompany Bonnard's drawings, reversing the priority of the earlier book which was Mirbeau's full text accompanied by the drawings, but they were not previously presented coherently or at the correct size.

Mirbeau was a man of many parts.

He professed to be an anarchist. While anarchists are generally portrayed as extremists with a bomb in one hand, Mirbeau's most outspoken stand was criticism of the official religions, chiefly the Roman Catholic. The difference between an anarchist and a partisan is that the anarchist criticises all institutions a partisan opposes one tyranny.

It is generally held that the anarchist as individual was superseded by contradictions in terms,

anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-communism and a myriad groupuscles from the early 20th century to the present day via The Sex Pistols. Mirbeau is not associated with any known anarchist movement, which is as it should be.

But yet we must live and pay our taxes or be suppressed. There was a strong humanitarian line throughout his writing. Running a motor car with a full time chauffeur and a strong lust for travel he was a man of means., a bon viveur, playwright, novelist and art critic of discrimination who befriended Bonnard, despite their very different temperaments. He befriended many leading artists. His most notorious work was in part a response to the Dreyfuss affair and I leave the title in its original tongue *Le Jardin des Supplices*. It's strong stuff!

Mirbeau was shocked at the injustice and anti-semitism which saw Dreyfuss sent to Cayenne (the French euphemism for Devil's Island). He listened to tales of pogroms in Russia and held the hands of the emaciated survivors who at the time were merely despised in France rather than persecuted to their destruction. Bonnard was also a humanitarian and an early motorist.

Sebastien Roche his novel of 1890 discusses the maltreatment of a young boy by Catholic priests. Mirbeau despised the Jesuits in particular and satirised the bourgeois deference to their influence and learning. Every page drips with it. Are lessons ever learned?

628-E8 was the registration number of Mirbeau's Charron, a car which delighted him and in which he travelled widely driven by his wily chauffeur Brossette. The original book was published around 1905. The Charron was no toy; it worked for its living.

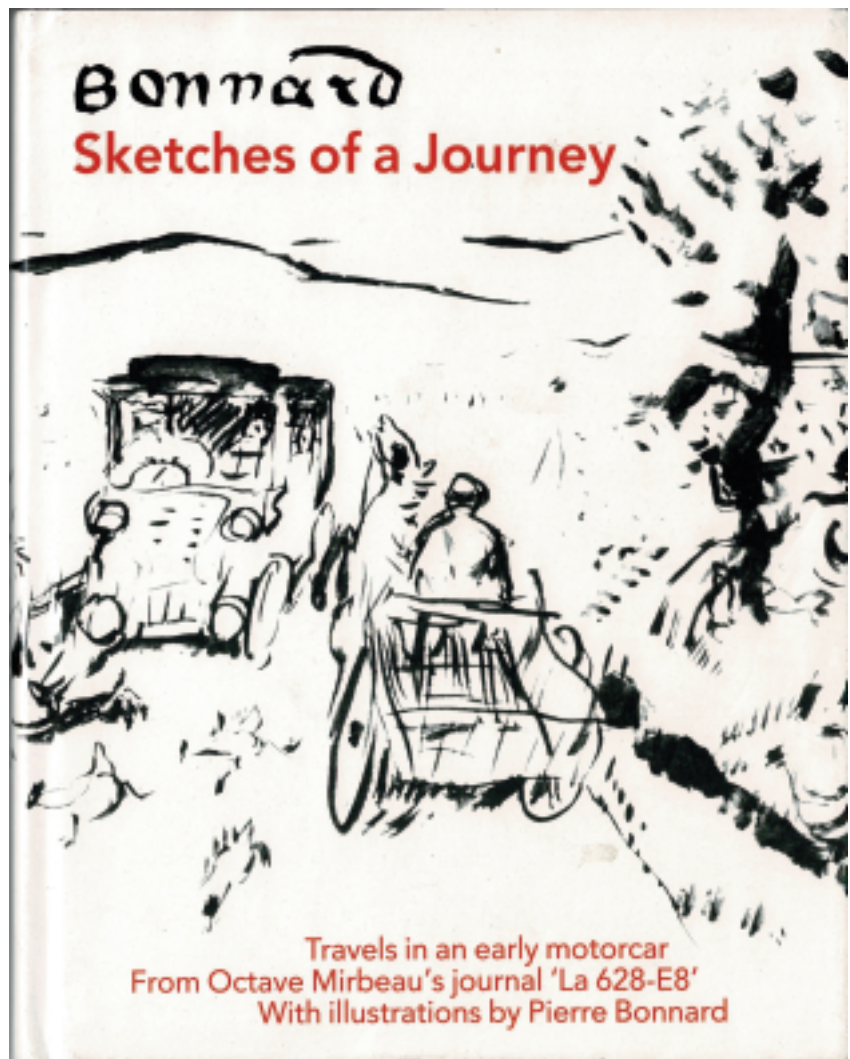
Bunny's acquaintance with the marque started early. His own memoir includes a picture of him in his grandfather's Charron. Bunny thought it was taken outside Nether Court but from the appearance of the building I am sure it is somewhere else. Could it be

the Woodside villa in which the PBIs resided. Bunny was on a raised seat so that he could reach the wheel and mighty pleased he looks about it all.

Like many another the marque emerged from the making and racing of bicycles. Charron's involvement with car making began in 1901 with the firm of Charron, Girardot et Voigt (known as CGV), but in 1906 Charron founded a solo business which lasted until 1930, the graveyard time for countless

businesses. 628-E8 was a CGV with a saloon body.

p.s. Notoriety in English nearly always carries the sense of infamy and wrong-doing. It is increasingly becoming a synonym for fame rather than infamy. Confused yet? The Hitchcock film *Notorious* features former Nazis appearing to prosper in Brazil after the war. That is this editor's idea of notoriety.



John Lennon's Phantom. For a while nouveau riche buyers were considered to be lowering the tone of the brand, but increasingly it was newer money that sought out the finest from Crewe. Nick and I would have appreciated the loan of one for transit from the NEC North car park to the southern end of the NEC instead of being made to walk half a mile. Bang goes £18.50 for parking and a **FREE** bus ride to nowhere.

Discovering the Universe

The most visible object on the Cheshire Plain by far is The Lovell Telescope as it is now known. We could easily see it from High House elevated on an edge overlooking the plain. An edge is a long hill.

The telescope first operated in 1957 though it was not the first instrument on the site. The complicated story of its development was narrated by Bernard Lovell in *The Story of Jodrell Bank* (1968 OUP).

A second book was written jointly with Joyce Lovell who married Bernard in 1937. She was the loyalest of loyal wives who seemed to manage her large household almost without effort.

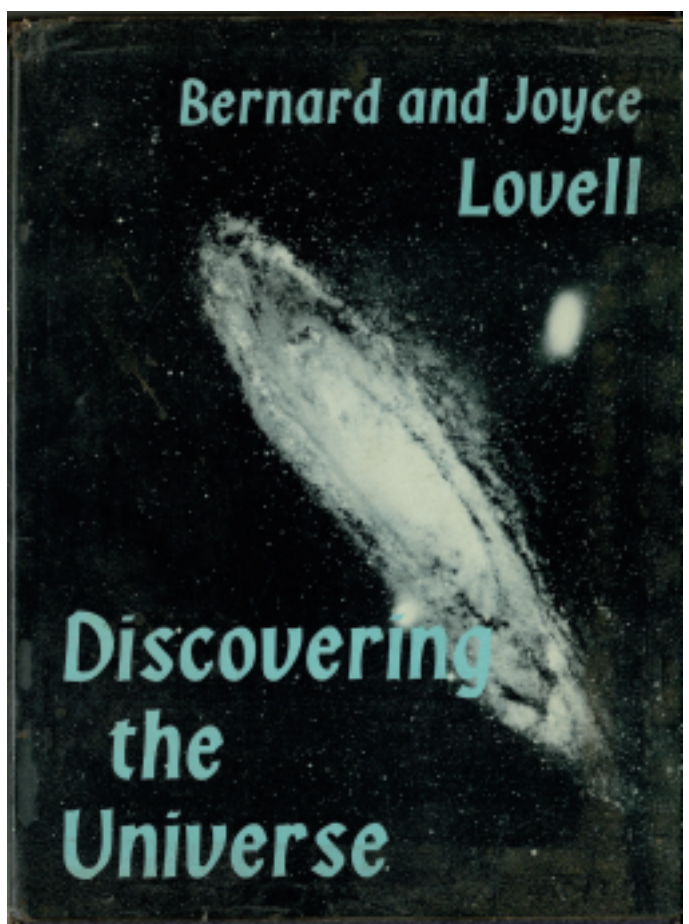
She claimed to enjoy my sticky bread as much as her far more professional chocolate cake. It was mother's recipe of course, but I did make it quite often and even demonstrated it at Swettenham Women's Institute.

The Quinta at Swettenham was said to have been a copy of a house on the Sandbach Road in Congleton and indeed it looked very similar as I recall. It is a large Victorian effort and the Lovells converted a rear extension to a games and party room. Sir Bernard drove an ageing Jaguar Mark VII. Joyce's Morris Minor failed during our Swettenham period and it was replaced by a Farina Estate car. A name for it flummoxed her for a day before 99 VMB became Very Much Better.

One thing you would not find at The Quinta was a television set. That was until Roger started to collect them and his room was positively full of the things,

few if any of which worked. As Lovell senior was an electronic genius responsible in part for the war-winning cavity magnetron that drove the H2S airborne radar sets, I should think that sorting a television out would have been a doddle. For Roger it was more of a challenge. If only its similar namesake HS2 were as useful!

This copy was a gift to me at Christmas 1963 from Joyce Lovell.



Rock Mills - Brockholes 1921

The 1921 census results are the last that will be released in my lifetime.

The next release will be in or after 1951. There are no censuses extant between 1921 and 1951. There was a fire, during wartime but not enemy action. Frank Maude, my grandfather, was still living at

home with his parents Tom and Emily.

Tom was a dyer's labourer at Charles Midgley & Co Ltd. of Seed Hill dyeworks, Huddersfield. That is now part of Sainsbury's car park. He was born on 3rd October 1870 in Wighill, a village near Tadcaster,

Charles Midgley had previously been bankrupt in 1893, but by 1921 was incorporated as a limited liability company. Wise move.

A Huddersfield website notes that the site was probably connected to a corn mill at one time. Hence the name perhaps, but was known to have been a tentering field before it was built over.

Woven cloth would be stretched out to dry and assume its final width, on one of the many days when the sun shines on Huddersfield.

As it happens the land on Gynn Lane where Number 1 now stands was also a tentering field.

There was the more mechanised method, a tentering frame, at Edwin Brooks dyehouse where women were making the final checks, much as Gertrude Gill (lmy grandmother, Frank's wife) had been doing a generation earlier. Before I visited the dyehouse. It was known there as a stenter, which is the same thing.

Grandad worked as a motor driver for the same company as his father. It is thought that Frank worked in the motor trade immediately after leaving school. This was a new business before The Great War. That Frank found a role as an ambulance driver in the Army Services Corps was a very fine outcome. Had he been obliged to carry arms it is almost certain he would have become a conscientious objector. He worked as a driver for the

rest of his working life, but never owned a motor car. Uncle Harold, Frank's brother, was a dyer's labourer but he was only 15 years and 7 months old at the time of the census. He worked in Honley for Cooper and Liversedge and Wood, wool and cotton dyers.

The Gills lived at 9 Lockwood Buildings, Honley, which are on Station Road.

In 1911 they had been living at Prospect Buildings, Honley. Grandma, but 13 years old, is recorded in the digital version as a baker, but that is a misreading of Burler.

In 1921 of the Gill siblings Harris was still only 12 and in 'Whole Time' education.

All the sisters were working for Joseph Sykes, Worsted manufacturer of Rock Mills, Brockholes. Grandma and Ellen (Nellie) were menders, Emily was a weaver, Florence was a warp winder. Grandma had advanced from being a burler to a mender. The 9th edition of the Dictionary of Textile Terms and Definitions (joint ed MC Tubbs) tells us that Burling involves drawing out thick threads and untying knots (burls), whereas mending is the insertion of thread where warp or weft is missing.

Great grandad Fred Gill was a joiner at John Mitchell & sons of Brockholes, though the evidence is that he had the skills of a cabinet maker.

They were all living at Crogres Buildings, Honley. I suspect they are no longer standing.



Rock Mills. Image credit to <https://colnevalley.blogspot.com/2014/04/rock-mills->

The Anarchist Bookshop - Leeds to Pennsylvania Avenue

Are we all anarchists now? Given the freedom of expression afforded by Tik Tok and X you might well think so, but the paradox is that the social media set fashionable modes of expression and suppress individualism. Individualists all wore the same model of Levi's.

This fine book has sparked a completely new line of enquiry unrelated to family history.

Memories fade, which is why I write family history. When I was the world's worst student in Leeds there was a bookshop just outside the University campus, now rebuilt on by the Ziff building, I think.

It was the Anarchist Bookshop. I befriended its owner, never questioned his anarchist views and socialised with him many a time. He painted in a style that borrowed from primitives and comic strips and perhaps William Blake. Though I have forgotten his name, as has Leeds, he introduced me to one of the greatest gifts ever given to mankind, Theakston's Old Peculier. Now a national brand it was more or less unknown outside Masham, and thither we went for a couple of pints of the stuff, and dear reader I drove back unscathed. Nominative determinism was hard at work when it spawned two breweries in the tiny community of Mash-am.

There are memories online of a chaotic bookshop at Hyde Park which may or may not have been its successor. Hyde Park is but a park's width north of the University on the way to Headingley. Nothing as mundane as a dubious bookshop is allowed to sully the majesty of today's campus.

Investigation into the man whose work Bunny translated has been something of a revelation, for Octave Mirbeau was a professed Anarchist.

The problem with anarchism is the same as the problem with all creeds which tend towards or do reject the power of the state however constituted. Its most powerful and formidable exponent of our age is Donald Trump. Republicans have long regarded Uncle Sam as the greatest of their threats. A man, a real man, will defend himself against all comers, for which he needs a gun. But he must get gasoline for his car, which must be built, bricks for his home, drills for his oil well, guns for his slaughtering. I hope you get the idea.

Mrs Thatcher is the nearest we have had to a Republican as our more recent political leader to date. She is alleged to have said there is no such thing as the state, but she also negotiated the UK's access to the institutions of what became the European Union which has little room for anarchists.

The Anarchist Cookbook of 1968 has an interesting history. Its teenage author Powell was responding to the Vietnam War. I think copies were on sale at the Anarchist Bookshop. It was supposed to activate millions of Americans against Communism, Fascism and Capitalism. Millions of copies have been sold, but Powell renounced it when he turned to Anglicanism in 1976, but had passed the copyright to the publisher. In earthly terms the score is Capitalism 1: Powell nil.

In place of a constitution we get a tyrant, a supreme egotist, a ruthless exploiter of other souls who knows that all statesmanship is transactional, unaided by a moral compass. Give that man a Nobel Prize!

More on Bonnard

Sheffield City is proud to own a Bonnard oil painting.

It featured in an exhibition this year, Liliane Tomasko The Psyche of the Portrait which featured her response to four works in Sheffield including Bonnard's nude. It reminded me of the dark Camden paintings of Richard Walter Sickert, one of whose more airy Dieppe paintings was also in a different exhibition at The Millennium Gallery.

Apart from visiting the Graves Gallery in Sheffield the best way of seeing the picture is via the link below.

<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/nu-aux-bas-noires-72166>

or Google Bonnard Painting Sheffield.

ArtUK is the charity for whom I have taken numerous photographs of sculpture and murals. The Bonnard is titled Nu aux bas noires, Nude with black stockings.

Streets in the Sky - 2025 - Park Hill Flats

I joined a group of RPS members for a guided tour of the Park Hill Flats. Many of the group had been on one or both of the previous visits in 2015 and 2020. Much has changed in those years.

If you have ever looked up as you call at Sheffield Railway Station the flats are what you see on the skyline. 60S council flats built with the best intentions but mixed results. While not as notoriously troubled as some postwar estates Park Hill went downhill (as it were) and became derelict.

Rather than face demolition they are in an entirely new stage of their existence, refurbished and gentrified. The transformation is not complete but there is now one block used by students and others have been sold for considerable sums.

The days have gone when the milk float could get on the decks via a lift.

It is humbling to have a few of my photographs included in the third of the RPS photobooks published after the visits.



PARK HILL FLATS

'Streets in The Sky' 2025 : The Trilogy Final Chapter

Edited by Stewart Wall

By coincidence some of the sculpture photography volunteers also met in Sheffield. at a later date, for the first time physically, for a guided tour of some of Sheffield's curated sculpture and murals followed by a real Italian pizza.



Sir Stanley's Royce

For decades I have been hoping to find details of the car supplied to Stanley Tubbs which he soon gave to Dame Madge Kendall. I was saving up to pay to search the records but chance has come to my rescue, bless it!

According to DB Tubbs the car was an early Phantom I which would have been built in about 1925. Contrary to legend the car was in fact a 1922 Silver Ghost, chassis number 9YG, with engine number P284. Like all pre-war Royces it was sent by RR as a rolling chassis to a coachbuilder specified by the purchaser, to finish the car to the customer's specification. That may or may not have been one of their standard designs. Early Royces with heavy coachwork were tainted by a reputation for poor riding.

From 1907 the fairly new company Rolls-Royce Ltd had a one model policy. That one model was the 40/50. It was a beautifully engineered design with a six cylinder side valve engine, all designed by Henry Royce himself. The car quickly established itself as the best car in the world, and outside the company was called The Silver Ghost after one particular car painted silver won competition honours in the hands of Rolls-Royce managing director Claude Johnson, the so-called hyphen in Rolls-Royce. Rolls-Royce Ltd bought The Silver Ghost back after many years. It is now in private hands again and remains one of the world's most recognisable cars.

By 1925 other manufacturers had caught up. Few could match the reputation for reliability and quietness but the competitors included Bentley, Daimler and Hispano-Suiza. Rolls-Royce had a factory in Springfield Massachusetts for a while where the competition included Packard, Cadillac and Pierce-Arrow. The Phantom I came with a new overhead valve engine also designed primarily by Royce, but the chassis remained the same, now with brakes at each corner unlike the early Ghosts. Rolls-Royce have used the same ethereal naming scheme ever since, and some are currently being reused, such as Wraith which is on its third outing.

Aero engines were named after birds of prey, turbines after rivers.

The car was registered DD-1553. Even registration plates had their own personal hyphens in those days! That number is no longer in use.

Supplied via H.H. Lewton, The Garage, Long Street, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, for Sir Stanley W Tubbs, Bravo coz for buying locally. Stanley's car was fitted with a Pullman Limousine body by Barker, who were one of the leading coachbuilders who specialised in Rolls-Royces, but were entirely independent of the manufacturer. The Pullman Limousine was one of their standard designs, which was later also available for the Phantoms and the 'small' cars, the 20hp and the later 20-25 (3.75 litre) and 25-30 (4.25 litre). The best known coachbuilders were bought up by manufacturers. HJ Mulliner and Park Ward became part of Rolls-Royce itself. Van Den Plas was bought by Daimler. Most of the others faded away before or after WW2.

Barker's records are in the Science Museum, <https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/documents/aa110066307/records-of-barker-co-coachbuilders-london>

in 25 volumes, and that should include details of their standard Pullman Limousine design and perhaps of this particular car. The details such as fabric, woodwork, handles, divider, extra seats, carpets and trim would all have been the buyer's choice within the basic construction.

Whether the car still exists is the next question. It would now be a valuable thing, though less than the earliest Ghost chassis. It is very unlikely that has. In 1933 Autocar had advertisements for reconditioned Ghosts, by then between about 9 and 25 years old from £80 when more recent Rolls-Royce cars might be had for a few hundred pounds. Plenty of opportunity there for a car to go through a very bad patch before emerging as a desirable and collectible car only some decades later. A Rolls-Royce owner who lives in Derby told me that scrap merchant Journey's End were scrapping old Royces wholesale at one time. One Ghost I spotted in my travels this year carried the motto Imago Labor Consequit. Hard work makes the dream come true. The car had been bought as a box of rusty bits. The motto is very close in sentiment to the Tubbs motto

but more secular. (Per Deum et industriam obtinui – With God and hard work I have obtained what I have). Latin tends to favour epigrammatic construction.

The definitive book on Ghosts is by John Oldham and is available for around £30. DBT's book (reviewed in this issue) makes a serviceable introduction.

Meanwhile search for more information about Percy's 20hp Royce is ongoing, but it is known to survive. The survival rate is one in five (1500 or so out of 7800. That is exceptionally high for any make of Vintage car which is generally between one and

five percent.

A 1929 Phantom I appeared in a sale in May, 2025 and proved to be a Pullman Sports Limousine by Barker. The pictures are of that car. It may be a bit racier than Stanley's car. A limousine is characterised by its divider which usually had glazing that could be lowered. Though estimated at £40,000 to £50,000 it made only £32,5000 a reflection of the move away from pre-war cars by modern drivers used to more modern conveniences such as sixpenny brakes, heaters and automatic gear change, and just possibly might be a little less thirsty! Sixpenny cars stop on a sixpence, an old



Barker Pullman Sports Limousine seen alongside a Mini at the auction house of a well known television personality, Matthewsons. Although this is a later car than Stanley's the Rolls-Royce chassis and the Barker coachwork design changed very little in the intervening decade. The thirties saw some more innovate coachwork designs, particularly on the smaller

cars and the Bentleys. Interior styling included Art Deco features. In those days leather was often applied only to the front seats. West of England Cloth was considered superior, but not in this instance.



Wet, wet,wet on a sunny day in Leigh

In the beginning there were two rival systems in the world of photography.

Daguerre announced his in 1839. It produced well defined images on highly polished surfaces. It was dangerous, as it involved the use of mercury vapour. Daguerre was given a pension by the French Government on condition he did not patent his invention. This was universal except in the United Kingdom where it was licensed and was not really commercially viable. Vive la difference.

Aristo Talbot woke from his dreams and announced to the world that oh yes, he had been taking photographs for years before Daguerre was successful. The Talbot system was also licensed. Talbot's oldest surviving negative is of the Oriel window in his beautiful house, Lacock Abbey which is now honoured with its Fox Talbot museum. My wrath knew no bounds at learning the National Trust prohibited photography inside the house. That general embargo was lifted a few years ago, and I too have photographed the famous window.

The chief advantage of Talbot's system is that it created a negative from which many positives could be created, whereas Daguerre's images were unique. The disadvantage of the Talbot system is that the negatives were on paper which resulted in prints with much less definition and contrast than his rival's, though this softness is often admired and his images are very good indeed.

Just over ten years later everything changed for ever. Scott-Archer devised a process which produced a beautiful negative on glass, with high definition and from which any number of prints could be produced. Daguerre's process survived for a few years in America but otherwise the world turned to the new wet collodion process. Scott-Archer bravely did not patent his process and died in poverty.

Liquid Collodion, which rapidly becomes sticky, is applied to glass and shortly afterwards the plate is immersed in silver nitrate; after a few minutes it is ready for use. The huge drawback of that system is

that a plate can only be used for a few minutes. In a studio that is not a hardship but in the Crimea or the battlefields of the American Civil war or the mountains of Nepal this involved logistics and persistence to a very high degree.

For thirty or forty years wet collodion was the system of choice. Studios sprang up all over the land and small cartes de visite portraits were available to all but the poorest folk. Dry plates came into use and then Kodak pulled the master stroke and made roll film and a cheap camera. Celluloid became available and now home photography was available to all but the poorest folk.

There is a variant of wet collodion on glass which is the tintype on blackened metal sheet. Aluminium will do just as well. This has the remarkable and unintuitive property of making the negative image appear positive

As intrepid photographers wish to supplement their use of the marvels of digital photography with experience of the old analogue processes there has been a revival of interest in them all. Dave Richards of Leigh in Lancashire is one such and runs a studio and courses in a mill part of which still makes

textiles, oh yes it does. I joined a small group of RPS members in Leigh for a day. I sat for one tintype and made another. Given the choice of the two to take home I chose the one I had taken.

It is easy enough to see these are flawed. It takes some experience to get it right every time. Pouring the collodion evenly is the trickiest operation. Stopping the development at the right time is a real art. I rather wish I had taken my camera strap off before this. My rigid expression is typical of a beginner sitting for seven or eight seconds in good daylight without moving at all. It is more difficult than I expected.

All the early light sensitive materials, mostly silver nitrate, are sensitive only to blue and ultra violet spectrum light so can be safely worked under a red light. Modern studios have very high wattage flash units which can be used in winter when the UV in available light is low.

There are contemporary graphic processes which use UV sensitive materials. One is screen printing, and another is letterpress printing from polymer plates. I have both succeeded and failed at both those techniques. Must try harder.



The Tubbs - Index

Do you really mean to tell me you haven't actually remembered much from the previous issues of this publication? Tut,tut!

Back numbers are online on my website tubbspubs@org.uk and a very rough index to previous articles will be linked to the page of back numbers.

So far there are 350 index entries excluding this issue.

This issue is a Charron-4-Kevin free zone!

In the meanwhile the editor wishes you a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year, and take off the neck strap before posing for your photograph!

One law for the poor ...

In March 1891 HTT presided over the annual meeting of the Commissioners of the Level of New Romney, as reported by The South Eastern Advertiser.

It was reported that the unfortunate Mr Brand's sewing machine had been seized because he had not paid disputed scots of £1/9/6d (£1.47). It had been sold for £2.

But as well as the cost of the warrant of 9/-, there were:- auctioneer's fee of a guinea, two assistants cost 7/10d, carriage of machine 4/-, railway fares 6/8d bringing the total cost of sale to £2/8/6d., by my calculation though the report only made it £1/19/6 (£1.97) the difference of 9/- being the way the warrant cost is accounted for.

The committee heard that a local auctioneer could not be found and that the nearest had been in Folkestone, hence the additional expenses. It was decided not to pursue Brand (possibly Brandon) for the difference, as he was not liable for it.

It was then reported that no action had been taken by the clerk against two others who had refused to pay scot of £84 and £44 respectively, apparently because the water was not being effectively removed (pumped over the sea wall). The wall had been installed by Littlestone Estates.

There was a problem connecting Nash's run to the main sewer, which was three inches higher. HTT objected on behalf of the estate to paying both Scot and the cost of pumping the water, and pointed out that nearly half of the local rates were paid by The Littlestone Estate.

The Clerk was exonerated from not having issued further summonses, in the light of their experience with Brand, and the Commissioners then proceeded to raise his salary to £20 from £5.

No doubt Mr Brand thought it was a stitch up, but we surmise that paying scot is better than doing porridge. There was a similar charge on some residents in Gunthorpe with the exciting name of Dyke Rate. It did not stop houses from flooding!

Great Expectations

You will recall that Pip's Great Expectations were first raised while he was growing up on The Romney Marshes at the smithy of Jo Gargery. Gradually the marshes were being transformed to dry pasture by the exertions of Dutch engineers, as also in the Fens.

HTT also had his great expectations, and like Pip's they were not really met. Henry Thomas Tubbs claimed further that he had finally tamed the waves where King Cnut had failed. He built a wall.

The local newspaper reported:-
We have received Mr. J. N. Masters' New Romney Household Almanac, which teems with a mass of information of both local and general interest. The

preface again deals with the attempt. which bids fair to be crowned with success, for the transformation of Littlestone Estate into a fashionable watering hole, and we have previously expressed our opinion that a great future is in store for the place. The publisher, descanting on the attractions of the neighbourhood, observes :— The advantage of cheap residence offered by a town where there are practically no rates, is too obvious to need commenting on and will doubtless turn the scale in 'favour of Romney with many paterfamiliae contemplating a visit to the seaside during 1887. Since the first issue of this Almanac in 1884, an astonishing change has been wrought in the aspect of the Littlestone Estate, by the gentlemen who have taken it in hand. A wide road

(which will be finished as soon as the gas and drain pipes are laid) has been made from the town to the sea. From the S.E.R. Station to Marine-parade there is a 15ft. path on each side of the road, which we hope to see asphalted in the same way as the single path from the town to the station has already been done. A spacious promenade, which will ultimately be considerably extended, has been made along the sea front. It is as are all the roads on the estate—planted with ornamental trees at short intervals, which promise to do well in spite of their proximity to the sea. A stretch of turf, about 20 feet wide, is being made along the whole sea front, and seats are provided at short intervals. The splendid sands are unequalled on the South Coast. At low water there is a stretch of hard white sand from Dungeness to Dymchurch (a distance of several miles), absolutely unbroken by the breakwaters, or other unsightly obstructions common to most watering-places. The beach affords splendid bathing at high water. Considerable progress is now being made with the building on the estate, and during the coming winter it is proposed to build at least 28 houses on the sea front. We are also informed that almost enough shares have been taken to commence the construction of the Pier forthwith..



At another meeting there was discussion of the need to obtain a steam roller. It was decided to buy a hand roller instead, from the ironworks at Rye. It was hoped that Mr Jones would give a discount of 25% on £4/5/- plus 2.5% for cash. Is it a coincidence there was a Mr Jones on the highway committee?

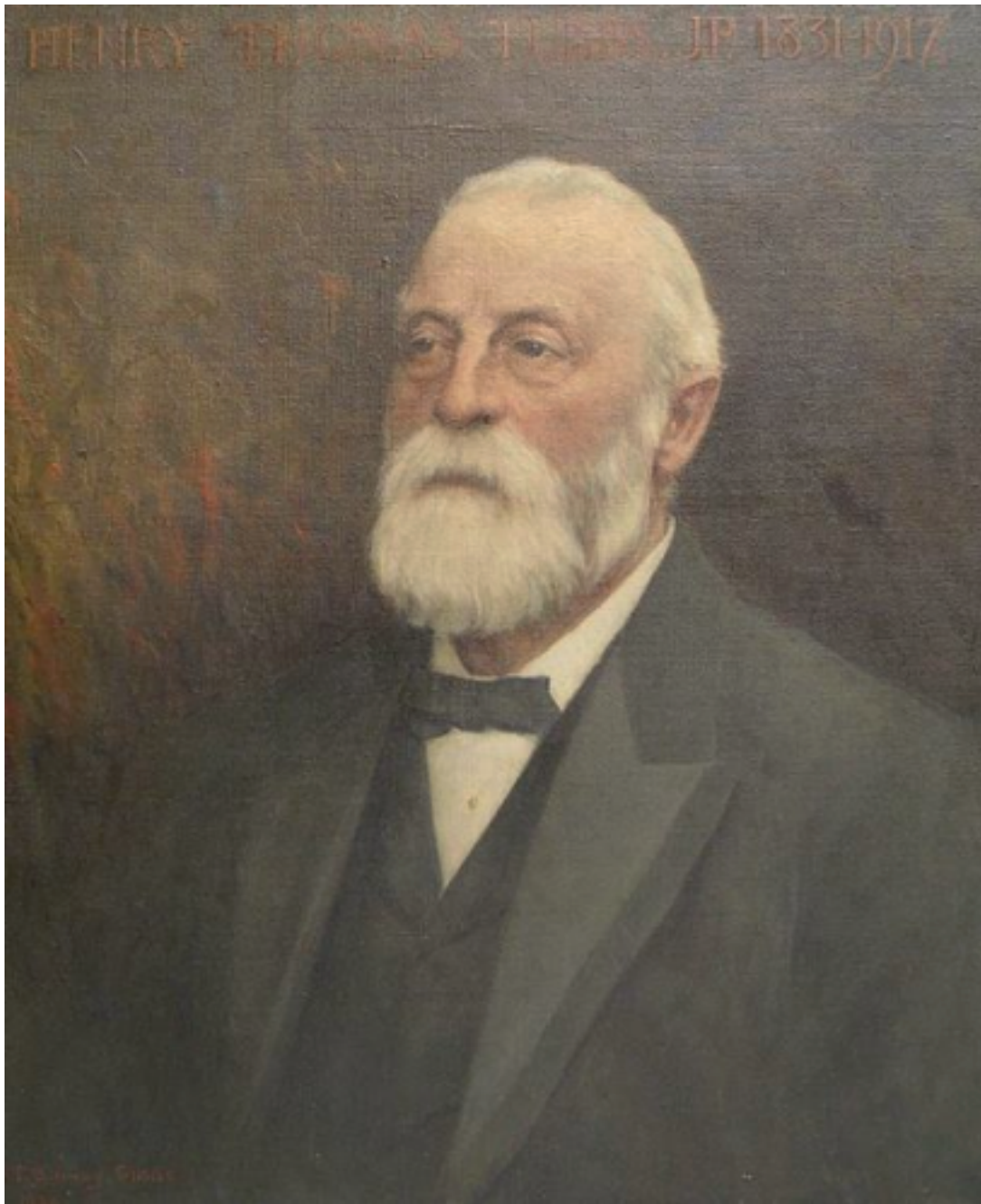
Among the local information is a carefully compiled directory, tide table, and a list of all the different public bodies and societies, together with their officers. There is also a succinct description of the various parishes in the New Romney Union. The calendar is interlarded with some most interesting literature ;

and ** Cassells' Cookery for Every Home ” ought to [be] of far more value than the 2d. charged for the work, which contains 174 pages. A perusal of the year book cannot fail to impress one with the perseverance and capital business [?] of Mr. Masters, while the numerous specialities which are associated with his name, and which have [earned?] universal appreciation, are illustrated and described in a very agreeable manner.

In March 1885 the council considered purchasing the Gas Company for £2,000. It had been formed 35 years previous and had provided gas originally at 10/- latterly 8/6d per thousand cubic feet. The Company was not willing or able to enlarge the works on its present site, and was not willing to finance the required expansion resulting from the development of the Littlestone estate. Although HTT was present at the meeting, it is not clear from the report whether the Estate owned all or part of the shares of the Gas Company. The opening of the railway also made a difference.

Presumably it was that factor which persuaded the Corporation to relocate the works to its site near New Romney railway station. Gas pipes were laid under the road. Their safety was a consideration when assessing the weight of road roller that might be needed. I am not sure where the Gas company's original site was.

Photo:- Littlestone sea wall with Victoria Diamond Jubilee (1897) Memorial Fountain in foreground.



HTT Portrait discovered!

The story of this portrait is extraordinary in several respects. It turned up unexpectedly at an auction a few years ago, but strangest of all is that it is posthumous.

Bigwood Fine Art Auctioneers Ltd. (Auction March 28th, 2014 - Lot 531 - Head and shoulders portrait study of Henry Thomas Tubbs. J.P., dated 1929 and signed Thomas Binney Gibbs.)

HTT died in 1917, so it might be assumed that it was commissioned either by Stanley or by Tubbs, Lewis.

HTT was a man of means who could surely have afforded to have his portrait painted but he seems to have preferred the modern medium of photography,

which was both quicker and cheaper. Even if coloured by hand, as many of them were. I am not aware of a photograph from which this is likely to have been painted. Nor is the present owner who passed on this information to me, having seen my website.

Gibbs was a Royal Academician who moved into Whistler's studios after Whistler's death.

That puts him firmly in the reach of the Chelsea Arts Club and I think it likely PBT suggested the artist, to his brother, but that is mere speculation.

This contact has uncovered a few more insights which are held over for the time being.