

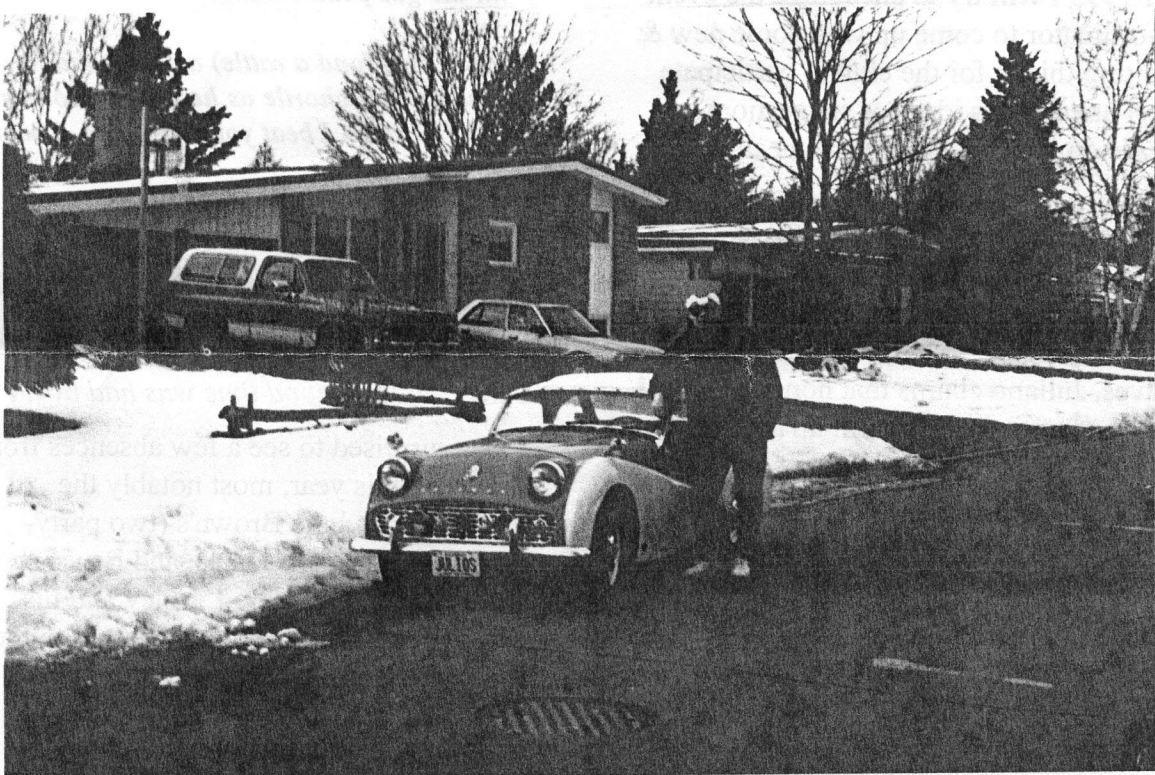


# VERDRIVE

The Newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club

January, 1995

## A Late December Spin



*In This Issue:*

- Great North American Race
- Mike Crawford's latest colour choice
- "OIL DRIPS"

*Cover: Julio must have done a self-portrait for last month's cover, because here he is in his Santa's cap, outside Mills's house, on December 24! That's some sleigh there, Santa!*

**Editor's Note:** (Julio) - Here we are again into another new year. I hope everyone had a very good Christmas holiday, and that Santa brought you all the parts you needed for your cars. Unfortunately, I didn't receive my bag of goodies, so no more cookies & milk for the old guy.

For 1995 I will try to encourage the event co-ordinator to come up with some new & exciting things for the club to participate in. If anyone has ideas or suggestions, please don't be shy - give me a call at 727-8113.

**Editor's Note:** (John) - I guess I was a little hasty in figuring I'd be the last one out in my TR this year, but as the cover proves, Juliano claims that honour - who'd have known it would warm up again? I would've been out on Christmas day, but I was in Belleville - curses!! To further spoil my plans, it snowed before New Years, so as yet no-one (to my knowledge) has garnered the coveted "first out in '95" honour. To commemorate Julio's achievement, Pat Mills wrote the following poem:

*Twas the day before Xmas,  
(with apologies to Clement C. Moore)*

*Twas the day before Xmas,  
when all through the bog.  
Many creatures were stirring,  
including the dog.*

*We were busy preparing  
for the big day ahead.  
The turkey to thaw,  
'gifts to wrap' it was said.*

*When out on the road,  
there arose such a clatter.  
We rushed to the door  
to see what was the matter.*

*When what to our wondering eyes should we see,  
But a candy-cane Triumph - a bright little 3.  
With a little old driver not lively or quick,  
We knew in a moment it wasn't St. Nick.*

*Pictures were taken to prove it was so,  
Juliano was out for a spin in the snow.  
After coffee & cookies to his car he did spring,  
Pulled the choke, turned the key,  
hit the gas-peddle thing.*

*With a roar (and a rattle) away he did fly,  
we heard him chortle as he weaved good-bye,  
"HO HO HO - I beat you John-boy, I beat you!!"*

#### **OVTC Christmas Party:**

The Christmas Party was, suffice it to say, a big hit as always. There was plenty of good food, good drink, and it could be safely said: "A good time was had by all".

I was surprised to see a few absences from the scene this year, most notably the Threader's and the Brown's (two party-hound couples to be sure), and Bruce & Mary Young (with Joe Lashley and his 'Union Jack' socks freshly departed to the Belcher Islands, we were counting on Bruce and his tie to be there!). I'm sure something very special was up for these folks to miss what is the high point of the OVTC off-season. See you at next year's party, eh?!

#### **Great North American Race:**

While I was in Belleville for Christmas, my uncle gave me a newspaper clipping describing the 'Great North American Race'. This event is a cross-continent road race for vintage automobiles (1905 to

1947), and it's scheduled to start in Ottawa on Canada Day, July 1, and finish in Mexico City after 7000 km and 40 cities. The race features 71 cars from around the world and offers \$250,000 in prize money. This should feature many gorgeous vintage cars, so mark your calendars.

### **How are you passing your winter months?**

Let us know what work you are doing, have done, or need to do on your cars this winter. Others in the club may be interested in your projects, and may get ideas of their own before spring. Call John (723-9876) or Julio (727-8113) with the gory details.

### **Museum of Automotive Evolution:**

I remembered the day before we returned to Ottawa to look in on the Museum in Belleville, but I forgot the sheet with the name and phone number. I remembered the name of the street where the Museum is to be found, but on a brief drive-by, I had no luck in spotting anything. I'll try to check again the next time I'm down.

### **OVTC Grille Badges:**

The Grille Badges are now in. Call Julio at 727-8113 for yours. Cost - \$40. These grille badges make a great emblem for the front of your car!

### **Membership List:**

We've nearly got everyone on a common June renewal, so I'll be putting out a Membership List with next month's issue. No more fumbling through the phone book to contact a fellow member. We haven't had a list in a couple of years, so a lot of current members aren't known outside the

club. This will also help everyone put names to faces once Spring comes and we all emerge from our winter hibernations!

### **February '95 Meeting:**

The February meeting will be held at Milano Auto Body (75 Aberdeen St., off Preston) on Monday, February 27, a half hour early -- 7:00 p.m.! Joe Panuccio will be giving a talk on body work, painting, prepping, etc. Pat Zakaib's car is presently at Joe's, so we'll also be able to see how things are progressing on Pat's TR6. If it's anything like Joe did for myself, Mike Stapleton, Randy Hildebrandt, etc., I know Pat won't be at all disappointed.



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### **Dart Tourney coming soon!**

Start practicing - the Inter-Club Dart Tourney is coming up soon. Clive will be providing details as the date approaches. Who knows, the way this winter's going, we might be able to drive our cars to it this year!

### **Life in Sanikiluaq:**

Some of us saw Joe ('Johnny') Lashley over the holidays. Joe had with him a video of his new home in the Belcher Islands - believe me, there wasn't a Triumph to be seen! Joe is on the hunt for an Innu carver to do him a soapstone TR8 carving! Good

Luck, Joe. See you again in August/September for Watkins Glen, Bronte, etc., etc.

**"OIL DRIPS"** (by Julio)

- I've been spending my time porting & polishing my intake manifold, which led me to do the dashpots and gas reservoirs on the carbs. What the hey - I might just as well do the complete carbs now!
- Well, Mike Crawford has finally decided to paint his car 'Diamond White'. He describes it as the white used on the 1992 Lexus models. Will that be the final choice? - only the Shadow knows. Stay tuned!
- One of our 'lost sheep' has returned to the flock. An original owner of his TR6, Harris Popplewell has rejoined the club - welcome back, Harris! (p.s. - your car would look really good with the OVTC grille badge on it!)
- Come spring, Randy and his yellow TR6 will be moving to Lotusland (also known as British Columbia), and he will belong to the Okanagan British Car Club. Randy gave me a copy of their newsletter, which is called "The Exhaust" (fitting title!). As their newsletter indicates, it seems to be a well put-together club! Hey, Randy - be sure to keep in touch, eh?!
- John Day's looking to locate an engine hoist for a couple of hours to pull the engine from his parts car. Then the shell can be rolled out the back of the garage for the rest of the winter (2 TR6s and an Accord are an uncomfortable fit, to say the least). If anyone out there knows someone who

could spare an engine hoist for a short while, please give John a call at 723-9876.

**Classifieds:**

- 1981 TR7 convertible - Steve Lashley. This fuel-injected number is a rarity, so come on, all you speculators! Call Steve at 726-6724 for details.
- Mike Crawford is offering for sale a virtually-new twin-pipe exhaust system for a TR6. Cost - \$100. The system is complete up to the exhaust manifold. This is worth buying now even if your system is still usable! Mike has other assorted parts available also, as he's going all-out in his body-off restoration effort. Give Mike a call at 823-6642 for details.

**Technical article:**

This month's article isn't so much technical as 'trivial' in the sense that it offers some explanations into where some marques received their distinctive badges. Unfortunately, the Triumph shield or laurel wreath aren't included in the list, but other interesting insignia are. Enjoy!!

(I am surprised at the author's noting the Triumph Globe symbol being dropped with "the advent of the TR2", since it appeared on their cars as late as the TR4A. Ooops!)

## Milano Auto Body

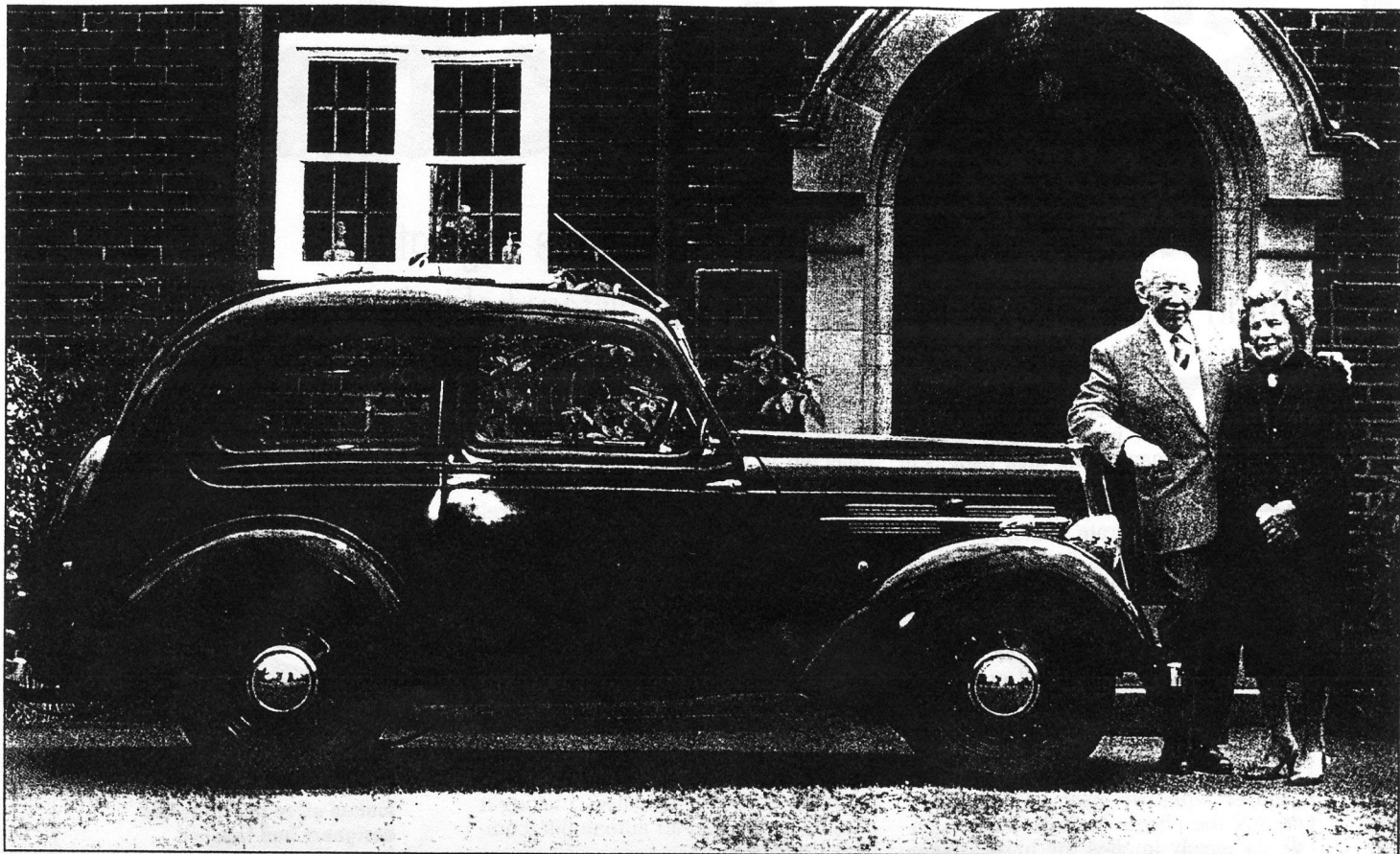
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Pictures: ROBIN PALMER

# Legend in a lifetime

**W**HEN Wilf Metcalf tied the knot with his sweetheart Barbara in August 1937, his brand new Flying Standard Nine was waiting to whisk them away to a honeymoon in Scotland.

Since then the world has fought a war, listened to Elvis, seen men walk on the moon and witnessed the Berlin Wall coming down. But some things have remained unchanged.

Today, 55 years later, Wilf and Barbara are still happily married and the Standard, which cost them £167, is still in the garage.

"Hand on heart, I can honestly say that I've never considered getting rid of it," declares Wilf.

**Wilf Metcalf and his wife Barbara have clocked up 198,000 miles in their trusty Standard Nine since 1937. Andy Wilman looks back with them**

"But at the same time we never aimed for the record books. It just stayed, and before you know it 55 years have gone by."

But of course there's more to it than that. The car is loved because every one of its 198,000 miles is intertwined with the family's history.

All three of them, for example, went through the Blitz together; the young couple in their little north London flat, the Standard up on bricks (all tyres were requisitioned for the war effort) in a nearby garage.

Over the next half century it shuttled around two generations of Metcalfs, including seeing all three children through university.

Today it lives in semi-retirement, covering around 2,000 miles a year from their West Midlands home.

The 9hp four-cylinder engine boasts a 0-60 time of 24 seconds

and claimed top speed of 65mph, but the couple like to ease off at around 50mph.

Wilf, a competent mechanic, has practised the art of preventative maintenance to keep the car fit and healthy all its life. Not that it needed much tending - ask about any problems with the Standard and Wilf and Barbara look at each other, shrug and shake their heads: "The original gearbox is still in and the chassis is coated with anti-rust paint; all I've done is overhaul the engine and replaced the clutch, pistons and conrods," says Wilf.

His job has been made easier by the car's build quality and simplicity. Electricies are kept to a

minimum - instead of a fancy ventilation system, just open up the windscreen to let in the fresh air, while the indicators are the semaphore type which flick out of the B pillar.

As for simplicity, the equipment list in the Standard's sales brochure says it all. Features included locks to doors, an inside driving mirror and petrol gauge. Wilf had splashed out the extra tenner for the Deluxe model, which included sun visor, clock and ashtray.

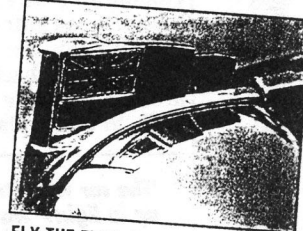
The ignition key is a mere flat strip of metal. "Makes life easy - when I lost it once all I had to do was whittle a temporary one out of wood," says Wilf.

The Standard Motor Co, which had built cars since 1903, died in 1963 after being sucked into British Leyland, responsible for strangling much of Britain's motor heritage. But Wilf, who also runs a Jaguar, remains patriotic to homegrown cars: "Besides, we had a tough time with the Germans and the Japanese in the war and I refuse to support their car industries," he says.

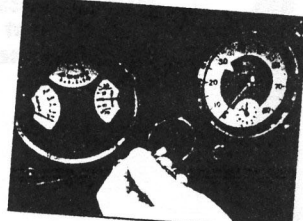
The Standard is now worth £2,000 5,000. Says Wilf "It's all irrelevant. We won't be selling." Barbara adds "As for the future, when we're gone, we'll let our children fight it out as to who wants it most."



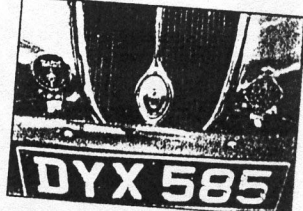
RIGHT TURN: B-pillar trafficator



FLY THE FLAG: Bonnet mascot



IGNITION KEY: Flat piece of metal



SIGN OF THE TIMES: Bumper badges



MEMORIES: Barbara in the Nine

**We had a tough time with the Germans and the Japanese in the war, and I refuse to support their car industries**

# Signs of the times

Ever wondered where your classic car's name originated?  
 Brian Palmer uncovers some intriguing history behind car badges

**B**ritish Leyland committed a cardinal sin in rubbishing the importance of marque names and their badges in a misguided attempt to promote a thoroughly unromantic corporate name. And, with unintended irony, the badge they adopted for BL looked more like a bath's plughole. Presumably, it was the one down which they had consigned the baby along with the bath water ....

Any industrialist will tell you that a respected name, badge or logo, as we term them today, is worth millions, and that's why they are always so keen to buy them. After all we invariably say 'Hoover' when we mean vacuum cleaner, and the phrase 'to Rolls-Royce standards' surely implies the highest standards of quality?

Like any other trademark, car badges are the manufacturer's hallmarks. But are they any more than just decorative additions to the radiator or nose of the car? Do they mean anything?

Let's kick off with the aforementioned Rolls-Royce. The RR badge simply consists of the initials of the founders — Henry Royce, the engineer, and the Honourable Charles Rolls, the pioneer motorist and entrepreneur.

Originally the twin initials were set against a red background and changed around the time of Royce's death, in 1933, to black. Naturally the myth grew

that this was a sign of mourning.

Another widely held myth suggested that a member of the Royal Family had objected to red on the grounds that it was the colour symbolising the Bolsheviks who had murdered their relative, Tsar Nicholas, and his family in the October Revolution of 1917.

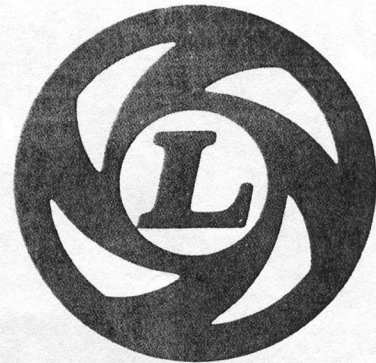
The true facts are, sadly, somewhat more prosaic, for Royce sanctioned the change before his demise on the grounds that red enamel often clashed with bodywork colour.

Austin's traditional badge was one of several on the popular winged theme suggestive of speed and freedom, but added a roadwheel viewed head-on, surmounted by a steering wheel, making it clear that this was an automobile company trademark.

Bristol, whose cars are built, not unsurprisingly, in Bristol, chose the city's heraldic device which asserts its proud maritime history with an impregnable cliff-top castle overlooking a grand galleon sailing off on some voyage of discovery.

Not insignificantly, this is contained in a roundel not too far removed from that of BMW, from whence all early Bristols were derived.

There's no need for excessive complication in marque identity. The Ford blue and white oval logo, jeal-

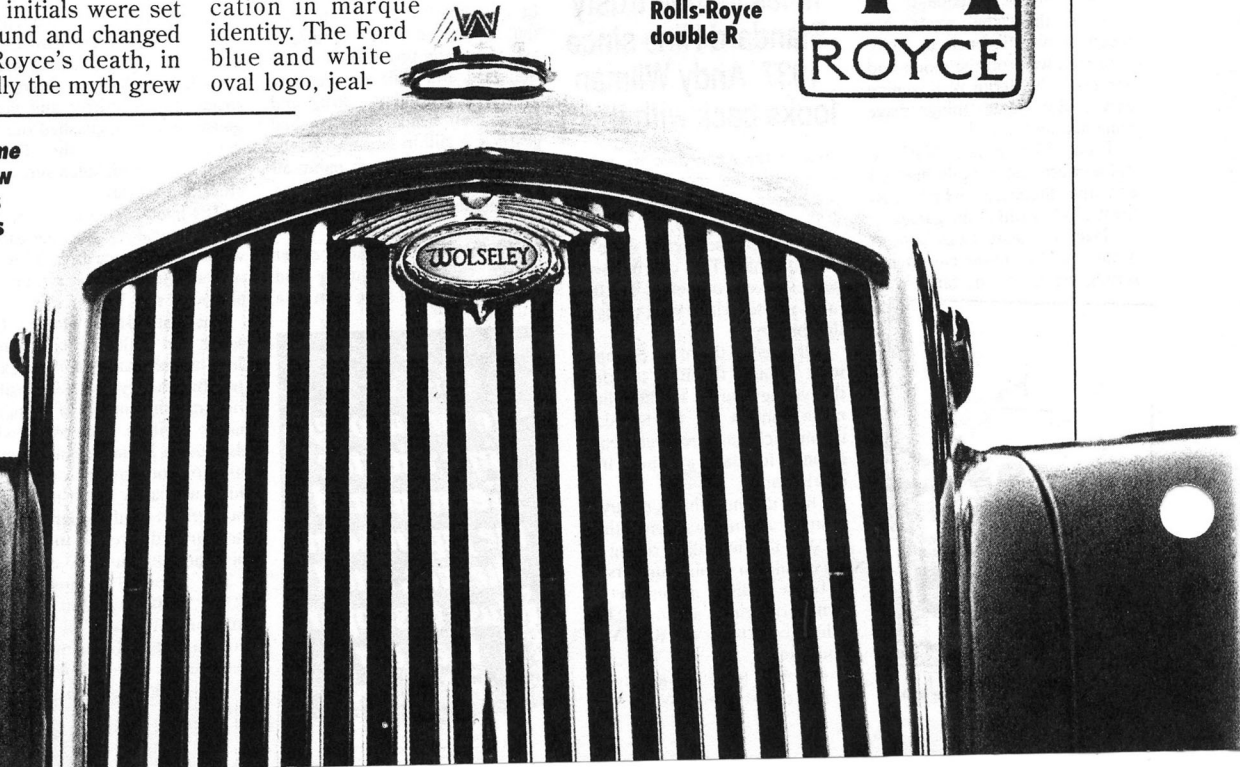


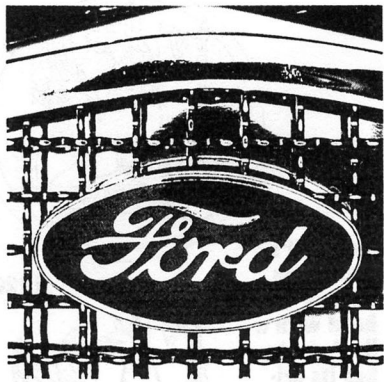
Resembling a bath plughole, this is how Leyland's logo looked after the corporate designers had finished



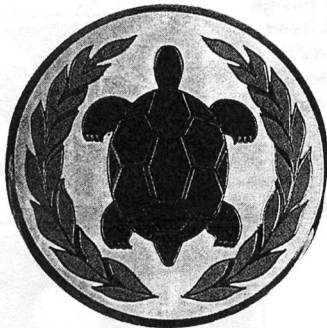
Possibly the most famous badge of all time — the Rolls-Royce double R

*'The car with its name up in lights' was how numerous brochures described Wolseley's products — but the idea was not new*

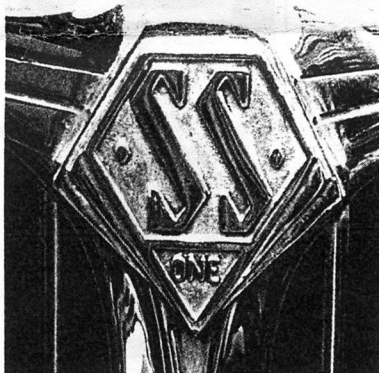




**Ford's famous logo has remained essentially unchanged for years**



**Gordon Keeble's tortoise was ironic for the company's fast cars**



**William Lyons' SS badge stood for Standard Swallow before the war**

ously protected and unaltered for years, has defied any attempt at modernisation.

Apart from the flamboyant F, it is merely the company name in script, a kind of signature. It is a trademark, pure and simple and, like those other American products Heinz and Coca-Cola, is impervious to change, and recognisable the whole world over.

Gilbern, the specialist car manufacturer from Pontypridd in Wales, would have been considered very unpatriotic if they had adopted anything but a red Welsh dragon as an emblem. In any case, a leek on a radiator is scarcely a good idea.

On the other hand, Gordon Keeble's adoption of the turtle, or tortoise, which has nothing whatever to do with a current children's folk hero, originated from when one of the reptiles walked across the road in front of an early car during a photo session near the factory at Eastleigh.

When it was placed on the bonnet of the car to enhance the photograph, it promptly christened the pristine paintwork, whereupon, with fierce opposition from the car's designer, Jim Keeble, who thought it was a symbol of bad luck, it was adopted as the official badge.

It's a symbol of ironic humour from a manufacturer of not especially slow sports cars.

Jaguar is, perhaps, better recognised by a mascot than a badge, even though the famous leaping cat has since been banished on safety grounds.

Its pre-war forebears used the initials SS in very *art deco* letters contained in a hexagon. SS stood for Standard Swallow as William Lyons' Swallow Coachworks had started out rebodding standard Standards, if you know what I mean.

The name Jaguar was originally just a model name, but after the 1939-45 war the original SS marque name proved an only too uncomfortable

reminder of Hitler's feared troops (*Schutzstaffel*), which were, as Sir William Lyons recalled in a masterly piece of British understatement, 'a sector of the community not highly regarded ...'

MG is a concern with a similar background, only its initials were contained in an octagon and the octagonal theme, like the SS hexagon, got translated into instrument bezels and virtually anything else they could think of. The company would probably have made the wheels octagonal, too, if they could.

MG stood for Morris Garages, of course, an outfit run by Cecil Kimber making ritzy-looking Morris models which gradually grew sportier.

The famous badge was, in fact, conjured-up by a young accountant at Morris Garages named Ted Lee, who had also studied art, and first appeared in MG advertising in May 1924. That little doodle went on to become one of the most powerful symbols of all time.

The famous Rover Viking insignia was something of a pun. Found in various guises through the years, from full-length Norseman with spear to just his head, then a rather nicely detailed mascot in 1922, and finally to the Viking Longship arriving in 1930. It suggests that the Vikings were great explorers — or rovers. Get it? Heaven forbid that respectable Rover owners would ever contemplate the raping and pillaging that these ancient warriors were also notorious for ...

An empire of a different kind was celebrated in the badges of Standard and Triumph. Standard unashamedly carried the patriotic symbol of the Union flag and made great play of 'Buying British' in all their advertising.

Triumph featured the globe, or at least half of it, or rather the half that mattered in those days — Britain, Europe and the colonies of Africa, Asia and Australasia.

But Triumph dropped this nationalistic nonsense with the advent of the

**Viking warriors inspired the Rover company's emblem**



**Triumph's globe echoed the marque's international appeal**



**MG's octagon has become one of the most powerful motoring symbols**

TR2. It would be nice to think that had something to do with the rapid post-war independence of our former colonies, but somehow I suspect it was more to do with directing sales at America, a country which had been so conspicuous by its absence in the Triumph cartographer's original design.

Vauxhall Motors' symbol has fascinating, if confusing, origins. They started life in London as the Vauxhall Ironworks in the Wandsworth Road, close to the Thames at Vauxhall.

The word Vauxhall derives from Fulkes Hall, the home of Fulk le Breant, a 13th century knight and mercenary who lived nearby. His heraldic device was a Griffin — a fantastical animal with an eagle's head on a lion's body.

This, then, was the marque emblem adopted by Vauxhall Motors. And, by strange coincidence, when they moved from London to a green-field site near Luton in Bedfordshire in 1904, it was discovered that Fulk le Breant had also owned the manor of Luton, a gift bestowed on him by King John.

The Griffin symbol has been used in various forms over the years but Vauxhall insists on calling it a Wyvern — and indeed so-named a model — but, heraldically speaking, a Wyvern is a two-legged Dragon with a knotted tail.

Artists' licence with its form over the years means that it is now unclear exactly what it is meant to be. Perhaps the two mythical beasts have mated to produce something else entirely — a Cresta, perhaps?

Another long-time Vauxhall trademark was not a badge nor yet a mascot, but sculpted bonnet flutes that trailed back from the radiator.

Now you might suppose that some skilled draftsman or artist thought up this ingenious styling device. Not a bit of it. It is said that around 1904 a Vauxhall director noticed the incised

moulding on his bedroom wardrobe and thought this would look good on the bonnet of their new car. Thus, an unknown cabinet maker was, inadvertently, made one of the first car stylists!

Now you can't get much more English or traditional than Wolseley — and its illuminated badge was unique, right? Wrong. In fact the idea which the company used from 1933 to such good effect had originated in the Fageol car of Oakland, California.

When Wolseley relaunched the idea, they suggested somewhat grandly that if owners parked their cars at night with the sidelights on they would be instantly able to spot their car by its illuminated badge. Clearly they didn't expect to sell too many cars! In later years this feature was also a dead giveaway that the rozzers were on your tail.

Perhaps the most unusual car badge of all was the one used by George Lanchester on the splendid series of cars he designed in the twenties. It was unusual because the round emblem on the radiator contained nothing but a glass window through which to check the water level. In fact no name appeared anywhere on the car. The ultimate, perhaps, in inverted snobbery?

Looking beyond these shores are other interesting emblems. The linked, and vaguely Olympic, rings of Audi for instance. They represent the four companies — Audi, DKW, Horch and Wanderer — who came together to form the Auto Union in 1932. The famous Porsche-designed rear-engined racing cars adopted the new name but road cars kept the old marque titles.

Audi were set up in 1910 by August Horch who left the company he founded after a row with the management. They refused to let him use his own name, so he used the Latinised version, Audi, instead.

We mentioned BMW briefly when discussing Bristol. Theirs is a striking but simple badge made up of blue and white quarters in a circle. But how



1920s

Vauxhall's Griffin, an eagle's head with a lion's body, has its origins in mediaeval times, but the design has been steadily altered to become the stylised circular rendition, below right



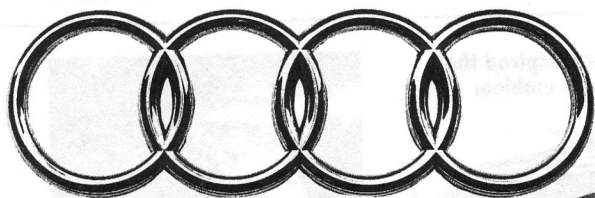
1940s



1980s

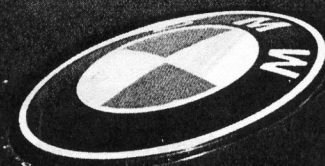


1990s



Audi, DKW, Horch and Wanderer made up the four rings of the German Auto Union in 1932

A rotating propeller against a vivid blue sky was the basis of BMW's badge





## HISTORY

many of BMW's customers today have the slightest notion of what it represents?

BMW went into car making late in life — 1928 to be exact — making the British Austin Seven under licence. That badge harks back to an activity that predates the cars by quite a margin.

The penny will drop when I explain that the company made aero engines from 1916, and the striking logo is an abstract interpretation of a rotating propeller against a bright blue sky.

Mercedes-Benz is famous for the three-pointed star. In fact, the trademark dates back to 1909, 17 years before the merger of Daimler and Benz. So where did that Mercedes name come from?

Emile Jellinek was a wealthy Austrian banker, businessman and diplomat. As Consul-General for the Austro-Hungarian Empire and an early automobile enthusiast, he persuaded William Maybach, Daimler's co-director, to enter a sports model in the Nice Week competition held in the South of France in March 1901.

It was such an advanced car, and so sure was he of success, that it was entered under the pseudonym *Mercedes* for fear of upsetting the partisan French crowds. The name was taken from his daughter's christian name and was actually Spanish — as was his wife.

In the frenzied aftermath, Daimler decided to market, via Jellinek, all their cars under this exotic-sounding name — especially when Panhard Levassor, who had the Daimler rights for France, threatened to sue.

And the star? Legend has it that Gottlieb Daimler once told his young sons how one day a star would rise from the family home to bring them fame and good fortune.

Citroen's smart chevron design is

both unusual and, like BMW, suggests what the company made prior to cars.

André Citroen's parents were rich Jewish diamond merchants of Dutch extraction but were cheated of all they owned. When André was only six years old his mother died and his father committed suicide.

Sent to Poland, he worked with his uncle who made wooden cog wheels. He noticed that those intended for hard wear had teeth arranged in a distinctive vee formation, and asked if he could obtain the rights for sale in France.

André intended to make them, not in wood, but in metal, and set up his own gear-cutting firm in Paris around the turn of the century.

By 1910 annual sales hit one million francs, his most famous undertaking being the steering gear of the *Titanic*.

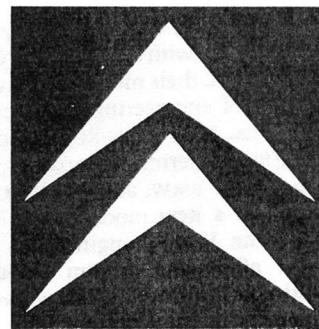
Automobiles followed in 1919, and the famous bevel gear design then took pride of place on the front of all the cars.

The famous Ferrari prancing horse was actually first seen on Alfa Romeo racing cars when Enzo Ferrari ran their racing team in the twenties.

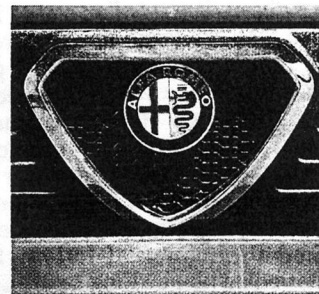
Its origins were similar to that of the famous flying stork used by Hispano Suiza, in that it was the emblem of a First World War fighter ace, one Francesco Baracca; his mother, Countess Paolina, bestowed it on Ferrari as a charm for an equally brave Italian. Ferrari then placed it on a yellow shield after his hometown Modena.

Rival supercar maker, Ferruccio Lamborghini, used a charging bull as his badge. Why? Simply because he was born under the star sign, Taurus. And his famous model, the Miura, continued the theme by being named after a ferocious Spanish breed of fighting bull.

So, there's a lot of fascinating history lurking behind those little badges. Next time you run a duster over your car's proud emblem, spare a moment for the story behind it. ■



**Citroen's chevrons were based on the meshing of gear teeth**

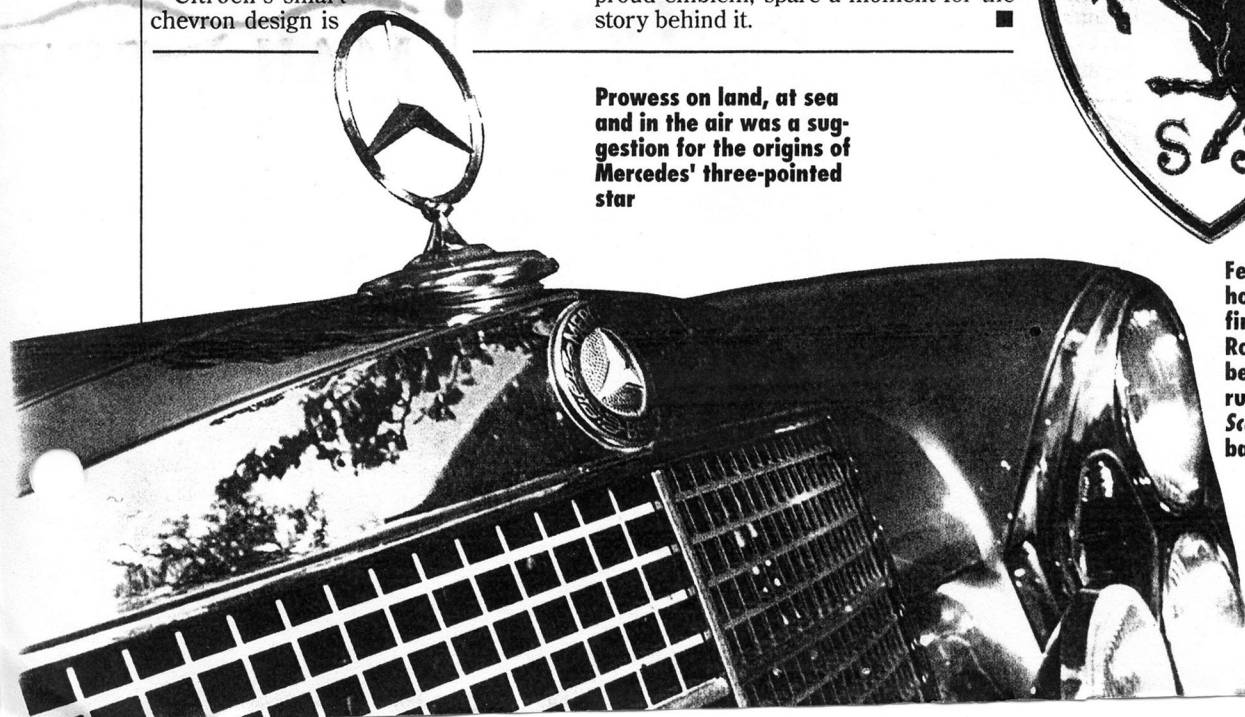


**Alfa Romeo's serpent badge, adopted in 1910, is based on the Milanese Visconti family crest. The red cross was added to mark the family's involvement with the Crusades**



**Ferrari's prancing horse logo was first seen on Alfa Romeo racing cars before the war, run under the Scuderia Ferrari banner**

**Prowess on land, at sea and in the air was a suggestion for the origins of Mercedes' three-pointed star**



## Ecstasy, meet Mercedes

**E**VER since an engineer, Henry Royce, teamed up with an aristocrat, Charles Rolls, in 1904, their motor cars have been emblems of engineering excellence and Britishness. Now Rolls-Royce Motors is talking to two German companies, Daimler-Benz and BMW, about collaboration to develop a new model. Rolls-Royce's parent, the Vickers engineering group, cannot afford the £250m (\$390m) it would take to develop a much-needed new model. The news has brought plenty of predictable, misguided noises about another pillar of British industry falling into foreign hands.

Yet the "Spirit of Ecstasy", the winged figure that adorns Rolls-Royces, is less British than she looks. Long before anyone intoned a word about global sourcing, Mr Royce was grabbing technology from abroad. His first engine was adapted from a French original. Today's models, such as the £148,544 Silver Spur, are full of foreign parts. The v8 engine under the bonnet of most Rolls-Royces was born a Buick in Detroit in the early 1950s.

The gearbox is another adaptation of General Motors technology; the suspension is derived from a French Citroën; the starter-motor is made by Nippon Denso, a leading Japanese car-parts maker; the engine's electronic system is made by Germany's Bosch.

A few years ago Vickers toyed with selling a stake in Rolls to BMW or to Daimler-Benz which makes Mercedes-Benz cars. Since then Rolls has recovered, thanks more to sales of its sportier Bentley models than to its staid Rolls ones. But the company is still making and selling only half the 2,600 cars a year that it sold ten years ago. It is only just back in profit after heavily cutting the workforce to improve productivity.

Although BMW is putting up a strong fight, Daimler-Benz looks the more likely partner. It already has a big v12 engine for its slow-selling Mercedes-Benz S-class models. Such gas-guzzlers are now environmentally incorrect in Germany, but Rolls-Royce drivers are not known for their green concerns. And for all BMW's



new British bent—it recently bought Rover—Mercedes is no stranger to a little brand-intermingling. It is teaming up with Switzerland's SMH, the maker of the Swatch watch, to make the Swatchmobile, a new compact town-car. The question of whether Ecstasy will now sport a lurid green watch-strap has not yet troubled the Rolls negotiators.



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