THE 'POMEROY' WITH POMEROY

Being a good-natured chap, when I find people in a dilemma I always try to get them out of it. So when Pomeroy said to me, 'It's very awkward, because I want to enter for the Pomeroy Trophy but my car's so good that I think I might win it and that really would be a case of give a thing, take a thing, no man's plaything,' I said, 'Well I'd better come as your navigator because I'm sure to make such a nonsense of it that you won't win however good your car is.' So that was decided upon.

So we set off for Silverstone and the Vauxhall went so well, as usual, that I thought to myself at this rate I shall have to be a very bad navigator indeed if something very embarrassing is not to happen, unless of course all those slide-rules have slipped a cog somewhere and the formula turns out to be completely haywire. And when we got to Silverstone it could not have been nicer, because the party was very select and we had the place all to ourselves, as it were, and all the best people were there, or nearly all of them, and none of the wrong ones, and it wasn't freezing or snowing or doing anything more than blowing a very reasonable sort of equinoctial gale.

First of all the cars had to do a figure-of-eight round some barrels. Now the curious thing is that quite a lot of people I know were put off from entering this competition because they thought the formula was so complicated. Yet as it turned out, you could win quite easily without beginning to understand the formula, but you could not win without understanding which side you'd got to drive of these barrels, and that proved much more complicated than the formula. And as the drivers said they could not see the barrels, someone suggested that I had better go and stand next to one to see if they could see me, and as most of them took me in a power-slide, I was not at all sure whether they could or not, and I began to wonder whether there might not be something in this propaganda about motor racing being dangerous. But as nothing happened (to me), I suppose it's all right really.

After that the cars did an acceleration and maximum speed test, and looked very fine while they were doing it. And after that we went and had a Presidential Lunch in Past-President Lycett's Riley, and one Past-President opened a very good bottle that fizzed and the other Past-President opened an equally good bottle that didn't fizz, and a good time was had by all, and Past-President Lycett said 'We *understand* motor racing'. And the only thing was that after lunch Past-President Pomeroy said that as I was his mechanic I could so-and-so well go and pump up his tyres with a foot pump ; and I don't know whether it was those bottles or perchance some slight inequality of the surface on which the pump was set, but at any rate while I was pumping like mad the so-and-so thing turned over and dealt me such a shrewd blow on the ankle bone that I believe I should have sworn if I knew any swear words, and I limped for days afterwards. So I spent the next hour standing on one leg on the top of the bus lap scoring while the cars did their hour blind which practically all of them did very nicely, thank you.

After that we left Silverstone, filled up with petrol, and set off for Cheltenham, seeing how little petrol we could use, so that you have never seen vintage sports cars going so slowly, and some of the people on the road said 'You know, the Vintage Sports Car Club is really becoming quite well-behaved', and others of them said 'You know, I don't know what things are coming to, even those Vintage Sports Car Club people nowadays are nothing but a lot of old women.'

When we got to Cheltenham, we went to the Royal Hotel and I am told that some members of the Club had a drink. And while I was having a drink, Pomeroy, who I think may have been having a drink too, said to me it's very awkward because on the Silverstone results Jack Sears' T.T. Sunbeam is leading and I gathered he thought it would be rather unsuitable if a trophy presented in memory of Laurence Pomeroy Senior was won by a Sunbeam because it seems Laurence Pomeroy Senior did not think that a Sunbeam was as good a car as a Vauxhall. So I said well perhaps I'd better not be such a bad navigator tomorrow after all and perhaps we'd better check our route on a map and work out what time we ought to be where and that sort of thing. But Pomeroy said he was busy just then and that we'd get up early in the morning and do it.

So we got up early in the morning to do it but I don't know how it is I don't seem to be so bright in the morning sometimes as I am in the evening, and when Pomeroy gave me sums to work out as quickly as he worked them out on his slide-rule I didn't get them right and we hadn't got nearly all our times worked out by the time it was time to start off. However, it was a very nice morning and as we climbed the hill out of Cheltenham I realized I was going to enjoy this. Our route had been worked out by the Editor, who had been all round it the night before in his Bugatti, dropping red dye on the corners, so Bugattis can't really be anything like such unreliable cars as he says they are, and if any people think they know the Cotswolds just because they've driven along the main roads across them, they ought to follow a route dyed by the Editor. We went up and down the most exciting hills, and in and out the most entrancing villages, and sometimes we got a lovely view of the countryside and sometimes we got a lovely view of Bob Ewen in the Itala. It was all right going up the hills, because the Vauxhall climbed them like nobody's business, but when it came to going down them Pomeroy said we must save petrol and coasted down them with the engine switched off. After that I knew what the man meant when he entered a thing for the 1894 Paris-Rouen trials called a 'Baricycle, moved by the weight of the passengers,' and personally I think a baricycle is a very alarming thing to go in. However, Pomeroy said it was all right really and that I'd better just keep my mind on my stop-watch. We saw several very secret-looking people whom we thought might be checks (repeat checks, not Czechs, please printer) (Two of these were open cheques—Ed.) and we were spot-on every time for time according to my stop-watch, so I was quite surprised afterwards when Harry Bowler said we hadn't been — but then, it seems, nobody else was either. Then just as we thought we had got to the finish, with a minute or so in hand, we found that the sly

Jack Sears (1914 T.T. Sunbeam) passes through Prestbury during the Pomeroy Trophy. Photograph by Bruce Henly.

Laurence Pomeroy's "Prince Henry" Vauxhall is refuelled in Cheltenham after achieving 25 m.p.g. Jack Sears (extreme left) looks worried because he hasn't got a slide-rule like Pomeroy and has to use his thumb. Photograph by K. S. Green.

The furniture matches the wallpaper. Bob Ewen drives the 1908 G.P. Itala past Pittville Gates, Cheltenham, at the close of the Pomeroy Trophy. *Photograph by Bruce Henly.*

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Editor had made us climb up an almost perpendicular track up the side of a mountain, then plunge down a cliff, go round a hairpin and climb up another precipice. Which made a very exciting finish.

When we got back to Cheltenham we found that we hadn't won the Pomeroy Trophy, which was a great relief. And we found that Jack Sears had lost his way so that the Sunbeam hadn't won the Pomeroy Trophy either, which was also a great relief. And we found that Peter Binns had won the Pomeroy Trophy, in a 30/98 Vauxhall, which was also a great relief. So the formula was worked out right after all.

KENT KARSLAKE.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE POMEROY TROPHY, MARCH 22/23

Best time in the standing start ¼-mile was recorded by Grounds' Jaguar XK 120 (17.1 secs.) which later revealed itself as the most economical of the entry. Eric Sears' similar car took 19.8 secs., which was bettered by Peter Binns, the eventual trophy winner, in his 30/98 Vauxhall (19.3 secs.), and by Dr. Bob Ewen in the Itala (19.6 secs.). Prince Pomeroy in the Henry Vauxhall wasted no time (25.8 secs.) and Jack Sears in the T.T. Sunbeam took a mere 21.6 secs.

Fastest in the flying ¼-mile was Grounds again in 10.7, Eric Sears and Peter Hampton (blown 3.3 litre Bugatti) both taking one second longer. Binns' 30/98 and the Itala both took 13.2 secs., which only goes to show. But as the whole purpose of the Pom Trophy was this 'going to show' business, everything was working out very smoothly. Richards' 2½ litre Speed Twenty Alvis showed excellent form by recording 13.5, the Sears' Sunbeam took 0.2 sec. longer and Sidney's Riley 2½-litre Saloon managed 13.9.

In the Hour High Speed Trial all managed to qualify except Mrs. Armitage's 3-litre Bentley, whose Autovac could not keep two S.U. Carburettors from starvation. A pity, incidentally, that the event did not attract any more Bentleys, including a few 4½-litres to give battle to the Vauxhalls. Peter Hampton (Bugatti 57SC) went faster and faster, having a tremendous dice with the Jaguars, all because his pit staff (it is alleged) lost count of one lap, so that at the end he had done more laps than anyone else, and used much more petrol at 8 m.p.g.

Pom, wearing a very shiny brown crash-helmet, looked at a distance like Father Divine in his celestial chariot: he also wore a stop-watch, which he consulted on each lap. Binns completed his qualifying laps several minutes before the hour was up, and then tried to retire because of oil shortage, but he was firmly instructed to keep going until someone shouted 'Time!'

The High Speed Steering Test around marker drums (one of which we noticed was wearing a check cap and black moustache) baffled one or two people, who didn't go the right way even at the second attempt. Outstanding were Jack Sears (Sunbeam) who bettered his brother in the XK 120 by 0.2 secs., despite lack of front brakes, and Binns, who beat the lot.

During the lunch interval Mrs. Nancy Binns changed both her suit and her carriage — a 2½ Riley Roadster for a Jowett Jupiter — and Pom donned a specially drilled waistcoat with lightly-flowered pattern, ready for the first consumption test *en route* for Cheltenham and during Sunday's Regularity Test in the Cotswolds. Despite route cards and a limited amount of red marker dye, several competitors lost themselves in the latter, by-passing check-points so that no one knew whether they had exceeded or fallen short of standard mileage, with a consequent effect on their fuel consumptions.

Grounds' Jaguar recorded an astounding 26.2 m.p.g., but his mileage was open to doubt as he missed several checks. Eric Sears lost himself in the sister car, but achieved only 18.7 m.p.g. The versatile Binns' Vauxhall covered 25.2 m.p.g., the Prince Henry 25.0 m.p.g., and the 12-litre Itala no less than 16.7 m.p.g.

The Most Uneconomical Cars were Hampton's Bugatti (13.7 m.p.g.) and the Nattriss Alvis (15.2 m.p.g.); the former having a supercharger and the latter a self-changing gearbox.

It was agreed by all that the 30/98 Vauxhall, winner of the coveted Pomeroy Trophy, must henceforth be the Acknowledged Best Car in the World !

R. B.

Results :—

The Pomeroy Trophy :—	P. J. Binns	1924 Vauxhall 30/98
Best Non-Vintage :—	L. S. Richards	1932 Alvis Speed 20
Best Edwardian :—	Dr. G. A. Ewen	1908 Itala 12-litre
Second Class Awards :—	L. Pomeroy	1914 Vauxhall 'Prince Henry'
	T. B. Webb	1925 Vauxhall 30/98

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A VINTAGE BREAKER'S YARD

After Gray ; and nowadays, who isn't ?

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The rolling Hurg grinds slowly past the Leaf,
The veteran homeward plods its weary way,
And leaves the world in darkness, and in grief.

Now fades the skithering Alfa from the sight,
And all the air a scent of castor bears,
Save where the Bug creates its awful plight
Metallic tinkling goads its crew to tears :

Save that from yonder argent-mantled tower
The flying stork does in the wind incline
From such as, knowing but the common shower,
Molest her ancient dignity of line.

Behind that rugged wall, in sylvan shade,
Where chassis lie in many a mouldering heap,
Each on the formless mound for ever laid,
The rude ancestors of our motors sleep.