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Editorial:

Apologies to Rod Collins; I believe I missed out his name on the committee heading last month, and also apologise to all club members for not having got this edition of the mag. out earlier. What with one thing and another including the RAC, I have been rather busy.

You all know the result of the RAC where Waldegard finished first, Mikkola second, and Brookes third, with the latter clinching the RAC Motor Championship from Airikkala who kept falling off the track. It is rumoured very strongly that Mikkola has signed to drive for Ford - what with Waldegard, Clarke, Elsmore and Vatanen, and assistance to Brookes etc, it looks as though Ford are going to have a crack at the world Championship next year. Elsmore gets his Group 4 drive by winning the Castrol Autosport Championship by the way, from the up and coming Malcolm Wilson.

On the subject of rallying, the Mini Miglia next year takes place on January 14th/15th, so if you're not entering, offer your assistance to marshall to Norman Simmonds any Tuesday night! By the time you receive this, the regs for the event should be out, so obtain a copy and fill in the appropriate page.

Best result so far on a rally where Knowldale club members have entered this year, go to 'Woody' in his Escort, where also 'Parrot' came in the top thirty. Apparently Knowldale is fast becoming one of the top clubs in so far as much as the clubs name has become synonymous with producing good all round sportsmen! What with 'Woody's' 4th overall and Super Star 'Cleggy' appearing on both sound and vision wavelengths, as well as in black and white in MN etc., we are at the stage where the clubs name means something to someone somewhere, and lets keep it that way!

On a more serious note, I have kept the mag. from the printers this late hoping that 'Cleggy' will put to print an edited version of what went on behind the scenes regarding all those communications with the press and media, and hopefully it will be in the mag. somewhere. It certainly has stirred up the old establishment!

For those new members of the club who have joined us within the last few months (and of course those members who have been with us a while) Rod Collins and Roger Hampson have taught us a lot with regard to rally navigation, and guest appearance by the Hon. Sec. John Clegg on pace note events, brought out an atmosphere of what the club is really about — the SPORT. What it didn't do, and what it couldn't put across was the excitement involved in actually competing on an event. That is where you put your theory into practice — by being involved, and a good way of becoming involved is making new friends at the club, to help someone else who is competing. Most weekends some member of Knowldale is actively involved in rallying, sprints, hillclimbing etc., and that means other members are actively assisting in some way or another.

Whether it's stage rallying — where a service crew is needed and essential, or a night rally where the sight of a friendly marshall tells you how the other competitors are going (or that extra minute!?) or the help off the tree on Melling White is most welcome, and the comforting thought that you might have got away with it save for that KCC member! It is always helpful to have a friend on hand to offer moral support and/or congratulations, or the more tangible aid of a towbar or rope. Roger Riley, the Comps Sec. knows most of the events where KCC members are entered, or myself, so see one of us if you happen to enjoy a pint or two after an event on a Sunday morning around 8 a.m. So try it and promote the name of the club by buying a KCC sticker off John (ol' red eyes is back) Hardman! Hopefully the mag. will be out before Christmas, so come along to the disco/fancy dress on the Tuesday night before.

Late News

It appears the wild rover Deryck Pickup has forsaken his trusty charger, the white painted and black boot polished vinyl roof Avenger, for one of the Mazda hatchback cars. The ones where you pay a lot less money for the car, kit it out with all the goodies - suspension, lights, sump guard, roll-cage etc. and still end up with the fact that you get a brand new rally car for the same price as a new normally sold/retailed model — can't be bad.

WOODY'S WANDERINGS.

After a 12 month lay off due to the fact that the bogies had my driving licence, I decided it was time to go for the operation and have the brain removed again.

The reason for replacing the grey matter in the first place was due to the fact that I needed a car. Due to Hi-Shacks retirement I decided to build one for myself. After purchasing Shacks rolled and knackered Sport, RS1600 Estate, a body shell from Huddersfield, some bits of tins, bed iron, a couple of bottles of oxy-acetylene, 16 packs of rods and 2 dozen boxes of matches - I had all the ingredients needed to produce a four linked slipper sprung baby smoker.

After much cutting, hacking, thrutching, cursing, welding and painting, the Black Widow Mark II was born. Its first outing was on Christmas Day in a quarry up Whitworth, where I scared myself to death due to the fact that I had only driven a JCB and a dumper for the last twelve months and the power took a little getting used to. The car, however, held together very well and went like! due to the fact that I had put in a 5.1 diff out of the old sport (very low geared?). I turned out on the Boxing Day driving tests and completed these without hitting anything or running anybody down.

My first rally was the Hadrian Centurian - a full car knacker stage event in the Keilder Forest. My navigator was the famous Alan Barlow, my service crew the ever faithful Jacko and that up and coming quarry racing specialist "Selwyn" (Clegg). The event was a slight cock-up - we had trouble with insurance, a £15 turn of luck on the one-armed bandit, a great rake of ale the night before, a heavy hangover in the morning and then a 12 mile trip into Keilder, where on the second stage, I fell off. On getting back on the road, approximately 1½ hours later, (slightly out of time), we set off on the next stage only to have all the oil fall out of the engine, which produced instant retirement, but luckily no damage to the engine. Enough damage done, we decided to return home.

The Jim Clark was the next event I entered. This I did, with Jacko on the maps (as AB was with Derek). By this time we had changed the diff ratio to gear the car around 100 mph and had wangled a set of Clubmans out of a certain gentleman who owns a certain quarry in Whitworth. So now there was no holding us. Off we went with great V and D and managed to stay on the road on the first two stages, but the third stage spelt disaster for both Derek and myself. He hit another car on this stage which was stopped on the inside of a bend, doing his nearside front wheel and suspension no good what-so-ever, and I smashed both engine mountings due to the fact that I had no world cup cross members fitted. So with the engine and starter motor wrapped round the steering rack, it made it quite difficult to drive the car in anything but a straight line. We retired at the end of this stage, with me vowing that I would purchase a World Cup cross member for the next event.

On hearing of Derek's trouble we decided to wait for him to appear at the end of the stage. We didn't bother to go to his assistance as it is one of Mr. Pickups downfalls to rip that corner out of the front of the car, so being very experienced in boding it back together we knew he wouldn't need any help. When

we asked him how he had straightened the car, he immediately produced a piece of 2 x 2 timber (which had once been a tree stay). Now it was my turn to bodge - we jacked the engine up off the steering rack, broke a 4" lump off Derek's piece of wood, wedged it between the gear box and the sump guard and proceeded to limp out on the main road, where we met up with my service crew (the 'One Man Graham Sanderson Band' and 'Doc The Piano'). After we both received a thorough bollocking from Mr. Sanderson we decided it was time to go home. On the way home the tables turned and it was our turn to bollock Mr. Sanderson as his Rentruck Viva Van decided to run out of petrol on the A1. As luck would have it he was carrying petrol in gallon tins (5 gallons to be precise) and one gallon of water. All the tins were emptied into the tank and off we set and went no further than 250 yards — enough said!

The next outing was the Wynnes stages, run completely on Otterburn and for £15 entry fee and 60 stage miles it had to be a good do. So with World Cup cross member and new Bilsteins fitted, I set off looking for my next accident.

This time I had the inquisitive Mr. Sanderson sitting beside me - to see what this loony sport was all about. AB and Potty Stotty went servicing - my luck changed though and we needed no service at all. The only thing we did was to throw everything out of the car we didn't need (I heard that Russel Brooks did this once so there had to be some sense in it somewhere). At lunch we were 15th overall as the weight kept coming out and I kept going to the bogs. We climbed up to 12th overall at the end of the day - beaten only by the 'Big Smokers' I was smiling for once and came home happy.

Mr. Sanderson, being pleased with the job, said he wanted another ride out so I decided to do the Tour of Hamsterley. This was another epic do - no insurance, £30 entry fee and 60 miles all in the same Forest. Through telling plenty of lies we were seeded number 9 - that was the first mistake. In the morning it was like driving in a frying pan, so I decided we had to fall off some way or other. As it happened it was on the first stage, we got round a tight left hand bend, hit a rock with nearside wheel, the wheel came out of my hand and we plunged into a very deep ditch. Things looked rather bad until along came 14 Newcastle lads and after much encouragement and ball dropping, we eventually got the car back on the road. We arrived at the end of the stage to find we had clocked a maximum time for it which dropped us right out of the running. We carried on for the rest of the day without any more driving errors, only slight problems with the clutch. This was rectified by AB's brain power and the brawn of Selwyn. We ended up 25th overall (with the maximum) but when I got home and flattened 14 sets of batteries in the calculator I found that without the maximum we would have been 8th overall - so I was smiling again.

The Castrol '77 was the next on the list - an event I was really looking forward to. On this one I had John Lothian with me, as AB was playing out with Derek.

My rally was dogged with problems - the first being I couldn't get my arse into gear and with that jammed in neutral I was driving like an old granny, the car wouldn't rev above 5,500 and if it did it went flat. So without brain and no service crew, plus a touch of idleness, I didn't attempt to put the matter right. Instead we ploughed on for the rest of the day nursing a breaking up half shaft bearing and discovering my twin circuit braking didn't work when a rock tore off a rear brake pipe and the pedal went straight to the floor. We survived to the end of the stage without any drama and repaired the brakes. As we were mending the brakes, Derek came over and said he was glad someone else was having problems with their brakes as he had been experiencing troubles with his own rear brakes.

The last three stages I really enjoyed. One of them being the same length and route as in the morning, but on finding out at the finish we were 6 seconds slower on the second time round, I was very disillusioned. We went to the 'do' at night and I was sulking in my beer because we were 38th overall, but come prize giving we found that we had copped for 9th private entrant and £60 - so I was smiling again.

That was to be the last event of the year for me, but on the following Tuesday night at the Car Club, Selwyn announced that he was going to do the Preston Crest Stages, so I decided to have a play on that one just to see how much Selwyn could beat me by! After telling numerous lies again we were seeded number 12 and Selwyn copped for the "sweeping - up brush" and number 60 (right at the bottom of the field). This had me worried right away because I wouldn't be able to check his times, so me and AB set off with no knowledge at all as to what times Selwyn was putting up.

Frank Ward was having all sorts of problems with his mini, like the distributor going on strike and walking out just as he was about to take the first hairpin left - someone said the daffodils were out early this year so his dissy must have come out in sympathy!

George Swinbourne blew his clutch in the morning practice sessions so he duly packed his bags and headed home, to return by the afternoon timed runs with his other, more potent black Escort that was very fast and hairy up the hill. Good ol' George reclining the award offered to him as a sporting gesture mentioning in passing that it wasn't the same car that was scrutineered in the morning!

Martin Beamish was having a few problems with the engine misfiring, trying different plugs etc., but managed some good timed runs during the afternoon. Terry Carthy of BIZZ fame was not there - he was rapidly re-building his mini after the Motoring News had reported he T-boned the car at Longridge. I thought a T-bone was a meaty object and one for devouring - mind you I could be right!

With about 60 entries, there were two practice runs, and three timed runs plus another run for those who had entered for the team prize which would you believe was won by our kid, Martin and a lad called J. THOMPSON who was in the same class as Martin! So that rounded off a good days sport and even the weather was kind.

PHIL WHITE

There are 200 deadly sins - ever thought you may be missing out?

Steel wool is the by-product of hydraulic rams.

SPRINT – AUGUST 7th

Auto 66 was the organising club, for a sprint meeting on part of the emergency run-way for Concorde! a little to the south east of York, near a village called Elvington. Two members of the club had entered under the Knowldale banner, Phil and Rob White, who had made the long journey up there in convoy with Steve and Martin Beamish, and were rewarded with an excellent thrash along the runway with a couple of bends in the way to break the monotony, of three miles in length.

The entry was a little dismal to say the least, in that only about 60 entries had been received, including a certain McCartney in a Yardley BRM who was pipped for FTD by an 1800 cc Mallock U2! He recorded a time of 2m 05.35 secs. for 3 miles whilst yours truly slithered his way round in 2m 54.70 secs.

It had been the first time I had entered a sprint meeting and was thoroughly enjoying myself slinging the car sideways into the bends and hairpins a la Roger Clarke, when the times came up showing how slow I was. The art I believe is not to put the car sideways but to drive respectfully and neat and think about your tyres not being scrubbed.

Hell, it was great fun, even though Rob beat me by 1½ secs. Steve Beamish came home fourth in his Class 4 being beaten by some 5 secs of the first placed man. If they hold the event next year, then I for one will be back in a more powerful car if I can beg, borrow or steal one, for I can honestly say it's something different than a 30 second blast up Baitings Dam.

PHIL WHITE

Eastwood Jubilee Rally 29/30 October 1977.

Maps 90, 91 and 97 were required for a re-named Illuminations run by Morecambe Car Club. Had entered the event with Jim Stanton, but retired at first petrol halt due to an upset stomach – his not mine! Looking through the final results showed us 13th or 14th o/a at that halt – if! still one wonders.

Colin Brennan and Andrew Lord did the same event and even got away without incurring a fail because the organisers missed it! I do not know what the route was like after the petrol halt, but the first part was where a good BDA was required with plenty of long straights and flat over crests if one had the nerve. I hope a finisher of the rally will write a report for the mag in a future issue.

This was just to mention someone did the event thats all.

P.J.W.

THE (AHM!) MANX TROPHY RALLY '77

As you are all well aware by now, the rally was won by the number one seed of Pentti Airikkala and his swedish co-driver Ristro Virtanen in the Chevette. But this report will never find it's way into the pages of MN because it's the story of one of the crews attempting to overcome the misfortunes, trials and tribulations of running a brand new car on an event where maximum lateness was only 15 minutes.

The crew were Bill McGhie and Phil White who did the Granite City rally way back in April. Bill was building a group 2, two door 1600 CC Avenger all year and promised himself the first event would be the all tarmac thrash around the Isle of Man. Not to be put off by the event being his first International, an entry was put in and accepted by the organisers who gave us car No. 102. A lowly seed but none the less an entry.

Things started to go wrong even before we left for the island, when we were held up just outside the Blackwall Tunnel going south, by a multiple car smash inside the tunnel. The resultant 2½ hours delay meant frantic phone calls to Swaymar Engineering and Howe Exhausts to stay open please, so we could collect the new engine and exhaust manifold and system respectively. We got to Howe Exhausts and to our dismay found that what he was trying to sell as an Avenger comp. manifold was a very poor imitation of an Avenger Tiger manifold. So beware you lot – don't buy by post! check it out yourselves. From Howe which is opposite Brandersnatch, we made our way to Leathershead and Swaymar Engineering to collect the engine. By this time it was about 7.00 p.m. but by the previous phone call we managed to be able to collect and pay the bill. This was only a week before we were due to sail from Liverpool, the car had to be registered which was a new one on the Aberdeen Motor Taxation Dept., who hadn't even done one before!

Anyway, Bill set off from Aberdeen on the Saturday before we sailed on the Sunday, completing the journey to Rochdale in something like ten hours driving at 40 mph. The tow car couldn't pull the trailer any faster, if it did then it began to sway like mad (the trailer not the tow car).

So we arrived on the island Sunday teatime, booked into our hotel, The Loch Hotel, where the manager had been during the 60's a member of Knowldale, and a right plonk it was too! Monday morning was set aside to unload the tow car and rally car of spares and give to the service crew of Chris and Gary and their sister who had arrived on the island the day before.

Monday afternoon we set off to make some notes and to check those I already had from two years ago when I did the event with Deryck Pickup.

We had only been gone about 2 hours when Bill's bionic ears picked up a funny noise emanating from the back axle. A quick and calculated analysis proved it couldn't be bearings in the half-shafts as these were new, so it must be the diff. I suggested we go up to Finch Hill Motors who are the islands main Chrysler dealers to see if we could use one of their ramps. This they agreed to do and so a strip down of the diff was undertaken. Would you believe the crown wheel and pinion were knackered. Try as we might we couldn't get a 4.4:1 c.w.p. anywhere on the island, so we had to make do with a 3.9:1 second hand one we knobbled off a local. Some start this turned out to be! and we couldn't get hold of this C.W.P. until the Tuesday night which meant the re-build Wednesday morning. Whilst Bill was doing his thing I was off up the island making some notes with the service crew in their strutless 1600E that wallowed and wallowed and rolled its way round the TT course until

continued

we came to the stage I wanted — great car and a great couple of lads!

We met for lunch in Douglas and then in the afternoon Bill and myself set off to make some notes. A very nice car he had built and the seats were really comfortable but by the heck there was some drumming and vibration going on which turned out to be some welding rod threaded through the floor pan and around the exhaust to prevent the lot falling off should it get damaged! This was duly snipped away and a sweet sounding car we had in which to carry on.

Back to the hotel for tea where we were 15 minutes late which resulted in us missing our soup!

We decided to stay out late that night and do the stages that were in the second section of the rally — the night section. It was only around 1.30 a.m. that all the lights faded for some reason which turned out to be the brand new alternator packing up — or so we thought. More of that later.

Thursday (the day before the start) I was copying out the pace notes neatly (we had by this time been around every stage once but not as many as I would have like to have done — twice or three times) whilst Bill and the service crew were putting the final touches to the car. For one thing the aluminium sump guard wouldn't fit and had to be bent with the use of the tow cars front wheel and other silly things like that.

At scrutineering on the Thursday afternoon, everyone seemed very pleased at the turn out and preparation of the car and we passed through with no problems.

The cars did not have to go to parc ferme for some strange reason so we parked it outside the hotel and had an early night.

We set off on the rally 102 minutes after the first car left the starting ramp on the Friday morning 9.30 start for the first stage out - a total of 43.

The first stage INJEBRECK ran from CRONK-NY-MONA on the yellow, down the B21 going north, turning down the yellows to the B22 and finishing on the B10 in km sq. 3287 where the junction is with the yellow. A rude awakening to say the least and on one where we took it nice and easy to assess the handling characteristics of the new car and which Bill hadn't drove in anger before.

Stage two BRANDYWELL, was in fact DRUIDALE from north to south and the stage finishing on the brown/red 'T' at BRANDYWELL

It is a very hairy stage going in this direction with what amounts to something resembling HARDMAN'S BEND! and on which car 90 did the same trick without injury to any crew member. The road in fact goes FR 100 FKR into OHPL with the drop on the outside (navigators again!) of the FKR bend. This stage we completed without mishap as well as stage 3, THOLT-Y-WILL running from the Bungalow northwards to finish on the brown, except for the second hairpin, a right, the first being a left halfway into the stage. It was on this my brother was spectating and we managed to almost understeer into the banking. There's always someone you know on a bend that you make a mess of, instead of the bends that you get right - isn't there!

continued

Stage 4 was STAARVEY and was a quick blip through the countryside on the west coast of the island finishing before St. John's 30 minutes service halt. At this stage we were told by the service crew that what we thought had been a duff alternator was in fact O.K. but was not what BILL had been told when he bought it. He was under the impression he had purchased a 60 amp model when it turned out to be a 43 amp one, so it wasn't surprising that the lights went dim whilst checking the notes at night. But at this halt we had to swap the alternators anyway as the first spare wasn't charging correctly, so back on went the original. A quick check all round the car revealed the nearside rear shocker had let loose all its damping oil. We hadn't a tarmac spec shock as spare, so we asked the service crew to pick one up from somewhere. If it came to the crunch, the forest spec shocks would have to be substituted so in the meantime we carried on the stage 5 GAREY where plenty of right boot was the order of the day.

At the stage finish the marshall was quite pleased to say we did that in a sub 5 minutes and commentated he hadn't seen one of those for a long time! Which really made our day and proved the use of the racing engine under the bonnet. Mind you before we did any of the stages Bill was saying how he thought the SPR 3 clubmans tyres would be adequate, but after 5 stages wishing he had had a set of racers! So feeling quite pleased we lined up for one of the fastest stages of the rally - ROUND TABLE and when we got to the end of the stage we had just caught up the car in front. Whilst waiting for the marshall to sign the time card, I asked Bill what that smoke was at the front of the car and he said 'brakes'! No it wasn't it was steam!! So that was that - the actual water pump casting where the alternator bracket is fixed to, had cracked and all that water had escaped. With only 15 minutes maximum lateness and no spare water pump with us, we were duly excluded from the 1977 Manx International Trophy Rally. The fault for our retirement couldn't be placed on anyone, but Bill and myself had a real slanging match between each other. Understandably, Bill was real sick having spent so much time and money on the car to have gone out of the rally with a simple thing like the water pump, and I started another slanging match when I said I was glad we didn't retire through bumping or rolling it!

A message was sent via radio and other messages sent by competing cars to inform Chris and Garey of our whereabouts and when they arrived we went and bought a new water pump, fixed it on the car, filled it up with water and started it. The engine sounded fine although at the time we thought we had blown the head gasket. For the first time, there was what they called the Saturday run, something like the RAC'S Clubmans Trophy, whereby any car being excluded in the first or second sections could apply on the proper piece of paper to run in the third (Sat) section. This we did, the organisers asking us if we wanted to be re-scrutineered, we said no, there was no damage to the car, and we hadn't knocked down any old ladies etc. I asked about parc ferme overnight and they said no, just turn up in the morning, see what your start time is and away you go. This we did on the Saturday morning and arrived at the stage start, 28 BRANDYWELL, this time going south to north and we had to wait almost ¾ hour whilst the ambulance carried to hospital the occupants of a competing car that had rolled very badly indeed. We got to the end of this stage without mishap and made our way to petrol in Kirk Michael where we found we had lost some water from the radiator, suggesting we might have blown the head gasket after all.

At the start of stage 29 INJEBRECK from west to east, the stage start marshall told us we had been excluded from the rally, he didn't know why, only to tell us that we had to report to Rally HQ. We refused to move until he confirmed it on the radio, and when the stage opening car arrived he also confirmed over his radio that we were out and had to report to HQ., some reason about parc ferme. Well you can imagine the tempers raging in the car as we set off to pick the service crew up to follow us to HQ. When we got there they said it had been a mistake and lack of communication between the Rally Secretary whom we saw about entering the Saturday run and the boys in the back room where the radio and Clerk of Course were hiding out! Apparently the Clerk of Course did not know that the Rally Secretary had told us not to bother with parc ferme and he wanted all cars starting the Saturday run to gain a signature from supposedly leaving parc ferme. Anyway an apology we got, refund of part of entry we did not - we tried for it, so we were out and excluded to boot! Enough of the aggravations we had had so we decided to see if we could get the boat tickets changed from the Sunday Rally boat to the 3.30 p.m. Saturday boat. When we went to check, the little squirt sitting behind the counter told us the tickets we had were not even valid for the Rally Boat and if we wanted to change boats to the Saturday we would have to pay an extra £69.00! because the ones we had were half price cheap weekday tickets and the shipping agents had made a mistake! Without losing his temper (I don't know how after all we had been through) Bill said we would pack up and try and get on the boat anyway. When all the cars were on the boat and no more likely to arrive, an official said it looked like we had a passage - so on the boat we drove, locked up and vanished into the crowd before they changed their minds! And we didn't pay the 69.00 pounds they wanted either. That was about the only good thing that came our way all week.

Bill is now back home in bonny Scotland, ready to further the development of the car that handled pretty well on tarmac, but he has to see how it handles and performs on the loose, so we are now on the lookout for sponsorship. Here endeth the tail of the Manx!

Phil White

ANDREWS HEAT FOR HIRE RALLY TEAM BULLETIN No. 1

From the driving seat.....

Russell Brookes talking to Derek Hill

Tenacity pays off

For Russel Brookes the 1977 Scottish rally was another memorable event, perhaps even more so than the previous year when he won to gain his first International success.

DEREK: Where you looking forward to the Scottish this year with as much enthusiasm as last year?

RUSSELL: Yes, Mainly because the format had been changed. Last year the organisers experimented by changing the venue for the start and finish to Ayr with a view to cutting costs but it was not a success and the event went on for four days and had long road sections and fewer stages. This year however the organisers had listened to the comments and we were back at Aviemore, the route had been compressed into three days and there was about 50% more stage mileage.

I must admit it looked as though it was going to be rough and tough and it most certainly was! is!

DEREK: Running at No. 1, did you have any particular advantage from this bearing in mind the condition of the stages?

RUSSELL: Yes, this was a considerable benefit to John Brown and I because we could get onto a stage before it started to cut up. In addition stages up in the Highlands tend to cut up rapidly when the weather deteriorates. As it turned out the weather was extremely changeable. It is always worth remembering that conditions get worse quickly and better slowly so being early on the road is nearly always an advantage.

DEREK: You were going well in the early part of the event but what happened on the 14th stage.

RUSSELL: Well the distributor packed up and as we did not carry a spare (because they take so long to change) we had to push the car for about 2½ miles and freewheel for 2 miles. Actually we managed to get over the hill just in front of us with the aid of the starter motor but it was a long long hard grind after that and damned hard work. It took us about 1½ hours and certainly without the help of two unknown Scottish lads we would have been out of the rally and I am very grateful to them.

DEREK: You must have dropped a lot of time as a result of this incident?

RUSSELL: By our reckoning we had dropped around 9½ minutes on the leaders so after changing distributor we set off to try and reduce the deficit. However the timing was not completely right and we were down on power for the next 10 stages until we could stop for attention again.

DEREK: I imagine you were a little annoyed at this delay?

RUSSELL: We certainly were and we were determined we were going to get back onto the leaderboard. We were fortunate in that the weather came to our assistance soon after and we carried on through one of the worst downpours ever experienced on the Scottish. While most people decided to change to M/S tyres we opted to stay on Dunlop A2's. We reasoned that as we were first on the road the Scottish stages, which are renowned for being rocky, would not turn muddy. Mind you we had a few heart stopping moments as we aquaplaned through the puddles but otherwise I think we made the right choice. We obviously stuck our necks out somewhat but at the end of the first night's halt we had moved up to 5th behind Paul Faulkner.

DEREK: By this time, surely Vatanen had the event sewn up, if he managed to finish, so what were your hopes?

continued

RUSSELL: Barring a breakdown there was no chance for us to catch Ari but we had our sights firmly set on second place for the opposition, including Stig Blomqvist and Tony Pond, were not all that far in front of us. (Russell then proceeded to put up some more incredible performances and rattled off fastest time on 16 and the next 18 stages). We were a little bit irritated at one stage when several of the stages were cleaned by all the top crews which meant we did not make up any further leeway. However by lunch on the last day we were third, only 26 secs. down on Pond, with Blomqvist out with mechanical problems, and Vatanen going like a train.

DEREK: So with five stages to go things were looking good?

RUSSELL: Yes, the car was running well and so were we. But on the very next stage we had an exceptionally high speed accident which damaged the Escort on both sides but miraculously did not affect it one little jot on the mechanical side. Spectators were extremely helpful (again) and we only dropped 1½ mins. But then of course we did not know where Billy Coleman was behind us so we had to press on for the last three stages.

DEREK: You finally ended up third and gained nine points to put you back into the lead for the championship. Were you happy about this, in view of the problems?

RUSSELL: Without question we were very pleased and it all goes to prove a point I keep repeating and that is that one should never consider giving up. By the weird system of points allocation we collected nine points although we only finished in third place. Ari is not registered for the championship and being a foreigner his racing is declared void; and Pond, although a British licence holder did not score either as he is not registered for the series, but he occupied the placing that would score 10 points so we gained nine points.

DEREK: Finally what are your views on fire extinguishers particularly in view of the most unfortunate incident in which Pentti Airrikalla's Chevette was burnt out?

RUSSELL: The irony of this incident was that the car was completely undamaged when it went off the road but the blaze was caused by the hot exhaust setting the undergrowth alight. The Chevette was equipped with a permanently piped-in fire extinguishing system and there was absolutely nothing that anyone could do when the blaze started underneath the car.

I have had experience of three fires in rally cars and in every case I have been able to deal with them successfully thanks to hand held extinguishers. It makes one wonder which is the most effective system, but I, for one, will always opt for the hand held type.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Parrot on Eppynt? The mind boggles!

Here's hoping the mag will be out before Christmas.

TUES 20th DEC — Disco and Fancy Dress Hornets

MON 26th DEC — Boxing Day Autotests

Possible venues — The Club to Brights to Club
Held in the morning!

SUN 1st JAN — Longridge Rally Cross
(KCC Invited) (Take your wellies)

On a more competitive minded approach watch the notice board or see Roger Riley Comps. Sec. for whats on.

COSTA DI PLENTI

This year Trackrod Motor Club's Costa di Plenti took place on Sept. 17/18 and was an MN qualifier. A series of twelve selective followed by thirty two TC's punctuated with two petrol halts was in store for the eventual 78 starters.

The top runners were 1 - Byrom/Fletcher; 4 - Bloxham/Harper; 5 - Briant/Kirkham 6 - Wagstaff/Starr; 7 - Rathbourne/Coulthard; 9 - Harper/Davidson; 10 - Tordoff/Greenwood; 11 - Bean/Raeburn. Non-starting were Bill Gwyne and Ted Cowell at 2 and 3 respectively. Running at 43 and destined for an excellent 10th overall and 2nd semi-expert, were Tordoff/Kemp in their Firenze, snapping all the way at the heels of eventual class winners Reed/Howell. The novices had a ball as well, bouncing around in the top twenty, with the TR7 of Atherton/Dawson taking 16th overall and best novice from Brown/Gleehill who were 18th.

At 11.31 the first car left the Leeming Bar start for the first of 7 selectives to the first petrol. As the front runners were quenching their fuel tank thirsts messrs Stansfield/Taylor were stuck in the middle of selective two, wondering why the throttle cable end clip had chosen this particular moment to take up residence in the Yorkshire countryside. Having no spare clip we held it on with tape and were away again having lost about six minutes. Selective three was short and very fast and Ian was having a hard time winding it up as the throttle action was very stiff. It was destined however to get a spot of lubrication, for as we dropped into Caydale Ford on selective four, the water was everywhere. There we were slap bang in the middle, starter motor submerged going nowhere, - again. After being pushed out to a very crowded south bank, we got dried out and arrived at the finish control to find we had dropped another 6 or 7 minutes. The rest of the selectives down to first petrol at Kirkby Moorside were thankfully eventful. Anyway, fuel tank replenished and having regained a spot of time at the fuel halt we set off for selective eight just north of Gillamoor. This was a thirteen minuter due north up Blakey Ridge. But guess what happened on the very fast white just north of Lowna, yes dead right, the throttle cable fell off again. The selective finish was on the whites at 6899 being hairpin right and hairpin left to control. It was here that car number one (Byrom/Fletcher) went out in a big way, having got round the right they missed the left went on down a footpath and ended up at the bottom of a twenty foot drop.

By selective twelve things were looking up for Briant, everyone else in the top ten had disappeared. Tordoff through a fence, Bloxham with a shortage of gears etc. But try as he may he couldn't seem to make any impression on the very quick Bean. Still this was no time to settle down to second place, because not too far behind were Peircey and Wilson, who were having their own private battle as ANCC contenders. After selective twelve there came a series of twelve four minuters up to second petrol and the tightest part of the route. Time was being lost at a frightening rate and the poor old tail enders were collecting fails like foreign stamps. In our efforts to avoid fails we only made matters worse, by going off on a very bumpy hairpin left just before TC 10, bending the O/S/F wing in the process.

Second petrol saw many retirements and the bedraggled survivors set off down the road to RTC 14 and the third section. Having made up nearly all our lost time at petrol, we started afresh and had a trouble free run all the way to TC 32 over some very good roads indeed. This section saw no change up front, the sure footed Bean giving nothing away to hard charging Briant. We can recommend this event to any club member for next year. But don't forget your waterwings, it's just full of fords.

Results — 1st BEAN/RAEBURN 2nd BRIANT/KIRKHAM
3rd PIERCAY/HARRIS 4th WILSON/TEASDALE
38th & 11th Novice — STANSFIELD/TAYLOR
78 starters, 45 finishers.

MIKE TAYLOR

HILL HOUSE HIGHWAYMAN RALLY 24/25th SEPTEMBER

Organised by the Post Office Auto Club and the Civil Service Motoring Association the Highwayman had a 180 mile route over maps 92, 98, 99 and 104 consisting of 40 time controls and six selectives.

The rally started from the showrooms of Croft and Blackburn (Fiat and Citroen dealers) just south of Harrogate. A full entry of 90 cars had been received by the organisers but two crews non-started. Of the 88 starters only 45 were to be classified as finishers.

For my brother Ken, and myself, the Highwayman was our first ever rally. When we arrived at the start for scrutineering in our standard 1256cc Viva we quickly realised that we had jumped in at the deep end, especially whilst drooling over eventual winners Harrison/Ainsworth's immaculate Speedspares of Burnley Opel Kadette GTE and other equally impressive machinery.

Route information was issued 90 minutes before start time, which for us at No. 88 meant two minutes before the first car left the fourcourt at 11.15 p.m.

A short run out to North Rigton was followed by the first of 13 competitive sections before the selectives. For the first few miles my calling of directions was not quite up to the mark and by TC7 we had overshot at three or four junctions and consequently over-taken the same Imp three or four times.

Retirements came thick and fast, and a couple of times I thought it was our turn. Approaching TC 10 the car decided it wanted to hide in the long grass at the side of the road, Ken was determined that it wouldn't, so, for a hair-raising 20 yards he and the car argued about it, and thankfully Ken won. Soon after, at Skyreholme Bank the car attacked what we thought was a wall. So when we arrived at TC 13 I asked what modifications had been effected to the rear end. The reply I got was "None! it's a Vauxhall!" know a lot about cars these marshalls. It turned out that we had been saved by a small grass bank. Skyreholme Bank claimed at least three cars in the course of the rally, including an RS 2000 that had become an integral part of the wall it had attacked. Before the selectives I collected 4 fails for us by making up 4 minutes at a neutral time control, I won't do that again, I hope.

On selective one we turned in a reasonable time, but on selective two our troubles began. Ken was experiencing excessive brake pedal travel and could only get second gear if he went via first. We completed the first three selectives without mishap but as we approached the finish of selective four we could not find the appropriate slot although we did find a quarry. From a report in MN I had marked the spot "BS" meaning "Bad Slot" but I could remember what it meant. We failed selective 4 and went on to petrol.

On the way to petrol we were considering retiring. At petrol Ken adjusted the brakes and we decided that our all drum set-up (very sophisticated) with standard linings would not last the distance. We decided to miss the last two selectives and a few time controls and aim for a finish. This we did, we rejoined the route at TC 24 and completed all the following sections actually cleaning one section and picking up an extra fail for a wrong approach at TC38.

We arrived at the finish at the Chequers Inn, Bishop Thornton and viewed some of the much modified machinery. Even the winning car did not escape damage, Ian Harrison having bent the front and rear offside wings on an object or objects unknown.

Harrison/Ainsworth ran out winners by almost two minutes, having taken fastest time on all six selectives. Ken and I with our 17 fails finished 45th of the 45 finishers and 20th novice.

Our first rally, it won't be our last.

KEN BROWN

ALAN BROWN Viva STU 469L

TOUR OF MULL 1977

GEOFF ROTHWELL and ANDREW GREGSON

Mull gets into your blood. It got into mine in 1973, and ever since then it's only been a question of time before I DID MULL.

Every year since, I've been there but only as a spectator or marshall. Every year since, I've said "Next year, definately next year I'll do Mull".

Last year the weather finally made up my mind for me. After standing for 9 hours in the dark and pouring rain, holding my digital which refused to work (something to do with it being full of water they said) I decided it had to be — 1977 YEAR OF ACTION

They say "one volunteer is worth ten pressed men" well, that's what I got; one volunteer. His name is Andrew Gregson and in early Summer 77 he knew as much about Rally Navigation as I did about Rally Driving; nothing that is. Not a very bright prospect you may think, add to that the fact that I didn't have a suitable car, and that not very bright prospect looks decidedly black.

The search started for something to replace my Bog Standard AVENGER. I wanted something different; different to an ESCORT that is. But don't get me wrong, I have nothing against Mr. Ford, he makes exceedingly good cars — but there are so many of them. I didn't want to cut and butcher the Avenger but time was running out. So I sent for all the usual goodies from Chrysler Comps. Which arrived just as we finished the summer holidays in St. Tropez, but that's another story.

My mate, Dave the Demon Welder duly started burning paint off, melting trim and following Andy Dawsons excellent welding by numbers articles in back numbers of C.C.C. and several late nights and weekends of stick a plate here stick a plate there she was back on her wheels and looked absolutely Bog Standard. It was rapidly becoming obvious that this job was going to take longer than the time available. This is where Pete Lord stepped in. He accompanied me on my first Mull excursion in 73 catching the bug just as badly. This year he was all set to make the trip again but because of his business it had to be cancelled. He offered the use of his premises at Vale Street Garage, Bacup which I accepted like a shot. Free advice and frequent practical help sped the job along; even so the car was only finished at 10-30 p.m. on THURSDAY 13th OCTOBER, At midnight the same night the gear was all loaded and three heavily laden cars set off for Mull.

The trip to Scotland took the place of shake down trials for both me and the car. The only problem we did have was a plug which burnt out. This turned out to be the only mechanical problem all weekend.

Having driven through the night and had little sleep for the last six weeks or so, our planned recce of the island never took place. The next thing I remember is waking up on Saturday morning to hectic activity, scrutineering, checking over the car, arranging service points, signing on and generally worrying myself sick. My state of controlled panic contrasting with the apparent calm within No.45 as Collin and Andrew waited their turn to start. We had to wait another hour for our start time, and that hour must rate as one of the longest on record. When you start at No. 115 out of 120 the place is dead, and you wish you were. Almost all the other crews are out on the road, the spectators are well established in the forests, no crowds to wave you off, just a thump on the roof and the realisation that this is where you find out if it is all worthwhile.

The afternoon section on Mull is a superb thrash through two forests and then a tarmac selective. At the end of the two forest stages we had a stop to change to tarmac tyres - (I know rubber ones would have been better, but they were all I could get at the time). When I got out of the car my legs were not working properly, my mouth was like the Sahara Desert and my hands were dripping wet. It sounds like the symptoms of Swamp Fever, but it's actually only the after effects of a large dose of Adrenalin. Back in Tobermory I was a changed person, I couldn't wait until midnight + 15 when it all started again.

continued

The night section comprises 13 Tarmac Selectives, 4 Forest Stages and 2 Tarmac Stages. The weather was dry and everyone said it was going to be fast. Fast it was for some, Bean doing his 2 wheel Wall of Death act most of the night. Too fast for others, the carnage was heavy, only 53 finishers.

Generally accepted as being the section which decides the event is the second night selective from Dervaig for 23 miles down the west coast of the island, run again later in the opposite direction and again a third time near the end of the event with a change of route at Torloisk; Messrs. Brennan and Lord please note, turn right at 47/ 412454. Over such a distance it is obvious that quite a few crews will be caught and passed by the quicker lads. We managed to catch and pass 3 on the first trip down and were caught ourselves by two others, one of which was a local crew. I was resigned to the fact that they knew the roads when to my great satisfaction about 5 miles further on we re-passed them - admittedly they were in a ditch at the time, but it still counts, The other one to pass us was No. 113 a Clan, he was so much faster on the straights I just couldn't keep him in sight but by the end of the event he had totted up 11 fails, a classic case of the Tortoise and the Hare.

Two more smooth tarmac selectives follow before the very rough remains of the Glenmore old road where we were unlucky to catch the car in front who thought the passage control was the finish and was touring along at 10 - 15 m.p.h. and would not pull over. The marshall was very sympathetic and kindly gave us the same time but that didn't really pacify me. Luckily T.C. I was next with ample time for a brew a butty and a tyre change as Fishnish Forest followed the re-start.

Our service crew deserve a mention here. They were Keith who provided the service barge, by way of his company Escort Estate, Barbara who didn't want him out of her sight for 4 whole days and who created hot soup and beefburgers at service points (there's nothing like being organised), Geoff who provided most of the equipment and Dave the Demon Welder, who came along even though B.O.C. were on strike and he had no gas. To all concerned, many thanks.

By the time No. 115 reached the next Stage in Fishnish Forest the loose top dressing had been cut into two tramlines, so the car virtually steered itself. Underneath were transverse ruts about a foot apart and a foot deep which almost broke the car in two.

A much smoother Stage led to T.C. 2 before the first South to North trip up the 23 mile Selective and back to Tobermory. Another tarmac Selective from Tobermory ran along the East coast towards Salen, but the journey was broken by a re-run of the two afternoon Forest Stages, Lettermore 1 & 2. Credit must be given where credit is due; on Lettermore 2 run in the darkness Collin pulled out the stops to take 10th fastest. I hope it wasn't this which went to his head, but on the next Forest Stage shortly after T.C. 3 he had an off which cost him several minutes but luckily very little damage to the car. It was this Stage which I was dreading, as it was billed as a re-run of the rough Fishnish Forest.

As it turned out the organisers altered the route for the second run which was much smoother and faster.

Service followed at Caignure before the run back to Tobermory, all on tarmac and virtually a reverse of the route up to T.C. I with the slight exception of that infamous right turn at Torloisk.

We were happy at this stage to continue for a finish when at the end of the penultimate selective all braking effect ceased. It was 07 - 10 and we had until 07 - 50 to cover the 7 or 8 miles back to the finish within Total Lateness. I decided to drive slowly up and down the road for 20 minutes or so to get some cold dawn air around the brakes, before tackling the switchback which forms the road to Tobermory. In the end it took 17 secs. longer than our earlier time for the same section but at least we finished within our fail time.

We were pleased to be classified as finishers on our first event and even more pleased to be placed 39th overall when results were posted.

The next job is to get a few more horses out of the motor which is as yet Standard apart from twin 40's, then we'll see if we can catch a few of those Escorts.

Post RAC Snippets.

Timo has signed to drive for Fiat next year. Ove Anderson has Henry Liddon as co-driver in a Toyota Corolla for '78.

Blomqvist is open for drives next year - rumoured to be buying Cleggs Volvo, as 'Cleggy' is investing in an opal fruit!

Clark and assistance from Ford to Brookes and Elsmore in GP4 Escorts are doing the '78 RAC championship.

Opel next year are running a GP5 car rumoured to have 4 pots, 16 valves, fuel injected 275 bhp! 5 speed box car available for an up and coming lad. Did you hear Pond in his TR7 had clutch slip in Kielder - made up time to service halt and found out their service crew hadn't got a spare clutch plate! An all night session was in store for the Opel mechanics even before the start from Wembley the following morning - took the head of Danielsons engine, found a slipped liner, sent to Bradford for a new engine - completed it for 03.00 hrs and flywheel promptly fell off, repaired and put car in parce ferme.

Question - How did they not have to put the car in parce ferme the night before? (Danielson came 10th).

Fancy doing 100 mph along a forest stage with a letter box size opening for a windscreen (cos it had been rolled!), one puncture on the right hand side of the car and one wheel completely missing from the left hand side? Eklund in his Saab did it!

Plum Tyndall — The editor of the successful Lombard RAC Leader official newspaper quoted Ari Vatanen as having said "The Observer may well be ahead of the Times, but the Times is ahead of the Express" — until he rolled and was reported being towed out of a stage!

P.S. A Very Merry Christmas to all our readers - from the Committee.

P.J.W.

It's Very Nearly Ready

Following our unfortunate high speed argument with a boulder in the depths of Kielder forest last October, the ensuing time has been spent re-building the car and quite a job it has proved to be.

First of all, a new standard body-shell was acquired with Skoda's help. Peter Sykes from Fourways Garage of Osset then spent the best part of 100 hours stripping off the underseal, and seam welding and double skinning the new shell. Following this, a new standard wiring loom was fitted and modified where necessary and the dash assembled from parts rescued from the old car. New brake, clutch and fuel lines were fitted in the interior of the car and tubes welded into the shell to act as connections for the flexible aeroquip hose used to pipe water from the engine at the rear of the car, to the radiator at the front. The roll-cage was then fitted followed by a 2½ k.g. fire-eater piped-in fire extinguisher with nozzles in the front passenger and engine compartments of the vehicle.

Meanwhile work was going on the various body panels. Right from the start we had decided that we must build the car as light as possible. We acquired glass-fibre front wings and an aluminium bonnet, and the doors had their glass and wind-up mechanisms removed, prior to extensive lightening and fitting of fixed perspex windows. At the rear of the car we have made and fitted new rear wings with wide wheel arches, lightened the back panel and fitted a glass-fibre engine lid. We also have a perspex rear window waiting to be fitted as soon as the paint is dry.

continued

A new front axle with strengthened wishbones and new Bilstein shock absorbers was fitted at the front followed by the gearbox and new rear suspension. The engine was re-built with new liners, piston rings, flywheel, clutch etc., and fitted together with a new and strengthened rear engine crossmember. Our last two rallies showed that the car was only just quiet enough to pass the noise test, so the exhaust system has been re-designed and fitted with a larger silencer which is located on the inside of the rear panel. We had also had problems with air filters last summer and so this has been changed too in an effort to keep dust out of the engine. Together with a multiple-spark ignition system we are hoping that the new engine will be slightly up on the 90 bhp at the rear wheels of the old unit.

The big problem we have had is persuading someone with the necessary skills to paint the body for us (at the right price of course).

This has been dragging on for over 4 months but I am pleased to report that Rodney Driver, a friend who has helped in the past with service arrangements (and even co-driven once) has taken over the job and the shell is now painted, — the job was finished today, and a first rate job it is too.

The worst is now over and though many small jobs remain to be done we are looking forward to the next round on July 23rd, which we hope to be competing in - it really will be great to be rallying again! - and finally our thanks to:-

Fourways Garage
Dealer Team Skoda
Pirelli
Valvoline
Schofield and Brown
Bilstein shock absorbers — who are all helping again this year.

HOWARD BULCOCK 26/6/77

P.S. By the time you read this, the photograph of his car will have appeared in C.C.C. under their Pirelli/C.C.C. Stage Championship Title. And a nice looking car it is too.

(Ed)

HILLCLIMB — JULY 10th

MG Car Club laid on a hillclimb at Baitings Dam on that date and my brother Rob — White had entered in class 2. Considering there were only four in his class and he came last in his class is not an indication of his driving ability! — let me explain, the other three cars consisted of a 1275 S and two other Escorts all suitable modified with different tyres, cards, LSD's, lowered and stiffened suspensions parts etc., whilst 'our kid' had his bog standard Group 1 Escort Sport with Avon tyres (they didn't perform too badly considering they were mine!) a totally useless back end suspension that you wouldn't even find in Mothercare, and a driver that had never driven up the course at speed, but still managed to come within a second of the third placed driver.

The day dawned in a most promising manner with the sun peering through the windows whilst I was making the butties and coffee etc. before joining the lads — Steve and Martin Beamish (Martin competing in their mini) later on during the morning. Having established that our kid's car couldn't compete against the other cars in his class without too much of a modification, save for having the correct tyre pressures, points and plug gaps, I resigned myself to watching the antics of the other competitors winding their way up the side of the mountain. Mind you, when I eventually got there in the morning first practice was under way and I thought the event had been organised by the Morgan Car Club and not MG, there being an abundance of that particular breed. But the most beautiful sight I saw (apart from the talent) was Palmer Hewardine laying twin tracks of rubber some thirty feet long from the exit of paddock corner as he hurled his ex-Piers Courage Mustang up the hill with great verve giving the odd toot on the horn as he passed the crowd!

continued

The event was very Mickey Mouse, going through plenty of ploughed fields, cow sheds, muck middens and between hen cotes. After the third stage I was thinking about packing it in as the stages were so rough and silly. Anyway the day wore on and I eventually started enjoying myself, especially through the derelict Army Camp - where on my fourth time round I managed second fastest time to Robin Farrington - beating Peter Thompson in the process. Selwyn was nowhere to be seen. Ian Stansfield was also on this event in his twin cam, merrily creasing and bending his ex - Jim Stanton shell with gay abandon. The last stage proved to be the most exciting. Me and AB went over a series of 'yumps' and on the very last one, flew off the road and landed somewhere in a ploughed field. (As luck would have it we should have been in the ploughed field as the route turned off the road anyway). This little drama was soon remedied when I enquired of Mr. Barlow - "Which way do we go now?" and the only guide he could give me was to head for a bunch of spectators stood in the middle of the field where the route or we were supposed to go. Selwyn on the other hand got the 'yumps' all out of sequence and landed the car very heavily on its front panel, bending the lamp brackets under the sump guard. Ian Stansfield just put one or two more creases in his shell. Selwyn took first prize for his attempts because when asking his navigator (Potty Stotty) about the incident he said "All I could see was the ploughed field and no horizon"

We all got to the end of the event intact and arrived at the Preston Crest Motel about tea-time (or pub opening time) and went to get fed and watered and await the results. After much chopping and changing of times, Selwyn ended up 28th overall with some dubious stage times: Ian Stansfield took 18th overall - with a lack of brakes: and me and AB took 4th overall - beaten again only by the "Big Smokers" - so I was smiling again.

Plans for next year are centered around a class car for the RAC National Championship, or a crack at the 1300 Escort Sport Challenge.

"DOOWREKNAWSTI"

An Irish woman writes to her son in England

Dear SON,

This is your dear old mother writing to you. There is a lot of interesting news since you left. It is wet but not as when it was real wet. I am writing this slow because I know you can't read fast.

Excuse the writing I had an accident, burned my fingers in boiling water - it was all my own fault - should have felt the water before I put my fingers in it.

I'm feeling better since you went away. Went to see a doctor and got a wonderful medicine for my deafness. I took a dose on Friday night and it was so good that I heard from Uncle Hughie in Australia on the Saturday morning. I feel 25 years younger and your father is delighted. Your brother Ernie came crying from school this evening because all his pals have got new clothes; we can't afford to buy him a new outfit so we are going to buy him a new hat and let him look out of the window.

We had a row with the electric light company, it ended in a draw. We got no light and they got no money. It is very dark but not as dark as when it was real dark. We are hard up, son, send us a few quid, it will only cost you fivepence.

Your father met the landlord at the dogs the other night. He asked him about last week's rent. Your father said to forget about last week's rent and to worry about this week's - it was running in the third race.

Our neighbours the Browns started to keep pigs and we only got the wind of them this morning. Friday was wet, we went to bed early.

Mr. Higgins got his appendix out and a new kitchen sink in. The cat had four kittens in your fathers hat. I put them in a box in case they grew up round shouldered. The undertaker called and said that if the last instalment isn't paid on your mother-in-law up she'd come. Your father has worms and gone fishing. We heard that Annie passed away, your old Granny died and Fanny married a butcher, so now you have no Annie, No Granny and no Fanny.

Your father has a good job now, the first in 10 years. We are a great deal better off than we were. Your father gets £10 every Thursday so we do a bit of fixing up. We bought one of the new fangled things they call a bathroom. You hear of them in some houses. It is put in by a man called a plumber. One side of the room is a big long thing what you used to feed the pigs in before you went away. We jump into that and wash all over.

Just near that is a small one, they call it a sink. That is for light washing such as hands and face. Ah! but over in the corner is the nicest contraption of all. You put one foot in and wash it clean, then pull a little chain and you get fresh water for the other foot. Two covers came with it and we hadn't any use for them in the bathroom, so I'm using one as a bread-board and the other has a hole in it, so, we framed your grandad's picture. They sent us a big roll of writing paper with it, this is what I'm using now to write to you. Take care of yourself.

Yours, mummy.



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