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MOTOR NEWS:

Along Hastings front rolls a stately procession. More than fifty veteran cars are completing a journey that recalls a drive in 1909 when a battalion of Guards was driven from London to the coast. The 1955 journey began at R.A.F. station Kidbrooke in Kent. Once again Guardsmen were the passengers. Despite icy conditions the old-timers were soon ticking over - or, in some cases, shaking, rattling and rolling.

A 1904 De Dion Bouton was among the starters. The drive was part of the Automobile Association's jubilee celebrations, for it was the A.A. which organised the original run to prove that troops could be moved by motor car. One of the Old "B" type London buses came out of retirement for the trip.

Of the fifty-five that started the journey, only one fell by the wayside. A 1908 White Steamer nearly boiled itself dry with the effort, but still kept going. But whilst the Steamer was hiding away under its own cloud, one of the so-called passengers was finding out that a 1904 Speedwell wasn't - well - very speedy. The following day it was the turn of the veteran motor-cycles. From Tattenham Corner, 234 of them were made ready for the annual "Pioneer Run" to Brighton.

Then they were on their way. A 56 year old Deschamps needed a helping hand, but was quickly off on its own. Five years its junior was a solo Quadrant. Then an 1898 Romain was away, and soon the road to Sussex, already well packed with Sunday traffic, was filled with the strange sights and sounds of half a century ago.

Only twelve of the entrants failed to reach Brighton, and a record number received awards for making the drive without mishap. So, even if they have got whiskers there's still plenty of life in the old 'uns yet.