

PRESS INFORMATION

NUFFIELD

ORGANIZATION

MORRIS · MG · RILEY · WOLSELEY MORRIS-COMMERCIAL · NUFFIELD UNIVERSAL TRACTORS · S.U.

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1000 MILES TRIAL 1900

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION - 23rd April to 12th May, 1960

At 0930 hours on Saturday, 23rd April, 1960, the only known surviving car of the 1000-Miles Motor Vehicle Trial of 1900 will set off from the Royal Automobile Club in London to mark the Diamond Jubilee of this landmark in the motoring history of this country by attempting to follow the identical route of the original trial at the same average speed as it did sixty years ago.

This car, the Wolseley Voiturette of 1899, owned by the British Motor Corporation will be driven by Mr. St. John C. Nixon, the veteran motorist and motoring historian, who, as a boy of 14, took part in the original trial. He will be accompanied by Mr. Arthur Ayscough of B.M.C. Service Ltd.

Ten years ago the same partnership drove the same car from John O'Groats to Lands End and back to Oxford to mark the Golden Jubilee of the original Trial.

Enclosed in this wallet are the following:-

1. Detailed Itinerary of the Route.
2. Specification of the Wolseley Voiturette.
3. Description of the Wolseley Voiturette (by permission of the Auto-car.)
4. Photograph of the car with Mr. St. John C. Nixon and Mr. A. Ayscough.
5. Biographical notes.

With the Compliments of the Nuffield Organisation, Cowley, Oxford.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST FOUR WHEELED WOLSELEY CAR 1899 (BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE AUTOCAR)

It was in 1899 that the first four-wheel Wolseley emerged; it cost £270.

This car was the direct result of an Engineer's experience in other fields of engineering. Take the engine as an example. Horizontal, and a single-cylinder, it had an inlet valve opened by the depression on the inlet stroke, and closed when the piston began to return on the compression stroke. Only the exhaust valve was operated mechanically, by a cam on a shaft running along for all to see. The cylinder had a wet liner of cast iron making a watertight joint at the top of the water jacket through a conical machined seat, and at the other end bedding down upon a proper packing. The crankcase into which this liner fitted was of bronze, and later of aluminium alloy.

A detachable cast iron head carried the valves. The inlet valve seat was not in the head proper, but in a special detachable chamber, part of the inlet pipe. The piston was of cast iron with three rings, and the tubular connecting rod was secured to the piston by a gudgeon pin held at either end from the piston crown by what amounted to eye-bolts, of which the nuts were in the combustion space above the piston top.

Another point of interest was that the crankshaft was not only substantial, but also had large plain bearings and a flywheel at each end. On the exposed camshaft there were gears which drove a water pump, and this pump circulated water round the wet liner, the cylinder head itself, and then to a

water tank provided with two tiers of finned cooling tubes to form, as it were, a double radiator.

Since electrical ignition was preferred to the much-vaunted tube, a contact maker was driven from the end of the camshaft, rather a crude contact maker by later knowledge, and this was wired up to an accumulator and coil, carefully housed out of the way of oil and dirt under the front seat, whilst the plug was in the centre of the cylinder head. A little later on the coil was moved to the dashboard.

As the engine, which was of $4\frac{1}{2}$ -in. bore by 5-in stroke, ran at a maximum of 750 r.p.m., and gave $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 h.p. though later this was increased to 5 h.p., the lubrication system was simple. A small oil tank mounted on the dashboard fed pipes leading to the bearings and crankcase through what were called "sight-feed" lubricators.

In days when the argument between the merits of the wick or surface carburettor and the jet was extremely violent it is interesting to find that from the beginning Wolseleys had a single-jet carburettor.

Again, the modern critic has to remember that the legal limit of speed was set at 12 m.p.h. and although some vehicles, this one for example, could attain 20 m.p.h. over a timed mile, the relatively low pace permitted transmissions which would not be entertained to-day. Partly because of that, and partly because of the simplicity and lightness, the earlier Wolseleys of this type had a belt drive from the crankshaft to the gearbox, soon to give place to a roller-chain and then to an inverted-tooth chain as the engine power increased.

The gearbox itself was a plain, normal three-speed standard fitting. The shafts were on roller bearings and the main shaft, driven by the engine, drove the layshaft through the gears, whilst the layshaft, through a spur gear differential, in turn drove sprockets for the chains to the rear wheels. There was no necessity to provide for what to-day we call a direct drive, nor was a clutch necessary, because the belt could be moved gradually from a free to a power pulley to obtain

the necessary effect.

The design foreshadowed the possibility of the gate for the gear lever, as the lever which shifted the gears moved sideways as well as forward in a series of long slots. The sideways movement meshed the required gear, the forward movement pushed the gearbox back on a pivot, and so by tightening the belt took up the drive.

Naturally the steering on the earliest vehicle of this type was by tiller, but the steering mechanism was more involved and certainly better than usual. The tiller projected from a shaft running up the dashboard, but below this shaft was a gear which operated a horizontal shaft with universal joints, in turn operating the worm of an encased worm and worm wheel on the front axle itself.

Chain adjustment was effected by pushing back the rear axle by means of adjustable radius rods, which were a trap for the unmechanical in that it was possible to reset the rear axle out of parallel with the front.

With the compliments of the Nuffield Organisation,

Cowley, Oxford.