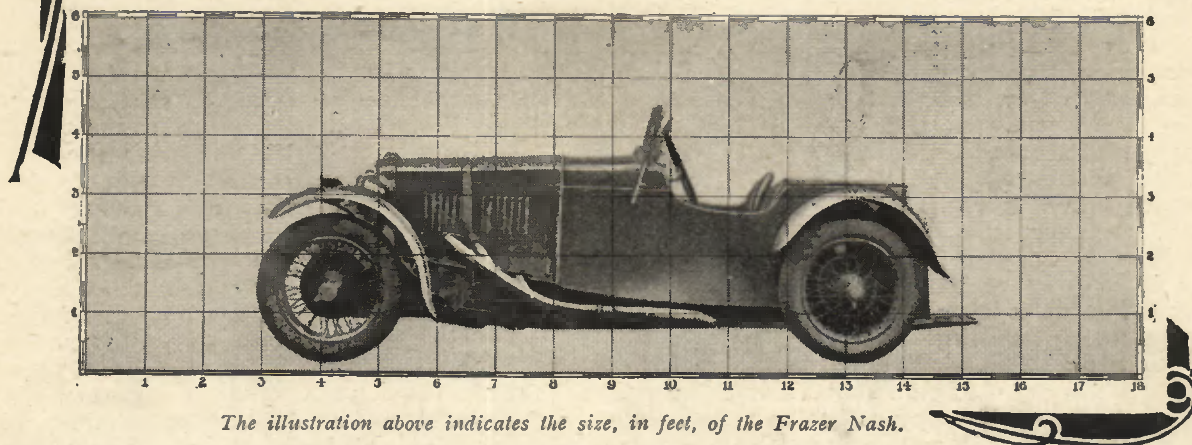


# Articles



# The AUTO CAR ROAD TESTS



The illustration above indicates the size, in feet, of the Frazer Nash.

## No. 674 (*Post-War Series*).—FRAZER NASH BOULOGNE II

WHILE each year A.F.N., Ltd., the makers of Frazer Nash cars, have been developing the unorthodox design which forms the basis of the car, yet the latest model is so far in advance of anything previously achieved that a test run in it is an experience to be remembered.

On paper there is nothing startling about the specification of the car. Finger-tip control, dimming device, even an electric screen-wiper, were missing on the actual car tested. This means little. The Frazer Nash sells on performance, and one has only to drive the car to realise that it cannot be called dear at its price. For a twelve horse-power, unsupercharged car, the acceleration and speed are amazing, and it is difficult to imagine that any car could put up higher averages under normal traffic conditions. Eighty miles an hour is quickly reached, on either third or top, and, under favourable conditions, thanks to a high top gear, over ninety miles an hour can be obtained without vibration. Swooping down a falling gradient one realises the real point of the type name of Falcon given to the car.

The Frazer Nash has, of course, a final transmission by chain. While few other makes now retain this form of design, the manufacturers see no reason to depart from it. In practice, the chain drive is light, reliable, cheap to renew if necessary; it makes an alteration of gear ratio to suit any conditions a simple proceeding; and, finally, it provides the easiest gear change that any car not fitted with an automatic selecting device could well possess.

The car tested was actually one of the three which ran in the last Tourist Trophy Race; but, apart from the addition of two small racing screens and a special carburetter setting, it was an absolutely standard car.

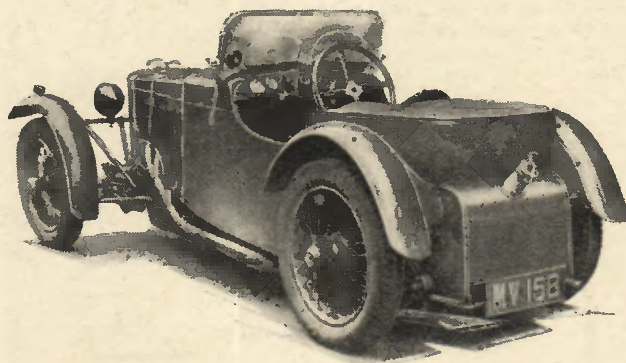
Constructionally, the de-

sign is simple. A four-cylinder o.h.v. engine, equipped with twin carburetters, provides the motive power. The drive passes, via a bevel drive and the chains, to a solid rear axle, no differential being provided. At very low speeds, and when manoeuvring the car on full lock, the absence of a differential can be felt, but on the road it is not noticeable, while for trials work and freak hill-climbing the solid axle is a real asset.

As in former years, the gear lever and hand brake are mounted outside the body. No ratchet is provided, though one can easily be fitted. Legally, this is necessary. To prevent the accidental engagement of reverse a spring-loaded catch is fitted inside the car. This must first be lifted. This is the only control which is not immediately accessible, since it is necessary to reach down through the steering wheel to operate it. For the rest, the driving position is excellent. Entrance and exit are not too easy, no doors being provided; but once in his seat the driver finds the wheel and brake and gear levers in exactly their right places. The pneumatic upholstery is comfortable, and the seat gives good support to the back. A two-seater body was fitted to the car tested, the rear compartment being used to house the spare wheel, the tools, hood, and collapsible hood frame.

The fuel feed is maintained by an electric pump, conveniently placed, with its switch behind the driver's right shoulder. As an emergency alternative a pressure feed is provided. Both systems work admirably, and there is no suggestion of starvation at full throttle.

To say that the road performance of the car is out of the ordinary is to make an under-statement. The road-holding is excellent, thanks to powerful friction-type shock absorbers. While hard at low speeds





## "THE AUTOCAR" ROAD TESTS—(continued)

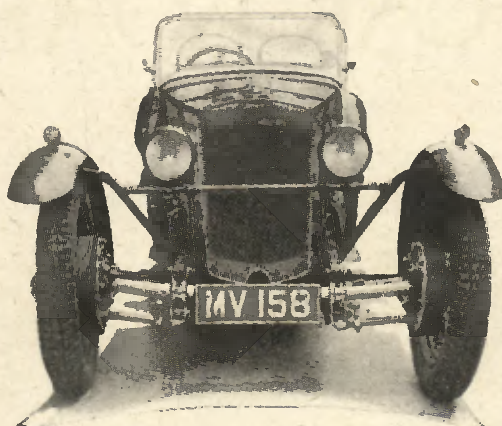
the suspension improves progressively until, as the speed approaches the seventy and eighty mark, the car holds the road in true racing fashion.

Steering is high-g geared, and consequently on the heavy side at low speeds; but, while transmitting road shocks, it gives a feeling of absolute security when the car is travelling fast. As a result, the extraordinary acceleration and speed of the car can be enjoyed to the full. Actually, the car is intentionally over-g geared, so that it is impossible to over-drive the engine on top gear, although 5,000 r.p.m. is obtainable on the gears; but, since a speed of nearly ninety miles an hour, corresponding to about 4,300 r.p.m., is available, few owners would wish for any alteration. It is, however, one of the merits of the car that any required ratio can be specified, according to the work the car will be called upon to do.

That the minimum comfortable speed on top gear is 16 m.p.h. is of no moment to the sporting driver, since all the gears are equally silent, and changes up and down can be made with complete ease with or without the use of the clutch. The first ratio of 10 to 1, combined with a powerful clutch spring, makes traffic driving rather tiring. Most owners would probably specify wider-spaced ratios. Yet even on a 10 to 1 gear no normal gradient has any terrors for the Frazer Nash. Brooklands test hill, with a maximum of 1 in 4, was surmounted at 3,500 r.p.m. from a standing start.

The standard acceleration test of 10 to 30 m.p.h. gives but a poor idea of the power available, since the engine is turning over at only 1,150 r.p.m. on first gear at the lower speed, but even so the figure—four seconds—is extremely creditable.

On the car tested the road clearance was low enough to cause the under-shield to strike the ground on rough roads; but, on the principle that it is easier to raise a chassis than to lower it, the makers design the car with a minimum clearance, which can then be in-



creased by packing beneath the springs to suit individual needs. With this alteration made the car is quite suitable for trials work, in which sphere, indeed, the make has won its chief fame.

Many potential purchasers might fight shy of a machine of this type, considering that if it is capable of putting up a good show in a road race it must be too fierce and intractable for everyday use on the road. The impression gained after several hundred miles of ordinary traffic work did not support this idea. The touring type plugs fitted

showed no signs of oiling up, and gave no trouble at speed on the road. Actually it needed three "flat out" laps at Brooklands before pre-ignition began to be felt.

Weather protection is quite adequate to the type of car, though a screen wiper is certainly a necessity for serious touring. The engine always started easily. It was no necessary to employ the hand pressure feed, and even if it was used, the pressure, once pumped up, was maintained for a considerable time.

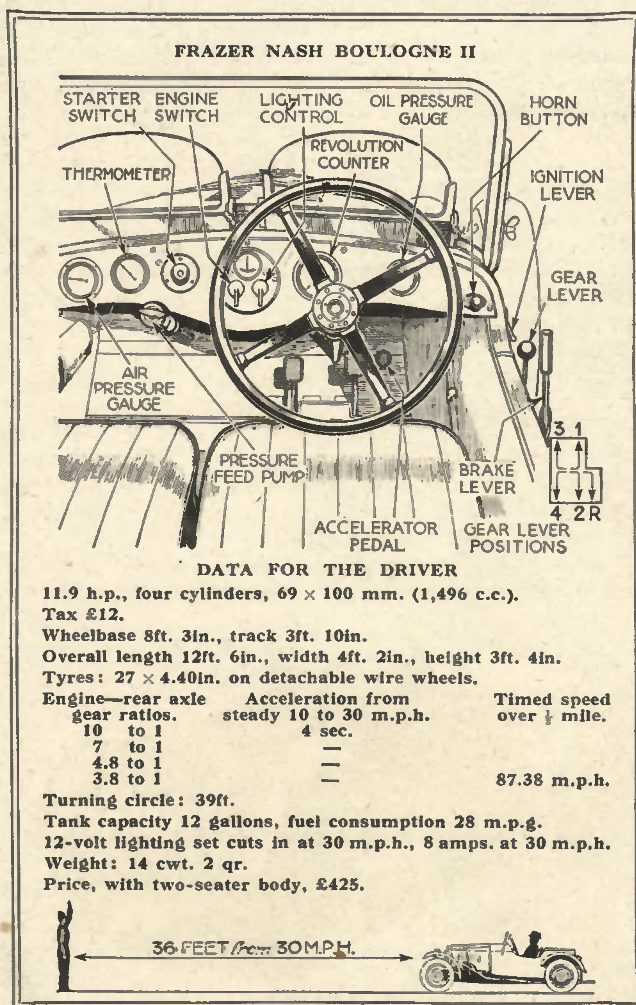
Moreover, unlike some sports cars, the Frazer Nash

retains its tune to a remarkable degree. When the timed speed was taken the car had covered 5,000 miles since decarbonisation, while a later test after the car had covered yet another thousand miles in the hands of a number of different drivers showed no falling-off in the speed available.

It is hardly necessary to say that absence of doors and a high first gear do not make the car suitable for short traffic journeys with many stops. No one buys a fast sports car of this type for shopping expeditions.

But for work such as high-speed touring over long distances one could hardly want a faster or more fascinating car. If there is any design on the market, of any size, at £425, which could even hold the Frazer Nash, it would undoubtedly have to be a remarkably good car.

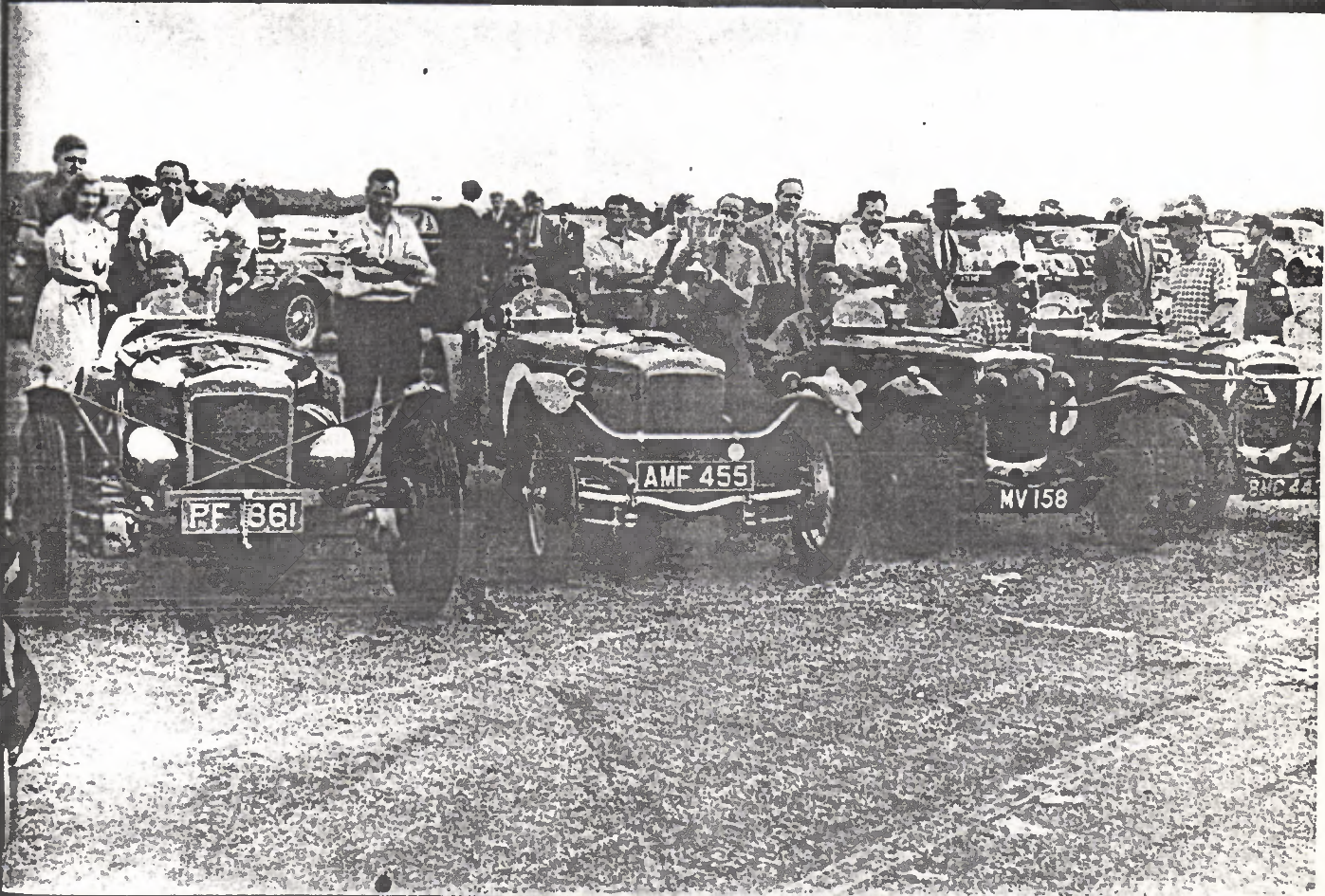
The car was submitted for test by the manufacturers, A. F. N., Ltd., Falcon Works, London Road, Isleworth.







# CHAIN GANG GAZETTE



No 81

APRIL 1987

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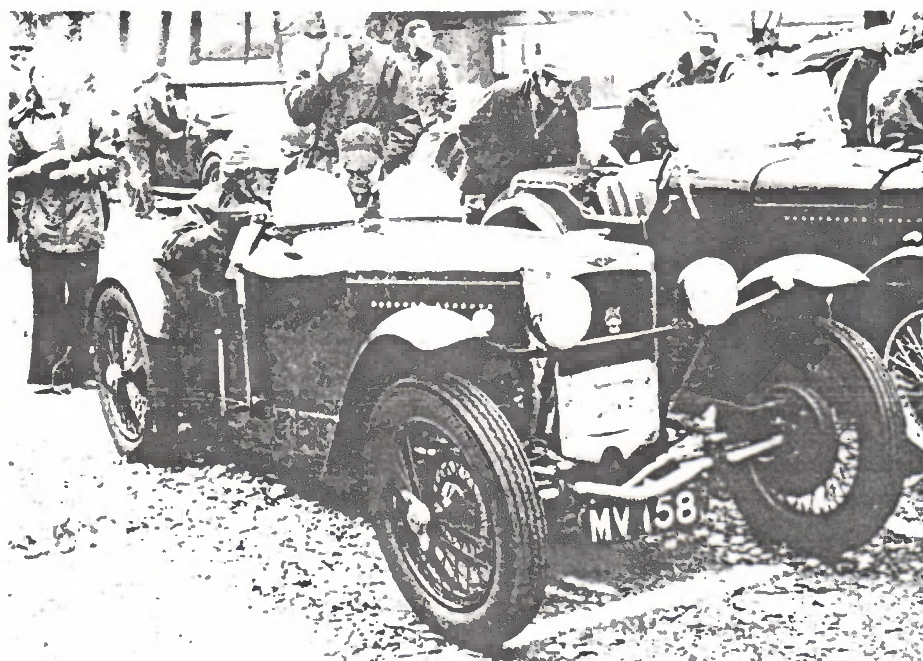




climb on the first raid and in so doing found ourselves at the top of the Giau pass moving from tarmac to plain gravel which felt just like ball-bearings as we slid down the other side. Interesting or frightening...not at all sure!

After all the partying we set off eastwards to find a small village on the Northern end of the Hallstater Zee in the Salzburg area of Austria, where my partner and his parents had been interned during World War I. This involved three more passes one of which was the Grossglockner, 2575m. The toll charge was so enormous the trip was almost aborted. Sadly there was little that looked familiar in that village, but what can you really expect, it was 1923 when he last visited that area.

Life again settled down, a few visitors from Down Under were either impressed or too polite to admit otherwise when given a quick run round the block in a sideways going car, the now regular VSCC picnics at Shuttleworth



2025

"Settling Down" on the 1974 Eastern Rally Photo: R.Sawers







Me taking Clifford and Iris into Bolzano 1969

1978 saw the Golden Jubilee of the ARDS TT Race and in company with DNV 951 the now much modified YW 9099 saloon, which had competed in the 1928 TT we joined in the celebrations which included three laps of the TT circuit. The thrash from the start to the first corner was a sight to behold. Piccadilly in the rush hour had nothing on this stampede, thankfully all the cars made it round that corner. We all got soaking wet including the many hundreds of spectators lining the circuit but it was just **FANTASTIC**. In hindsight it was a pity that no-one thought to take any times so I couldn't compare with my previous fastest lap of 68.2 mph.

By the time the next raid to Bolzano came round my now geriatric driver decided it would be more civilised to break the long journey to Heilbron/Langenburg with an overnight stop in the Luxembourg countryside and have a gentle run on the autobahn on the Saturday instead of 600 miles in one day. I had a very hairy experience following MV 1764 (Janet driving) from the hotel car park up to the schloss and arrived there quite out of breath trying to keep up. (these heavy footed ladies!!). Instead of climbing Stelvio again we set off to attack the passes we hadn't managed to

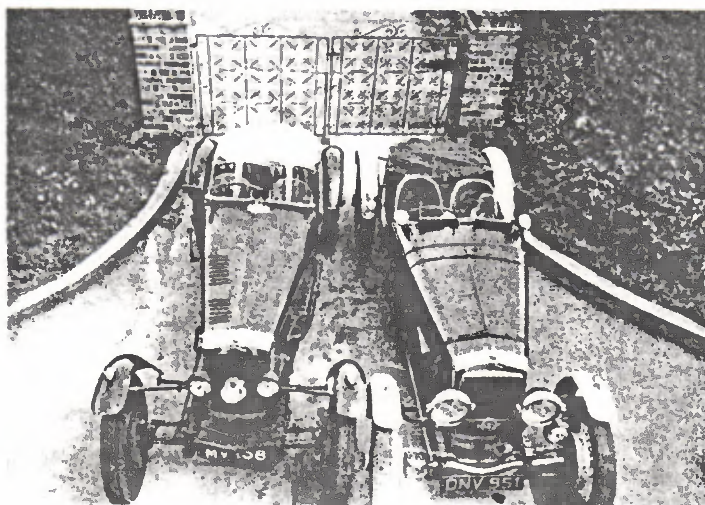




To my delight my partner did start to do some competition work entering a very early post-war VSCC meeting, my first since 1933, but without much success until the Nash Section decided to put it across the Aston Martins and went out and won the David Brown Trophy at its first competition in 1950. The winning team comprised PF 1861 (Derek Parker) AMF 455 (Bertie Brown) BMC 443 (Bill Bradley) and me. I also think the other Nash team came second. 1951 we raced at Castle Combe with Mike Hawthorne in a Riley and Bob Gerard in a post-war Nash. Bob Gerard was most impressed with the way I was coping with the wet and did mutter something about a straight swop. Nothing came of it and although my clumsy driver broke 3rd chain the first time he selected it we both enjoyed the five laps which due to the rain appeared to be one long slide from start to finish. A visit to VSCC Silverstone passed uneventfully but my first visit to VSCC Prescott was memorable if only because that Douglas Hull in his blown 1750 Alfa Coupe pipped us by 1/100 of second for third place... he had to buy the beer when we met at the Bulls Head at Fenny Stratford.

To go back to the fact that I am such a slim car I did wonder what would happen if and when my partners decided to ensure that there would always be an England. By this time of course the saloon Nash which would have been such a family asset had been sold off to Maurice, the body removed and the very fast DNV 491 appeared on the VSCC racing scene. I found that there was no need to worry as a small seat was made complete with wrap-around wind-

MV and the slimline saloon 20 years later circa 1960



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