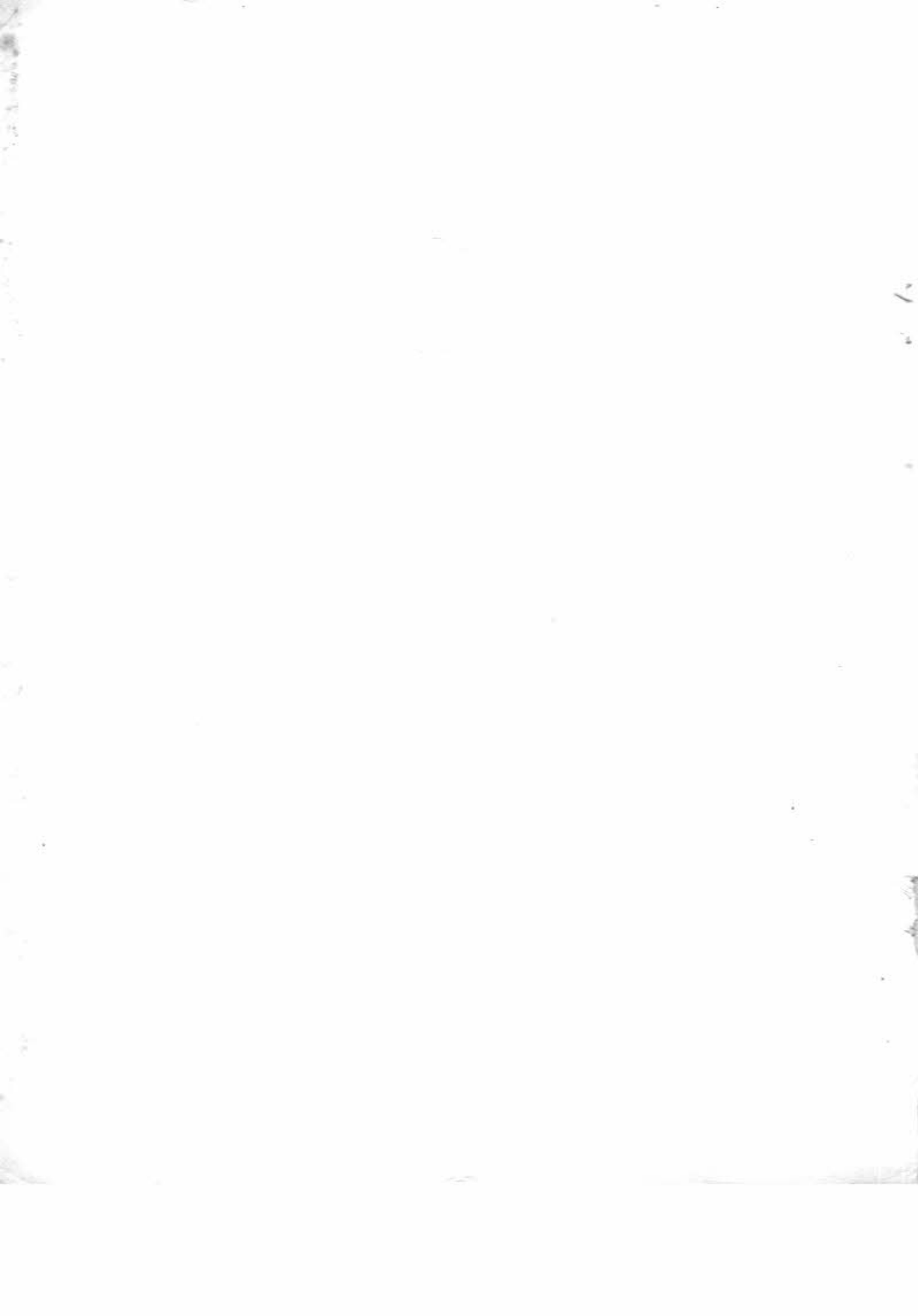




The Austral Alvist's Aide

BULLETIN
of the
ALVIS CAR CLUB
VICTORIA





" I MARRIED A VINTAGE ALVIS "

- by Alvispouse.

HOW do you think I felt, taking a dickey seat to a perambulating heap of junk of the dirtiest, smelliest, oiliest variety you ever saw? "Stamp out the Beetleback" - that's my cry from now on . . .

As you may have gathered, there is an addict in the house, which I was once kidded into believing was my province. I thought I kept the poor fool happy with my cooking, cuddling and cooing, but a nature you never suspected can gradually emerge and almost engulf you if you're not careful.

You don't need much experience to see all the signs of an attack coming on long before it has lead to action. The man of the house surrounds himself even more than before (if possible) with motoring magazines and Car Club Bulletins, and rushes every Saturday morning to 'The Age' and dips his nose deep into the 'Cars For Sale' Notices, muttering "That's a bargain", or "I know that absolute heap - he's asking a mint for it!" and so on.

Even more noticeable than this is his general air of vagueness: he goes visibly moody and can be found, at the most unexpected moments, staring into space and muttering disturbing phrases like "I could do a lot with her in a couple of weeks", or simply, "What an interesting body". All of which, of course, is enough to make any reasonable woman wonder.

The next step is also fairly easy to discern - if you're observant. Instead of the erstwhile air of wondering concentration, there is a general atmosphere of slight sheepishness. This usually occurs, I imagine, after one of those weekend afternoons when he left home and wouldn't say where he had gone. You can tell by these facts that The Deed Is Done, and that at any moment now you can hear the patter of tiny wheels. If you're wise, however, you'll keep mum about your suspicions, because he is planning to give you a surprise. How right he is!

The next Saturday morning then, he'll come into the kitchen, just when you've started washing the dishes, and say "Come outside now, dear. I've got something wonderful to show you." He seems to be brimming with long suppressed excitement and pride. You go out, expecting to see a 1955 Grey Lady at the very least. It turns out you're only about 30 years and £2000 off the mark.

You look up and down the road, but all you can see is a heap of litter that some inconsiderate dolt has left outside your front gate. There isn't anything else in view, excluding the Jones' new Holden two doors down. You gaze expectantly at your beloved, thinking it must be a hidden surprise. Encouraged by the gleam in your eye, he murmurs reverently, "Isn't she a beauty?"

Of course, the 'beauty' is that dratted heap of junk lying there, broken and dispirited in the gutter.

"She'll be perfect when I've worked on her a bit", he volunteers.

With an uncomfortable flash of intuition, you realise that for the next few weeks you can dress yourself up to the hilt and he isn't going to take a scrap of notice; naturally you're not nearly as interesting as a rare piece of vintage Alvis machinery. Taking your silence for mute wonder (which it is, of course, but not the kind he thinks) he waxes eloquent.

"Look at her line", he cries, with a sweeping gesture. "Old Smith-Clarke sure knew how to make a car look fit for real he-man motoring, and what a motor!". He comes to a halt, lost in admiration. You peer distastefully at the indescribably maze of bared wires, and unpolished metal parts, thick with the grime of years, and dripping dark black oil from every pore it possesses. He recovers after a while and admits that "she's a bit rough inside, but I'll soon fix that."

A bit rough! Choking with mirthless laughter, you stagger brokenly back into the house. You know now that there are bitter times ahead.

The day soon comes when you find a piece of engine in the kitchen, and he looks up darkly when you protest that he's getting oil on the tablecloth. The single grubby piece of newspaper he has placed underneath has soaked up the grime like super blotting paper, and it now coats everything it touches with a nasty, smelly smear. Then, after thoroughly cleaning the parts with petrol in the kitchen sink, so that all the plates etc. for weeks after reek of fumes, he begins to file away pitted castings and polish with hours of elbow grease and Brasso. You walk around the floor going 'grit, grit, grit' and marching little black flecks into the nice new hall carpet for months thereafter.

Then he races in to you crying "I've got the head off!! Come and have a look." You clutch your own head in agony and fear and rush out to see if he's carried out his threat to decapitate the dog, but it is apparently only something to do with the engine. He gets you to stand there and hold this heavy iron hunk up with a piece of wood, while he leaps up astride the radiator. Grabbing hold from that precarious position, he lunges with the head and jerks backward sharply, thus removing the seat of his trousers on the bunny on the front and decapitating it. Not to mention howls of gony and clutchings at the nether regions - but only after this dirty hunk of iron has been safely laid to rest. Later on, with the bright clean head back in place, he asks you to hold onto the rockers with a spanner, while he sets them, whatever that means. He then says to watch closely while he turns it on. You do, and he does, and that nasty copper pipe sticking just in front of you sends a sudden jet of sticky oil all over your dress and down your neck. It would indeed send you off your rocker. Tappet he says - he's right, and with a heavy sledge-hammer preferably!

Every week-end, you're driven nearly insane by the continued roaring (like an animal in pain) rrrrrrrr, rrrrrr, rrrrrrrrrrrrrr which he achieves by pressing the exhilarator. The whole thing is very trying indeed to say the least. You shrink inside your shell, a nobody. You might as well have married the flip-flop-flappin' 12/Snifty - then at least you would have known what to expect . . .

And the thing makes so much work for you. Almost every day there appear great grey smudges over the clean towels, and slimy black drips on the bathroom floor. He has no idea how they could have got there, of course. And the black shirt cuffs and jacket edges . . .

If you should let a word of protest or disparagement cross your lips, you'll be in trouble. The vintage Alvis is the most interesting, incredible, magnificent, remarkable machine it has ever been your dear one's good fortune to encounter. You're the first to agree that it's remarkable; it's certainly absolutely astonishing how anyone can get so worked up about such an old uncomfortable you-know-what. But he'll really be hurt if you should as much as hint at such a thing - he'll sink into a sulk for days, muttering darkly and obviously thinking harsh things.

There seems to be little appreciable difference in the 12/Snifty for some considerable time, but eventually, it begins to look almost like a car. Then you are invited to give the car an affectionate name. You can readily think of some choice appropriate ones, but quickly refrain from the temptation to utter them. You settle for something innocuous such as Egbert or Boadicea.

You are also amazed at the enormous collection of other Alvis Car Club maniacs who stand around at any odd hour and admire your man's handiwork, almost as though he had actually achieved something. There must really be one born every minute as they say.

In spite of your incredulity, you begin to bask a bit in the reflected glory. After all, you were good about it, and didn't complain as much as you should have - except that time when he used your new washing-up bowl to drain the hump ... sump ? ...

He has let you into all the secrets of his work (in fact he's talked about nothing else ad nauseum) and taken you out to look each time a new bit of the engine emerged from the chaos. You're certainly impressed with the way the engine now gleams like a new pin, and even the interior trim has a sort of well-worn glow about it. There's no doubt that with a lot of hard work Anyway, it did keep him quiet while he was doing it.

The first flush of love is over, and now he has time to turn to you and notice that you aren't too bad after all. He loses interest in the Alvis now that he's done all he can to it, and his enthusiasm is on the wane. The next stage is when he starts to say: "You know, I think something a bit faster than this might be fun. A good Speed Twenty perhaps. . . . This is only an old slug of a thing after all"

When you hear this, you'd better get out all your patience, dustcovers, floor cleaners and so on. He's in for another attack.

- - - - -

TD 21 & TE 21 SERVICE DATA

Mr. F. C. Brown, of Alvis Ltd. Service Department has supplied the Club with Service Data Sheets for these models and also a Spare Parts Catalogue. These will not be printed in "Alvic" because there are no TD or TE models as yet in the Club. There are reputed to be three TD 21s in Victoria, but actual contact has not been achieved with the owners. The Data Sheets and Catalogue may be inspected at the Clubrooms, or by application to the Spares Registrar, Mr. D. Muirton, 15/37 Domain Street, South Yarra (26 2337).

* Distorted S.U. Carburettor Flanges:

It is often found that inability to idle smoothly on cars such as the Speed Twenties and 25s. using triple S.U.s. can be traced to air leaks at either the throttle spindle and butterfly or at the manifold flange. The first requires new spindles and butterflies to be fitted by a qualified carburettor expert - do not fiddle yourself with triple SU set-ups, as effective idling will be jeopardised. Idles of 300 rpm can be readily obtained with properly fitted set of throttle spindles. We recommend Brownriggs of Dorrit Street, Carlton to do this job, and at a very reasonable price.

Distorted carby flanges allow air to leak into the inlet manifolds. Fitting two flange gaskets does not overcome the problem, as tightening of the flange on to this soft material will distort it further. It is necessary to place a steel ruler or very accurate straight-edge along the flange to find the degree of distortion. Then, the carburettor should be held very carefully in a vice, and a broad flat file used with care until the whole flange becomes shiny. Check again after filing to ensure that the flange is really flat. Alternatively, the body may be filed down by moving across a sheet of emery on a glass plate until the flange is flat. Test by bluing and moving around a sheet of paper on a glass flat. The blue should all smear off on the paper. Any spots retaining unsmearred blue indicate further filing.

A word of warning: The file must be parallel to the correct flange surface plane. The file must not be 'rocked' across the flange, or it will become rounded and will not stop the air leaks. It might well cause the flange to crack when it is being tightened.

The same procedure applies to distorted exhaust pipe-manifold flanges on cars such as 12/50s especially. More gaskets or gasket goo are only temporary palliatives and do not work well anyway. The flanges must be dismantled and carefully filed flat or better still, professionally surface ground.

* Silencing engine roars from Vintage and PVT Alvises:

The most obvious engine roars on these cars come from the carburettor intakes which are usually not supplied with air silencers. Obviously, the fitting of efficient modern air cleaner-silencers would help greatly if room under the bonnet could be found for units of sufficient size. Since this can be very difficult, and may well ruin the otherwise authentic vintage layout, another approach can do much to quieten the engine. This is to apply sound deadeners to the bonnet itself. The general idea is to a) Apply rubberised auto-body deadner solution first to the metal bonnet lids b) Glue to this a layer of matting or polystyrene foam c) Coat matting or foam with further rubberised paint. This cuts out at least 50% of the engine noise heard in the cabin. Before cutting matting (fibreglass is best, but horsehair or even thick old carpet can be used) make templates out of brown paper and get the exact size and shape right. If (e.g. Speed 20s) air inlets open straight onto the bonnet sides, do not apply matting directly opposite inlets since a) fibres of the matting may be sucked into the air inlets every now and then b) backfires often occur on starting up and sheets of flame can be ejected. This poses a fire risk if matting is in the flame path. Bostik or other efficient glue is used.

TA 21 INLET VALVE OIL SEAL

In order to prevent an excessive quantity of oil flowing down the inlet valve stems and being drawn past the valve guides into the induction ports, one of the split collars on each valve has been faced with neoprene and when assembled with an unfaced split collar forms a tight oil seal between the valve spring cup and the valve stem. As this seal is only necessary on the inlet valves, the collars per car are required as follows:

- | | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| C. 6976 | Valve spring split collar | (neoprene faced, inlet only) | 6 off. |
| C. 5825 | " " " " | (unfaced, inlet & exhaust) | 18 off. |

All cars from Car No. 24144 have this modification incorporated.

SERVICE DATA SHEET NO. 3L/3TA 21 CLUTCH OPERATING RODS

The clutch operating rods with right angled split pinned ends have been replaced by rods with fork ends to eliminate the possibility of shearing the split pins. Existing rods may be modified by cutting off the right angled end and dieing 5/16" B.S.F. to take the fork ends and lock nut, the fork ends being adjusted to the same centres as the replaced rods. This modification was introduced at Car No. 24310.

SERVICE DATA SHEET NO. 3L/4TA 21 EXHAUST PIPE FLANGE JOINT

As a result of recurring failure of the gasket between the exhaust manifold and the exhaust pipe flanges, a hexagon bridge piece has been fitted under the nut of the centre stud. This bridge piece should be fitted in such a manner that it bridges across the two flanges so that when the nut is tightened the compression is equally distributed to both flanges.

In order to accommodate this additional part it is necessary to remove the existing centre stud and replace it by a longer one; a plain washer is used between the bridge piece and the nut in place of the shakeproof type. This modification was introduced in production at Car No. 24335. The parts are:

- | | | |
|---------|--|--------|
| C. 7094 | Exhaust pipe bridge piece | 1 off. |
| C. 50/3 | Exhaust pipe stud ($\frac{3}{8}$ " BSF x $1\frac{1}{8}$ " long) | 1 off. |
| C. 94 | $\frac{3}{8}$ " plain washer. | 1 off. |

SERVICE DATA SHEET NO. 3L/5TA 21 EXHAUST MANIFOLD GASKETS

A few cases have arisen where even the modified manifold gaskets available for Three Litre engines have still given a certain amount of trouble. If cases arise where gaskets continue to fail, we recommend that both exhaust and inlet manifolds should be fitted face to face with the cylinder head without any gaskets being fitted. In the course of investigations, this procedure was thoroughly tried out and found to be completely effective.

SERVICE DATA SHEET NO. 3L/6TA 21 ENGINE SPEED FAN

A large diameter crankshaft fan pulley C. 7078 has been introduced as an alternative to the standard pulley in order to raise the fan speed from .786 engine speed to engine speed. It is necessary to use fan belt C. 7079 with the larger pulley.

In certain cases there has been a tendency for the anti-roll bar rubber bush to work out of the retaining bracket. A modified type of bracket has now been introduced (Part No. C. 7258) and we would recommend that the original bracket should be replaced by this type.

The modification referred to can quite easily be carried out on the original brackets, and our suggestion is that the original brackets can be modified after replacement with the new type and retained for future use.

It occasionally happens that flexible pipe in the oil line to the oil pressure gauge contacts the flexible petrol pipe on the Three Litre. On assembly there is ample clearance between these two pipes, but it has happened that they have been dislodged resulting in chafing and leakage of oil from the oil pipe. Contact is usually due to the steel pipe running from the oil gauge down the steering column being accidentally bent or misplaced on re-assembly. We recommend that these pipes should be checked to ensure that they cannot come into contact with each other.

To obtain the correct steering geometry, the steering side rods must be carefully adjusted so that the distance between centres of the ball sockets is $13\frac{1}{4}$ ". These rods should not be adjusted, but we have found that on many cars the rods have been adjusted to a greater length than that stated above. It is therefore necessary to slightly shorten the track rod, after correcting the side rod length to $13\frac{1}{4}$ ", in order to obtain correct front wheel alignment.

In future cars of this type will have the adjustment of the side rods permanently set in production, so that this difficulty should be eliminated.

The front wheel alignment, which must be obtained only by adjustment of the centre track rod, is between parallel and $\frac{1}{16}$ " toe-out.

FACTORY SERVICE NOTE:

9th March 1955

MULTI-GRADE ENGINE OILS

A number of enquiries have been received recently concerning the use of multi-grade engine oils in Alvis cars.

We consider Shell X-100 10w/30 and B.P. Special Energol Viscostatic oils to be quite suitable for our car engines. It is however strongly recommended that instructions issued by Messrs. Shell and B.P. Ltd. are carried out on changing to one of the above-mentioned oils.

ADJUSTMENT OF BRAKE LINKAGE ON TA 14.

TA 14 models have the Girling compensated rod-link brakes, which do work very well indeed, provided that no one has tampered with the rods or the adjusters and compensating pivots. In most cases, poor TA 14 brakes are due to:

1. Worn brake linings past limit of adjustment.
2. Failing to adjust brake shoes to take up wear.
3. Incorrectly adjusted brake rods and compensators.

The first cause is an obvious one, and can be seen on taking off the brake drums and inspecting the shoes. Re-lining is the answer.

The second cause is more common than it should be. Many owners are not aware that adjusters exist at each hub. There are found mounted on the brake back-plate opposite the side of entry of the brake rods. They have a squared end which is rotated by means of a spanner. As the wedges rotate distinct clicks are heard and the adjusters should be tightened until they cannot be turned any further without excessive force. This should lock the shoes onto the drums. The adjusters are then released by two clicks and the drum tested to ensure that it is free to rotate. It may be necessary to release the adjuster a further click if the drum is out of round and rubs heavily on the shoes.

Should new linings and correctly adjusted shoes fail to improve the brakes greatly, someone has probably been altering the linkages in a misguided attempt to 'tighten-up' the system. The whole linkage system must therefore be checked out thoroughly. In a nutshell, the rods must be adjusted to ensure a) correct linkage rod geometry and b) Freely rotating compensators.

It should only be necessary to adjust linkages to bring geometry back to normal after replacement of worn linkages and clevis pins. It is obvious that, to obtain first-class braking, all joints must not have excessive play. Also, compensator pivots must be well greased and free to move without stiffness. This can only be properly tested by removing all rods, cleaning thoroughly (preferably off the car) and correctly maintaining the units once in service.

First, disconnect all the rods from the compensators and levers and tighten up the shoe adjusters, leaving the wedges on the peaks of the flats.

Next, inspect the compensators as above, and reassemble, making sure that they are free on their respective bearings.

Now, reconnect the transverse rods on the front compensators, and adjust each by means of its screwed clevis ends (If never tampered with, this should not be necessary) so that the long lever of the compensator, to which the longitudinal rod is attached, is $5/8$ " to $3/4$ " before a line parallel to the front axle, and the swinging link of the compensator is parallel to the longitudinal rod. (Refer to diagram). Take great care to achieve the correct geometry here. When satisfied, tighten up the locknuts.

Repeat the above procedure for the rear brake compensator.

Now, connect the longitudinal rods from front axle compensator to the front relay lever, and to the reversing lever at the base of the pedal lever and centrally placed to it. Adjust these rods until the relay lever lies just forward of the vertical and the lower end of the reversing lever is $5/8$ " forward of the vertical. Tighten up the locknuts.

Connect the push tube from the top of the reversing lever to the top of the balance lever, which should be in a vertical position, with the brake pedal in its full off or highest position.

Next, connect the rod from the lower part of the balance lever to the lower hole in the rear relay lever nearest to the pivot, and adjust the rod so that the relay lever lies $\frac{3}{4}$ " behind a line passing through the pivot and parallel to the rear axle.

Now, connect the rod from the end hole in the lever to the long lever on the rear compensator, and adjust it to maintain the adjustment earlier set on the rear compensator.

Handbrake linkage:

This only operates on the rear wheels via a Bowden cable to the rear relay lever.

Connect the handbrake cable from the handle assembly, using the top inner hole of the relay lever, and adjust to give two clicks of lost motion in the hand brake. This ensures that the handbrake is truly 'off' when the car is in motion and the handle fully released. It is most important to disconnect the handbrake cable before over-all brake adjustment, and reconnect it, and adjust only after the rest of the system has been properly adjusted.

Final adjustment:

The shoe adjusters were set early on in the fully on position with the shoes contacting the drums. Slacken them off two clicks all round, check the tightness of all locknuts, and check that all split pins have in fact been fitted where necessary, otherwise clevis pins could work out at a vital moment.

When carrying out maintenance brake adjustment with the car on the ground, it is possible to check if the drum is free. This can be done by lightly tapping with a spanner when it should ring. If it does not ring, slacken off the adjuster a further click and test again.

Summary: The important aim of this procedure is to ensure the correct geometry of the compensator linkages. To re-iterate, the long lever of the compensator (which attaches to the longitudinal rods) must be set $\frac{3}{4}$ " ahead of the line parallel with the axle. Note, that the rear compensator is set similarly, except that the distance is $\frac{3}{4}$ " behind the parallel line.

Another point to watch, is that the compensator mountings to the axle beam are really tight and secure.

DAVID MUIRDEN.

