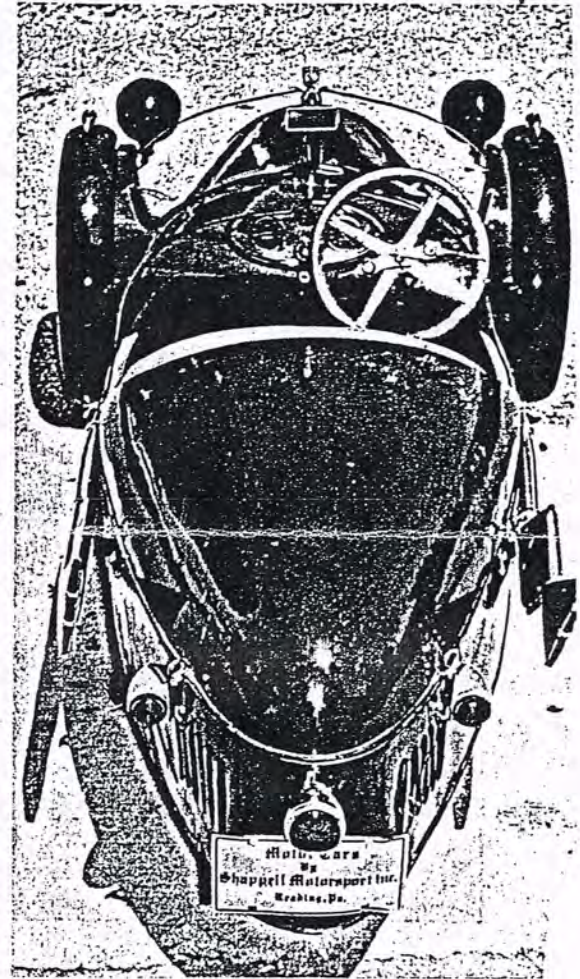
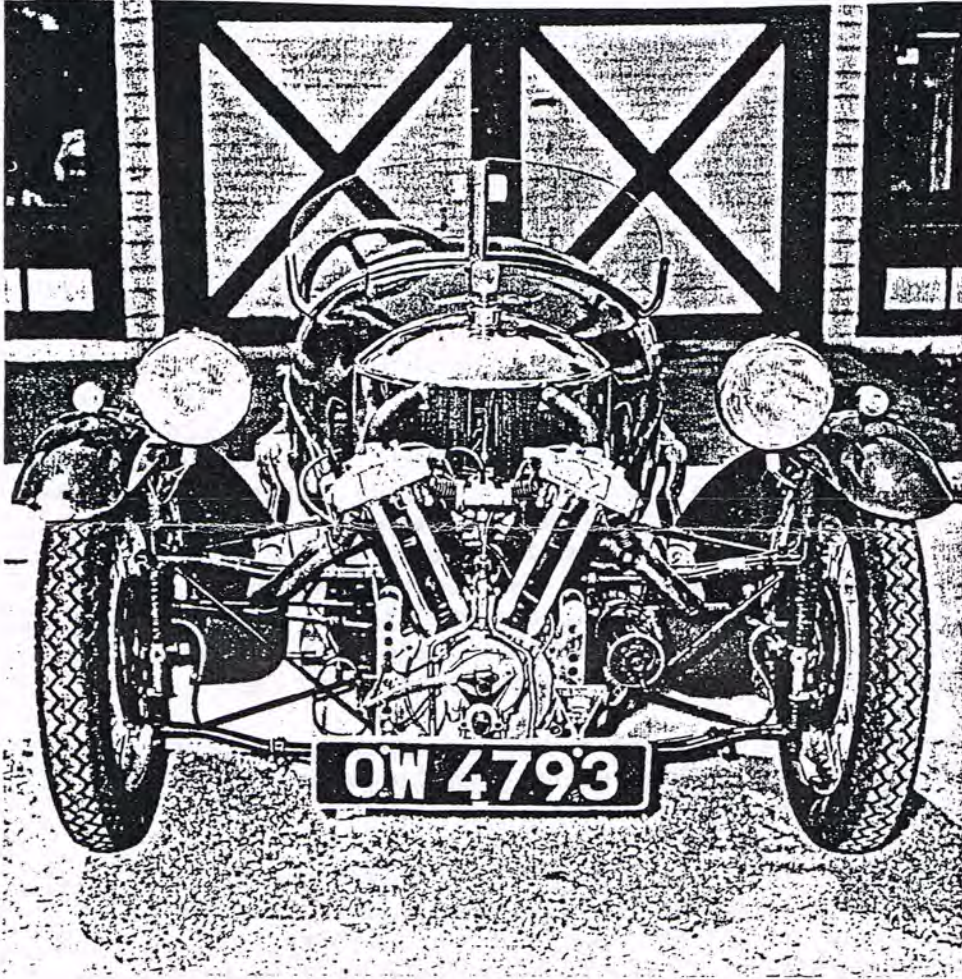




JULY 1984



**OWNER'S
GROUP
NORTHWEST**

MORGANS FROM ABROAD:

A PRIMER FOR FINDING, BUYING, SHIPPING & MODIFYING

Some time ago I read the article on buying a Morgan overseas which you will see reprinted here. I found it extremely interesting and vowed that when I found the right time I would share it with you. This seems like a good time, for several reasons.

For one thing, with the Morgan Motor Company 75th Year celebration coming, a good deal of attention is being focused on the scepter'd isle. And with the present strength of the U.S. dollar--the Pound Sterling is at this writing \$1.42--and with Morgan prices climbing steadily here, this might well be a good time to "buy British."

For another, one of our members, E. W. Blatter, wrote in with a copy of the chart on "typical selling prices of Morgans" that CAR COLLECTOR magazine had run in 1979, asking if it could be updated. I asked Jerry Willburn, father of one of the Morgan world's finest clutch mechanics and technical editor and president of the Plus Four Club if he would help us with the updating. Jerry knows Morgans and has for some time run a "Morgan Mart" column for the Plus Four Club's FORMAT. I know you'll find his straight-from-the-shoulder appraisal fascinating and particularly interesting when compared to the current British Morgan prices noted in John Blundell's article.

Finally, I received a most intriguing letter from another of our members, Bill Cox, an auto importer. Bill had recently brought in a Morgan and wrote offering to help any member interested in learning more about how it could be done. I wrote Bill and have since spoken to him a number of times; he has a wealth of knowledge, and the more I have explored the subject, the more convinced I have become that anyone considering the purchase of a Morgan must give serious thought to bringing one in from abroad.

It seemed to me that the best way to begin our exploration of this important subject was by re-printing the Blundell article with some updated figures on current UK Morgan prices and to pair it with Jerry Willburn's essay on the U.S. market.

I'd also like to note here three questions that the Blundell article raises and which I think deserve future consideration.

One is the question of shipping. While John suggests alternative methods of shipping by sea, there is one other possibility: air freight. We've taken a look at this and think that you will be rather surprised at the conclusions, which we shall present next issue of the RIDER.

Secondly, as John makes such an excellent point for treutilizing of a UK agent to expedite the shipping and to check out the potential purchase, the ob-

vious question arises, what about some sort of U.S. agent to handle matters here, where in particular the morass of U.S. Customs, EPA, DOT and even USDA regularions which apply present the innocent Morganite with a rather bewildering not to say frightening prospect as he considers importation? This subject, too, we've explored with Bill Cox and will have a good deal to share with you next issue.

Then, finally, what about these government regulations? John Blundell avoided the entanglement with these by bringing in a pre-'68 Morgan. But does this mean that any later Morgans are hopelessly shut off from us? Well, not so, according to the situation as we've been able to research it.

Many of you have heard rumors about changes in the government regulations, and in fact an addendum to the Blundell article dealt with the (unsubstantiated) rumor that a one-time exemption to the import restrictions would be offered upon the payment of a penalty fee.

Well, under the favorable climate of the current administration on Washington, things have changed considerably. And, according to many with whom we've spoken, it is quite feasible to consider bringing in a Morgan, especially, but not necessarily, if it is over 5 years old. This means that the period from 1968 through 1979 has in fact opened up; and even the post '79 cars can be brought in, if you know what you're doing, that is!

What not all realize is that there are two separate but equally important areas of regulations to be dealt with here: those of the Department of Transportation, regarding the safety of the car, and those of the EPA, having to do with emissions.

So, next month we will continue the pursuit of this fascinating subject and hope you find it as interesting as we do. We'll try to guide you through the intricacies of the DOT/EPA regs, including the significant differences between the pre- and post-79 cars. And we'll tell you exactly what is going on in the Congress right now that might affect the regulations and consequently your chance to get your dream Morgan into this country--as well as what you can do to influence this legislation.

Finally, we'll present information about the potential role of the US import agent--and about a brand-new organization meant to look out for the interests of the car importer--and how this can affect you.

WSS

those for sale are definitely depressed. There is a far more urgent tone to the adverts. In the past, every advert carried a phrase such as "genuine reason for sale" or "taking delivery of new car" or "moving abroad." Now they are littered with "low price for quick sale" or "nearest offer accepted" or "quick clearance." It is a buyer's market.

I have never bought a car "unseen" from England and imported it, and the advice that follows is based on that experience. So, how would I buy a Morgan at a range of 6,000 miles?

First, I would subscribe to at least 2 or 3 of the magazines mentioned above [CLASSIC AND SPORTSCAR, SPORTING CARS, THOROUGHbred AND CLASSIC CARS, MOTOR SPORT, MISCELLANY] and study the adverts closely. Relevant addresses and overseas subscription rates are given below.

Having spotted a very interesting prospect such as "Morgan +4 four seater '57 immaculate condition blue with black hood, tonneaux, upholstery \$8,000" I would spend \$5 on a telephone call to the vendor. If the car is pre-68 you will almost certainly find that other interested purchasers are Americans living in the UK but who plan to return home with a Mog.

In early October I was thinking of purchasing the '57 +4 four seater described above. One phone call established that it had had 3 owners, had covered 73,000 miles and had the TR engine and the Moss gear box. The current owners had had it for the past 8 years and the only major original part missing was the dash clock. Furthermore, the owners would only sell to an "enthusiast, (they had already turned down an offer from Saudi Arabia) and claimed that it was a "unique" car since it was "a narrow bodied four seater." Some 3 weeks after the advert had appeared they had received no firm offers from anybody that would give it a good home.

Much can be done over the phone and photos can be requested. But how do you get the car checked out to make sure that it is all that the vendors claim? No rusting chassis or rotting frame?

My advice is to contact by phone again one of the Morgan restorers/service people who advertise in MISCELLANY and commission him to go and see the car and write a full report on it for you. The cost of such a report will depend to a large extent on how far he has to travel. If you are lucky it might be as low as \$50 if he only has to drive a few miles. And, unless the car is in the Highlands of Scotland, it should not exceed \$100 to \$150.

From personal experience I can recommend two such people very highly. For anything in London or within 100 mile radius, I would use Richard Bourne; and for the Midlands, the famous Morgan writer and leading authority, Colin Musgrove; both their addresses and phone numbers are given at the end. [ED NOTE: To this list I have added the MOCDC's old and good friend, Melvyn Rutter, who responded to my recent letter: "In the last twelve months we have sold here at The Garage 25 Morgans dating from 1937 to the present day, so I could probably give you and your members an extremely good idea of current Morgan scene both here in the U.K. and overseas.....Should any of your members find a car, then naturally I would only be too pleased to give them a thorough examination and possibly negotiate on their behalf if they so wished. We have acted for a number of people who wished to sell their cars, but I always insist on getting them to come to The Garage so that we can put the car up on a lift and have a good look underneath, particularly at the chassis.....As to our fees, if the owner brought the car to The Garage and we were able to give it a thorough inspection and full report, we would charge probably less than \$50. If the American would-be purchaser wanted us to act on his behalf and buy the car for him and arrange shipping, then we would do this on a strictly hourly charge out basis of £12 per hour."]

So, within, say, two weeks of spotting a promising advert, you should have received information from the vendor both on the phone and in the post, plus your agent's report. You want the car, and the price is right. What other costs are there, and how do you get the car over here?

There are two ways of bringing over a car. It either comes in a container or on a roll-on-roll-off ship. Of the two, the former is the more expensive, but the car is less exposed to the elements during 21 days at sea.

A second decision you have to make is whether or not to use an auto export agent rather than going direct to a shipping company. Using an export agent costs a lot more, but at least you know that someone familiar with the rules is handling things for you. For example, did you know that the USDA will stop your car from entering if it has not been steam sprayed?

Here are three quotations I obtained this summer:

No agent/roll-on-roll-off	\$600 + cost of steam cleaning and somebody to roll it on
No agent/container	\$750 + steam cleaning and rolling it on
Export agent/container	\$1,200 with no extras

WANT

WANTED five 15" plus four or 4/4 disc
wheels in good condition without cracks.
Contact: Tom Hooker, R.D.#1, Box 256
York Haven, PA 17370 (717) 266-1025

WANTED: 1 SET OF USED
CHROME WIRES AND ADAPTORS
FOR 1960 +4.

DARRYL LUM
2597 BROCK ST.
VANCOUVER 16, B.C.
V5R2R3

SELL

For Sale: 1964 Morgan Plus 4 Plus. Total restoration.
All work documented with receipts and photos. Left hand
drive. Some extra parts just for Plus 4 Plus.
Ted Glover (214) 867-1122 after 6:00 Texas time.

The article on the Plus 8 in last months issue was
from July 1984 Motor Trend Magazine.

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