

SUNBEAM CARS

The Car referred to in this leaflet is a 25 h.p. Six-cylinder SUNBEAM embodying the special features which are included in all SUNBEAM models intended for overseas.

Full particulars of SUNBEAM Cars will be supplied on request.

FOUR MODELS : 16 h.p. ; 20 h.p. ;
25 h.p. and Three-litre Six-cylinder.

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ACROSS SYRIA TO BAGHDAD



A JOURNEY TO IRAQ ON A 25 H.P. SUNBEAM

ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB

LIBRARY

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

Across Syria to Baghdad

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF A 600 MILES
TRIP BY A 25 H.P. SIX-CYLINDER

SUNBEAM

YOU may be interested to read an account of the satisfactory manner in which one of your cars performed, on a journey which was, perhaps, rather more severe than ordinarily falls to the lot of a new car for its first run.

You will, perhaps, recollect having supplied one of your 25 h.p. Open Touring Models for the use of His Excellency the High Commissioner for Iraq in the latter part of the year just passed; and may also remember that the car was shipped to Beyrout (Syria) and disembarked there. Beyrout is approximately 600 miles from Baghdad, which was the car's destination; and the two places are separated by the twin ranges of mountains—the Lebanon and Ante-Lebanon—and by a tract of the Syrian Desert. It is of the car's journey between the Mediterranean and Baghdad that we now write.

On its arrival at Beyrout the car was cleared and uncrated by a prominent trans-desert motor transport company there, and our representative arrived to find it standing ready for its initial journey. Time permitted but a short test run of about five miles; as it was desired to commence the big journey with the least possible delay. This journey was to be done in two stages; the first entailing crossing the Lebanon and Ante-Lebanon to Damascus, and the second making the desert crossing between Damascus and Baghdad.

This description of a run across Syria to Baghdad, received from the Secretariat of His Excellency the High Commissioner for Iraq, is reprinted by kind permission of His Excellency.

Acc. No. M89-062
Class. No.

The first stage, to Damascus, was a journey of 68 miles, and, commencing at sea level, the road soon steered direct at the mountain climb. It abounds with hair pin bends and fairly severe gradients and in 18 miles rises to about 6,000 feet. The surface is good though the road in many places is narrow. Very many picturesque villages are passed en route and these continue almost to the highest point. Some gorgeous scenery is encountered on this run and the Blue Mediterranean is in sight until the summit has been left behind. Then comes the drop down the mountain side into Tchourah (30 miles) the half-way post, and here an opportunity for testing the Sunbeam's brakes was presented. The descent, like the climb, simply abounded with gradients and hair pin bends. A weight equivalent to four or five passengers was carried, and thus the car in its first 30 miles underwent quite an exhaustive test run. We are pleased to state it came out most satisfactorily; it seemed to toy with the gradients, whilst a feeling of perfect safety was imparted on the descent by the efficient action of the servo-assisted brakes. The steering was delightfully light and the adjustable front seat permitted a very comfortable driving position to be found. The next 28 miles, over the Ante-Lebanon, not being such a severe road, was attacked with perfect confidence,



Crossing the Ante-Lebanon Mountains.

and, the mist having subsided, a couple of photographs were taken, (which, however, disappoint in that they do not give a very good idea of gradients.)

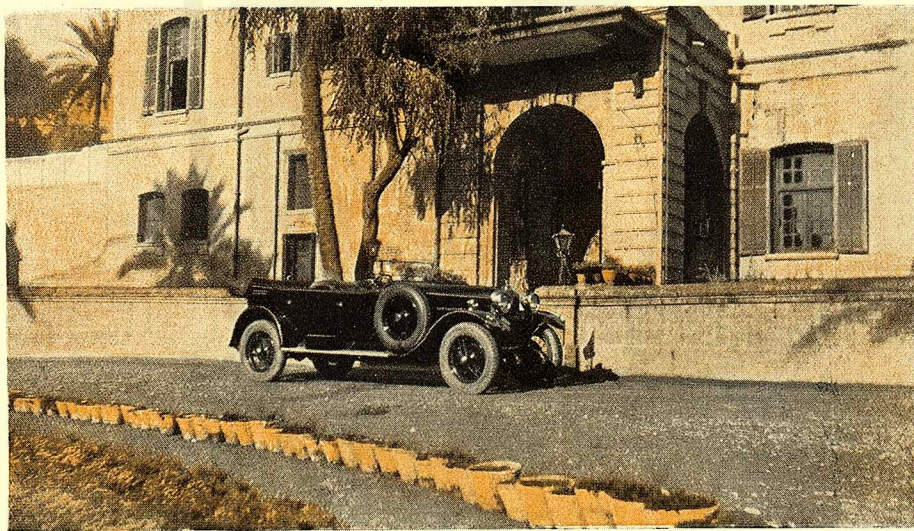
Damascus was reached safely and arrangements put in hand for an early departure upon the next stage of the journey. This was a run of 530 miles across the Syrian Desert, the greater portion of which is uninhabited. One other car was found to be setting out the next day and it was arranged to accompany it. The morning of departure saw us set out at 9.30 a.m., having completed the necessary police and Customs formalities, and 18 miles later saw us leaving all signs of permanent habitation behind, and we met nothing but a few flocks of sheep grazing on the fringe of the desert. In due course these also were left and we had the desert to ourselves, with permission to roam at will, for the road was innocent of hedge, ditch or other boundary. A very well defined track exists, for the route is now constantly used and convoys link up Baghdad and Damascus twice weekly throughout the year. The going is almost flat, and the surface is, generally speaking, excellent in dry weather, being a kind



On the Edge of Baghdad.

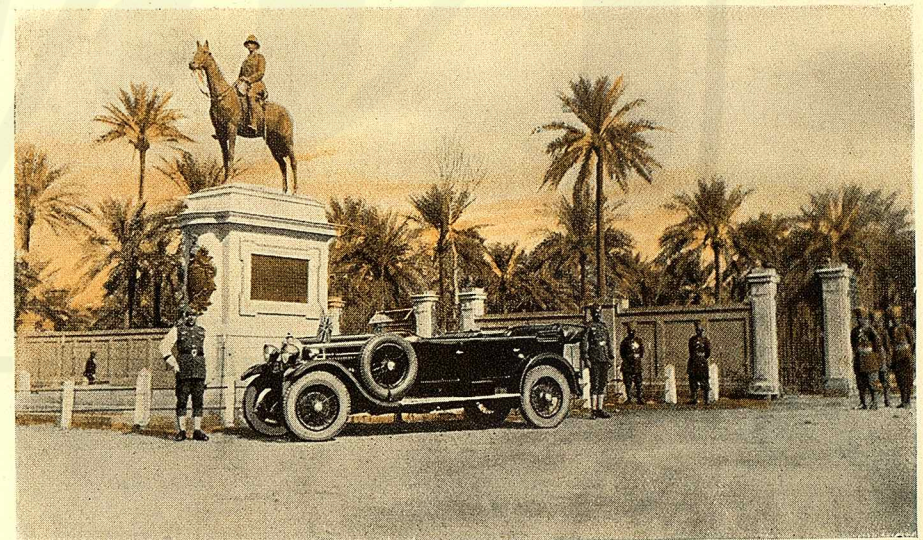
of hard clay with a pebbly surface for a lot of the way. But for the absence of irrigation the desert would be an excellent crop bearing region, and should not be thought to be simply a sandy waste such as the Sahara, for instance. After an infrequent rainstorm the desert in many places takes unto itself an agreeable looking mantle of grass, and encourages the sheep to penetrate the further into its fastnesses until late spring each year.

That same evening, at 8.30 p.m., we found ourselves at the mid-desert post called Rutba, where there exists a masonry-built fort which has been constructed around the well which is situated there. This point, 260 miles from Damascus, is the first point where water can be found, and no more is available until a point 200 miles nearer Baghdad. This fort boasts a restaurant, and it was very agreeable to find a hot meal available at such an isolated spot. A refrigerator plant is installed and cold comforts are thus available in summer time. When we mention that the shade temperature reaches 118° in the summer, the reader will perhaps appreciate what a welcome oasis is this post. Petrol supplies having been replenished, it was decided to push on into the night, and at 10 p.m. we again set out Baghdad-wards. A board at Rutba



At the Door of the Residency, Baghdad.

reminded us we had left Syrian territory and so should, from now on, observe the English rule of the road. The track continued to be clearly defined and no difficulty was experienced in finding it. The surface was excellent in many places and an all-out speed could easily have been accomplished, but only a very modest speed was attained. Daybreak found us almost within sight of Ramadi, having reeled off a further 200 miles during the night. After a delay for breakfast and customs formalities at Ramadi, of about an hour, we again set out for Baghdad. Ramadi marks the recommencement of habitation, and the road towards Baghdad follows the River Euphrates for many miles, and traverses largely cultivated country. The Euphrates is crossed by a pontoon bridge at Fallujah, and a last 40 miles over uncultivated desert found us reaching Baghdad at midday, after a run devoid of any semblance of trouble. The journey having been rain-free, we were literally smothered with desert dust, and the run including stops had taken $26\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Though the car had travelled right through the night, the driver was very little fatigued. As this run is perhaps rather a larger task than is set most new cars as an initial effort, we thought you would be interested to hear that the car you supplied successfully accomplished it and gave not a moment's anxiety the whole way.



The Memorial Statue to Sir Stanley Maude at Baghdad.