

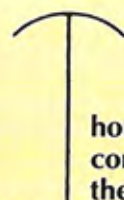
England on the 'C' type

Frank Raymond Wilton England served an apprenticeship at Daimler before becoming service engineer for Alvis, while also spending a period as mechanic for Whitney Straight and ERA Ltd. During the war he was a pilot in RAF Bomber Command, then joined Jaguar in 1946 as service manager. Master-minding Jaguar's racing programme in the 1950s was an 'extra' job before he became assistant managing director and, on Sir William Lyons' retirement, managing director. 'Lofty' (as he is invariably known) recently celebrated his 80th birthday and now lives in Austria. Here 'Lofty' relays his personal recollections of the momentous 1951 Le Mans, exclusively for Jaguar Quarterly.

'Lofty' at Le Mans, the tall figure always unflustered, ensuring efficiency in the Jaguar pits (this is 1953: winning drivers Rolt and Hamilton confer behind him).



CONCEPTION



Thoughts of making a competition version of the XK 120 came to Bill Heynes when he and I went to Le Mans in 1950 to watch the 24-hour race in which three privately owned (if works prepared) XK 120 cars competed. The performance of those cars, plus the fact that at that time no one had produced a properly aerodynamic-shaped car and that the opposition lacked any really up-to-date sports racing vehicles, convinced us that using the reliable standard mechanical units in a tubular chassis with an aluminium, aerodynamically shaped body would, if ready for the 1951 race, stand a good chance of being successful.

It took some months to convince Sir William Lyons that such a car might win but late in the year, and after the Mk VII was launched, he agreed.

Meanwhile Bill Heynes had set out his plans for the design of the car and obtained the services of Malcolm Sayer who came from Bristol Aircraft and who would design an aerodynamically shaped body for the new car. The layout of the tubular chassis frame was first done by Bill Heynes as a model using matchsticks!

At that time the staff of the engineering design office numbered 12 with a similar number in the experimental department. Walter Hassan, the experimental dept. engineer, had left and gone to Coventry Climax as chief engineer in 1949 and, to help out, I had agreed with Bill Heynes that he could have my London service representative, Phil Weaver, to act temporarily as exp. shop superintendent (a function that Hassan had also covered). Weaver was still with the engineering dept. when he retired a few years ago!

It is interesting to note that since 1945 the staff mentioned had re-introduced the pre-war range of cars (with certain engine modifications since the six-cylinder engines were being built by Jaguar instead of Standard), produced a left-hand-drive version of those cars, designed and introduced a single helical gearbox, designed and built the XK engine, and designed and made a complete new chassis with



'Lofty' is still very much associated with Jaguar and the 'C' type today. Here he is at Le Mans in 1991, with Ole Sommer and XKC 027.

Rare contemporary photograph of an early 'C' type wind-tunnel model employed by Malcom Sayer; it shows an interesting stage in its development the cockpit is more like an XK 120's and there appears to be provision for an opening 'boot', plus a lift-out panel for engine access.

