

## Swallow failed to make a summer

**B**EARING in mind the fact that the Swallow Doretti enjoyed a production run of little over twelve months, it is perhaps surprising that so many have survived. Like the TR2, whose engine, gearbox, suspension and brakes, the Doretti used, it was built robustly.

Unlike the TR, it utilised a tubular chassis with roadster bodywork of arguably more pleasing line and more luxurious appointments and all this added 450lbs over and above that of the stock TR. True, the Doretti looked more accommodating than its blunt-tailed rival, but that roomier look was deceptive. The additional wheelbase length in the specification was needed to house an engine which was moved back seven inches in the frame.

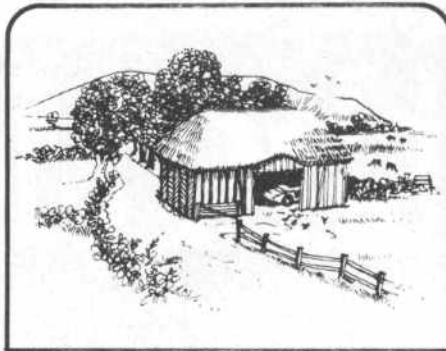
The Swallow half of the name derived from the Swallow Coachbuilding Company (1935) Ltd., an old-established company which had its roots in the sidecar business commenced in Coventry in 1922 by William (later Sir William) Lyons. When this became S.S. Cars (and later Jaguar), the sidecar business was sold off, and continued independently.

By 1954, the company was based at Walsall aerodrome in Staffordshire, but its postwar vehicle manufacturing activities had been hardly crowned with success. From 1948 until 1951 they had built the Swallow Gadabout motor scooter, a logical step for a firm with motorcycle connections and in the austerity-ridden post-war years — but this tubular framed all-enclosed Villiers-engined machine was ahead of its time and never caught on.

As can be seen, the Doretti was a handsome car with shades of both XK120 and Austin-Healey in the body styling, but with all that additional weight it was less rapid than its nearest rivals and cost £230 more than the TR2. Fitted with Laycock overdrive (which most of them were) it would, nevertheless, achieve just over 100mph.

The end came in 1955, when Swallow decided that with sales of less than 500 cars the project was not a viable proposition. It was

*The Triumph TR based Swallow.*



## Hedge-row, barn and byway

certainly a creditable production figure for a new marque, however, and another twelve cars were constructed by Monkspatch Garages of Solihull from parts left over after production ceased.

Today there is a healthy following for the marque, and examples change hands quite frequently. The example shown here was offered at Sotheby's sale at the South West Classic Car Show in Bristol last year, and yet another featured in their sale of the Lord Cranworth Collection this June. They are still modestly priced, offer more comfort than their spartan TR cousins and are apparently very durable.

### Dig this

**W**E MOUNTED an expedition to exhume a 1928 Buick from its Welsh grave of thirty odd years at Adpar near Newcastle Emlyn. After much toiling and profanity, and help from Bill Edmondson from Barnes (who owns a 1928 Buick and who had made the three hundred mile trip in the hope

of spares) we unearthed engine, gearbox and steering gear.

All were pretty well corroded, and the engine (which was upside down when dug out) had unfortunately suffered a hole in its sump which had allowed water to enter its nether regions. The usual overhead valve "six", with massive torque tube and propshaft, it proved to be of Canadian origins.

The engine bulkhead was then dug out, revealing that General Motors of Canada were the makers; that it was Model 27; Serial number 119890 and Engine No. 1814262. Sadly it was a different model to that owned by Bill, so even had the parts been worth salvaging, they would not have fitted his car.

We then turned our attention to an Austin Seven, and eventually managed to extract engine, gearbox and steering gear. It proved to be a quite early magneto job, with updraft carb, but the crankcase was so badly corroded that, to date, we have been unable to decipher the engine number. The bulkhead plates of these little cars were made in brass, and some idea of the year of manufacture can be gained from the last patent date shown on them. So far, however, the plate remains buried!

Once again corrosion was rife, but some items (including the brass ignition and throttle control levers on the steering column) will be



salvageable. We'll be making a return trip soon to see if we can find anything of a Triumph Gloria saloon which still awaits disentanglement.

Everyone seems to be digging up Buicks these days, and Terry Bizzel sends us this phot of the sad collection of bits which he is rebuilding in Southgate, Swansea. They are all that remain of a 1915 Type 44 Bedford-Buick (imported in chassis form and originally bodied in Britain) which lay buried in the ruins of a collapsed shed for over fifty years.

A two seater, of quite sporting appearance, with (as the photo shows) Buick's pushrod operated overhead valves, the car looks beyond redemption, but Terry is well ahead with the restoration. Despite its external appearance, the engine internals were found to be in remarkably good condition and appear to have seen little use.

Terry is in touch with a Mr Schneider, who owns a 1919 model, the specifications of which are similar, and who has generously offered to loan his car for a period so that all the necessary measurements can be taken to aid the restoration.

No such problems confronted Ted Woolley