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James Radley beats a train from London to Monte Carlo

Gilbert M Ralph - Hon Archivist

James Radley (1884-1959), the English adventurer, shared a passion for ballooning, flying and motor racing with the Hon. Charles Rolls but unlike Rolls he survived his numerous exploits and died an old man. Radley competed in the Austrian Alpine Trials in 1912, 1913 and in 1914 in three different Rolls-Royce Silver Ghosts; 1930E, 2206E and 18PB. He was successful in the latter two events – but that is another story which will no doubt be featured during 2013, the centenary of his first success. There is however a lesser known motoring event for which he received notoriety in November 1913 – he broke the speed record for motoring between London and Monte Carlo in a Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost, 2521, a 1913 model with a light tourer body fashioned



by his own works at Portholme.

James Radley set out from the Automobile Association in London on Monday 3rd November 1913 at 1.10pm and reached Monte Carlo 26 hours and four minutes later at an average speed of 37.5 mph beating the previous record by 3 hours and 13 minutes.

After crossing the English Channel he left Boulogne in darkness at 5.41 pm and by dawn he had reached Lyons. From there he sped on through Avignon and Cannes arriving in Monte Carlo at 3.14pm on Tuesday 4th November. The time included the Channel crossing, various delays, including a puncture, stopping to attend to a loose battery box and a

long delay at a railway crossing. He drove the entire distance himself and was accompanied by two observers, Lieutenant T G Hetherington, Mr W B Rhodes-Moorhouse and a mechanic.

above: James Radley

below: The "Monaco Revue" of 15 November, 1913, reporting (in French) Radley's exploits in his Silver Ghost. chassis number 2521

The speed record was described in several English newspapers and was reported in "The Car" magazine of

Troisième Année -- No 70. 15 Novembre 1913.



Monaco Revue



UN RECORD AUTOMOBILE. De Londres à Monte-Carlo en vingt-six heures. — Décidément notre siècle est celui des records ! Les journaux nous annoncent chaque jour des prouesses fantastiques qui nous rappellent les exploits que Jules Verne nous a si bien décrits dans *Vingt mille lieues sous les Mers* ou dans *Le Tour du Monde en 80 jours*.

Un sportman anglais, M. James Radley, vient de réaliser une jolie prouesse. Il a établi le record de vitesse en automobile entre Londres et Monte-Carlo.

Parti de Londres le 3 Novembre à 1 h. 10 de l'après-midi, il est arrivé le lendemain à 3 h. 14 à Monte-Carlo, ayant fait le trajet en 26 h. 04, soit 60 kilomètres à l'heure environ.

M. James Radley, qui était accompagné de M. W.-B. Rhodes Moorhouse, du lieutenant Hetherington et d'un mécanicien, a toujours tenu le volant. La *seur* de M. Radley, partie de Londres l'undi, par le rapide de 11 heures du matin, est arrivée à Monte-Carlo, le 4 Novembre, ayant accompli son voyage en 1 h. 10 de plus que l'automobiliste !

Le départ et l'arrivée ont été chronométrés.

Nous publions la photographie de la voiture de M. Radley, sur la Place du Casino.

Photo Gessat.

