Perspectives on the Road: Narratives of Motoring in Britain 1896-1930

Esme Anne Coulbert

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Supervisors:

Professor Tim Youngs, Nottingham Trent University

Dr Carl Thompson, Nottingham Trent University

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of the travel writing inspired by automobile journeys in Britain in the period 1896 to 1930 and the new modes of subjectivity afforded by the motor car. In permitting greater access to the countryside away from railway stations, motorists were able to gain fresh perspectives on the landscape. Their journeys in the countryside invited them to 'rediscover' England and shape new versions of national identity based on a revival of pre-industrial pastoral idylls. This model of Englishness was directly influenced by car travel, particularly ideas of getting 'off the beaten track'. A comparative study of the travelogues of American writers visiting Britain looks at their search for a shared heritage and the contrasting vision of England that they convey. The different experience of automotive travel and freedom to use the car as described by female writers in the period is also explored in two case studies.

Many of the texts analysed in this work have never been discussed in scholarly studies and so this thesis aims to apply new material to the catalogue of home tour narratives, and to shed new light on the early years of automobile travel. This thesis also explores the car's relationship to modernity in the narratives and concerns about the impact of motorised tourism on the landscape. By weaving together different theoretical concepts from travel writing, such as notions of the tourist and traveller, with historical studies of the car's cultural impact in Britain, this work aims to establish the travelogues featured as a distinct sub-genre of travel writing studies.

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Contents

1

Introduction

> The chauffeur could not travel as quickly as he had hoped, for the Great North Road was full of Easter traffic. But he went quite quick enough for Margaret, a poor-spirited creature, who had chickens and children on the brain.
>
> 'They're all right,' said Mr Wilcox. 'They'll learn—like the swallows and the telegraph-wires.'
>
> 'Yes, but while they're learning—'
>
> 'The motor's come to stay,' he answered. 'One must get about. There's a pretty church—oh, you aren't sharp enough. Well, look out, if the road worries you—right outward at the scenery.'
>
> She looked at the scenery. It heaved and merged like porridge. Presently it congealed. They had arrived.[1]
>
> E.M. Forster, *Howard's End* (1910)

This brief extract from *Howard's End* voices a number of the fundamental issues concerning the introduction of the car that this thesis will address. Depicting an exchange between the wealthy businessman and car enthusiast Henry Wilcox and his fiancée, the intelligent and idealistic Margaret Schlegel, the scene firstly shows the divisive nature of the car as Margaret's disinclination towards this new rapid form of transport is juxtaposed with Henry's enjoyment of speed and the car's practical efficiency. Secondly, it shows how the car exposed motorists, both as drivers and passengers, to new sensory experiences. The narrator describes the scenery as congealing like porridge; such perceptions of how travel by automobile influenced the way that landscape was perceived and its literary representation are central to this thesis. In 1910 travelling through the countryside at unprecedented speeds in an open top vehicle was still a novel experience, and as Henry Wilcox insinuates, many believed that the greater exposure to the experience one gained, the more one's eyes and wits would become accustomed to their new demands. It was a case of developing a more efficient mind and sharper eye to make out details and shapes. Some, like travel writer J. E. Vincent, even thought that it would improve the mind and adapt it in an advantageous way.

[1] E.M. Forster, *Howard's End* (New York: Penguin, 2000), p. 169.

Henry Wilcox's dismissal of Margaret's nervousness of having 'chickens and children on the brain' also exposes some contemporary attitudes towards female motorists. This was a contentious issue as the car was firmly entrenched within notions of masculinity and authority. As this work will go on to discuss in the fourth chapter, women re-defined female identities around the car which allowed them to embrace automobility for both private leisure and professional capacities. Wilcox's *laissez-faire* attitude towards road safety also demonstrates some of the problems faced by the population struggling to develop a new set of responses to motorised traffic. The car became a powerful symbol of danger and destruction and sparked numerous campaigns to improve pedestrian awareness and safety, and motorists' responsibility.

This thesis attempts to explore all these issues in an assessment of how automotive technology impacted on the way that we travel, and perceive travel itself, via an examination of its literary representation in narratives of journeys made around the British Isles in the early period of motoring between 1896 and 1930. Through these travel narratives it is hoped that this thesis will be able to draw a detailed and unique picture of perceptions of the car and motoring in a period that saw the invention of cars and their gradual proliferation on the roads in Britain.

Arriving as it did at the dawn of the twentieth century, the car heralded a new age. The steam-powered epoch of the 1800s was being left behind for a new century of modernity and everything that technology could bring with it. The era of the motor car also coincides with other important inventions that shaped society in the first decades of the twentieth century. On the 12th December 1901 Guglielmo Marconi sent a wireless radio signal from Poldhu, Cornwall across the Atlantic where it was successfully received by an aerial fixed atop a kite on the coast of Canada. From this point onwards, the development and success of the wireless radio and the telephone revolutionised communications in much the same way that the car revolutionised travel, tourism and living patterns. The broad diffusion of the car, particularly in the 1920s and 30s, led to a new dispersion of human geography. As the railway less than half a century before had allowed people to live outside urban centres and commute to work by train, a similar pattern immerged in the 1900s. People were able to live further away from towns, cities and railway links as the car could carry them easily and quickly to their destinations. A vogue for buying country cottages and villas that families could travel to at the

weekends was also responsible for a rapid growth in buildings to cater to such tastes. These were the lament of motor tourists as their perceived ugliness and vulgarity were ruining visions of rural England that motorists had taken to the road to find. The travelogues and motoring publications were platforms to vent such concerns about the despoliation of the countryside.

The arrival of electricity and the invention of cinema in the late nineteenth century also contributed to a modern cultural experience. Living in the 1900s was to experience new technology and a radically new reality to the century that had just been left behind. This excitement of technological possibility gathered momentum when in 1903 the Wright brothers took to the air. In just a few short years between 1890 and 1903 all of the above listed technologies made their debut. The scale of change was terrific in technological terms; however, the process from invention to actual cultural impact was much more prolonged. For example, it was not until the 1920s that advertisements began to appear in *The Autocar* for wireless radios that could be connected up to the car's engine.

As car manufacturers turned their resources over to armaments during the First World War there was a lull in both car manufacturing and motor touring as leisure. Paul Fussell notes that with the passing of The Defence of the Realm Acts of 1914 and 1915 almost prohibiting travel abroad, would-be tourists were also discouraged from making any unnecessary journeys at home. As food and coal were so tightly rationed the pervading mood was one of restriction and austerity.[2] The lack of motoring narratives between 1914 and 1918 also attests to a limited amount of touring in England. There are only four publications in this period that the research for this thesis has been able to identify, and three of these books are written by Americans. This evidence steers us towards the conclusion that, even though there may have been certain deterrents towards motoring for pleasure, it didn't cease altogether. Although it may have been easy for Americans to ship their cars over and tour England, there would have been clear signs of England's economic and cultural stagnation as the war drew all resources to France.

The war itself marks a huge shift in the development of automobiles and attitudes towards the car. This thesis will offer two different readings of the motoring travelogues before and after the First World War. As the numbers of cars on the road increased in the years leading up to the war, so did

[2] Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 9-10.

enthusiasm towards motoring and acceptance of its permanent presence on Britain's roads. After the war finished motoring flourished. The 'Roaring Twenties' as it is sometimes referred to is often characterised by its embrace of the motor car and its association with fast living and partying. John Lucas warns that we shouldn't let ourselves judge the overall picture of Britain by the behaviour and parties of London high-society.[3] However, in this instance, the car itself was a symbol of this kind of post-war decadence. The frivolous and dangerous exploitation of automobiles in F. Scott Fitzgerald's American novel *The Great Gatsby* (1926) encompasses both thrilling and horrific consequences. Similarly in Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* (1945) Sebastian Flyte and Charles Ryder take off on afternoon excursions into the countryside and are later caught by policemen driving whilst drunk with prostitutes in the car.[4] It is important to recognise that these literary representations do not reflect the vast majority's experience of the car in the 1920s, but they certainly added to the image of the powerful motor car as symbolic of a decade that embraced excess and liberation.

One of the primary reasons for examining the travelogues featured in this thesis is to look at how motorists attempted to establish themselves as travellers, rather than their less refined doppelganger, the tourist. Notions of the tourist and traveller in travel writing studies are well discussed. Betty Hagglund has outlined the progression of the traveller/tourist debate from its eighteenth-century origins to modern travel writing criticism to show how the negative connotations of the term 'tourist', particularly familiar in the work of Daniel Boorstin and Paul Fussell, have been reimagined by more recent critics such as Derek Hall and Vivian Kinnaird in more neutral terms.[5] Most importantly, it is recognised that tourist and traveller have no fixed theoretical definition in themselves but act as vessels onto which the feelings and perceptions of the writer can be projected. Here I have employed Buzard's landmark work in travel writing theory, *Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Way to 'Culture', 1800-1918*, to help interpret the discourse used in the automotive travelogues. Buzard's investigation focuses primarily on the rise of travel and tourism during the nineteenth century and he analyses emerging tourist patterns and the socio-economic

[3] John Lucas, *The Radical Twenties: Writing, Politics, Culture* (Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications, 1997), p. 3.
[4] Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (London: Penguin, 2008), pp. 106-7.
[5] Betty Hagglund, *Tourists and Travellers: Women's Non-fictional Writing about Scotland, 1770-1830* (Bristol: Channel View, 2010), pp. 6-9.

conditions that brought about these developments. As this thesis will go on to discuss, these patterns continued to develop through the use of the automobile in the first three decades of the early twentieth century. At the heart of our contemporary understanding of the notions of tourist and traveller are the distinctions that travelling is a singular, independent and extremely personal experience; the tourist, on the other hand, connotes plurality, homogeneity, and shared experience which is therefore impersonal and superficial.[6] Buzard writes that **'**the tourist *fails to connect* with the vital, indigenous life and culture of the places he or she visits, instead being ushered through a packaged itinerary of artefacts and architecture by means of a pre-established tourist industry'.[7] Buzard's distinction of the tourist-traveller dichotomy shows how the tourist becomes a 'rhetorical instrument' through which the experiences of the author and their attempts at acculturation –meaning to define acts of 'acquiring', 'displaying', and 'trading upon' one's accumulated experiences'— can be measured.[8]

The traveller, then, as opposed to the tourist, represented a 'loosely defined set of inner qualities that amounts to a superior emotional-aesthetic sensitivity.'[9] The motorists perceived themselves to be travellers primarily based on the fact that they believed the car offered them fresh perspectives on the country. Their privilege as motorists, through the freedom of movement that the car permitted, demarcated them as exceptional to the collective of tourists who followed pre-determined routes and itineraries.[10]

Authors' proclamations of the 'invasive' and destructive nature of tourism and tourists are common in the travelogues featured in this thesis, and Buzard coins the term 'anti-tourist' as a way of conceptualising a shared set of concerns. He writes that anti-tourism is a 'way of regarding one's own cultural experiences as authentic and unique, setting them against a backdrop of always assumed tourist vulgarity, repetition, and ignorance.'[11] He later adds that 'Complaints about the tourist invasion were less an effort to defend favourite haunts—an effort that would be futile, in any event, in the face of tourism's continuing development—than they were a rhetorical strategy for guaranteeing the

[6] James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Way to 'Culture', 1800-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 91.
[7] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, pp. 320-1.
[8] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, pp. 4, 9.
[9] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, p. 6.
[10] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, p. 6.
[11] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, p. 5.

complainer's difference.'[12] Buzard bases his theories on the patterns emerging from changes in nineteenth-century tourism, from railway transit through to the growth in popularity of Thomas Cook tours, and other similar package holidays. Increased tourism to particular locales and destinations helped to establish such tourist structures, and thus tourists were perceived as bringing with them a whole set of modernising forces that were imposed not only on the places themselves, but on all those who visited. Therefore the objective of the 'genuine traveller' was to create ways to define their own difference from mass experience, and obtain a 'distinctively meaningful and lasting contact with the visited place'. [13] Automotive travelogues have continued these nineteenth-century themes and anxieties, and this issue will be explored throughout the thesis.

This thesis adds a new dimension to discussions of the traveller/tourist that incorporates how the car created new perspectives. Wolfgang Schivelbusch's *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century* (1986) is a thorough investigation of how the means and pace of travel affected the passengers' experience and representation of the journey. Many of the discussions in this thesis draw from Schivelbusch's discourse model in attempting to build a parallel study based on automotive travel in Britain. *The Railway Journey* also shows that much of the discourse surrounding speed and automobilism actually has an earlier nineteenth-century precedent. Images of the annihilation of distance and time were first used to articulate the speed with which a train could reach its destination.[14] Therefore Schivelbusch's book is crucial to this thesis as it demonstrates that the language used to describe the speed of a motor car and the overcoming of spatio-temoral distance was defined in the previous century.

The way that speed is represented in the narratives is crucial to understanding firstly the appeal of motoring; secondly, the way in which speed determines how the landscape is perceived; and thirdly, speed as experience. These three aspects of how speed affects the motorist result in some of the most idiosyncratic descriptions of motoring in this period. Enda Duffy's *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism* (2009) explores the relationship between speed and modernism in

[12] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, p. 94.
[13] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, p. 28.
[14] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 10.

contemporary art, music, literature and cinema. With the exception of Edith Wharton's *A Motor-Flight through France* (1909), Duffy does not consult early twentieth-century automotive travelogues. In this thesis there is room to develop such new discourses by applying them to the material of this study.

The introduction of the car into the travel narrative is a key point of contention in the texts, particularly in the pre-1914 texts due to the fact that the car is still a fairly novel piece of technology. The integration of traditional forms of Victorian home tour narratives with automobile travel was far from seamless; there appears to be a constant tension in the travelogues about how the modernity of the car can be reconciled with an historical tour of Britain and a traditional 'highways and byways' form of narrative. Literary representations of the automobile are also symbolic of the broader social struggle for the car to be a permanent fixture on the roads in the early part of the twentieth century. In Henry Sturmey's pioneering account of a journey from John o'Groats to Land's End made in the year 1897, *On an Autocar Through the Length and Breadth of the Land* (1899), he describes a scene outside Plymouth when he tries to get his car transported by ferry. The boatman is clearly bewildered by the car and is unable to classify what it is, eventually deciding to charge Sturmey five shillings because he perceives the car to be 'an explosive'. [15] Eventually the issue is settled, with much negotiation on Sturmey's part, and they agree that the fare should equate to a carriage without horses. At another near-by bridge Sturmey is told that he could equally be charged the price of a traction engine. The process of classification of the car and revision of narrative models, form, language and modernity are central to exploring the automotive travel texts.

The travel narratives that form the body of this study have obviously been subjected to a selection process which will benefit from an explanation. Questions concerning genre and the nature of travel writing have always been problematic. The broad remit of this thesis considers any text that represents tours of Britain by motor car**:** memoirs of tours; motoring guide books; novels of fictional motor journeys; essays; and journalism articles of motor tours. All these have been counted as primary sources to a greater or lesser degree, but the focus is predominantly on factual accounts.

[15] Henry Sturmey, *On an Autocar through the Length and Breadth of the Land* (Coventry and London: Illiffe, Sons & Sturmey, 1899), p. 75.

Priority has been given to first-person accounts of motor journeys — travel writing as memoir — over third person narratives generally associated with tourist guides. The latter are used more as supporting material to create a broader view of automotive touring in Britain.

The parameters imposed on the text in terms of date and geographical locations also need to be explained. 1896 seems to be the natural starting date for research in this area due to its significance to the motoring movement: it was the date of the Locomotives on Highways Act that lifted the last legal restrictions that had prevented cars travelling on the road.[16] That is not to say that there were no car journeys in Britain prior to 1896, but the strict sanctions placed on motor vehicles made long journeys virtually impossible. The first narrative of a car journey being made is Sturmey's *On an Autocar through the Length and Breadth of the Land* (1899) which was first serialised in *The Autocar* magazine in 1897. After the 1896 Act, writing inspired by automotive journeys flourished, particularly in the new magazines that were established to encourage and support the development of motoring in Britain. In the pages of *The Autocar*, *The Car Illustrated*, and *The Motor*, reports of journeys made by car and their various successes are manifest and these contemporary sources will be used to support the readings of the texts, especially to illustrate broader issues and perceptions of motoring during the first decades of the twentieth century.

I have chosen to end my account of automobile narratives at 1930. 1930 was a landmark year in motoring: the number of registered cars on the road reached a million, speed limits were abolished in 1930, and in 1934 driving tests were introduced.[17] In the historical overview contained in the first chapter I indicate that during the interwar period leading up to the 1930s there was greater access to automotive technology. This broader diffusion of cars means that in motoring narratives the car loses the sense of novelty and excitement that characterise the early motoring narratives. Concerns and incidents involving the car become less and less frequent as it becomes a permanent feature on the roads in Britain and touring by car reaches the zenith of its popularity in the mid-to-late 30s.

[16] The Locomotives on Highways Act abolished the requirement of a 'red-flag man' to walk in front of the car waving a warning flag, and raised the speed limit from just 2 m.p.h. to 12 m.p.h. Peter Thorold, *The Motoring Age: The Automobile and Britain 1896-1939* (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2003), p. 16.

[17] David Thoms, 'Motor Car Ownership in Twentieth-Century Britain: A Matter of Convenience or a Marque of Status?' in *The Motor Car and Popular Culture in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Tim Claydon and Len Holden and David Thoms (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 41-49 (p. 42); Steve Koerner, 'Four Wheels Good; Two Wheels Bad: The Motor Cycle versus the Light Motor Car – 1919-39' in *The Motor Car and Popular Culture in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 151-176 (p. 167). Speed limits were reintroduced in 1935 because the number of fatal road accidents soared.

It has proved problematic to set up geographical perimeters on this work as many of the narratives that begin and end in England also cross the borders in places into Scotland and Wales. It has therefore been necessary for me to label this work as concerning the British Isles. However, this too does not satisfactorily define this work, as it implies that equal weight will be given to Scotland, Wales and even Northern Ireland. Sadly, this is not the case. As the travel writers included in this thesis tend to begin and end their tours in London, or at least the south east, this is predominantly a study of travel writing in England. However, where their work crosses the borders into Wales and Scotland it will also be included. It makes sense to discuss the narratives as whole texts and areas where Wales and Scotland come into discussion provide interesting comparisons to the written accounts of motoring in England. It is also indicative of wider touring patterns, landscapes and roads that appeal to motorists, and areas investing in automotive infrastructures.

A major theme running throughout this thesis when assessing the car's literary debut is the element of national identity. By adopting this new technology motorists thought that the car would give them unparalleled access to the countryside and allow them to see England in a new way and articulate a sense of 'Englishness'. Essays such as those by Catherine Brace and Paul Readman deal directly with the correlation between the motorists of the early twentieth century and the surge of literature professing a new understanding of Englishness.[18] Although they do draw upon extracts of travel writing, their essays do not focus on the specific literature of this thesis. Hand in hand with this idea of re-discovering England and Englishness is the notion of 'getting off the beaten track'. The car allowed motorists access to areas that had been much harder to visit before the advent of the car. More lengthy works on the construction of English national identity such as Simon Featherstone's *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English National Identity* (2009) and Ian Ousby's *The Englishman's England* (2002) help to understand the progression and history of such constructions of national identity. Although discussions of national identity in the early twentieth century are available, there is clearly a gap in existing scholarship for an analysis of the descriptions and influence of automotive travel writing. The third chapter of this thesis is dedicated to this

[18] Catherine Brace, 'Finding England Everywhere: Regional Identity and the Construction of National Identity, 1890-1940', *Cultural Geographies*, 6.1 (January 1999), pp. 90-109; Paul Readman, 'The Place of the Past in English Culture c. 1890-1914', *The Past to Present Society*, 186 (February 2005), pp. 147-199.

argument and explores the distinct national image of England as an Arcadia; a trope that recurs throughout the motoring travelogues.

There have been many useful published works on the social and manufacturing history of the car in England, notably Peter Thorold's *The Motoring Age: The Automobile in Great Britain 1896-1939* (2003) and Sean O'Connell's *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender and Motoring* (1998). These are particularly useful sources to gather contextual information about the reception of the car and how it was integrated into different social networks. In their respective works Thorold and O'Connell sometimes draw from contemporary travel writing to illustrate their arguments, although their discussions are not primarily based on travel writing. As they are both social historians they do not discuss the literary representations of cars and motoring that form the focus of this thesis. Nor do they engage in current travel writing debates and discourses. This thesis will utilise these thorough and detailed works, amongst others, to help to provide a solid historical basis onto which the research and material in this study can be transposed.

The fourth chapter of this work explores the relationship between the automobile and gender identities to understand how gender definitions were imposed onto, and created around, technology. Judgments about the ability of the motorist to drive well or recklessly have often been determined by the sex of the driver. A powerful machine like the car capable of immense speed was seen by some as a symbol of masculine strength and male entitlement. This basic association between masculinity and automobiles endures to the present day. To others, such as Dorothy Levitt, Maud M. Stawell and Mary E. Kennard the dawn of the motoring age presented new opportunities for women to embrace the technology of modernity and remodel versions of femininity. There has been much excellent research analysing the relationship between women and the car such as the studies by Sidonie Smith (2001), Virginia Scharff (1991), and Deborah Clarke (2004); however, these works focus on American women's experience of motoring and entitlement. Georgine Clarsen's superb book *Eat My Dust: Early Women Motorists* (2008) contains two chapters dedicated to British women's experience of motoring. However, Clarsen's emphasis is very much on social history. Female-authored British travel writing pre-1930 is clearly an area that is underdeveloped and this thesis presents the work of Maud M. Stawell and Sarah Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz to enrich this area.

Impressions of travel writing in this period are largely influenced by the familiar canon including D.H. Lawrence, Greene, Forster, Waugh, Auden, Stevenson, Kipling, Isherwood, Hemingway, Orwell and Robert Byron who all wrote about journeys made abroad.[19] However, there is a significant lack of information about travel writing in this period *in* Britain. Featherstone's *Englishness* throws some light on part of this picture with his discussion of walking tours in the first two decades of the twentieth century. C. R. Perry in his essay on H. V. Morton also provides a fresh perspective on the home tour in this period; however, there is no work dedicated to the exploration and analysis of automobile narratives.[20] In contrast to the lack of research on British motoring narratives, scholarship on its American counterpart abounds. The American road journey has been mythologised in both literature and film, and criticism of its symbolism and political agenda has flourished. There exists a misunderstanding in critiques of the car that the American motoring movement and consumer's relationship to the car is similar to the British story. However, there are profound differences both in attitudes towards the motor car and the rates at which automotive technology were taken up. Clarsen notes that there was a 'more rapid diffusion of automobiles across social classes [in the U.S.], compared to Britain. Car ownership became emblematic of an energetic and particularly American democratic national culture.'[21] In Britain the car represented social exclusivity and elitism, rather than representing freedom from social boundaries through consumption as in the U.S. The travelogues provide a clear demonstration of this assertion and will be used to support such critical readings.

There are other important differences in the respective motoring movements. In America new roads had to be built to 'open up' the continent, whereas in Britain, it was more a case of widening existing roads and adapting them for purpose. There is no shared narrative of 'going West' between the two Anglophone countries, and the significance of frontiers in the U.S. is entirely different from that in Britain.[22] Critical arguments based on American attitudes towards the car and driving cannot be

[19] The majority of these writers are featured in Paul Fussell's landmark work *Abroad: British Literary Travelling Between the Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).
[20] C. R. Perry, 'In Search of H. V. Morton: Travel Writing and Cultural Values in the First Age of British Democracy', *Twentieth Century British History*, 10.4 (1999), pp. 431-456.
[21] Clarsen, Georgine, *Eat My Dust: Early Women Motorists* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2008), p. 64.
[22] See Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity 1880-1940* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press, 2001).

assumed to apply equally well to British travelogues. Some critics have themselves left no distinction between British and American motoring in the early years of the car pre-1930. Duffy's *The Speed Handbook* lacks this emphasis and moves freely between U.S. and British sources throughout the argument without proper consideration of this issue.

It is important to note here that in researching the abundance of motoring guides and memoirs of tours that a proportion of them are written by visiting American tourists who advocated taking a motor holiday in England. Their narratives make an interesting comparison to those written by their British counterparts as they appear to share an interest in local myths and legends. They also recognised that they had a shared history with the British, and attempted to define their own tour that particularly catered to the concerns and interests of American tourists. The American writers also make frequent comparisons between motoring in the U.S. and in Britain, which support my assertion of the differences in contemporary motoring cultures. Writers from the U. S. also discussed England's uniqueness compared to any other place in the world. Much of this fascination was derived from visiting places of literary and historical significance. Nicola Watson's *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture* (2009) will be employed throughout this chapter to understand the motivations and feelings induced by the authors at particular landmarks. The volume of guides written by Americans for their fellow countrymen has merited a chapter dedicated to its discussion at the end of this thesis.

Throughout the research for this study the myth of 'the open road' has lingered and contemporary advertisements, guide books and marketing literature use this image of a car racing through open countryside to lure people to the road. The vision of the open road permeates automobile culture from the early 1900s to the present day and has a specific resonance to motorists connoting freedom and exhilaration. The prospects of speed, sublime scenery, fresh air and abandon all teem beneath the humming sound of a waiting open-top car. Robert Shackleton wrote in 1917:

> motorists are eager to get away from any city; it is not alone the call of the road, in the sense that it is the call for the exhilaration of movement, but it is a restless yearning that represents the restless longing of mankind for fields and sky and air and liberty.[23]

[23] Robert Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain* (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Co., 1917), p. 20.

Such powerful images and connotations have been prevalent throughout the car's history. The invention and proliferation of the motor car revolutionised societies not only in practical terms but it also changed people's relationships to technology. Rather than binding human to machine to perform a particular function such as in the factories that made the cars, the car was bound to the desires and whims of the driver. It was a tool for liberation and freedom of movement. However, as the next chapter will go on to explore, this freedom was only granted to those with the financial might to afford it, and to them the car became a powerful new symbol of wealth and commodity. In the very early twentieth century, when commodity culture and consumerism were poised to become the cultural forces that they are today, the car was the ultimate consumer product.

The sense of opportunism and spirit of adventure that the open road can offer endures and inspires reflection on 'the motoring age' where it began. The social history of the car and its development up to 1930 will be the subject of the first chapter in this work. It will outline changing attitudes towards the car throughout the period and how the automobile was used to represent, in Sean O'Connell's terms, 'critiques and celebrations of modernity'.[24] This will provide a rich historical background which will inform the material in the subsequent chapters.

[24] Sean O'Connell, *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender and Motoring 1896-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. ix.

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The Open Road: a Brief Chronology of the Automobile

This chapter focuses on the socio-cultural history of the car in the period covered by this thesis to provide an outline of the early motoring movement, exploring both the technological development of the car, patterns of car ownership, trends of automobility, and changing attitudes towards the car. This is intended to provide a thorough understanding of the impact of the car and its cultural influence onto which our readings of the travelogues can be transposed. This chapter will work chronologically through the period beginning around 1896 and leading up to 1930. Henry Sturmey's *On an Autocar through the Length and Breadth of the Land* (1899) is used to investigate the early stages of motoring as certain idiosyncrasies contained within this work help to build an image of the era of pioneering motor trips at the turn of the century. Sturmey's written account of his journey in 1897 from John o'Groats to Land's End and then Coventry was conducted not only to explore the potential of automotive transport in Britain and the reliability of the car, but also to raise the profile of the car amongst the general public. Journeys of this distance took place all the time in France, yet the British public were largely unaware of this type of technology, what it was for, and what is was capable of. Sturmey's journey was not so much a publicity stunt, but carried out to raise public awareness of this revolution in transportation. The account of his journey was first published as a series of articles in *The Autocar* in 1897, of which he was an editor, and in 1899 as a book. Sturmey was an innovator of bicycle design and also founded another magazine, *The Motor*, in 1903. This text will also draw from other contextual sources such as articles and adverts in the magazines that were established and became part of the early infrastructures built around motoring.

There have been a number of very comprehensive studies of Britain's automotive industry largely spurred by the recent downturn and collapse of car manufacturing in Britain in the last two decades. Such reflections have prompted historians to look back to the youthful heyday of the car and the inception of a very successful and industrious automotive trade. Peter Thorold's *The Motoring*

Age: the Automobile and Britain 1896-1939 (2003) and Sean O'Connell's *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender and Motoring 1896-1939* (1998) are among some of the works that help to lay the foundations for this chapter. This is embellished with other contemporary material such as car advertisements and articles from the motoring magazines which extend the traditional focus on car manufacturing and the motoring movement drawing on more cultural perspectives as a way of reconceptualising ideas about the automobile in this period.

New beginnings

Interest in the possibilities of automotive transportation originated in Germany: Karl Benz and Gottlieb Daimler were simultaneously working on their own car prototypes in the mid-1880s. French engineers were also quick to seize the opportunity to develop such technology. As early as 1889 at the Universal Exposition in Paris a collection of steam- and petrol-powered vehicles were exhibited, including models by Daimler and Serpollet-Peugeot. Similar events followed such as the Chicago World Fair of 1893 where the automobile was first exhibited in the United States.[1]

In the years leading up to the landmark 1896 Locomotives on Highways Act in Britain, the first motoring competition took place in the Paris to Rouen trial in 1894, and in 1895 the first motor race from Paris to Bordeaux then returning to Paris again.[2] Successive races followed in the years to come, notably in France, where the appetite for these public spectacles was enormous. Enda Duffy comments:

> These contests on the open road were the automobile world's version of the fascination with sports contests in the new era of mass leisure and of sport as mass spectacle. They were also renovated versions of the tales of heroic adventure of the Victorian fin de siècle, presenting intrepid drivers on dangerous courses rather than explorers in the African jungles.[3]

[1] For more information about the Chicago's World Fair see Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform and Social Change* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp. 95-126.
[2] Daryl Adair, 'Spectacles of Speed and Endurance: The Formative Years of Motor Racing in Europe', in *The Motor Car and Popular Culture in the 20th Century*, ed. David Thoms, Len Holden and Tim Claydon (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 1998), 120-134 (pp. 121-2).
[3] Enda Duffy, *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2009), p. 126.

The visual display and interest generated by motor racing on the continent helped to garner enthusiasm and momentum for the pro-motoring lobbyists in Britain who felt that the glamour and prestige of this new feat of engineering was passing the country by.[4] After all, Britain had been the centre of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was the birthplace of the railway. Yet for all the motor racing and investment in automotive technology abroad, there seemed to be little enthusiasm for these new developments on the part of the British government and the public.[5]

In October 1895, the year before the Act was passed, Sir David Salomons, baronet and M.P., organised the Tunbridge Wells Motor Show, hosted on his private estate. As it was held on private land they were able to flout the speed limits and the 'red-flag man' rule. The event attracted an estimated 10,000 spectators and Salomons' support for the new technology was certainly felt at Westminster.[6] Despite this Britain was seriously lacking in any inclination towards welcoming the car and the technological and manufacturing industries that came with it. Detractors of the automobile initially based their bias on the dangers that the automobile presented to the general public and saw the car as a dangerous hobby of the wealthy. O'Connell notes that

> A particular problem for them [the motorists] was the widely propagated image of motorists as rich, arrogant joy-riders, out to have fun at everyone else's expense. One of the earliest critics of the car was the *Daily Telegraph*, which ran a campaign against this 'social juggernaut' in 1903.[7]

Indeed such criticisms were perennial during the first decades of the automobile's presence on the roads in Britain. Perceptions that the car was an expensive fad abounded and many thought that this fascination with the car would soon pass, primarily because the unreliability of these machines was notorious.[8] C.F.G. Masterman writes in *The Condition of England* (1909) that the leisure class look to all sorts of occupations to 'distract' them from the amount of leisure time they possess. One of the

[4] Peter Thorold, *The Motoring Age: The Automobile and Britain 1896-1930* (London: Profile Books., 2003), pp. 6-7. This opinion was also held by motoring pioneer S.F. Edge which he recounts in his memoir *My Motoring Reminiscences* (London: G.T. Foulis & Co., 1934), pp. 104, 135-6.
[5] See S.F. Edge, *My Motoring Reminiscences*, and Stenson Cooke, *This Motoring* (London: The Automobile Association, [n.d. but pre-1931]), pp. 10-31. Cooke documents a case that highlights the active persecution of motorists by local governments and the police.
[6] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 14.
[7] Sean O'Connell, *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender, and Motoring1896-1903* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 119.
[8] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, pp. 56-7, 73.

examples that he gives of these distractions is watching a high speed motor race that ends in fatalities; a sort of grim spectacle that leaves the onlookers awestruck and horrified, but is ultimately perceived as entertainment.[9] Motoring enthusiasts saw the motor races as a trial of new technology and human endurance; a gripping display of human endeavour.

It is commonly asserted that the motoring movement really began in Britain on 14th November 1896, the day that the Locomotives on Highways Act was passed. This relaxed the strict regulation for the use of cars on public roads; prior to this act steam powered locomotives were permitted on the roads but drivers were legally required to have a man walking in front of the car waving a red flag, or a red lamp at night, and could only drive at 2 m.p.h. in towns and 4 m.p.h. in the countryside.[10] The 1896 Act removed the requirement of a red flag man and increased the speed limit to 12 m.p.h.[11] The passing of this Act was received with great excitement by motoring enthusiasts and the general public, as demonstrated in the overwhelming interest in the Emancipation Run from London to Brighton. Influential figures in motoring circles such as Harry Lawson, Sir David Salomons, Evelyn Ellis and S.F. Edge, amongst others, had been closely following the development of motoring on the continent and celebrated the passing of the Act by taking part in the Emancipation Run on the day it came into force. Some eminent car builders from Europe like the Bollée brothers, accompanied by the racing cyclist H.O. Duncan, had cars shipped over to take part. Charles Jarrott, racing driver and founder of the British Automobile Association, was also present at the Emancipation Run, along with Harry Lawson, who is partly credited with organising the run. S.F. Edge, the champion bicyclist, and later racing driver of cars and motor boats, also took part. The glamour and excitement of the spectacle was reported in *The Times*:

> The cars were to be drawn up near the Whitehall-place entrance of the Hôtel Métropole; but, although there are one or two very wide thoroughfares there, the crush of sight-seers was such that it was impossible to preserve anything like regular order in placing them [...]
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> [...] this immense concourse of people upset all calculations and all arrangements, and, while something like one-half of the vehicles were never able to start at all, the procession having been abruptly stopped by the crowd, despite the efforts of the horse police to keep a passage clear, the four or five and twenty which were fortunate enough to get clear were compelled to proceed at a very slow rate, so dense was the crowd all the way to Brixton

[9] C.F.G. Masterman, *The Condition of England* [1909] (London: Methuen, 1960), pp. 29-30.
[10] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 8.
[11] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 16. The speed limit was raised again in 1903 to 20 m.p.h. which stayed in place until the speed limit was completely abolished in 1930 (pp. 50, 206).

> [...] The scene all along the road was most remarkable, for not only were the spectators on foot and in carriages numerous beyond anticipation, but hundreds of cyclists formed a flying escort to the cars, and it would probably not be an exaggeration to say that ten thousand cyclists were on the roads between London and Brighton on Saturday.[12]

The excitement and anticipation of the crowd who were determined to witness a piece of history prevailed over the terrible weather. The wonder of the age, the 'horseless carriage', was about to make its momentous debut into British history. Incidentally, in this same year Karl Benz patented the first flat internal combustion engine. However, vehement opposition to the car still persisted. S.F. Edge notes in his motoring memoir that

> There were, too, numbers of extremists who would have been glad to see the new Act repealed. They thought that everybody who favoured motor cars ought to be hanged, drawn and quartered, and every motor car should be burned. Nothing one could say about the march of science had any effect, and this prejudice continued for many years in some quarters, even after motoring became comparatively popular.[13]

Such strong reactions to the car and motorists were not uncommon and a more subtle resistance to the car is evident in the fact that, even after the success of the 1896 Act, Britain was still remarkably slow to warm to the automobile and create any long-term permanent motoring infrastructures. Edge writes of his frustration at the unwillingness of British authorities to accommodate motor cars on the roads. He and his business partner Montague Napier found themselves having to break the law in the early hours of the morning to test their racing car, which was built to race at 85 m.p.h. when the speed limit was a mere 12 m.p.h..[14] Their ambition was to enter a British car in the annual high-profile Gordon Bennett Cup, but the restrictions placed on competitors stated that all car parts, including engine and bodywork, of the entry must be made in the country it represented. They successfully entered and won the 1903 Gordon Bennett race which meant that Britain had to host the race in the following year; however the authorities were reluctant to do this so the 1904 race was forced to take place in Ireland.[15] The opportunity to present the grand motor races, so familiar on the continent, to the British public was too easily passed up and England gained a further reputation for being sceptical and hostile to the new technology.

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[12] Anonymous, 'Meet of the Motor-Cars.', *The Times*, 16th November 1896, p. 7.
[13] Edge, *My Motoring Reminiscences*, p. 39.
[14] Edge, *My Motoring Reminiscences*, p. 104.
[15] Edge, *My Motoring Reminiscences*, pp. 135-6.

The first car manufacturer to open in Britain was Daimler who purchased an old cotton mill in 1896 in Coventry to begin production. It is significant that at the time of the passing of the Locomotives on Highways Act that allowed 'horseless carriages' use of the roads, Britain had no indigenous car manufacturers of its own. All the cars that took part in the Emancipation Run had been shipped over from mainland Europe. The purchase of the former cotton mill in Coventry is also emblematic of how the motor trade grew in this region. Renowned for its manufacturing of bicycles, and previous to that, sewing machines, Coventry had the engineering and manufacturing expertise ready to develop the car industry in Britain. This was also supported by a ready work force that was well adapted to changing technologies and familiar with production methods in the large industrial complexes. Many of the recognisable motoring manufacturers of the first decades of the twentieth century such as Humber, Rover, Singer, and Hillman actually began as makers of bicycles and switched over to manufacturing motor cars within the ten years of the act being passed.[16]

The early years

In the very first decades of the automobile reactions to the car tended to be rather polarised: vociferous critics were equalled by those who were excited and enthused by the potential of this new technology and had high hopes of how it could be developed to suit other purposes. However, if we are to believe Sturmey's *On an Autocar through the Length and Breadth of the Land* the general population knew next to nothing about the cars and the technology which had produced them. Prior to his journey, Sturmey had printed some "save trouble cards" for the purpose of handing out to gathered crowds as a way of continually answering frequently asked questions. It reads:

What is it?

It is an autocar.
Some people call it a motor-car.
It is worked by a petroleum motor.
The motor is of four horse-power.
It will run sixty miles with one charge of oil.
No! it can't explode — there is no boiler.

[16] Jonathan Wood, *The British Motor Industry* (Botley, Oxford: Shire Publications, 2010), p. 8.

It can travel at fourteen miles an hour.
Ten to eleven is its average pace.
It can be started in two minutes.
There are eight ways of stopping it, so it can't run away.
It is steered with one hand.
Speed is mainly controlled by the foot.
It can be stopped in ten feet when travelling at full speed.
It carries four gallons of oil and sixteen gallons of water.
The water is to keep the engine cool.
It costs less than ¾ d. a mile to run.
The car can carry five people.
It can get up any ordinary hill.
It was built by the Daimler Motor Co. of Coventry.
And cost £370.
We have come from John-o'-Groat's House.
We are going to Land's End.
We are not record breaking, but touring for pleasure.[17]

Sturmey's cards are a good measure of how little ordinary members of the public knew about motor cars. Some people held deeply irrational fears about the car and thought that it could spontaneously combust and burst into flames.[18] There is also the discernible feeling of apprehension amongst onlookers and passers-by as well as huge gatherings that amassed to wave and cheer Sturmey on his journey.[19] In many of the towns and cities on Sturmey's route the cheering crowds were so large that policemen had to line the streets to make a path through the crowd.[20] This ambivalence towards the motor car demonstrates the way that the country was split between those that supported the new technology and were excited about its future, and those that saw the car as an industrial monster that seriously threatened the public at large and the nineteenth-century way of life that some rural communities embodied. Criticisms of drivers and cars form a part of larger discussions about self-imaging and the tourist-traveller debate that will be addressed throughout this work.

As indicated in the introduction to this thesis, the motoring era leading up to 1930 is a tale of two halves divided by the cataclysmic effects of the First World War. People's experience of

[17] Henry Sturmey, *On an Autocar through the Length and Breadth of the Land* (Coventry; London: Iliffe, Sons & Sturmey, 1899), p. 11.
[18] Sturmey, *On an Autocar*, p. 75.
[19] In one encounter on a country road Sturmey passes three people with a horse and cart. The horse seemed completely indifferent to the motor car; however, 'in a tone that was meant to wither us completely, and with great vehemence, the old lady spat out, "You ought to be *put* in *prison*, you *did*." [his italics].' Sturmey, *On an Autocar* , p. 73.
[20] Sturmey, *On an Autocar*, pp. 36, 60. He also notes that they have a fleet of people on bicycles accompanying them into and out of some towns, sometimes as many as twenty or thirty (p. 61).

motoring and, more importantly, those who had access to automotive technology, changes after 1918. The cost of purchasing a car, maintaining it, and possibly employing staff to drive it, was so expensive that the only consumers were the very wealthy. Peter Thorold says that in 1908 the average cost of a new car was £420, approximately £41,000 in today's currency.[21] There were some cheaper models such as the Swift 10-12 h.p. four-seater that could be purchased in 1910 for the equivalent of £25,600 today; however this is still well beyond the reach of the majority of households especially if we take into account the average annual wage. Historian Paul Johnson estimates this to be only £69 in 1913 for a semi-skilled manual labourer.[22] This would be approximately £6,500 in today's value.[23] Describing the period preceding World War One, John Lucas emphasises the

> gross materialism of Edwardian England, the terrible poverty of millions (vast numbers of men who volunteered for war service in the autumn of 1914 were rejected on medical grounds, others because a constant diet of condensed milk and white bread had so rotted their teeth that they couldn't cope with army food), the strikes, the lock-outs, the city slums, to say nothing of the conditions which farm labourers had still to endure, [...].[24]

The vast wealth of the motorists is balanced with a picture of deprivation and industrial unrest, a picture also uncovered by Masterman in *The Condition of England* where he rails against 'the life of poverty festering round the pillars which support the material greatness of England.'[25] The vast gap between the average income of labourers and the cost of cars demonstrates that owning a car was far beyond the means of the lower and middle classes. At the other end of the scale, 'Owen John' (pseudonym for Owen John Llewellyn) the long-time columnist for *The Autocar* reflected in an article in 1926:

> I grant that, in those early days, one had to be either a rich man, a fool, or in the business to travel the country by car. Twenty-five years ago they were unreliable, uneconomical playthings, and one used them at one's own risk and treated their disadvantages and uncertainties entirely as an expensive hobby.
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> [...] Who of his generation does not remember Mr. Hoggenheimer and his car, that made a noise like the shaking of a shot in a tin, his horn that always caused a roar, his fur coat

[21] Calculated in line with increases in the Composite Price Index between 1908 and 2011 as published by the Office for National Statistics. < http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-223954> accessed 30 March 2012.
[22] Paul Johnson, 'Introduction: Britain, 1900-1990' in *20th Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change*, ed. by Paul Johnson (New York: Longman, 1994), pp. 1-19 (p. 6).
[23] Figures produced on the same index as in ref. 21.
[24] John Lucas, *The Radical Twenties: Aspects of Writing, Politics and Culture* (Nottingham: Five Leaves, 1997), pp. 12-13.
[25] Masterman, *The Condition of England*, p. 12.

> and his cigar, and the very atmosphere of affluence that attended his every entrance and exit? He, to the public, was the typical motorist. [26]

This passage reveals a rather uncompromising view of how early motorists were perceived. The reference to Mr Hoggenheimer could be alluding to an American play of 1906 where the wealthy Hoggenheimer hunts down his wayward son in America.[27] It is unclear if Llewellyn is directly referring to the play here or whether the name is being used generically to connote a man of new money and little taste or decorum, publically flouting his wealth and material possessions. The name itself emphasises the word 'hog', a pig grown large on his own success and wallowing in the comfort and luxury of his surroundings. Independent of Llewellyn's direct reference the idea of the affluent motorist draped in furs with a vast disposable income is one that permeates the literature of the early 1900s, and no clearer example can be given than the lively and rambunctious Toad of Toad Hall whose misadventures in a motor car form the central storyline in Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908). The combination of wealth, pride and recklessness are also seized upon by Masterman who comments:

> Others are inflamed with the desire for 'driving abroad in furious guise', as an escape from the *ennui* of a life which has lost its savour; as in the tortured and bored procession in old Rome, for the 'easier and quicker' passing of the 'impracticable hours'. But a large proportion of those who have employed motor cars in habitual violation of the speed limit, and in destruction of the amenities of the rural life of England, have done so either because their neighbours have employed motor cars, or because their neighbours have not employed motor cars; in an effort towards equality with one, or the superiority over the other.[28]

Masterman's assertion that motor cars, as consumer items, play an important role in maintaining and reinforcing social class is key to understanding the way that motorists imagined themselves; the 'Hoggenheimers' were the ones wealthy enough to be 'modern' through the consumption of luxury items such as the automobile. Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) communicates the idea of 'conspicuous consumption' that foregrounds the importance of purchasing luxury items as a visual display and symbol of one's affluence. Veblen writes: 'The basis on which good repute in any highly organised industrial community ultimately rests is pecuniary strength; and

[26] 'Owen John', 'On the Road', *The Autocar*, 16th April 1926, p. 28.
[27] Gerald Bordman, *American Musical Theatre: A Chronicle* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 265-6. Hoggenheimer is also the name of a German card game where bets are placed.
[28] Masterman, *The Condition of England*, pp. 21-2.

the means of showing pecuniary strength, and so of gaining or retaining a good name, are leisure and a conspicuous consumption of goods.'[29] The car then embodies both the principles of conspicuous goods as a social symbol to be read and decoded by others, and facilitates conspicuous leisure by the same token. Veblen also recognises that the freedom to travel for leisure, because there is no necessity to work, is one of the most prominent ways to differentiate those in the very upper echelons of society: 'Abstention from labour is the conventional evidence of wealth and is therefore the conventional mark of social standing; and this insistence on the meritoriousness of wealth leads to a more strenuous insistence on leisure.'[30] These early motorists possessed the most valuable commodity of all, leisure, and the car helped them to display this: leisure made manifest. John Urry also concurs with Veblen's theory of how leisure defines social structures**:**

> Tourism is a leisure activity that presupposes its opposite, namely regulated and organised work. It is one manifestation of how work and leisure are organised as separate and regulated spheres of social practice in 'modern' societies. Indeed acting as a tourist is one of the defining characteristics of being 'modern' and is bound up with major transformations in paid work. This has come to be organised within particular places and to occur for regularised periods of time.[31]

Urry develops Veblen's initial theories to also attribute leisure, and by extension tourism, to modernity. Through this idea leisure and tourism become social performances that assert one's wealth, influence and authority.

The motoring magazine *The Car Illustrated* was a high-end publication aimed at this socially elite group of motorists that featured the most wealthy and influential people in the country, from the King down through high society. It ran features on a family's motor cars and their stately homes throughout the country. Many of the wealthy socialites of the day used the magazine as a way of improving their public profile and showing off the size and grandeur of their estate, which would include their fleet of new motor cars. The King himself was the subject of one particular edition in his Daimler, and his lover, Lily Langtry, was featured as a model of Redfearn ladies motor costumes in

[29] Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 59.
[30] Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class*, p. 32.
[31] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 2nd edition (London: Sage, 2002), p. 2.

another edition.[32] The magazine also contains advice for these people about how to keep and look after their cars. One particular article gives advice to those wishing to embark on motoring as to what they will require in order to own and maintain a motor car successfully. It reads:

> A motor-car is a valuable vehicle, and must have proper accommodation if it is to prove a success and a pleasure. [...] In this case proper accommodation will have eventually to be provided not only for storing the vehicles but for engineers' shops, fitted with lathes, forges, and all that is necessary to carry out repairs of a more or less serious nature, in addition to the living requirements for the staff of drivers and mechanics.[33]

This extract insists that owning a motor car is a symbol not only of one's vast wealth but also of one's judgement and good sense; the erecting of something resembling a blacksmith's workshop is required to guarantee success. The recondite nature of automobilism in the early 1900s meant that purpose-built garages and the skilled staff to operate the car were essential. To the calibre of people purchasing cars in this era, it is doubtful whether the added expense of staff and garages was really a consideration.

The conduct of motorists and particularly gentlemen drivers was also the source of much animated discussion. As Kathleen Bell observes, many contemporaries believed that if a person was wealthy enough to own a car then they were inherently capable of driving well and possessing the necessary skills to manage a car.[34] Sean O'Connell notes a similar belief that all gentlemen drivers would be naturally courteous drivers because they all possessed refined manners and excellent judgement due to their social class.[35] Of course, this was often not the case and battles over entitlement to the road between horse-drawn vehicle and motorized cars were common.[36]

Travel writer J. E. Vincent caricatured the position of the 'anti-motorists' who believed that 'the motorist is a dust-raising, property-destroying, dog-killing, fowl-slaying, dangerous and ruthless

[32] 'The King as a Motorist', *The Car Illustrated*, vol. 1, no. 2, 28th May 1902, pp. 18-20. Lily Langtry appears in *The Car Illustrated* , vol. 1, no. 3, 11th June 1902, pp. 61-2.
[33] Anonymous, 'Motor Houses', *The Car Illustrated*, vol. 1, no. 2, 28th May 1902, p. 7.
[34] Kathleen Bell, 'Poop, poop! – An Early Case of Joy-Riding by an Upper Class Amphibian' in *The Motor Car and Popular Culture in the 20th Century*, pp. 69-83 (p. 71).
[35] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, pp. 79, 120-1.
[36] S.F. Edge actually gets into a physical fight with the driver of a horse and carriage who whips him with a horse-whip as Edge is passing by. Edge, *My Motoring Reminiscences*, p. 8.

[image removed]

Figure 2.1 Image from a collection of cartoons that appeared in *Punch* relating to cycling and motoring, published as *Mr Punch Awheel; The Humours of Motoring and Cycling* ([London]: The Education Book Co. Ltd., [no date]), p. 33.

speed maniac.'[37] Indeed, most fierce critics of motoring were particularly venomous about the new 'gentleman's sport' and thought that their leisure came at the expense of the public at large. It must also be remembered that although the speed limit was only 20 m.p.h., this would have been considered to be very fast for the time, faster than a horse at canter. This would have seemed frightening to the public and made them wary of these machines that they knew little about. Due to the high levels of anxiety about the dangers of speed, the limit of 20 m.p.h. was heavily enforced, often through means of entrapment. Police speed traps were manifest throughout the country to catch unsuspecting motorists and often the charges were exaggerated or completely unfounded. Stenson Cooke, the first secretary of the Automobile Association (founded in 1905), remembers in his book *This Motoring* the extent of the contrivances of the police and local magistrates to catch motorists in order to make money from fines.[38] This led to the AA employing young uniformed cyclists to patrol the roads and alert any oncoming drivers. Rudyard Kipling's short story 'The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat' (written in 1913 and published in 1917 in *A Diversity of Creatures*) satirised these speed traps and the corrupt magistrates that presided over the cases. Although Kipling's similar lampooning of speed traps and the legal proceedings brought against motorists is light-hearted and humorous, the problem and frequency of such occurrences should not be overlooked. Motor clubs began to form to offer support for the burgeoning number of motorists, such as the Automobile Club (later the RAC) which was founded in 1897. These clubs quickly sought to counter such cases and the open discrimination against motorists, helping to establish the Motor Vehicle Users Defence Association which provided motorists with legal assistance for court cases brought against them.[39]

Now that the rural roads could be used by motor cars it was no longer safe or practical for livestock to freely roam and graze in the roads. It was also clear that an expansive overhaul of the road system in Britain was required to solve the problem of dust and reduce the number of accidents. At the turn of the twentieth century the roads in Britain were terribly neglected. The majority of long journeys were made by railway and in rural areas only local traffic used the roads. Consequently little money was spent on their upkeep and maintenance. In the early 1900s when the first cars were being

[37] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, p. xx.
[38] Cooke, *This Motoring*, pp. 2-9.
[39] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, pp. 41-2.

used on the roads it became clear to them that the roads were insufficient to withstand the use of automobiles. Frequent letters in the correspondence pages of *The Autocar* call for the government to spend more money on improving the roads. The weight of the cars and the increased volume of traffic only added to the poor condition of the roads, which in wet weather became thick mud and were prone to flooding. In the summer, the dust that cars created was also a serious complaint. Thomas D. Murphy writes in his travelogue of 1908 that

> The dust, in the form of a fine white powder, covers the trees and vegetation, giving the country here and there an almost ghostly appearance. No wonder that in this particular section there is considerable prejudice against the motor on account of its great propensity to stir up the dust. So far as we ourselves were concerned, we usually left it behind us, and it troubled us only when some other car got in ahead of us.[40]

The countryside and its network of roads required renovation; clearly the success of the motor car and its acceptance and long-term future depended on a revival and restoration of the nation's highways. Calls for the improvement of roads were already active prior to the use of the motorcar as cyclists lobbied under the Road Improvement Association.[41] A few early attempts to improve roads and eliminate dust saw some roads being metalled in 1900. In 1902 tarmac was developed by mixing bitumen and ironstone slay or stone, and by 1914 the process of laying tarmac was in full operation.[42] Tarring the roads was also another method that was employed to improve the conditions as it waterproofed and bound the surface stones together to reduce the amount of dust, particularly on the roads without tarmac. However, road improvements came to an abrupt end in 1914 at the outbreak of war and in 1918 the roads were found to be in a poorer state than when the improvements had first started.[43] To counter this problem in 1919 the Ministry of Transport was established and they set about grading roads (either 1 or 2) to begin a process of standardisation throughout Britain.[44]

It was not only the roads themselves that were found to be in dire state of neglect; in the early 1900s motorists were frequently confronted with derelict inns and the ruins of tollhouses.[45] This

[40] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways from a Motor Car* [imprinted new edition by Dodo Press], p. 60.
[41] Trevor Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), p. 13.
[42] Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century*, p. 26. The Road Fund was created out of the 1909 budget to set up a national policy for improving roads (p. 29).
[43] Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century*, p. 30.
[44] Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century*, p. 30.
[45] See J.J. Hissey, *The Charm of the Road* (London: Macmillan, 1910), p. 391.

reminded travel writers such as J.J. Hissey about the 'glory days' of coaching in the nineteenth century, even though, as Hissey himself noted, earlier writers of journeys in Britain such as Daniel Defoe also lamented the poor condition of the roads in his book *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1726).[46] Motorists began to style themselves as the patrons and custodians of Britain's roads and claimed that their tourism and countryside excursions were vital to the recovery of the ancient inns and hostelries that had once existed to cater to horse-drawn coaches.[47] With their patronage, a new type of roadside inn could be established for motor tourists, and many, such as Hissey, believed that automobile tours in the countryside could revive the fortunes of these old roadside inns and save them from bankruptcy and neglect. He comments in his 1906 travelogue *Untravelled England*:

> I wonder if the motor car will revive the ancient glories of this house? I know of some old coaching inns that have taken a new and apparently long and prosperous lease of life, owing solely to the modern revival of road traffic [...] The resurrection of the comfortable old-fashioned inn, beloved of Dr. Johnson, would be a glorious achievement of the motor car![48]

Later, in his book of 1910, he was much more optimistic and direct about the influence of the car on the traditional coaching inns:

> The railway left the old inn high and dry for a time, but first the cycle, and afterwards the motor car, more surely awoke it from its long sleep; the simply impossible had happened—the resurrection of the road! The landlords of the country inns began to open wide their eyes with delighted surprise, and forthwith began to refurbish their premises, not before they wanted it. Profitable customers had come again their way.[49]

Although rather dramatically stated, it seems that where the demonised railroads had attempted to erase an important part of transport culture, the bicycle and the motor car, the will of the people as Hissey would have his readers believe, have won the day. These wealthy motorists who were making countryside excursions during the weekends and taking more prolonged tours in their motor cars were

[46] J.J. Hissey, *Untravelled England* (London: Macmillan, 1906), p. 167.
[47] Hissey comments in *The Charm of the Road* about the new inns and facilities like petrol stations that have arisen to service motorists and their cars (pp. 238-9).
[48] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 260.
[49] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 97.

having a serious impact on the countryside that had been badly damaged by the Agricultural Depression which had begun in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.[50]

The 'roaring twenties'

The image and potency of the car in 'the roaring twenties', as the 1920s has come to be known, is so powerful that it often overrides the more everyday reality that horses and carts were still being used in areas up into the late 1940s. It is important that we recognise that while the motor car enjoyed, and still enjoys, some celebrity in this period, the transition from horse to car was a much more protracted process that took half a century to complete. However, in urban centres the development towards motorised transportation was much more accelerated and pronounced.[51] The car's suggestion of liveliness and its invariable reputation of being symbolic of modernity and leisure in the 1920s are still important. After 1918 there was a resurgence of car manufacturing and the number of cars on the roads grew rapidly, at a rate that far surpassed its growth before the First World War. The following table shows the numbers of cars on the roads in Britain from 1905 to 1930.[52]

Year	1905	1909	1912	1913	1914	1918	1919	1920	1922	1925	1930
No. of cars	15,800	48,000	88,000	106,000	132,000	78,000	110,000	187,000	315,000	580,000	1,500,000

This table also reflects a far greater dispersion of the automobile throughout the social classes. There are a number of reasons why this occurred: a rise in average wages, cheaper car prices, and monthly payment finance schemes all contributed towards a broader diffusion of automotive technology.[53] Motorcycles were also hugely popular and cheaper alternatives to owning cars. Motorcycles were experimented with as early as 1895 by companies such as Humber and Bayliss, and Thomas & Co. in Coventry.[54] During the war motorcycles outsold cars as their cost and maintenance was far cheaper

[50] Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 250-5.
[51] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, pp. 62-3.
[52] The figures used in this table have been compiled from the work of Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, pp. 51, 88, 128 and Trevor Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century*, p. 22.
[53] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, p. 20.
[54] Damien Kimberley, *Coventry's Motorcycle Heritage* (Stroud: The History Press, 2009), pp. 40-1, 56-8.

than their car competitors.[55] In 1915 there were 138,496 registered motorcycles; in 1920 this figure rose to 287,739; and in 1925 motorcycles numbered 581,228.[56] Although this study has asserted that only the very wealthy were able to access independent automobiles prior to the First World War, motorcycles were a much cheaper alternative that allowed its passengers a similar kind of freedom and independence at a much lower cost. For example, in 1912 you could purchase an Ariel TT Roadster for only £47 (approximately £4,546 today), and in 1923 a more modest motorcycle like the BSA Sports cost £70 (approximately £3,584 today).[57] It was estimated by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders in 1926 that you must have an income of at least £450 (approximately £23,300 today) to be able to afford to run a car; this excludes the initial expense of purchasing the car.[58] Some contemporary sources believed this estimate to be far too optimistic and thought that the cost was much higher.[59] Although this evidence demonstrates that motorcycles were far more accessible and cheaper to run than cars, they were still beyond the reach of the average semi-skilled labourer in 1913. However, producers of cars also recognised that the success of their businesses relied on generating a broader market for cars to increase sales.

In July 1922 the Austin Seven, or the 'Baby Austin' as it was also known, was mass-marketed and for over a decade dominated the sale of 'light', or small and economical family cars. The Austin Seven was actually aimed at attracting potential buyers of motorcycles allowing them to become car owners. Steve Koerner writes:

> [...] Austin was explicit about the dimensions of this vehicle, which were not to exceed those of a sidecar combination and thus fit easily into the same garage space. In this way some of the inherent advantages of the motor cycle combination would be undercut. When the Seven was launched in July 1922, Austin announced that the potential buyer was 'the man who, at present, can only afford a motor cycle and a side car, and yet has the ambition to become a motorist'.[60]

[55] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 184.
[56] 'Table 20 – Motor Vehicles in use in United Kingdom from 1904-1936' in *The Motor Industry in Great Britain 1937, Issued by the Statistical Department of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Ltd.*, p. 59.
[57] Calculations of equivalent prices today based on an average inflation rate advised by the Bank of England. Calculations accurate to 2012. [see ref. 21]
[58] Calculations of equivalent prices today based on an average inflation rate advised by the Bank of England. Calculations accurate to 2012. [see ref. 21]
[59] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 185.
[60] Steve Koerner, 'Four Wheels Good; Two Wheels Bad: The Motor Cycle versus the Light Motor Car – 1919-39' in *The Motor Car and Popular Culture in the 20th Century* ed. by Tim Claydon, Len Holden and David Thoms (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 151-176 (p.155).

The Austin Seven had a similar impact on car-ownership to that of the Model T-Ford in America in 1908. It cost just £165 in 1922, which equates to approximately £7,500 in today's terms.[61] The car was now within reach of the lower-middle classes and many families chose to joint-purchase a car with another family or household in order that they might be able to own one. After the success of the Austin Seven in Britain, other car manufacturers tried to replicate their success by making light cars of their own.

In a study of the diffusion of automobiles in Britain it would be an oversight not to mention the influence of Ford. I do not wish to turn this into a prolonged discussion as this has already been examined at length in a number of other works. However, it is necessary to emphasise how easily one could buy a Ford, one of the cheapest models to purchase. Ford opened his Manchester factory in 1911 to expand into the British market. In 1914 mass production successfully reduced the price of the Model T to £113, approximately £11,000 today. There has been much attention on the Model T for democratising travel due to the cheap price tag and cost of maintenance. However, this claim is somewhat overestimated in a British context. If we consider that the average wage of semi-skilled labourer in 1913 was only £6,500 in today's value, it is clear that any potential buyer would have to be of the comfortable middle classes in order to consider such an expense. It can be seen that the Ford, although opening up the possibility of independent motorised travel to a much broader market, did not have the same effect in Britain as it did in America. I have already suggested in the introduction to this work how the car was subsumed into existing class-based social structures, and the Model T was often sneered at by those driving other more expensive marques. O'Connell comments on the distaste for cheaper models like Morris, Hillman, Ford, and Humber:

> 'Appropriate' cars for the gentry were Armstrong-Siddeleys, Bentleys, Lanchesters and Rolls-Royces, but they studiously avoided Humbers, which were seen as the cars of the staid middle-aged middle classes. [...] The SS.1 was often referred to as 'a cad's car', or 'a promenade Percy's car'. It also had a reputation as a flashy car favoured by 'spivs' and 'shady traders'. The SS.1 had its chassis designed by body-builders, who gave it an attractive and expensive appearance. *Autocar* described it as a £310 model that looked like a £1,000 car. This discrepancy between looks and cost may explain some of the animosity towards the car. [...] Its comparatively low cost allowed new social groups to enter the sports-car niche. Hence its buyers came to be viewed as intruders in a sphere of motoring they had previously been

[61] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 236. Calculations of equivalent prices today based on an average inflation rate advised by the Bank of England. Calculations accurate to 2012. [see ref. 21]

> unable to join, with the result that they were classified - by the 'Bentley Boys' and others amongst motoring's cognoscenti – as a motoring *nouveau riche* whose sense of good taste had not caught up with their purchasing power.[62]

O'Connell's analysis shows that the car was not just a marker of those that 'have' and those that 'have not', but also enforced a rigid class hierarchy, as the car was naturally assimilated into Britain's existing social strata. Marketing brochures also appeal to this high-end market. An advert for the 1928 Armstrong-Siddeley 'Richmond Enclosed Limousine' displays a gentleman reclined in the back seat, covered in furs and attended by his chauffeur. It markets extravagance and luxury and with its silk curtains creates the impression of being inside a finely decorated dining room rather than a car. David Thoms discusses the function of such adverts and comments: 'Cars are rarely portrayed as merely useful load carriers but as objects of desire, which reflect on the good taste and even technical knowledge of the owner.'[63] The appeal of the Armstrong-Siddeley and other exclusive marques is the outward symbol of opulence and aesthetic taste. It was a luxury commodity that could be used by the very wealthiest to show their social refinement and technological prowess, rather than a practical piece of equipment that offered an alternative mode of transportation and conveyance of goods. [64]

The rapid rate of growth of the motor movement in the 1920s led to a dramatic rise in new businesses that focused on servicing this new industry: tea houses, hotels, petrol pumps, and gift shops sprung up at a remarkable rate.[65] The car, and the infrastructures that arose around it in the countryside, were good for the rural economy but these changes often led to regret that the commercialisation of the countryside was destroying the secluded fantasy that these writers set out to find; it is the age-old cycle of tourism perpetuating more tourism and changing the landscape around it. Ian Ousby writes that the process of appreciating landscape and place quickly leads to partial localised judgments about the selected places. He continues:

> Tourism completes the process by turning the habits of travel into a formal codification which exerts mass influence and gains mass acceptance. Distinguishing signs in guidebooks, symbols on maps and road signs enforce its selections, raising them to the status of communal

[62] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, pp. 23-4.
[63] David Thoms, 'Motor Car Ownership in Twentieth-Century Britain: A Matter of Convenience or a Marque of Status?' in *The Motor Car and Popular Culture in the 20th Century*, ed. by Tim Claydon, Len Holden and David Thoms (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 41-49 (p. 47).
[64] Thoms, 'Motor Car Ownership in Twentieth-Century Britain', p. 41.
[65] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, p. 162.

> or official wisdom; the sights thus selected are professionally laid out for display, explained, preserved, restored and eventually endangered or spoilt by their very popularity.[66]

This is a well-developed area of travel writing theory and this sentiment is certainly not exclusive to the motoring narratives of this era. Wordsworth's opposition to proposals to extend the railway network to Kendal and Windermere in 1844 reflected similar fears.[67] What is significant is that this age-old lamentation was being re-enacted in a new form, built around new independent motorised transportation, and the fact that the writers of automotive travelogues feared the proliferation of motor tours that they were themselves popularising.

Inevitably such exploitation of the countryside for capital gain took hold very quickly. Entrepreneurial advertisers recognised these new leisure patterns that saw a mass movement into the countryside and took advantage of this space as a place to advertise. There are many references in the travelogues that show how consumerism and capitalism once restricted to urban centres had intruded into the countryside, much to the disgruntlement of figures 'in search of England' such as Hissey, who wrote:

> During our journey we observed many a pleasing bit of village architecture thus spoilt as a picture by glaring plaques of crudely-coloured enamelled iron attached to them, setting forth the virtues, real or otherwise, of somebody's soap, some other body's ointments or pills, and the like. One day we may discover the value of the picturesque and take measures against its spoliation, for nothing is now sacred to the enterprising advertiser.[68]

It appears that as early as 1906 the cycle of 'destruction' that tourism brought to the areas tourists revered had already begun. This marketing trend grew throughout the twenties to such a height that in 1928 the Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England was established.[69] It was one of a number of organisations set up to try to protect the countryside from enterprising builders and unscrupulous advertising companies. The anonymous author of the article 'Safeguarding Our Countryside', published in *The Autocar* in 1925, states that a similar situation occurred when advertisers were placing advertisements all along the railway lines, and that a committee formed in

[66] Ian Ousby, *The Englishman's England: Taste, Travel and the Rise of Tourism* (London: Pimlico, 2002), p. 5.
[67] See Ousby, *The Englishman's England*, pp. 145-9.
[68] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, pp. 18-19.
[69] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, p. 153.

[image removed]

2.2 ‘Ediswan Valves’ (advertisement) in *The Autocar*, 29th May 1925, vol. 55 [page unnumbered].

1893 called the Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising (SCAPA) to lobby the government for reforms in this area.[70] The author of the article calls for SCAPA to be reformed in order to help combat the new wave of commercials aimed at motorists. Indeed, the motoring travelogues featured in this thesis are replete with such complaints. The late 1920s and early 30s saw a wave of legislative measures to curtail the exploitation of the countryside.[71]

Other leisure patterns that encouraged travel into the countryside were the trends of camping and caravanning. 'Owen John' Llewellyn wrote in his regular column 'On the Road' in 1926 that the reason for the popularity of caravanning and camping was partly due to the high prices charged in some hotels. He accused hotels and inns of taking advantage of motorists and charging them high rates. [72] This mass movement into the countryside also placed huge emphasis on the physical health of the population.[73] This concern was perhaps also instigated by scenes of wounded and exhausted men returning home from the Front; consequently a huge social movement to improve the nation's health ensued. Camping was originally a gentleman's sport in the late nineteenth century and was also perceived by some as a requirement of a cycling tour. By the 1920s whole families would go camping or caravanning with their motor cars.[74] Motoring in the countryside also held these connotations and car manufacturers were quick to seize on this to advertise their latest models. Peter Thorold also draws our attention to the fact that there was a decrease in the limit of working hours, going from fifty-five hours before 1914 to forty-eight hours.[75] This left more time for leisure and day excursions and weekend getaways became enormously popular. Towns next to the sea that had profited from the expanding railway network now became promenade grounds for motor cars, particularly places like Blackpool and Brighton.[76]

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[70] 'Safeguarding Our Countryside', *The Autocar*, 20th November 1925, pp. 1013-5.
[71] 'Safeguarding Our Countryside', *The Autocar*, 20th November 1925, pp. 1013-5.
[72] 'Owen John' writes in his regular column 'On the Road' in April 1926 that the reason for the popularity in caravanning and camping is partly due to the high prices charged in some hotels. He accuses hotels and inns of taking advantage of motorists and charging them high rates. *The Autocar*, 16th April 1926, pp. 650-652.
[73] Hissey claims that motoring through the 'bracing air' could actually help with ailments such as dyspepsia, and advises a vigorous drive on the moors. Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 298.
[74] See 'The Joys of the Open Air' article about the availability of caravans to hire for a motoring holiday in *The Autocar*, 20th November 1925, p. 1005. Also 'The Camping Motorist' in *The Autocar*, 19th March 1926, p. 500.
[75] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 186.
[76] Simon Featherstone charts the development of Blackpool as a lower class tourist destination in *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English National Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), pp. 98-100.

The trend of motoring in the countryside at weekends began in the 1900s, but hit the height of popularity in the 1930s. John M. Dillon advised his readers in *Motor Days in England* (1908) that companies were available to loan cars with a chauffeur-cum-tour guide and described it like a package holiday where the passengers were taken to stay at specific hotels.[77] Escaping to the countryside for the weekend, away from one's workday existence, became a national pursuit. The advertisement for the Standard 'Light Two & Four Seaters' from 1923 tries to suggest that with one of its models every weekend can be turned into a small vacation.

The motor car also changed living patterns in Britain. Ribbon developments along new roads and new commuter towns sprung up in the areas immediately surrounding urban centres.[78] Like the railway a century before, the car was rapidly changing modern lifestyles. Hissey, amongst others, believed that the railway was responsible for the growth of ugly villas that developed along the line around railway stations, and that many beautiful countryside towns and villages had been ruined by unscrupulous builders. However, during Hissey's journey in the 1906 travelogue *Untravelled England* an estate agent remarked to him that the boom in demand for country properties was due to the ease of travelling by motor cars.[79] The broader diffusion of motorised transportation also came in the form of charabancs: long open-top buses. These were being used before the First World War in cities, but after the war the popularity of charabancs, or 'charries' as they were more commonly known, helped fuel this idea of the twenties being a period of leisure and mobility. By 1937, David Thoms estimates that charabancs transported approximately 82 million passengers. [80] However, among the serious car-owning motorists these charabanc 'trippers' were viewed with contempt as their experience of motoring was seen as a cheap and ersatz version of the real thing. As this thesis will go on to explore in the fourth chapter focussed on exploring national identity, 'trippers' were seen as vulgar, disreputable and akin to the mass railway excursionists and Thomas Cookers of the previous century.

In the first decades of motoring there were insufficient motoring guides and map books for motorists. Travel writer J.E. Vincent commented in 1907 that the Murray guides he was using on his

[77] John M. Dillon, *Motor Days in England* (New York; London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), p. 251.
[78] J.E. Vincent comments in his travelogue that the car has revolutionised lifestyles by allowing people to live further away from London and outlying railway stations; in a sense the commuter belt has diffused throughout the immediate countryside around London. Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, pp. 252-4.
[79] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, pp. 132-3.
[80] Thoms, 'Motor Car Ownership in Twentieth-Century Britain', p. 44.

motor tour of East Anglia were thirty years out of date.[81] Early travellers by motor car such as Henry Sturmey used cycling guides because they contained crucial information to motorists about the gradients of hills and the condition of the road surface. Hissey travelling in 1910 noted that he was still using Patterson's Roads which he called 'the Bradshaw of the coaching age'.[82] Road information was invaluable as some machines could be inconsistent when it came to hill climbing, and tyres had little grip and a bad road surface could be dangerous. When it came to tourist guides, Baedekers and Murrays were still used, but these tended to cater towards railway travel. However, as this thesis will go on to discuss in the following two chapters, in the motoring narratives of the early 1900s and 1910s there was a back-lash against these prescriptive guide-books, as motorists became intent on 'discovering' England for themselves.

Due to motorists' reliance on gradient information the Ordnance Survey (hereafter referred to as OS) rose to prominence in the early 1920s. The OS brought out new 'Popular Editions' in the 1920s with the motor tourist in mind that contained a new system of road classification to reflect the quality of the road surface and its width. As the main component of this new marketing campaign the OS included artwork on the cover of their maps, which was to have an enormous impact not only on the sales of OS, but also in the public imagination by the way it portrayed the British countryside and particularly the motor car. Their new style of artwork designed by Ellis Martin placed the countryside, leisure, travel and the car at the centre of their marketing campaign. Tim Owen and Elaine Pilbeam praise Ellis Martin as: 'a master of his genre, and his work was the embodiment of that strange era of intense leisure pursuit which existed between the wars.'[83] The significance of these maps and road books retrospectively is that they romanticised an already existing movement and placed the motor car at the centre of this campaign. The automobile and the motor maps were essential for the OS to reclaim their position at the forefront of British tourist culture, and they seized upon the motor trend as a new market at which to aim their products. These maps reached the height of production after the First World War and continued into the 1930s. The car is the focal point of the picture situated in rural

[81] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, pp. 70-1.
[82] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 200.
[83] Tim Owen and Elaine Pilbeam, *Ordnance Survey: Map Makers to Britain Since 1791* (London: HMSO & Ordnance Survey, 1992), p. 100.

surroundings, even placing the observer inside the car looking down the road ahead. At the centre of this scene, with the family/friends gathered round, is often a large touring car. These images have become synonymous with tourism in Britain during the interwar years and form part of the cult of romanticising an historic and pastoral portrait of Britain in this era. What the OS and other map books, such as Burrow's R.A.C. Guide, illustrate very well is that the car and its possibilities sell seclusion, escapism, and rural landscapes. These map books and their popularity attest to a larger national pastime, and their simultaneous development with the plethora of automotive travel narratives is significant because they cement the idea of the car as both a powerful consumer item and the paradigm of leisure.

Conclusion

Whilst emphasising the revolutionary changes to transportation and living patterns that the motor car produced in Britain, it is important to remember that the growth of automobile travel in Britain did not develop at an even rate. Reactions to the car and the way that it changed the landscape and the movement of large numbers of people sometimes caused vehement resentment of this technology. Its presence on the roads in Britain was the source of controversy, for reasons as varied as crashes, fatalities, dust, the despoliation of the countryside, taste, and scepticism about the nature of the engine and how it worked. However, the development towards automotive technology had begun long before. Steam locomotives and traction engines had been around for decades before this point, particularly for use in farming and agriculture. Hissey registered his annoyance at traction engines when he came across one on the road whilst in his horse-drawn carriage in his book *On the Box Seat from London to Land's End* (1886)**:**

> Presently a huge iron monster, a traction engine to wit, made its unwelcome appearance. What uncouth dangerous monsters these are, the abomination of our age, the perfection of mechanical ugliness, dangerous and menacing to spirited horses, the terror of nervous equestrians and lady riders; it is a shame such things should be allowed to travel upon such narrow country lanes. [...] Passing these fiery, fuming, sulphur-smelling, evil-looking

> monsters safely, though not without a good deal of shying and prancing of our frightened steeds, we continued on our way [...].[84]

To Hissey, this machine is the embodiment of danger and the imagery he employs vacillates between the industrial and the mythical as he attempts to describe this alien body within the natural landscape. It frightens the horses and riders and threatens the natural elements around it. It is the Frankenstein's monster of the industrial age.

Unbeknown to him, in twenty years time, he would adopt far more mechanical methods to continue his tours throughout the British Isles. In his 1906 automotive travelogue *Untravelled England* Hissey comes across a similar agricultural traction engine and the encounter between the two parties is entirely the reverse. The venom in the previous 1886 description has all but disappeared, Hissey simply describing it in one sentence; 'we met a big traction-engine puffing noisily along.' However, in this instance, it is the driver of the traction engine that takes offence at the presence of Hissey's motor car: '"Them things," he exclaimed scornfully as we passed carefully by, "ought not to be allowed on the public roads"—which seemed to us a case to put it mildly, of "the pot calling the kettle black."' The driver then lets out a final burst of anger when he curses Hissey's car shouting '"I hope as how the blooming thing will blow up!" We pretended not to hear, and shouted back, "Thanks, and the same to you," and then we slipped in the full-speed lever and hastened away.'[85] What is really being disputed in both circumstances is who is the rightful inheritor of the road, and which machine is symbolic of the darker and dangerous side of modernity. In the first meeting of 1886, Hissey believes he is the natural inheritor of the road because he is travelling in the old and accepted method of horse and carriage, and the traction machine represents to him all that is deplorable in the modern age of industrialism. In the 1906 encounter, circumstances have changed. The traction engine now represents the past, and therefore has the right to the road. Hissey's modern interloper is to the traction engine driver a nuisance and a powerful emblem of degenerative modernity and upper-class frivolity and leisure.

[84] J. J. Hissey, *On the Box Seat from London to Land's End* (London: Richard Bentley & Sons, 1886), p. 72.
[85] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 171.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* the phrase 'open road' **'**was first included in the *New English Dictionary*, 1903, as a subentry of "open, adj."' just seven years after the Locomotives of Highways Act was passed. An unknown writer in *The Autocar* of October 1st 1926 writes:

> If the motor vehicle had never achieved any other purpose than laying open the roads and lanes and towns and villages of England to the man who, without this aid, would have been compelled to spend a life confined to his own locality, it would have thoroughly deserved its place among the most beneficent productions of the world.
>
> How much the welfare and happiness of the individual have been increased by ability at will to tour our country can never be expressed in words. The motor car has brought each part of England to our doors, and the camera and the pen enable memories of beautiful places to be kept green.[86]

The author also distinguishes the importance of travel writing and photography in 'capturing' the rural spots of England. This is significant, as it would seem the function of such tours and trips into the rural landscape are not just experiential, but also should be immortalised in some tangible medium or another. The writer of this article also directly associates individual mobility and the freedom of travel with happiness. The cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard creates a similar impression when he articulates the importance of car travel in social terms:

> Travel is a necessity, and speed is a pleasure. Possession of a car implies more: the driving licence is a sort of passport, a letter of credit from an aristocracy whose domain is the very latest in engine compression and speed. Disqualification from driving is surely tantamount to an excommunication, to a kind of social castration.[87]

To lack this kind of ability to travel means that one is restricted to familiar localised territories, whose physical space is representative of the limitations of a class without the means of independent travel: motorised travel means social mobility. This is a powerful statement and really uncovers the importance attached to automobility and car ownership in the first decades of the twentieth century.

[86] Anonymous, 'The English Countryside', *The Autocar*, 1 October 1926, p. 516.
[87] Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (London; New York: Verso, 2005), p. 70.

3

Driving Through Modernity

Testimonials to the thrill of motoring, its novelty, and the feeling it produces in the driver characterise the travel narratives that form the body of this thesis. This chapter focuses on the first tranche of texts published before the Great War and looks at what makes them so distinctive. Their unique quality hinges upon the car being an integral part of the narrative. The experience of driving an automobile and moving independently at high speed becomes the main source of inspiration behind their work. Sidonie Smith recognises the significance of modes of transportation and their influence on the writer in her book *Moving Lives*. She writes:

> the social relations of travel and travel narrating in the twentieth century are mediated by these technologies of motion. [...] Vehicles of motion are vehicles of perception and meaning, precisely because they affect the temporal, spatial, and interrelational dynamics of travel.[1]

This chapter is concerned with these issues and aims to address a recurring problem within the early motoring narratives: how to write about a new technology and create a language to describe it. The pre-war travelogues explore a range of visual images and experiences in an attempt to accurately recreate the feeling of motoring for the reader. The literary representations of the exhilaration and excitement of driving an automobile provide some of the most memorable and vivid passages in the texts. These scenes also expose the new relationship between driver and machine, replacing the natural bond between human and animal. Wolfgang Schivelbusch's work *The Railway Journey: the Industrialization and Perception of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century* will be discussed in this chapter to explore the extent to which perceptions of automotive journeys were a continuation of, or a departure from, experiences of train journeys during the nineteenth century. Schivelbusch's conclusions about how such relationships were re-conceptualised by the advent of railway travel are

[1] Sidonie Smith, *Moving Lives: Twentieth-Century Women's Travel Writing* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pp. 22-3.

significant to this thesis because the railway, as a revolutionary method of technologised travel, is a precursor to the automotive journeys at the end of the nineteenth century.

The car, as a symbol of the modern, has a problematic presence in the narratives when the writers visit historical landmarks. It seems to become an anachronism from another world that they find difficult to assimilate into the natural environment, despite their own enthusiasm for motoring. The relationships between the motorist and the car, and the motorist and the historical site, become strained and problematic at this point, and shall be analysed at length to discern how these obstacles are overcome, if at all, in the narratives. Some attempt to reconcile the anomaly of the car at historical landmarks and others revert to completely removing its presence altogether. These scenes will be scrutinised to understand whether the car becomes fully accepted in the narratives or whether it remains removed and distanced from both driver and landscape.

The first wave of narratives, beginning with Henry Sturmey's *On an Autocar through the Length and Breadth of the Land* (1899), leading up to the outbreak of the First World War, are profoundly different from those written during the 1920s. After the war, fears and anxieties surrounding the car diminish and therefore less narrative space is given to such concerns. In the early pre-war years, supporters of the car perceived it to be a marvel; a triumph of science and engineering. In the early travel narratives the authors frequently comment on the novelty of car travel and the boon of owning a motor car. They justify the reasons why they have chosen to go on a tour in an automobile, or say that the purpose of publishing an account of their tour is to benefit other motorists who might wish to go on a similar journey.

This chapter will draw largely on the work of travel writer James John Hissey (1849-1921). Hissey is a pivotal figure in the context of this thesis as he is the only writer who began his travel writing career in the horse-drawn age and makes the cross-over into motoring. This conversion to the automobile becomes a point of comment and comparison in the texts. His automotive travelogues are peppered with his reflections on how his experience of touring and seeing places changed due to the use of the motor car. Once he successfully makes this transition, he looks for other ways to diversify his narratives of the Home Tour, such as his 1908 book *An English Holiday with a Car and Camera*. His travelogues of journeys made in Britain amount to fifteen in total, far more than any other writer

included in this thesis. One characteristic of Hissey's writing that makes him unique is the way that he uses the language of the horse-drawn age and attempts to adapt it for use as motoring jargon. Hissey is trying to develop a vocabulary around motoring in a way that no other writer does. Surprisingly, there is very little written about Hissey. Sean O'Connell and Peter Thorold, both notable cultural historians of the automobile in Britain, use Hissey's work to support arguments for broader cultural attitudes towards the car, but Hissey's work has not been discussed in literary debates, or specifically from the perspective of travel writing. In many ways he epitomises a fundamental concern of this thesis, namely: how does travel writing adapt or change due to the introduction and proliferation of a new form of transport? Through analysing the work of Hissey and his contemporaries, such as J.E. Vincent, Thomas D. Murphy and John Dillon, we are able to understand how the automobile was integrated into broader society and accepted as a viable mode for undertaking a tour in the British Isles.

Pioneering motion: J. J. Hissey and his contemporaries

The unique qualities of the early automotive travelogues, written prior to the First World War, rests on the fact that the car is central to the narrative. The journey and experience of the writer and the performance and motion of the car are locked in a symbiotic relationship that thrives on the novelty of travelling by car and the task of undertaking such a tour. Frequently, such as in the work of Hissey, the preface and the first chapter of the book are dedicated to the reasons why a car has been utilised rather than any other form of locomotion.

James John Hissey was born on 9th January 1847 into a family of gentleman farmers in the village of Longworth, Oxfordshire.[2] Hissey's uncle invested heavily in land in America, in an area that now forms part of downtown Chicago. After his uncle's death Hissey and his father inherited the land which had risen greatly in value. Hissey travelled to America on two occasions between 1868 and 1876 to register his claim to his uncle's land, and travelled widely on the newly opened railroad to the Yosemite Valley, San Francisco and Yellowstone Park. From his inheritance he became a man of

[2] The information contained here about J.J. Hissey is derived from an interview on 15th May 2012 with his grandson John Hissey.

substantial means, and his chief hobby lay in touring the British Isles. He was also a fair artist and his journeys were the source of both literary and artistic output. Many of his drawings, paintings, and photographs he used to illustrate his travelogues. His first published work, *An Old Fashioned Journey through England and Wales* (1884), was the beginning of a long and industrious career during which he published fourteen solely authored works on journeys he had made in the British Isles.[3] His final work was published in 1917, although he did have the manuscript for another book but delayed its publication, possibly because the costs of publishing became too high during the First World War.[4] This manuscript has since been lost. From his letters to close friend and publisher, Richard Bentley, it is clear that his books were well received, both at home and abroad.[5] Although none of the volumes went into a second edition, the reviews of his work are very flattering, one reviewer calling him 'Autolycus of the Road' and the 'genial knight'.[6] Hissey would have been greatly pleased with such accolades as he styled himself as a sort of modern Arcadian. The term 'genial knight' also hints at the mock-heroic tone of his writing. Hissey was an avid motorist and purchased a Daimler in 1897 and owned a string of cars including an MMC and a Sunbeam. His journeys usually begin at his home, Trevin Towers in Eastbourne, which he built in 1894 and resided in until his death in 1921.

Undertaking a motor tour in the British Isles was the pastime and occupation of a gentleman of leisure and Hissey had to pay for his books to be published. There have been suggestions by the Hissey family that the royalties were barely enough to cover the publication costs. Evidently, royalties and a financially sustainable career were not considerations for him. His publications were relatively expensive: his 1906 travelogue *Untravelled England* was priced at 16 shillings and indicates the intended readership of his work: those who were able to afford their own automobile and go on a tour.[7] In his 1910 book *The Charm of the Road* Hissey comments that the purpose of the journey was

[3] Hissey also collaborated with his friend T. Huson to produce *Round About Snowdon* (1894).
[4] He comments about a paper shortage in his letter to Richard Bentley dated 26th March 1917, and notes in another letter to Benson dated 26th February 1916 that Macmillan have told him to take his time with the manuscript and to delay publication until the war is over. Letters from the Hissey family's private collection.
[5] In an undated letter to Benson, suspected to be written around August 1916, Hissey talks about receiving letters of appreciation of his work from America, and occasionally Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Egypt and India. Letter in the private collection of the Hissey family.
[6] 'A.B', 'Autolycus of the Road: Mr J.J. Hissey's New Book', clipping of review included in a letter to Benson dated 11th November 1917 (Hissey family collection).
[7] It is difficult to gauge the actual cost in today's terms because books were more expensive items compared to other consumer goods (i.e. food, clothes etc.) by which the rate of inflation is measured in the Retail Prices Index. 16 shillings in

a ‘holiday jaunt’ to achieve ‘perfect freedom’.[8] However, as much as his work came about as a respectable gentleman’s occupation, it is far more than simply the product of a life of leisure. There are no records in the letters to Richard Bentley of how well the books sold, but this was of no concern to Hissey. The purpose of the books was something else entirely: namely, his desire to dissertate upon the enjoyment of travel, British history, literature, and the English countryside and its people.

His conversion to motor cars took place enthusiastically and with great excitement. He expressed in his first motoring travelogue, *Untravelled England* (1906), that ‘it would be a new experience, and there is always a certain fascination in an unknown quantity.’[9] As an established travel writer Hissey clearly saw the potential of the car and the added freedom it would allow him on his journeys. He anticipated the way that his journeys would change allowing him to explore more of the ‘highways and byways’ of rural England. He also realised that the automobile overcame the limitations of horse-drawn travel, and made it possible to cover greater distances in one day. Other contemporary travel writers also concurred with this perception. J. E. Vincent states in *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car* (1907) that his party had motored a considerable number of miles that day along ‘pleasant byways’ and they were still able to get back to London in time to go to the theatre. He concludes ‘That is the new kind of pleasure which the motor-car has rendered possible, and it is a very real and genuine one.’[10] The car introduced Vincent to a mixture of speed and leisure which were a fascinating novelty to him.

Hissey provides the most vibrant and detailed descriptions of the emotions motoring produces on the driver. Within *Untravelled England* are long passages of emotive writing that really capture the excitement of the early motoring movement. This extract explores a number of key issues that this chapter is concerned with:

> Then the fascination of speed got hold of us. It was quite wrong, but there was nobody to see, and nobody to be hurt or put to inconvenience, so we “let the motor out” and broke the law—greatly to our enjoyment. The motor, like a thing of life, appeared to enter into the spirit of the thing. We opened wide the throttle. She bounded forth responsively, rejoicing in unaccustomed liberty; she for once would show her paces. Chic, chic, chic went the engines

today’s financial value would be around £80. A better indication of the cost could be calculated by solely looking at the inflation of books but I have been unable to locate this information.

[8] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road, England and Wales* (London: Macmillan, 1910), p. vii.

[9] Hissey, *Untravelled England* (London: Macmillan, 1906), p. 4.

[10] J.E. Vincent *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car* (London: Methuen, 1907), p. 180.

> with ever-increasing rapidity. The distance seemed to rush at us; the miles became yards. Downhill we dashed with a whirl of dust; up on the other side we raced at the pace we had descended. The chic, chic of the engines was soon lost in one harsh, continuous roar—we were flying! One horizon succeeded the other in rapid, bewildering succession. Our eyes were on the distance—only that could we discern clearly—the wonderful distance that ceaselessly came rushing towards us. For a time a strange illusion took place; it was as though the car were standing still, and the country it was that went hurtling past. There is a joy in speed, and poetry in it, and danger in it too. But a rush at full speed in a motor car over a lonely road, and through a deserted country, wide and open, is an experience to be ever afterwards remembered. Truly, for such a moment life *is* worth living, and optimism is rampant![11]

Hissey's written account of his experience in an automobile re-enacts the emotions and sensations of travelling at such speeds in this new technology and pushing the car to its full potential. It vividly recounts the euphoria felt by Hissey, lulled by the roar of the engine, whilst he watches the landscape whizz by. The 'fascination of speed' is a key phrase for Hissey in a number of his works; it illustrates the kind of optimism and enthusiasm for all that this new technology, and speed, had to offer. The unprecedented speed is a novel liberty to Hissey and comes at the expense of breaking the law which adds to its excitement culminating in a crescendo of emotion. The 'roar' of the engine captures the essence of the mechanical power that lies beneath his finger tips and is a source of sublime terror and awe. The very sound of the engine and its responsiveness to the driver's command is all part of the thrill of motoring. However Hissey elects to describe the car like a horse: 'she for once would show her paces' as if he were perhaps describing a filly or a mare. This animal/machine is an accomplice to Hissey's desires for speed and abandon. The fast pace creates an illusion where distance and time become unstable to the observer. Hissey's final exclamation at the end of the extract captures the optimism, freedom, and opportunism that characterises such early motoring travel narratives.

Hissey also makes allusions here to flight; this is an important comparison because the development of aviation parallels that of the car. In 1908 the Aeronautical Society acquired land for 'Experimental Flying' in Dagenham, Essex, and in the following year Louis Blériot flew across the English Channel. The most significant date which aligned the technologies of motoring and flying was in 1910 when the British Aeroplane Company acquired grounds at Brooklands race track to build a runway in the middle of the car racing circuit.[12] This cemented the link between the two

[11] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 427. In 1906 when Hissey published this work the speed limit was only 20 m.p.h.
[12] Trevor Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), pp. 54-5.

revolutionary forms of transportation in the minds of the public. Although perspectives between the two are very different, the importance of this analogy is the effect of speed on the eye.

Hissey emphasises that the car allows him to have a form of independence on his journey, presumably positioning himself diametrically opposite the package tours of Thomas Cook, coach parties, and railway tourists. He proclaims in *An English Holiday with a Car and Camera* (1908):

> The true charm of travel, to my mind at least, is to be able to dictate the direction, to have it in one's power to stop or to go on, to loiter or to hasten, as the mood of the moment inclines. So on a driving or a motor tour the element of individuality comes to the fore; the man who travels thus asserts his freedom, and can enjoy to the full the charm of independence— subject to the possible but slight risk of a breakdown of horse or car,—and such is the essence of a true holiday.[13]

For Hissey, the car came to embody the freedom and enjoyment of travel more so than any other form of travel. His travel books depend upon the idea of exploring and discovering the undisturbed spots of rural England. John Urry describes the desire of this type of tourist in search of less populated regions in order to see the object of consumption in an isolated and therefore more personal manner as the 'romantic gaze': 'There is then a 'romantic' form of the tourist gaze, in which the emphasis is upon solitude, privacy and a personal, semi-spiritual relationship with the object of the gaze.'[14] As these places become more heavily populated with tourists seeking the same experience, the 'romantic seeks ever-new objects of that gaze'. The motor car, in this sense, lends itself to the romantic traveller as it offers a 'package' that frees the driver from the established routes and offers discreet, bespoke, and exclusive travel experiences. Here Hissey is asserting that only by using a car can he really achieve his ideal of a traveller: gaining an intimate and unparalleled understanding of the history and countryside. He writes 'To travel by road is to learn the geography of one's own country.'[15] By following the roads he is forced to accept the natural features of the landscape; to go up hills and through fords as the car clings to the surface of the earth and dutifully follows the natural curvature of the landscape. This process of simulating the undulations of the landscape heightens the sensory

[13] J.J. Hissey, *An English Holiday with a Car and Camera* (London: Macmillan, 1908), p. 3.
[14] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze, Second Edition* (London: Sage, 2002), pp. 43-4.
[15] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 267.

experience of the natural environment and strengthens the connection between the subject and the object of the romantic gaze.

Hissey's work is serious in subject and composition, although his narrative style is light-hearted and nostalgic in places, mixing dissertations on art history and chance encounters such as an odd conversation with a tramp on a lonely byway. The travelogues aim to do something far more broad than simply proffer tourist information concerning local and national areas of interest. His books advocate travel and the discovery of England in its rural outposts, and in the pastoral commonplace, such as a quaint village church in front of a pond; the reviewer's labelling of Hissey as 'Autolycus' is very much deserving. The car, then, is crucial to Hissey's vision of the independent traveller and 'a Bohemian, or a scholar-gypsy' of the modern age.[16] The motor car and independence of movement are what Hissey uses to distinguish himself as a traveller rather than a tourist; he constructs an image of himself as the educated gentleman roughing it for the purposes of his art, and thus differentiates himself from the tourist collective who consult their Baedekers and move efficiently from site to site. They are associated with insincere and disengaged fragments rather than a deeper appreciation and understanding of the whole. This kind of conscious crafting of the traveller image, as opposed to the tourist, is not new. James Buzard observes a similar pattern emerging in first half of the nineteenth century in response to the growing number of people undertaking forms of the Grand Tour. He writes: 'the desiderata of travelling turned inward and created the honorific sense of 'traveller', which means essentially 'the one who is not a *tourist*'.'[17] Buzard adopts Erving Goffman's term of rôle-distancing to define this process of self-identification through polarising, and to some extent projecting and therefore disowning, contemptible tourist patterns of travel consumerism. However, in doing so Hissey and many of his contemporaries create a manifestation of a new type of tourist. Buzard comments: 'In a manner characteristic of many modern cultural practices, the devices of rebellion or rôle-distancing [...] were themselves the distinguishing features of a new type of conformity, a new rôle.'[18] The vision of the 'Autolycus', the modern Arcadian, the 'Bohemian

[16] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 3.
[17] James Buzard, 'The Grand Tour and After (1660-1840)' in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 37-52 (pp. 48-49).
[18] Buzard, 'The Grand Tour and After (1660-1840)', pp. 49-50.

scholar-gypsy', are creations of new rôles that attempt to demarcate the tourist from the traveller, but the writers are simply reimagining a form of tourist in new garb: a motor coat.

Hissey's sense of command over the machine is crucial to this new understanding of the motorist as tourist/traveller. He states that he had 'taken the simple precaution before starting of becoming acquainted with the working, the treatment, and the driving of my car.'[19] Unlike many motor writers, Hissey does not take a mechanic, engineer or chauffeur with him on his journeys. The inner workings of a motor car were, in 1900, a rather recondite subject. There was a huge demand for chauffeurs and mechanics to be employed at private houses to run and maintain the engines.[20] Hissey's resolve to acquire this knowledge himself, so that his journey with his wife may be uninterrupted by a mechanic, is quite admirable and he declares that overcoming setbacks himself is part of the excitement of motoring:

> A motorist who takes with him that ever-present and expensive nuisance a mechanic knows nothing of the real charms of motoring (I have never taken a mechanic with me yet), nor does he know anything of the joy and the personal pride in overcoming a break-down. That is the spice of motoring; the possibilities of an adventure lend a zest to a journey. [...] Thoroughly to enjoy a motor tour you must be your own mechanic, and trust to your own skill and your own brains, [...] you must love your engines; so your car becomes your slave, and it will be to you as clay in the potter's hands.[21]

This is characteristic of Hissey's own self-fashioning and longing for independence, desiring his readers to perceive him as a genuine traveller and serious motorist. By insinuation, those that use a chauffeur or mechanic are not proper motorists and only experience a limited enjoyment from being a passenger. The sense of 'mastery' over the machine delineates a host of conceptualisations of the relationships between the driver and the car which I shall return to and explore in the course of this chapter.

Many authors of the early tranche of automotive travel writing were of a similar social ilk to Hissey. The contemporary American writer Robert Shackleton was also in a position of wealth and privilege. His travelogue *Touring Great Britain*, first published in 1914, went through four editions,

[19] Hissey, *An English Holiday with a Car and Camera* (London: Macmillan, 1908), p. 4.
[20] Chauffeurs also make their appearance in the travelogue and their relative expertise (or lack of it) is the cause of much grievance for John Dillon. Throughout *Motor Days in England* Dillon seems to be constantly at war with his chauffeur, Fowler, whom he accuses of knowing very little about cars, and of making elementary mistakes such as running out of petrol. Dillon, *Motor Days in England* (London: G.P. Putnam's Son, 1908), p. 173.
[21] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 249.

and he also included an excursion to England in his work *Unvisited Places of Old Europe* (1914).[22] The book is a combination of a summer pleasure tour and a serious endeavour to compile a guide book for the motorist containing all the familiar stately homes and castles. [23] He positions his work as a new manifestation of the traditional tour because he is able to see more as he covers a greater distance. He also happens upon places by chance en route. J.E. Vincent concurs with the idea that a tour by motor car is different from any other:

> This book, the first volume it is hoped of a series, was undertaken because the existing Guide-books were, through no fault in their writers, by no means adequate to the needs of the traveller by motor-car. A new method of travel, in fact, brings in its train the need for a new species of guide-book [...].[24]

In this extract Vincent is reacting to the need for a new type of guidebook that caters specifically to the motor tourist, recognising his difference from any other category of tourist. The whole structure of a traditional guidebook is being challenged here as Vincent recognises that the requirements of motorists and the practicalities of travelling by automobile need to be accommodated. Considerations in the way of petrol were crucial to any plans made for a motor tour, and many motorists elected to carry extra supplies with them, or arrange a delivery of fuel to an hotel in advance.[25] The first petrol filling station was established by the Automobile Association in 1919 at Aldermaston in Berkshire. Up until this point petrol was available from some garages off the main roads, but on a tour of Britain it would be foolish to rely on stumbling across a garage.[26] In the early 1900s petrol could be purchased from some blacksmiths and chemists but not everyone stocked it.

Motorists were also required to know which hotels were able to house cars and which roads were unsuitable for cars. Maud M. Stawell notes to her readers that many roads that run through private estates refuse entry to motor cars or charge an extra fee for the admittance of motors. Information on gradients was also absolutely crucial, and, as Vincent acknowledges, information on

[22] The first edition of *Touring Great Britain* was published under the name *Four on a Tour in England* (New York: Hearst's International Library, 1914). It was later re-issued by the Penn Publishing Co. in 1917 as *Touring Great Britain*. Further editions were published in 1920 and 1926.
[23] Robert Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain* (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Co., 1917), p. 1.
[24] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, p. xix.
[25] Sturmey also makes this arrangement as does Vincent and Dillon.
[26] Thorold, *The Motoring Age: The Automobile and Britain 1896-1930* (London: Profile Books, 2003), p. 198.

where and how a motorist might seek mechanical assistance and repairs.[27] However, Vincent's narrative veers more towards a memoir of a journey and foregrounds his experiences and perceptions rather than the hard-boiled facts and functions of a tourist guide. Four years after Vincent's efforts at authoring such a guide for motorists Charles Ashdown and Gordon Home's book *The Motor Routes of England* (1911) offered a strict guidebook containing strip maps of roads and recommended daily excursions from different towns and cities. The narrative style is functional and truncated, punctuated with short and informative sentences concerning a brief history of a place and its main roads. This is written entirely in the third person and aims to proffer information much in the same way as a Baedeker, but with the addition of detailed road descriptions and hotel and garage information.

Muscle and machine: oats, coal, petrol

In all the pre-war texts the authors justify why they are using a car rather than any other form of locomotion. Although movement by horse-drawn means was still the most common form of transport in the first decade of the twentieth century, its 'heyday' for inspiring touring narratives was largely coming to a close around 1900. Hissey's work is a good way of analysing this transition in travel writing. In 1896, the year of the Locomotives on Highways Act, J.J. Hissey published *On Southern English Roads*, a record of a coach tour in the South Downs. A lifelong advocate of independent road travel, he expresses the liberty that travel on roads brings in relation to the grinding monotony and predictability of railway journeys. He remarks in his travelogue *On the Box Seat from London to Land's End* (1886):

> Perfect freedom was our motto; we did not wish to be bound down by any prearranged plan or plans; that would have been contrary to the very spirit of the journey, and have spoilt its special charm. No; we would be thoroughly independent; would go where we liked, start when we chose, and rest when and where we pleased. Such freedom was the essence of our tour.[28]

This strong sense of unfettered freedom is the obvious precursor to similar discourses in the motoring travelogues. In 1906 Hissey published his first travelogue about a journey made by motor car (a

[27] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, p. xx.
[28] Hissey, *On the Box Seat from London to Land's End* (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1886), p. 2.

Nagant-Hobson). Hissey stated that one of the main advantages of no longer using horses was that travelling was no longer mired by the guilt of over-working the horses. He wrote:

> The day was hot, the hills were steep, but as the motor did the climbing, we happily did not mind the hills; we travelled by petrol instead of by oats, by piston instead of by muscle, so our joy of the scenery was not marred by the straining of horse-flesh; and to a considerate traveller this is a strong point in favour of the motor. How can any right-minded man properly enjoy good scenery if he suspects he is punishing his horses. [29]

Hissey was reassured by the fact that flesh and muscle had been replaced by mechanical components, and looked upon the old method of horse-drawn travel as almost barbaric in its cruelty to animals. It also insinuates that the time-honoured tradition of travelling by horses was no longer able to fulfil the demands of modern civilisation which was becoming more and more dependent on mechanistic processes. This process of ridding himself of the guilt of over-worked horses and presenting the car in valorous tones shows how the automobile was being integrated and assimilated into a society characterised by enlightened ideals of progress. The car didn't threaten horses' safety or their livelihoods; it protected them and positively saved them from hard labour.

The journey by car seems to be the specific purpose of this narrative. In the opening lines he expounds his belief that the car, more than any other method of transportation, is conducive to travel. He writes:

> [...] no hill was too steep for it—the climbing of any hill was merely a matter of reduction of speed according to gradient; nor had we ever to get down and walk "to ease the horses"—I mean the engines [...] a well-built and well-designed motor car [...] is a thoroughly reliable conveyance—one that has restored to us the freedom of the road.
>
> [...] you can leave it [the car] standing by the wayside unattended with the happy assurance that it will not bolt [...][30]

Hissey directly compares the advantages of a car over horse-powered modes of travel and declares that the car offers him greater license to roam as he pleases. He perceives the animal component of horse-bound travel as a weakness: they tire and require rest, go lame, and are unpredictable and likely to let you down. Hissey's expectations are that the car will allow him to see locations that he would have otherwise not come across, granting him greater access and greater privilege: 'The chief charms

[29] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, pp. 39-40.
[30] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, pp. 4-5.

of a journey lie in exploring, so that you may have the delight of, ever and again, coming upon the unexpected and the unfamiliar.'[31] He reiterates these same advantages in all his automotive travel books, emphasising that only travel by road can offer a 'genuine' insight into the people and the country he is travelling in, which in-turn subordinates the experiences of others touring by railway or horse-drawn coach: the tourists. He states:

> We were in search of the unexplored, not the well-known. To us the famous spots of England lack the refreshing sense of freshness; we were on a voyage of discovery in a land where all things have been discovered, yet had not been discovered by us. Even when Columbus found America it was known to the Indians there.[32]

Here Hissey is reinstating the knowledge and traditions of local people in regional locations, and the ethnographic potential of such a trip. The rural inhabitants are the keepers of folklore and local knowledge and only by exploring with the motor car is Hissey able to gather more insightful impressions of England and its people. He believes that this allows for a richness and depth of understanding and appreciation that cannot be conferred by a guidebook or group excursion. This view is also shared by others. Thomas D. Murphy remarks: 'I think it can be clearly demonstrated that this method of touring [by motor car] will give opportunities for enjoyment and for gaining actual knowledge of the people and country that can hardly be attained in any other way.' [33] In accessing areas away from the railway stations they are able to see communities untouched by modern rail development and tourism which Murphy and Hissey perceive to be more authentic representations of indigenous people.

Another peculiarity of these automotive travelogues is that the journey in the car, along with the wish to explore, is the most gratifying part of the trip. Hissey relishes the opportunity to extemporize rather than follow an itinerary: 'I travel purely for pleasure of travel, and care not a whit about direction or destination. In the journey I joy.'[34] Being in command of one's own movement and direction presents opportunities of adventure, and often misadventure, and Hissey becomes consumed with the idea of 'the romance of the road' and the possibilities of the unknown:

[31] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 5.
[32] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 312.
[33] Thomas D. Murphy, *British Highways and Byways from a Motor Car* (1908) [imprinted new edition by Dodo Press], p. 3.
[34] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 38.

> On the road it is always the unexpected that is happening, and following it you have the never-failing feeling that you may be driving into romance, for before you lies the unknown, pregnant with possibilities. It is the eternal hope, in spite of constant disappointments, of meeting with some adventure of however mild a nature that urges one on and on. The call of the far-away will not be denied.[35]

The uncertainty of where the road and car may be taking him and the possibilities that arise from this kind of byway drifting epitomise the distinctive qualities of the early motoring travelogues. The open road and expectations of the motor car spur the journey onwards, not to pre-determined destinations, but to adventure and opportunity.

Significantly, this new mode of travel invited the writers to compare their journeys with those undertaken by railway. Hissey constantly contrasted this with the experience of railway tourists who were moved from station to station in a constant motion. When arriving at Capel Cruig in Wales he remarks that the place is

> high amongst the mountains, where at any rate the railway does not reach, and where perforce the traveller has to arrive by road, as a genuine traveller should, and not be dumped down at a station as though he were a parcel. Even though he get there by a motor car, still he is a road-farer, and so something of the romance of the road clings to him.[36]

Here Hissey concurs with Ruskin's view that by rail the passenger becomes a mere parcel, which Schivelbusch illustrates as a passive commodity being moved from place to place.[37] Crucially, Hissey insists that the 'romance' of such journeys lies in the fact that he travels by road; the road has a history, is a place of meetings, and the motorist is able to interact with the world around him. Hissey also thought that the car brought him closer to nature as he was an active participant in the journey interacting with the environment, and *reacting* to it by steering and changing speeds. The driver is constantly engaging with all of these factors and plays an active role simultaneously responding to situations both within and outside the car.

The motor car's ability to offer fresh perspectives on familiar locations appealed to the motorists' sense of distinguishing themselves as individual travellers. The view from the carriage of a

[35] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 378.
[36] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 248.
[37] John Ruskin, *Modern Painters Vol. III., Containing Part IV., Of Many Things* (Project Gutenberg Ebook, 2012), p. 293. Also see Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp. xiv, 38.

train was only able to proffer one perspective that was shared by all passengers. Thomas D. Murphy describes his experience of visiting Stratford-on-Avon by rail:

> Imprisoned in a dusty and comfortless first-class compartment [...] we shot around the curves, the glorious Warwickshire landscapes fleeting past in a haze or obscured at times by the drifting smoke. [...] We were hustled by an officious porter into an omnibus, which rattled through the streets until we landed at the Sign of the Red Horse; and the manner of our departure was even the same.[38]

He concludes this recollection by comparing his journey to Stratford by motor car: 'only the subdued hum of the motor broke the stillness as we saw Stratford-on-Avon from afar, conscious of a beauty and sentiment that made our former visit seem commonplace indeed.'[39] Although the car still imposes on the traveller and reminds Murphy of its presence, it is benign and reminiscent of a cat purring with satisfaction. Maud M. Stawell also reminds the reader in *Motor Tours in Yorkshire* (1909) that the advent of road travel by car has not only allowed novel ways of looking at landscape but also opened up the possibility of alternative viewpoints on well-known scenes, highlighting her privilege as a motorist. On the approach to York she comments that 'Of all the fresh experiences that the motor-car has brought to us there are few from which the imagination gains so much as from this way of entering old and beautiful towns. We have too long accepted the roof of a railway station as our first view of such places.'**[40]** The route into a town or city had for decades been dominated by the scene from a railway carriage, alighting at set railway stations; classic 'pseudo-places' defined by Paul Fussell in *Abroad* (1980) as connoting familiarity through a sense of 'placelessness'.[41] Here the car has directly allowed Stawell to physically view York from a new angle, an experience that was restricted and denied to travellers by rail throughout the nineteenth century. Stawell believes she is able to appreciate York in a new light, brought about by seeing York Minster looming in the distance 'idealised by the dusk of twilight' and forges a novel connection made possible by an alternative perspective.**[42]** Stawell believed that the new approach to York by motor car gave her a more profound understanding of the history of York and its past inhabitants.

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[38] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways from a Motor Car*, p. 1.
[39] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways from a Motor Car*, p. 2.
[40] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in Yorkshire* (New York; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 169.
[41] Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 43-4.
[42] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Yorkshire*, p. 170.

Redefining speed

Speed played a vital role in how the writers described their encounters with their environment and the sensations it produced on the driver. The motor car redefined notions of speed and spatio-temporal distance which had previously been constructed in terms of movement by train and horse-drawn coach. Wolfgang Schivelbusch describes the process of the train eating up the landscape through speed in a ravenous and insatiable way, and remarks on how the railway also begins the 'establishment of *speed* as a new principle of public life.'[43] The automobile builds on these existing discourses by partially replacing 'the machine ensemble' with the driver who directs the course of the car and controls how quickly it moves.[44]

Although the experience of travelling by automobile was vastly different from that of travelling by rail, the discourse that was used to describe motoring has its roots in earlier nineteenth-century definitions associated with rail travel. Schivelbusch states that '"Annihilation of time and space" was the *topos* which the early nineteenth century used to describe the new situation into which the railroad placed natural space after depriving it of its hitherto absolute powers.'[45] Similar descriptions of the ability of the automobile to transcend distance and space abound throughout the early pre-war narratives. Shackleton writes 'We stopped where we wished and went on when we chose. We were literally masters of time.'[46] When driving a motor car, the driver is at his or her own liberty to speed up or decelerate, and this control over velocity and the power to harness it was a frightening and exhilarating feeling. Hissey remarks in his 1906 travelogue *Untravelled England*:

> For a time the fascination of speed got hold of us. We delighted in the swift movement through the air—the bounding, as it were, through space. The scenery was far too beautiful to be rushed through in this manner; it was a sin to do so, but all men have their weak moments.[47]

The experience Hissey describes of 'bounding [...] through space' echoes earlier descriptions and

[43] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. xiii.
[44] Schivelbusch uses this term to describe how the train 'interjected itself between the traveler and the landscape. The traveler perceived the landscape as it was filtered through the machine ensemble.' *The Railway Journey*, p. 24.
[45] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, 10.
[46] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 3.
[47] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, pp. 356-7.

[image removed]

3.1 J.J. Hissey in his 1897 Daimler. Note the similarities more akin to a horse-drawn coach than a modern motor car. This car also shows tiller steering rather than a wheel which was common in all early cars pre-1900.

discourses of travel by railway and observations of how traditional formulations of time and space were being destabilised. Schivelbusch remarks

> What was experienced as being annihilated was the traditional space-time continuum which characterized the old transport technology. Organically embedded in nature as it was, that technology, in its mimetic relationship to the space traversed, permitted the traveler to perceive that space as a living entity.[48]

Although the railways had been a common mode of transportation for over half a century by the time Hissey published *Untravelled England,* the radical re-thinking of traditional concepts of time and space were still applicable because the motor car was replacing horse-powered forms of transportation on the roads. In this respect the car was more akin to horse-drawn locomotion than the railway because of the amount of influence the driver was able to exert. This process of displacing natural spatio-temporal relations occurs anew and the powers of the car over horse-drawn methods, with which it shared the road, were scrutinised in these terms.

The magical qualities that the car seemed to embody when it reached such high speeds could perhaps be attributed to the process of destabilising of the natural progress of movement. Schivelbusch continues:

> As the motion of transportation was freed from its organic fetters by steam power, its relationship to the space it covered changed quite radically. Pre-industrial traffic is mimetic of natural phenomena. Ships drifted with water and wind currents, overland motion followed the natural irregularities of the landscape and was determined by the physical powers of the draught animals.[49]

Although Schivelbusch is here remarking about perceptions of railway travel we can see that there are clear similarities to the way in which movement by car is represented. The excessive speed that was mechanically engineered to go beyond the speed and capabilities of horses was unnatural and produced ethereal sensations on the drivers as they attained implausible speeds and their emotions were heightened.

[48] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 36.
[49] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 9.

Literary representations of speed are the subject of Enda Duffy's *The Speed Handbook*. Hissey's persistent use of the phrase 'the fascination of speed' signified a movement and preoccupation of the modernist period much broader than the idiosyncratic observances in early automobilism. Duffy writes that the cult of speed in the early 1900s was contrasted in hindsight with the perceived 'slowness' of colonial travel and administration.[50] Duffy reiterates Aldous Huxley's position that speed was the only new experience of modernism, and as such, became the source of literary inspiration throughout the modernist period. He writes:

> For a brief moment, roughly the first quarter of the twentieth century, the thrill of velocity at any speed was vividly palpable. To those first granted the new experience of speed, the automobile appeared to enliven people by speeding them up. The automobile was the promise, through technology, of an experience lived at a new level of intensity. In offering the new sensation of hurtling through space at speed, it gave the car's driver a striking new level of personal power, both over the most minute of the new sensations and over its effect on others—most starkly, after the first crash, the power of life or death.[51]

The trains had enacted a similar process in the nineteenth century of speeding up lives, but 'enlivening' them seems to be the domain of the motor car. Duffy marks the arrival of the automobile and the unique way that it transported its passengers as 'the moment at which individual people were allowed to feel modernity in their bones: to feel its power as a physical sensation, through their sensing of modernity.'[52] Evidence of this claim can be found throughout the early motoring narratives. J. E. Vincent expresses this well when he remarks:

> At first he [the driver] revels without thought, or without conscious thought, in the sheer ecstasy of motion. The road which seems to flow to meet him, white, tawny or grey as the case may be, and to open before him as if by magic, the pressure of the cool air on his face, even the tingling lash of the rain as he dashes against it, result in a feeling of undefinable, almost lyrical exaltation. [53]

His perception of the road which rises to meet him is similar to Hissey's illusion of how the car transgresses concepts of time and space. Duffy argues that such literary representations of speed are definitive of modernity, and indicative of the reorganisation of space and time that happened as a

[50] Enda Duffy, *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 1, 59-110.
[51] Duffy, *The Speed Handbook*, pp. 1, 5.
[52] Duffy, *The Speed Handbook*, pp. 3-4.
[53] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, pp. xx-xxi.

result of the introduction of the automobile. He asserts that 'Speed is not only a pleasure that has a politics; speed, it turns out, *is* politics: the expression of a new order of the organization of global space.'[54] He arrives at this conclusion through an analysis of the waning strength of the British Empire in the first part of the twentieth century, and how many of the 'blank spaces' had been filled. Prior to this point he says that the concept of space 'seemed unlimited' and after the proliferation of the car, the idea of geographical space becomes finite. I would dispute this assertion. From a detailed study of the travelogues included in this thesis, the language tends to insinuate that space is simultaneously expanding and contracting. The use of the car opened up the potential to explore and travel farther, but the ease and speed with which this could be achieved contributed towards a notion of fixed topographical space. Vincent's 'thirst for a continent to travel over' demonstrates a sense of an expanding world whilst the car makes places more accessible, but also insinuates that the car has made countries smaller and that one country isn't big enough. Schivelbusch communicates this mutual exchange stating that

> [...] space was both diminished *and* expanded. The dialectic of this process states that this diminution of space (i.e., the shrinkage of transport time) caused an expansion of transport space by incorporating new areas into the transport network.[55]

Schivelbusch then adds this to the phenomenon of an expanding metropolis as transport lines extended to outlying towns and villages. This is more noticeable in the age of the motor car where rural areas that were previously off the beaten track, miles from railway stations or even coach routes, were now opened for the tourist. Hissey was astounded by this reciprocal effect commenting that 'the world has grown so small'. He then attempted to justify this paradox when he continued, 'A time there was when the Land's End had a far-off sound; now it is the resort of the day tripper; and even distant Japan has become a touring ground.'[56] The subjective space that lay between himself and 'distant Japan', although geographically unchanged, had been reduced through a speeding up of transport and communication. Duffy's assertion of speed as politics is an accurate one that

[54] Duffy, *The Speed Handbook*, p. 19, 36.
[55] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 35.
[56] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 379.

demonstrates speed as a new principle for shaping versions of realities. Schivelbusch further notes that the duration of the journey from one point to another is

> not an objective mathematical unit, but a subjective perception of space-time. [...] If an essential element of a given sociocultural space-time continuum undergoes change, this will affect the entire structure; our perception of space-time will also lose its accustomed orientation.[57]

This process occurs with the arrival of the motor car and motorists themselves show an awareness of how automotive travel affects their perspective on landscape and spatio-temporal subjectivity. Strange illusions take place where the driver's reality becomes unstable and transports him or her through an undetermined passage of time and distance.

Enda Duffy has registered how the tempo of Edith Wharton's writing in *A Motor-Flight through France* (1908) adapts itself to the speed of the car. The writing moves in quick succession and lyrically builds up its pace with the acceleration of the motor car until the narrative coasts towards the end of the passage. Duffy writes:

> [...] the viewer through the windscreen of a speeding car was presented with an unprecedented succession and variety of scenes, a massive sensory overload of roads, nature, structures, people, written signs, others. With all this flashing before her, the viewer had the task of editing, choosing what was important, ignoring the rest, and re-stitching scenes into a narrative that would, in turn, make sense of the confusing mass of scenes that followed at every succeeding moment.[58]

Duffy says that this system of 'sampling' from impressions and weaving them together characterises perceptions from a motor car. The flexibility of the travelogue form allows for acceleration and deceleration of narrative time; therefore, the structure is mimetic of the experience of travelling by car. There is no set narrative structure which can be used as a rule or measure; rather the elastic nature of the narrative, expanding and contracting, temporal and static, the oscillation of narrative pace from headlong motion to pausing at locations to explore in-depth perceptions, is emblematic of the automotive travel writers' experience of time. There are no fixed notions and their cars have allowed them to explore at a pace beyond cultural structures of time. The early pre-war travelogues discussed

[57] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 36.
[58] Duffy, *The Speed Handbook*, p. 162.

in this chapter certainly contain elements of this kind of scenic editing, as we have seen in the extracts of Hissey. However, in the texts that attempt to offer themselves as guidebooks for motorists the pace of the narrative is often slowed to focus on providing historical backgrounds to certain locations and more in-depth and still impressions, and the narrative space between sites (the journey) is fragmentary and accelerated. However, such experiences come at a costly price for the traveller and connoisseur of landscape as Hissey describes it as a 'sin' to subordinate pleasant countryside and landscape beneath the desire for speed and abandon. Thomas D. Murphy also highlights the importance of a moderate speed and advocates a low daily mileage in order that one may better appreciate the beauty of the landscape. [59] In between their desire for speed and responsibility as automotive writers, there is tension in the narratives about how to balance the journey time with the static and fixed arrival at locations. On occasions, as we have already seen, the journey time is accelerated creating the impression of a prolepsis, the motion darting the passengers and narrative forward in time as well as distance. On other occasions, the sensation of this rapid movement is the main attraction of the journey itself and focus of the narrative which is demonstrated through augmented transitional phases throughout the travelogues.

The relationship between driver and machine is one that the writers attempt to negotiate throughout the texts. J. E. Vincent writes in *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car* (1907) that 'The motorist is not an infatuated adjunct of a hurtling machine;' but person who has developed his or her own level of perception to adapt to the new speeds of the car.[60] This process of human adaptation is one that many of the writers focus on throughout the travel texts and is part of the broader assimilation of the automobile. Hissey comments in *The Charm of the Road*:

> "I hate a machine, it has no feelings," said a friend to me one day, referring to my car. Now that is the very thing about a motor that I prize, it never tires, and needs no urging of the whip; and what is more depressing than driving exhausted horses?[61]

The automobile has supplanted the human-animal bond that existed between horse and rider/driver. This animal interaction that was so familiar to travellers on the road and a source of companionship

[59] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 36.
[60] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, p. 227.
[61] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, pp. 39-40.

was now replaced by the engine. However, Vincent perceives this exchange is a positive one as the car does not respond to certain outward scenarios; it is void of any animal feeling or sensibility. Hissey concurs with such assessments but he also adds that the car *is* sensitive to the human touch and the driver's demands:

> ...never did a man have so obedient and faithful a slave. A touch of the lever, and it bounds along, scorning time and distance; another touch, and it creeps forward as slowly as a child may crawl; another touch, and it becomes an inert mass of iron, standing still on the roadway and there awaiting your pleasure.[62]

To Hissey, the automobile is as responsive to the driver's commands as the horse, perhaps even more so. Although the organic human-animal bond of the horse and driver has been displaced, the relationship of the driver to his car is equally intimate. The car possesses none of the animal sensibilities that render horse-powered travel temperamental and unreliable. The car's sheer mechanical and synthetic composition, to Hissey, makes it far more trustworthy and robust. By subverting these fears relating to the relationship between the driver and the machine, it becomes a process by which the car is assimilated into society, and the narratives. John M. Dillon writes in *Motor Days in England* (1908): 'The sun was shining in a comforting way, the cars running with the soothing hum of many bees and that perfect rhythm which so delights the motorist's ear, bespeaking a well-working mechanism.'[63] Through aligning the car with natural elements Dillon appears to be subverting fears about changing from the animal to the mechanical. This powerful and dangerous machine became part of the natural order of things and the car was no longer alien to the countryside around it.[64] It is interesting that this process appears to repeat itself after the horse is finally usurped from the roads as well.

[62] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 424.
[63] Dillon, *Motor Days in England*, p. 239.
[64] Schivelbusch remarks on this process of transferring certain fears and uncertainties from the mechanical to the animal in *The Railway Journey*, p. 14.

Internal and external realities

We have already seen how representations of speed inspired passages dedicated to replicating the thrill of motoring over the countryside at high speed. J.E. Vincent remarks that one's physical powers of perception have to adapt to the requirements of motoring.

> Soon—for the faculties of man adapt themselves rapidly to his needs—the man in the car begins to observe more rapidly and more minutely than in the early days. The man at the steering-wheel finds that he can watch the road up to the farthest visible point in advance, manipulate his throttle, use the accelerator or decelerator, and, most important of all, be in vigilant sympathy with his engine, subconsciously.[65]

Vincent here describes a process of synchronisation between man and machine that seems to occur organically: as the pace of the motor quickens, the abilities of the driver to process and compute the passing scenery become quicker and more refined. Vincent's hypnotic gaze towards the horizon produces an almost tunnel vision and his body is able to take over the controls of the automobile. This symbolises the holistic meeting of the driver and the car. The fact that Vincent notices that this occurs 'subconsciously' suggests that he believes the body is designed to be able to perform such specific functions and can adapt to any task required of it. The body is developing and evolving to meet the new demands placed upon it, and the ability to alter the speed of mobility means that the driver or passenger in the automobile is able to control his or her own level of perception.[66]

Describing the experience of car travel to an audience must have been a difficult task for the early pre-war motoring travel writers. The writers grapple with finding suitable points of comparison in order to reproduce the view they attain from the moving car. In *Untravelled England* (1906) Hissey describes the view in traditional forms of nineteenth-century paintings and stage sets:

> We rejoiced in our temporary triumph over space and steepness, in the ever-rapid unfolding of the country, in the dash uphill, in the constant and sudden changes of scenery like those of a theatre. It was as though we were passing through some vast picture-gallery—only the pictures were realities. For the nonce we were content to take a broad, general view of the scenery, to the neglect of details. The eye had not time to grasp everything, as when travelling fast you only obtain impressions—delightful ones it may be, but still impressions merely.[67]

[65] J. E. Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car* (London: Methuen, 1907), pp. xx-xxi.
[66] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 24.
[67] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, pp. 356-7.

Although Hissey takes delight in these sweeping stretches of horizon, he realises that it has its limitations. The fine details of architecture, people, and movement that animate the scene for him are veiled and unseen. The changing scenes of a theatre and a gallery of pictures are of course strictly inadequate, because in both cases, they are still images that prohibit any direct interaction, and are lifeless reproductions of nature. It is possible that Hissey is here alluding to early cinema images, but these again fall short of accuracy, as cinema in this period was not only monotone but also silent. However the idea of framing these images by alluding to pictures and cinema is significant. Schivelbusch writes of seeing things in motion from the window of a railway carriage that:

> Panoramic perception, in contrast to traditional perception, no longer belonged to the same space as the perceived objects: the traveller saw the objects, landscapes, etc. *through* the apparatus which moved him through the world. That machine and the motion it created became integrated into his visual perception: thus he could only see things in motion.[68]

In this sense we are able to see how the automobile is imposing itself between subject and object. The windscreens of automobiles gave much the same effect as looking through the window of a railway carriage: the view became framed and contained by the car and thus the traveller perceived the landscape as it was filtered through 'the machine ensemble.' Peter Frank Peters makes a similar assertion when he claims that 'The tourist's gaze became dynamic: the landscape was projected as a film on the windscreen of the car.'[69] The 'landscape painting [...] set in motion' is probably the most accurate description of what these early motorists in Britain were attempting to reconstruct, and definitely strikes a chord with the imagery Hissey invokes.[70] Vincent echoes Hissey's description when he comments that the motorist '[...] passing through scenes rapidly, learns to observe and to think more quickly than others, storing, as on a photographic film, memories to be unfolded and developed later [...]'.[71] The mind of the motorist has learnt to take in scenes more quickly and catalogues them like a photographic reel, the negatives of which can be reflected on in hindsight.

[68] Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 64.
[69] Peter Frank Peters, *Time, Innovation and Mobilities: Travel in Technological Cultures* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 94.
[70] Peters, *Time, Innovation and Mobilities*, p. 94.
[71] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, p. 227.

The unification of driver and machine is an important response to the experience of speed and the formation of impressions of the world outside the car. Vincent, amongst others, becomes entwined with the car's movement and mechanical life; once this type of symbiosis is achieved the scenery and landscape can be measured, formed, and interpreted through 'the machine ensemble'. Vincent has a feeling of complicity with the motion of car travel when he drives over an open heath and breaks the 20 m.p.h. speed limit to reach speeds of 50 m.p.h.: '[...] the road seemed to open wide to our advent, to stretch out its arms, so to speak, to embrace us; the motion, smooth, swifter and swifter still, even as the flight of the albatross that stirreth not his wings, and absolutely free from vibration, was, in a single word, divine.'[72] The gliding motion of the albatross that rides on wind currents seems to Vincent to capture the effortlessly smooth motion of the car over the contours of the earth. The romance of such descriptions illuminates the car in celestial and poetic tones. In fact, Hissey notes in *Untravelled England* that

> To thoroughly enjoy the country one must needs look upon it with an artist's or poet's eye; the artist will see a picture and the poet find a poem where the ordinary man would only note blue sky, trees and green fields—Nature means nothing more to him than that. The painter's practised eye looks for beauty and colour, and discovers these almost everywhere; moreover, he possesses the faculty of not, or only partially, seeing what he does not want to see. He casts a glamour over all he observes till the reality becomes a romance—the ugly fades away and only an impression of beauty remains, and this makes for the enjoyment of life. [73]

Here Hissey clearly elevates the artist and poet above the common man, distinguishing himself in the process as a traveller rather than a tourist. For him, the artist is able to create 'beauty and colour' even where there is none. This romantic vision of the artist and poet as traveller is clearly Gilpin-esque — derived from William Gilpin, the eighteenth-century writer, painter, and founder of the aesthetic school of the picturesque — and Hissey even mentions in five of his travelogues that he set out 'like Dr. Syntax, in search of the picturesque'.[74] Contrast Hissey's sympathies with those in Gilpin's *Observations* (1792):

[72] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, p. 131.
[73] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 93.
[74] Reference to the poem by William Combe, *The Tour of Dr. Syntax: In Search of the Picturesque, a Poem.* (1812). The phrase quoted can be found in the preface of *An English Holiday with a Car and Camera* (1908), in *Untravelled England* (1906) on p. 7, in *The Road and the Inn* (1917) on p. 3, in *A Leisurely Tour in England* (1913) in the preface and also in *Over Fen and Wold* (1898) in the preface. The phrase quoted here is taken from *Untravelled England*.

> A valley, like this, considered as a *whole*, has little picturesque beauty. But a picturesque eye will find its objects even here. It will investigate the hills, and pick out such portions, as are most pleasing. These it will form into backgrounds, and inrich [sic] the foreground (which can only be a plain) with cattle, trees, or other objects.—Even such simple scenes, by the aid of judicious lights, may form pictures.[75]

Hissey's conviction of finding beauty spots for the pleasure of the traveller is genuine enough, and it is easy to identify a link between the picturesque of Gilpin and Hissey's own narrative. James Buzard describes the picturesque process of selection stating

> [...] the *whole* required some distinct slant of vision and some measure of strategic omission. Everyday features of the visited place (populations included) either fell cleanly away from the visitor's view or arranged themselves as part of the spectacle. Places were represented as (primarily pictorial) artefacts of cultural worth by virtue of their wholeness and harmony, qualities which the traveller could demonstratively appreciate.[76]

Hissey seems to be adopting these practices and chooses to view landscapes as the artist would by both framing the scene and then removing the less desirable elements whilst enhancing the colour of the more pleasing aspects to produce a 'glamour' over all he sees. Hissey pronounces at the sight of a moated manor house in Groombridge that it is 'a graphic reminder of the days that are past and of the doings of old: it is a ballad in building, with romance written large over its weather-stained walls.'[77] Yet Hissey's aesthetic judgments on landscape and how it should be represented in art and literature are at odds with his modern method of transport. Even his pronouncement of such artistic form seems a little outdated considering the rise of Cubism in the early 1900s, and in 1910 Roger Fry staged his landmark exhibition of the Post-Impressionists at the Grafton Galleries in London. Although Hissey embraces the advantages of modern technology, he is romantic in sentiment and aesthetic taste, something which I shall return to later in this chapter.

The car in the landscape

This chapter has already addressed the perceptions of landscape from the car, now I wish to turn this attention to the car *in* the landscape and the way that the writers negotiate the modernity of the motor

[75] William Gilpin, *Observations Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1792* (London, 1792), p. 78.
[76] James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 188.
[77] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 105.

car, particularly at the ancient landmarks they are visiting. The juxtaposition of ancient and modern is a coherent narrative that runs through all these travelogues. Hissey says that the traveller has a bit of poetic licence when viewing landscapes which allows him to imagine them with romantic vision, removing the car from the scene to achieve the perfect effect. He writes:

> With half-shut eyes, so as to blur the view a little, we could, with small strain upon the imagination, have fancied we were medieval travellers looking down upon a medieval town: so much from this point of view has Conway preserved its ancient aspect—only the modern motor car would have to be conveniently ignored. Therein lies the art of the traveller in not seeing what he does not wish to see.[78]

The scene of Conway Castle undergoes a process of selection where Hissey removes those aspects he considers to be out of sorts with the picture as a whole. The fact that Hissey acknowledges this and externalises this process in the narrative is significant because it highlights that the motor car is still being negotiated in linguistic terms and the gaze of the traveller. Its modernity has to be ignored and overlooked because it cannot be reconciled with the ancient castle.

Hissey lays the foundations of these criticisms against the car in his earlier travelogue *Untravelled England* (1906). After looking around the ancient village of Stanton, in the Cotswolds, Hissey says that 'Then we rejoined the motor car, that forcibly struck us as looking strangely out of harmony with its time-toned surroundings, for the one was the very antithesis of the other.'[79] In the final sentence of this extract, Hissey establishes the car and Stanton as two contrasting worlds that are unable to be reconciled. However, it never occurs to Hissey that perhaps Stanton is 'out of harmony' with modernity. Although he claims the car reminds him of his own contemporaneity, he is more willing to align himself with the familiar traditions and historical legacy of Stanton than with the car. This reading can be corroborated much earlier in *Untravelled England* where Hissey describes the car as a trespasser in the landscape and an eyesore to those wishing to find the picturesque. He comments whilst driving over some marshland:

> how frequently one finds the loveliest landscape spoilt in some part by an unsightly building that the eye would gladly ignore if it only could! But I had forgotten that the modern motor

[78] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 260.
[79] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 335-6.

> car, standing where it did, was itself an intruder upon the harmony of unspoilt Nature—only the car was not a permanent fixture, merely a temporary trespasser.
>
> Strangely loud amidst the profound quietude sounded the throbbing engines as we remounted the car and resumed our journey, [...][80]

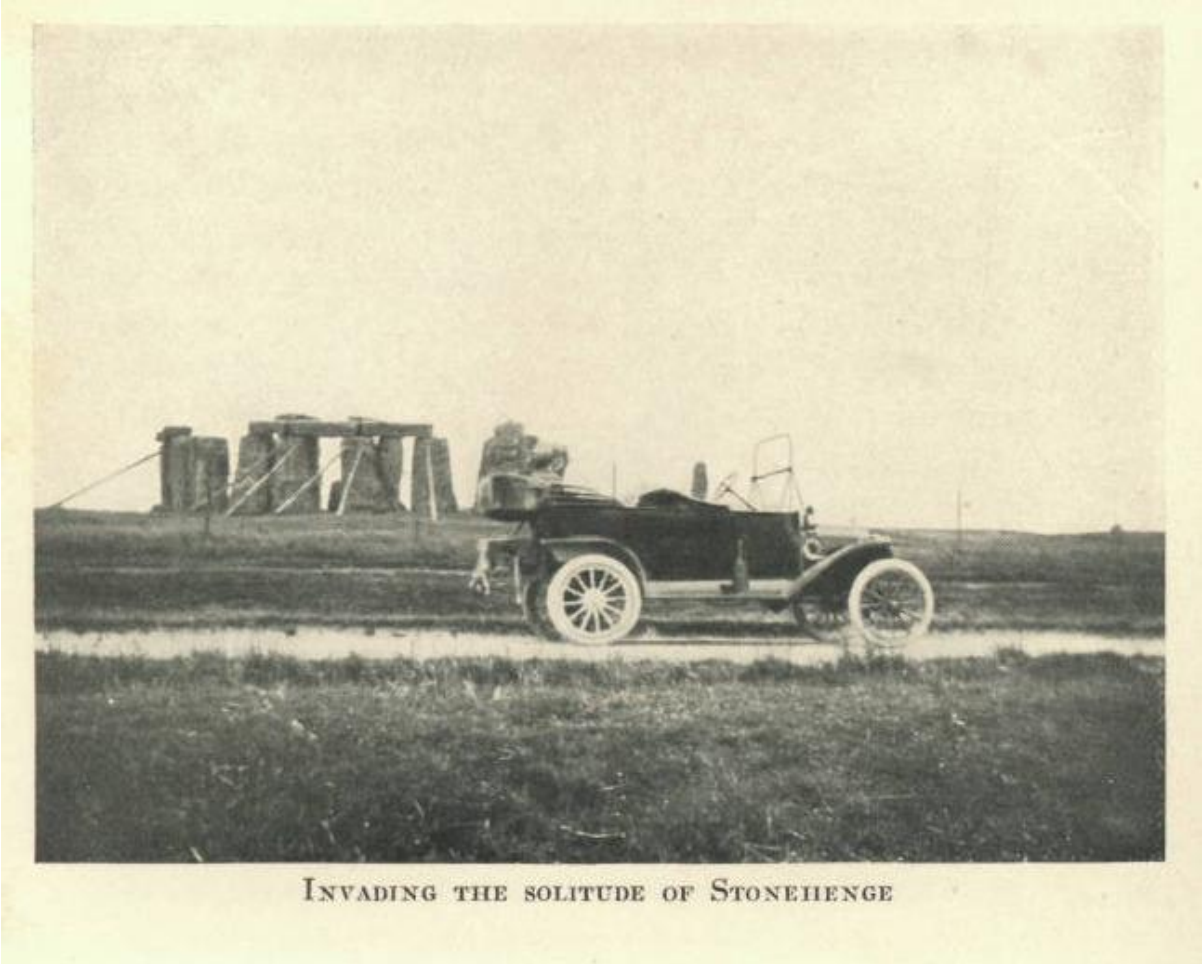
The car symbolises the manmade and is itself a product of intensive industry. Its presence and the noise from its engines cannot be ignored, and it seems to sever Hissey's connection with his natural surroundings, some of which are buildings and therefore man-made anyway. The only redeeming factor about the car, according to Hissey, is the transient nature of its use. It can be shepherded off and out of the picture. But, to Hissey, this doesn't seem to absolve the motor car of its hindrance to his relationship with the natural environment.

A considerable proportion of the writers of early motoring travel books are aware of the discrepancy between the ancient sites they visit and the modernity of the motor car. The car is out of place and time with its surroundings. John M. Dillon remarks at Warwick castle that his party see the Earl and Countess leaving the castle in cars to go 'for a run'. He adds: 'It was a rather curious sight to see these cars moving about this ancient pile and it struck us as a sort of anachronism.'[81]

In a similar vein, Hissey notes that the car dispels any illusion of being in the middle ages and almost prevents a certain immersion at particular sights: 'We had, for a time, been transported back long centuries; but coming suddenly from out of the medieval gloom of the church into the bright sunlight and to our motor car, effectually brought our day-dreaming to an end.'[82] In this extract the car is the gatekeeper to the world of romance that the writers wish to access. The car is also the guardian and keeper of reality, reminding Hissey that he inhabits a different world from the places they wish to immerse themselves in. Following this course, we may say that the car almost becomes an obstacle between site and sightseer, although providing convenient access to a location, it distances the tourist from the object and hinders 'genuine' interaction.

The car has a similar effect on the narrative in the work of Maud M. Stawell. On the occasions when the motor car enters into the text, it abruptly drags the narrative away from its fundamental concern: the history of Britain. Stawell writes 'It would be worth while to stop the engine

[80] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 32.
[81] Dillion, *Motor Days in England*, p. 145.
[82] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 49.



INVADING THE SOLITUDE OF STONEHENGE

3.2 ‘Invading the solitude of Stonehenge’ included in Robert Shackleton’s *Touring Great Britain* (1917), opposite p. 129.

for a moment, and to look at the massive Norman piers of the nave, the fine altar-tombs [...]'.[83] Stawell makes explicit that to fully appreciate and immerse oneself in the history of a location, it is necessary to set aside the car, silence it, and eliminate its presence. Stawell is also conscious of the irony of the car in these historical locations. She reflects that 'a battered little cottage' in the village of Dolgelley 'has been replaced by an ironmonger's shop, and we now supply ourselves with petrol on the spot where "Owen, by the Grace of God Prince of Wales," held his council, and drew up the instrument that allied him formally with the French.'[84] A sight of revered historical significance now fulfils the purposes of fuelling the car, but it also serves as a reality check signifying the changes towards a burgeoning consumer market, especially that built around the car and its users. On catching a view of the thirteenth-century Leeds Castle Thomas Murphy exclaims '[...] gazing on such a scene under the spell of an English June day, one might easily forget the present and fancy himself back in the time when knighthood was in flower, though the swirl of a motor rushing past us would have dispelled any such reverie had we been disposed to entertain it.'[85] The imagery of knights and questing is a persistent one throughout the automotive travelogues, but this use of archaic images shows the disharmony between ancient and modern. And perhaps the combination of the mock-heroic Victorian narrator and the modern motor car are completely incompatible. It also introduces a broader argument addressed in the course of this discussion centred on narrative style which prefers the history of a location over its present condition.

The observation that the car is out of keeping with antiquated locations is also perhaps influenced by contemporary misconceptions of the car, measureable by the adverse reactions it receives in the narratives. In an area of Norwich, Vincent and his party stop at an inn called the Maid's Head. They drive under an archway and through into its covered courtyard. As they are admiring their surroundings they spot a notice that asks motors be kept off of the premises as much as possible:

> The bar parlour on the left, [...] seemed to be, and was, of almost immemorial age. So did the surroundings generally. Yet in the centre was the most modern thing in this world, the very

[83] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), p. 23.
[84] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, pp. 130-1.
[85] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 25.

> incarnation of novelty, a motor-car, and a six cylinder motor-car at that, and staring us in the face was a notice requesting motorists, in effect, to make no unnecessary noise, but to deposit their passengers or pick them up, [...] rapidly as possible and then depart. [...] in the court of the "Maid's Head," the car was an anachronism, a jarring note, not in the picture, and the sooner it was moved out of sight the better. So moved it was and the original picture remained.[86]

This startling extract not only highlights contemporary attitudes towards the car, but Vincent's own analysis of the situation is highly comical. He sketches the motor car as disturbing the dust of the hostelry both literally and metaphorically. Whilst he humours the serious attitude of its proprietors he agrees that the car is out of sorts with the inn. The time-machine is an unwelcome visitor and 'the original picture' must be restored.

The theme of ancient pitted against the modern really characterises the narratives more generally. Alexandra Harris also notes how John Betjeman, who was in charge of editing the Shell County Guides in the 1930s, perceived the narrative style of these motoring travel guides. Harris writes:

> Betjeman had grown up with Victorian guides of the 'Highways and Byways' variety which were intent on taking the reader on a quest for authentic England. Authentic, in this case, meant medieval and vernacular; anything later tended to be treated as a violation of the old country. These guides from a previous generation were now the subject of much fondness and hilarity. After dinner at Fawley Bottom the Betjemans and Pipers sometimes played a game at their expense. Each player would produce guidebook entries in parody 'Byways' style and, predictably, England's oldeness took on some fantastical proportions.[87]

Harris's illustration of Betjeman's feelings about this style of travelogue is very enlightening. Clearly, this style is perceived by Betjeman to be outmoded and prompts ridicule and condescension, albeit in a benevolent way. However, this does underline the problem inherent throughout all the pre-war automotive travelogues: the writers utilise traditional Victorian-style 'byways' narratives, and attempt to simply write in the motor car. However, this technique immediately establishes the car as an anachronism, misplaced in a world preoccupied with romance and the picturesque.

As the gulf between ancient and modern becomes apparent Hissey becomes aware of the absurdity of his language, much of it left-over from the previous horse-drawn decades, in describing a

[86] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, pp. 107-8.
[87] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists, and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2010), p. 218.

motor car. In his first motoring travelogue *Untravelled England* (1906) he talks about having to 'remount our car' and 'Not being sure of our road, we pulled up, if such be the correct expression to apply to motor cars when they stop'.[88] He asks the same question about the expression 'pulled up' in his travelogue four years later, *The Charm of the Road* (1910).[89] In these early travelogues he fumbles through his vocabulary of travel only to find the expressions he has seem inadequate for describing automobiles. Even the name of the driver changes when referring to the driver of an automobile. He writes in *The Charm of the Road* 'I heard the driver (or chauffeur, is it?)'.[90] Through these early narratives we see Hissey getting to grips with motoring and assimilating it into his journeys, both practically and figuratively. He writes reflectively inviting the reader to share in this process of turning the car from the strange and alien machine into the familiar, through externalising this process of linguistic adaptation. Using terms from the horse-drawn era can also be read as applying domesticating metaphors to help assimilate the car into the text and the broader society. The language Hissey employs here can be seen as drawing the car into the discourse of the familiar and traditional.

Conclusion

H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) is remarkable for Wells' description of the time machine, how it feels to ride in it, and its discussion of the subjective nature of time and space. The time traveller's description of 'the Fourth Dimension' echoes descriptions by Hissey and others of their perceptions of motion and traveller: 'It is only another way of looking at Time. *There is no difference between Time and any of the three dimensions of Space except that our consciousness moves along it.*'[91] Even the passage where the time traveller describes what he sees from the time machine, which is relayed to the reader by the narrator, is remarkably similar to the descriptions given by the travel writers. Wells writes:

> The landscape was misty and vague. I was still on the hillside upon which this house now stands, and the shoulder rose above me grey and dim. I saw trees growing and changing

[88] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, pp. 109, 165.
[89] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 210.
[90] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 195.
[91] H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine* (London and New York: Penguin, 2005), p. 4.

> like puffs of vapour, now brown, now green; they grew, spread, shivered, and passed away. I saw huge buildings rise up faint and fair, and pass like dreams. The whole surface of the earth seemed changed – melting and flowing under my eyes. The little hands upon the dials that registered my speed raced round faster and faster.[92]

Wells also describes the feeling of 'a helpless headlong motion!' Although the time machine itself is based on an adapted bicycle, such feelings and impressions of speed are also likely to have been inspired by the new motor car that had made an appearance in Britain that year at the Tunbridge Wells Motor Show and had received a large amount of attention. Indeed, compare the above passage with one of Hissey's descriptions of motoring and the link seems obvious. A machine like the car, as well as the bicycle on which it is based, transporting its passenger at great speeds through the countryside to historical ruins and landmarks seem to be an obvious source of inspiration for *The Time Machine*. The car *is* a time machine. Not only does it transcend traditional spatio-temporal relationships, but the clear discrepancy between modern and old, and the anachronism of the car in the landscape driving around Britain, really influence people's perceptions of the car at this early stage of its development pre-1914.

The descriptions of the environment through which the writers pass are original in their interesting analogies ranging from nineteenth-century paintings of landscape, to subtle allusions to early cinema and film, and flying. As a piece of modern engineering, the car is also alienated from the locations that it visits. Many writers including Stawell and Murphy felt that the car was intruding into a traditional, historically familiar, and sanctioned space. The motor formed a barrier between subject and object that could only be partially dissolved by mentally blotting out the car's presence.

From 1896 to 1914 the process of articulating this new experience and assimilating the car into everyday usage and travel narratives was a complicated task. Speed and its literary representation were crucial in capturing the 'magic' and illusory quality of motoring on the open roads. However, writers struggled with finding a similar point of comparison. As they jostled with metaphors and alternative forms of imagery, what emerges from these narratives is the uniqueness of their physical and literary journey. In the first decades of the twentieth century, these writers were the pioneers of the road, and their future beyond the next hill and on the 'un-tarmac-ed' surface on the horizon was

[92] Wells, *The Time Machine*, p. 19.

fraught with dangerous possibilities. The passages that remind us of the novel sensation of motoring show the writers literally writing in order to make sense of speed, travel and the optical illusions taking place. By doing so they construct new versions of reality where automotive travel and its effects on driver and environment are negotiated and initiated into human experience.

4

National Identity

The automotive journeys around Britain between 1896 and 1930 show the places and communities that are deemed significant in an attempt to portray a sense of national character, nationhood, and the 'real' England. Claims that England needed to be rediscovered and recaptured are manifest throughout the pages of Hissey, Shackleton, Vincent and Morton. Simon Featherstone writes that the travelogues of this period work on the assumption that 'England was a lost or neglected place in need of rediscovery'.[1] He further asserts that the Edwardian era was 'a golden age of Englishness that was also a golden age for worrying about England's identity and future'; therefore this enthusiasm for cementing ideas about Englishness may have been prompted by anxieties over the Empire as the imperial ideology behind Empire building at the end of the nineteenth century was being questioned.[2] Alexandra Harris adopts a similar view when she claims that the permanence suggested by Englishness appeals at moments of national crisis.[3]

The problems of selecting what should and should not be immortalised as representative of Englishness is a clear point of tension, and one that Featherstone identifies in the contemporary works of Thomas, Massingham and Montague:

> A study of the genre of the literary topographical journey suggests the selective ways in which Englishness was defined in the first half of the century. Travelling to 'discover England' established an ideology of ruralism and historical continuity underpinned by an unacknowledged and exclusive modernity of vision and communication. These discursive acts of travel also highlighted contradictions and evasions in English self-representation, problems of national definition that are central to the national journeys of Edward Thomas, H. J. Massingham and C. E. Montague [...].[4]

[1] Simon Featherstone, *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English National Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 67.
[2] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 20.
[3] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010), p. 133.
[4] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 7.

Although Featherstone is here referring to the pedestrian travelogues of Thomas and the work of Massingham in the 1920s and 1930s, we can clearly associate the content of Featherstone's observations with the motoring travelogues of the early 1900s. This chapter will discuss how versions of Englishness were shaped around idylls of a pre-industrial rural landscape. Maud M. Stawell lists the attractions of the Devonshire countryside as '[...] scarlet poppies in the corn, and high banks fringed with ferns, and cottages smothered in flowers, and wide purple moors, and rippling of emerald seas, and the complete serenity that fills the heart of Devon.'[5] These impressions of England as placid, mild-natured, pastoral and benevolent saturate the concept of 'home' and England. From this same fount England is also distinctively branded as a 'storied land' alluding to its rich literary heritage and vivid historical epochs. Perhaps symptomatic of a colonial past, our imposed sense of 'Englishness' is highly stylised because it served a function and purpose, connoting a system of ideology and foreign politics. The version of national identity built in the travelogues of this period draws from 'English' antiquities and heritage as a way of sculpting a modern national identity from the past. In this way, Englishness *is* a visible and endurable entity continuously transposed and reified.

Although these narratives describe journeys made in the British Isles they concentrate specifically on articulating a sense of Englishness through racial identity, landscape, history, literature, and geographical boundaries. It is important to emphasise that the identity in question throughout the travelogues is decidedly English rather than British. These narratives are very much Anglocentric in both focus and perception. Where the writers cross borders into Wales and Scotland the landscape and people are defined in contrast to England and the English. Although figures such as Maud Stawell draw attention to the shared history of the Welsh and English, the two cultures are treated as distinct from one another. It is also important to emphasise that these versions of Englishness are also inherently white in ethnicity. Even though the Empire was far-reaching and cultural mobility relatively common, the brand of Englishness that manifests itself in these works is strictly white. Evidence for this is largely due to the fact that the writers assume that no other form of Englishness exists. Even though there were obviously other racial identities in England, they were ignored rather than included in a national demographic. This seems surprising considering the multi-

[5] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in the West Country* (London and New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 33.

racial composition of allied forces serving in World War One. It is not until J.B. Priestley's 1933 tour published as *English Journey* that England's racial diversity is really acknowledged and discussed.[6]

The travelogues published before the First World War compose a sense of Englishness through rather vague historical romances, places of literary interest, and hazy recollections of lanes and hedgerows, old byway inns, and rolling green fields. John Urry remarks on this subject: 'Then there is the seeing of particular signs, such as the typical English village, [...] This mode of gazing shows how tourists are in a way semioticians, reading the landscape for signifiers of certain pre-established notions or signs derived from various discourses of travel and tourism.'[7] These are rather benign and passive forms of national identity that work within an established pastoral framework and pay homage to the ancestry of castles and villages and valorise English heroes such as Sir Francis Drake. During the interwar period the importance of reinstating an English national identity takes on a new urgency — perhaps in response to the First World War as this chapter will go on to discuss — suggested in the titles of celebrity writer and journalist H. V. Morton's two highly influential works *In Search of England* (1927) and *The Call of England* (1928). Morton combines the style of an archaeological investigation into the roots of Englishness with a 'state-of-the-nation' report on the condition of England. These two aspects of Morton's writing, and the different approach he takes between the two travelogues, will be analysed at length in the course of this chapter.

When discussing the theme of national identity, it is important to establish exactly whose identity we are referring to. Unfortunately the use of the term 'Englishness' in this case, does not mean that the writers of automotive journeys are necessarily referring to everyone living in England. As this discussion will illustrate, vast areas of the north of England were often omitted from these tours and were left out of broader discussions concerning Englishness. The Peak District was actively avoided as it borders the large industrial centres of Manchester, Sheffield and the Black Country to the south (the Midland areas west and north of Birmingham, so called for the smoke produced by its heavy mining industries). The Peak was perceived to be ruined by the mining and quarrying industries that operated within it. A cursory glance at the routes taken by these motor tourists indicates a

[6] An instance of this can be found when Priestley visits Liverpool and inquires into the cultural diversity of the poorer areas of the city. J.B. Priestley, *English Journey* [1934] (London: William Heinemann, 1937), pp. 240-244.
[7] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze,* Second Edition (London: Sage, 2002),pp. 12-3.

startling fact: the journeys usually begin and end in London, and a tour of England is predominantly a tour of the Southern counties over the Downs and the New Forest, the south-west of England (Devon, Cornwall and Somerset), Shropshire, Wales, and occasionally Cumbria for the Lake District (the only exception to the northern rule due to the influence of Wordsworth). Therefore, in the automotive travelogues throughout the period covered by this thesis, the location of Englishness largely lies in the countryside of the Home Counties of West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent, Surrey, and Hampshire. The task of 'finding' Englishness by abandoning the city and pursuing it into the lanes and byways of the countryside meant that, as Featherstone articulates, 'national reality was always located elsewhere'.[8] However, this 'elsewhere' was seldom in the north. The absence of areas of the north from the travelogues, and indeed, partisan versions of Englishness will be addressed in this section of the thesis.

The regional travel books written by Maud M. Stawell offer one of the exceptions to this northern rule. *Motor Tours in Yorkshire* (1909) and Stawell's other localised travelogues will form the focus of a discussion on conflict and regionalism. They concentrate on areas that have been previously invaded and embattled and lie geographically on frontiers, coastlines and country borders. This is important because it is in these areas that ideas about Englishness are simultaneously reinforced and destabilised.

This chapter will follow the development of versions of English national identity from the romances of the byway narratives in the early 1900s through to J.B. Priestley's *English Journey* (1934) to show how Priestley's three Englands — the 'Old England' of the pre-industrialised and rural idyll, nineteenth-century 'Industrial England' and the modern post-war 'American England' — had their roots in the early automotive narratives of the previous two decades.

A place called England: countryside versus metropolis

In all the travelogues of motor journeys in the period 1896 to 1930, the strong sense of defining an 'Englishness' and touring 'real' England is at the forefront of the authors' minds; whether explicitly

[8] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 68.

stated in the preface or a recurrent theme throughout the text. In the case of Morton, his travelogue *In Search of England* (1927) adopts a systematic approach to discovering Englishness, organising the racial heritage of regional groups and chronologically processing landscape and people through a reading of English history. His two travelogues published in the second half of the 1920s constitute a national audit of Englishness. In the introduction to *In Search of England* Morton identifies a common feeling amongst the population: 'never before have so many people been searching for England', which has in turn stimulated a 'long-overdue interest in English history, antiquities, and topography.'[9] The desire of motorists to head out of the metropolis into the highways and byways of England stems from the belief that English national identity is rooted in the countryside; the farming heartland has provided and sustained the people throughout its tumultuous history at home and abroad. Morton writes that 'This village that symbolizes England sleeps in the sub-consciousness of many a townsman. [...] The village and the English country-side are the germs of all we are and all we have become.'[10] This creates the impression that every English citizen is congenitally born with a profound connection to the landscape; a connection that lies dormant and is in need of being reactivated.

Ideals concerning the countryside are predictably constructed against impressions of the metropolis which alienated contemporary industry in favour of a pre-industrialised rural idyll. This theme of dissatisfaction with the modern and contempt of the industrial in favour of a wistful rural bygone century is not new. Roger Cardinal notes a similar reaction in Romantic period narratives of Britain claiming that 'indeed the lament for a lost pastoral ideal was itself a Romantic commonplace from early on.'[11] By contrast the countryside was seen as an antidote for the mind and physical well-being of the nation.[12] Touring in the countryside had become a national pastime and claims that motoring was also congenial to one's health were abundant. The car was perfectly in line with this new movement and lent itself to this spirit of discovery and exploration. J.J. Hissey writes in *The Charm of the Road* (1910): 'These cheerful Sussex solitudes, with their illusions of remoteness,

[9] H.V. Morton, *In Search of England* [1927] (London: Methuen, 1931), p. vii.
[10] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 2.
[11] Roger Cardinal, 'Romantic Travel' in *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. by Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 135-155 (pp. 149-50).
[12] Featherstone's study analyses the revival of folk dance groups in the 1900s and the establishment of the Boy Scouts. It shows that this kind of concern over traditions and physical well-being is an issue being played out in other contemporary movements. Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 28.

possess a wonderful power to charm and soothe the town-tired soul.'[13] With an emphasis on the body of the writer, the countryside becomes a source of vitality, strengthening their constitutions. C.R. Perry notes this as a continuing thread throughout Morton's work:

> [...] the strength of a nation was ultimately determined by the condition of its villages and small towns. [...] Morton insisted that only the rural world offered a setting where the occupations, pre-eminently agriculture, which were essential to the physical and emotional well-being, indeed the very survival, of the British people could thrive.[14]

Through establishing these 'traditional' towns and villages it was possible to renegotiate perceptions of the past and the health of the rural present. The whole principle of touring in a car and the ideal of 'the open road' are synonymous with wide stretches of countryside and an empty road. The advent of car travel provided motorists with the option of adopting a semi-rural lifestyle where they could escape the city din at their convenience. Robert Shackleton writes:

> But we were eager to go away from London, because of the insistent call of the road, and we found ourselves longing again for the fresh, keen air, the bright sunshine, the country lanes and homes, the swift, fine motion of travel.[15]

The car was feeding access to an historical and literary heritage which could be selected and delivered by the individual: it is therefore possible to clearly link this kind of idealisation and romanticising of a country life to the growth of car travel.

Morton remarked in the introduction to *In Search of England* that he wanted to encourage people to 'discover rural England not merely as a pretty picture or as an old battle-field whose drama has long since departed, but as a living thing, as important to-day as it was when all men drew their bread from it'.[16] The vision of the pastoral here represented England as a natural living organism, not the derelict ruins of tourist guides. The English countryside was bountiful and the root to all existence. This opinion was also shared by George D. Abraham who wrote of Eden in the Lake District:

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[13] J. J. Hissey, *The Charm of the Road; England and Wales* (London: Macmillan, 1910), p. 28.
[14] C. R. Perry, 'Morton, Henry Canova Vollam (1892–1979)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/46343> [accessed August 6, 2013] (para. 4 of 6).
[15] Robert Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Co., 1917), p. 181.
[16] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. x.

> Far below, the road dips over into the depths and winds serpentine into the beautiful vale of the Eden. Compared with one's bleak surroundings, it is a veritable Garden of Eden, rich in pastoral delights, and clad in emerald garb of full fertility.[17]

The language and emphasis on the landscape reinforced writers' convictions that the fruitful exuberance of agrarian England was the root of existence. In the above extract, this opinion was probably compounded by the fact that the valley which Abraham described was called Eden.

Morton explored his idealised version of pastoral England through seeking out traditional skills and artisans. Part of his call for the return of prosperity to rural England saw him visiting the last "treen" bowl turner in England at Bucklebury Common. His excitement at documenting the craft came from the fact that he believed he was witnessing the way bowls were made in the days of Alfred the Great. Morton wrote 'The room was an Anglo-Saxon workshop! Probably the same sort of shed existed also in Ancient Egypt.'[18] Morton's interest in traditional handcrafts seems to be a reactionary response to the increasing industrialisation of production methods that dominated consumer markets. The hand-crafted artefacts re-established a connection between the artisan and the products of his or her labour at a time of increased 'alienation', in the traditional Marxist model, between workers, the mechanised processes of their labour, and the objects they created.[19]

The specific connection of notions of nationhood and automobilism were constantly the subject of comment in *The Autocar*. One anonymously written article entitled 'Summer and Our Land' reads:

> Motorists, most of all folk, come to love the land in which they live, for to no others does nature make so genuine, so startling, an appeal. Who else on a real summer day can pass from the grim directness and seething energy of a great city, swiftly to the fair countryside untarnished by mercantile by-products, to watch a weald, shimmering blue to the horizon, from the shoulder of the flanking hills, or note—the more keenly for the contrast with the city so lately left—the leaves and flowers in countless millions, so brilliant in the sunlight. Live always among these things and they are but a part of a routine; live always amid bricks and mortar and you will never know them—never even realise their existence.[20]

[17] George D. Abraham, *Motor Ways in Lakeland* (London: Methuen, 1913), p. 35.
[18] Morton, *In Search of England,* pp. 8-9.
[19] Richard J. Jane, *Jean Baudrillard* (London; New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 67-8. It is also important to note the popularity of the Arts and Crafts movement during the late nineteenth century and early 1900s which emphasised the importance of the individual production of decorative arts.
[20] Anonymous, 'Summer and Our Land', *The Autocar*, 29 May 1925, p. 934.

In this article the countryside is described in contrast to the town which only the motorist is capable of escaping. The city has been spoilt by the processes of commerce and industry; the factory smoke and the large residential terraces that develop around them make their presence inescapable. The countryside is a stabilising force for the writer and other city dwellers who can afford to tour in a car, emphasising the privilege of motorists.

'The city' was often synonymous with London, and associated with it was an aggressive form of capitalism. The grime, dust, soot and poverty of other large cities were a constant source of remark. The slums and factories situated next to one another were a continual reminder that the boom in commodity culture in the early twentieth century carried a human price. The large factories themselves were also a cause for comment as they portrayed on a grand scale the mechanisation of labour and production. In *The Call of England*, Morton's second attempt at a more realistic picture of England that included forays into some of England's cities, Morton observed at a factory in Birmingham:

> You look over hundreds of cloth caps, moving slowly, changing pattern: you look into hundreds of faces all wearing the same expression, and it occurs to you that this is a nightmare inhabited by Robots. It occurs to you that machinery is a vampire that sucks the blood of humanity and turns its back on life heartlessly as it turns out nails and pins, of a size and pattern. And there is something infinitely sad in the quiet contentment of the uniform grey people, moving slowly about in search of something to eat on Sunday.[21]

Huge manufacturing centres such as Birmingham are depicted as harbouring a much more sinister truth. In their uniform appearance and the rote nature of their tasks, the workers impress Morton as automatons that only take their human forms on Sunday when they are looking for something to eat. This impression is typical of the kind of mass labour and of the poverty of both material goods and intellectual stimuli that are associated with industrial production in this period. To these writers the towns and cities are mundane, drab and grey, and reflect a distasteful ordinariness and regularity. By contrast, the countryside represented natural states of equilibrium, humanity in its primary form. This

[21] H.V. Morton, *The Call of England* (London: Methuen, 1936), p. 180.

demonstrates that visions of England were still being constructed in rather traditional terms; they were either Blake's 'green and pleasant land' or the 'dark satanic mills'.[22]

As the previous chapter in this work has already shown, the journeys of the motorists into the landscape were also perceived as journeys into the past; an impression which was compounded in the pre-war 'byways' style of narrative. The image of England as a 'veritable Arcadia' was often repeated to convey both the expectations of what these writers hoped to find and what they proclaimed to see. [23] Hissey remarks that he always goes on a journey with a set of expectations and that having them is not necessarily a bad thing: 'Much of the pleasure of a journey lies in the ideals we create for ourselves, and that we always hope to find somewhere in the magic far away, and the joy that comes of the rare attainment of our desires.'[24] This suggests that the writers were attempting to mould whatever they saw onto what they already knew they wanted England to 'look like'. The importance of Arcadia being synonymous with England's pastoral scenes is important because this type of language alludes to the eighteenth and nineteenth-century landscapes of Poussin, Turner, and Constable, strengthening the link between the countryside and idealised versions of the past.

The characterisation of the rural populace also adds to this idea of undisturbed communities through the ages. The moral values epitomised by farming communities – a diet of simple living and simple pleasures and working in harmony with nature – were also idealised in the nineteenth century after the Industrial Revolution. In *Untravelled England* Hissey disguises himself as a local and sits in a countryside inn to eavesdrop on conversations and glean information about the local people, a practice also advocated by J.E. Vincent.[25] Hissey remarks that part of the joy of motoring in the countryside 'may be to chat with a native, for the country folk in out-of-the-way spots are often characters, and much old-world lore, local traditions, etc., are at times to be gleaned from them by patient listeners.'[26] The local people that inhabit such places are depicted in a way that casts them as characters from a scene in a realist novel. Morton, like the majority of other writers, expects to find

[22] William Blake, 'Preface' in *Milton, a Poem* [1804], *William Blake, the Complete Illuminated Works* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2008), p. 295.
[23] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 378.
[24] Hissey, *The Charm of the Road*, p. 12
[25] J.J. Hissey, *Untravelled England* (London: Macmillan, 1906), pp. 87-9. Also Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car* (London: Methuen, 1907), p. 28.
[26] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 2.

the countryside a scene from a distant century that fulfils his expectations as a tourist; an English idyll that he wishes to visualise and thus own:

> In all England is there anything quite so Old English as a country town where the fox is the chief industry, where they thatch the main street, tax peers, go to sleep in the afternoon, burn wood, never see charabancs or factory smoke, never, as far as I can find out, murder each other, and where the girls, when you ask them a question, look down at the floor and go red around the ears?[27]

These characterisations of the rural populace are as insulting as they are misguided. Morton's literary reflection of them is far from the truth of the Agricultural Depression which had blighted the countryside since 1870. His is a fictional account of an England that never, in truth, existed. What Morton did catch in his travelogues was a glimpse of interwar Britain searching for a nostalgic sense of Englishness that had been so destabilised by the First World War. Morton's traditional and rather archaic version of England is virtually unrecognisable from T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) and more generally from the dislocated nature of modernity and its literary representation. John Lucas writes:

> Fragmentariness seems indeed to be the condition of art in the 1920s. Dada, imagism, stream of consciousness, the shifting momentariness of cabaret acts, of cinema montage: these all testify to art as collage. Fragmentariness is mimetic, expressive of, and/or a critical response to a world gone smash.[28]

There is little in these narratives that reflects the contemporary avant-garde modes of art in this period. Morton's selective editing of the scenes that he was already predisposed to search for form a kind of longing for the pre-war, pre-industrial England unaffected by large-scale poverty and depression, the mechanisation of labour and the mobilisation of radical politics. Morton's England is unmoved by the rise of Bolshevism and the suffrage movement, the turmoil of social flux, the popularity of jazz, drug taking, and Futurism. At no point does Morton engage with the contemporary England that is all around him. He creates a mythical England with the countryside and its organic communities at its heart. As the above extract indicates, even these are the stuff of fiction and

[27] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 229.
[28] John Lucas, *The Radical Twenties: Writing, Politics, Culture* (Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications, 1997), p. 177.

imagination. Other tourists are trespassers to the villages and ruin the ideal that Morton wishes to find when he gets there. He complains about the rise in popularity of touring in Britain:

> The danger of this, as every lover of England knows, is the vulgarisation of the countryside. I have seen charabanc parties from the large manufacturing towns, providing a mournful text for an essay on Progress, playing cornets on village greens and behaving with a barbaric lack of manners which might have been outrageous had it not been unconscious, and therefore only pathetic.[29]

The problem for Morton lies in the fact that the countryside towns and villages off the tourist trail are also being discovered by other automotive tourists. The real tension here is that the 'other' tourists happen to be from the working class and have come in a charabanc. Reactions like this are really a development of similar reactions to railway tourists and Thomas Cook excursionists in the nineteenth century. James Buzard writes:

> Complaints about the tourist invasion were less an effort to defend favourite haunts—an effort that would be futile, in any event, in the face of tourism's continuing development—than they were a rhetorical strategy for guaranteeing the complainer's difference.[30]

The charabanc offered mobility and access to formerly exclusive areas of the countryside that had been the haunts of the wealthy pre-war motorists. The lower classes on a day excursion from the manufacturing towns of the north had neither the education nor taste to admire and appreciate these places.[31] Morton's polemic against such working class excursions demonstrates his fear that tourism erodes culture and replaces it with cliché.[32] His denunciation of other tourist groups is characteristic of anti-tourism, which is in itself a common aspect of tourism.[33] Morton's preference for his own authentic and sentimental interaction with the object of the tourist gaze is an integral part of the development of modern tourism. Dean MacCannell explains that

> For moderns, reality and authenticity are thought to be elsewhere: in other historical periods and other cultures, in purer, simpler life-styles. In other words, the concern of moderns for

[29] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. viii.
[30] James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature and the Ways to 'Culture', 1800-1918* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 94.
[31] Buzard notes similar attitudes in the nineteenth century towards railway tourists. See *The Beaten Track*, pp. 30, 38.
[32] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, p. 11.
[33] There are many discussions of the anti-tourist in Buzard *The Beaten Track* (1993), Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976), John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (2002) and Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Travelling between the Wars* (1980).

> "naturalness," their nostalgia and their search for authenticity are not merely casual and somewhat decadent, though harmless, attachments to the souvenirs of destroyed cultures and dead epochs. They are also components of the conquering spirit of modernity—the grounds of its unifying consciousness.[34]

We can see clear examples of this ideology in the early automotive narratives discussed in this thesis. For Morton, the presence of organised groups of tourists destroys the vision that he is attempting to create. The groups of working class tourists in their charabancs represent the phenomenon of modern tourism, an unwelcome interloper into Morton's pastoral vision.

The idea of an inherent identity that lay dormant in the genetic makeup of an Englishman was a powerful idea that permeated much of the discourse in the early automotive travel narratives. The countryside was the muse of the travel writers, showing them not only a different side to the England of modern industry, but a side to their own identity that was engaged and waiting to be contacted. Morton wrote: 'I would go home in search of England, I would go through the lanes of England and the little thatched villages of England, and I would lean over English bridges and lie on English grass, watching an English sky.'[35] He described this obsessive longing and consuming feeling as an 'Anglo-Saxon instinct for grass and trees [...] I suppose many a man has stood at his window above a London square in April hearing a message from the lanes of England.'[36] It was as though the countryside were calling the traveller 'home', in Morton's sense of the word. He had a longing for a medieval existence and a return to a more feudal and nostalgic past, one of myth and chivalry. Exploring the countryside was not just an antidote to the physical and mental effects of contemporary urban living, but a form of regression into the roots of English identity. The motorists drew strength from England's organic past. However, the realities were very different from the idealised glances of the passer-by. The countryside was still in the grip of the Agricultural Depression; farms were being left to rot and poverty was rife throughout the countryside.[37] These disturbing signs of decay were not always

[34] Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1999), p. 3. MacCannell also states that the 1900s were the beginning of 'modern mass tourism and its support institutions' on p. 59.
[35] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 3.
[36] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 3.
[37] Trevor Rowley asserts that the Agricultural Depression began around 1870 and continued into the late 1930s. Trevor Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), pp. 250-5.

registered amongst the motorists as they contradicted the glorious visions of Arcadia that they set out to find and recreate.

The Home Counties and the absence of the north

Whilst 'the countryside' becomes a label that can be indiscriminately attached to anything outside an urban centre, there are certain geographical locations that are repeatedly dwelt upon in the narratives and adopt an elevated status. These places include the Home Counties of Kent, Surrey, Essex and Sussex. Other areas that are also privileged in the narratives are the Cotswolds and Wales, the Lake District, and the South West (Somerset, Devon and Cornwall). It is very rare that a tour throughout England deviates from this rural itinerary. This peculiarity raises a number of questions: why these places? Why not the North York Moors or the Peak District? Robert Shackleton writes in his book *Touring Great Britain* (1923):

> None of us could quite say why, but we all felt vaguely stirred by feeling that we were approaching that great stretch of southern England named, without any definite boundaries, the South Downs: we all thought at first that we knew all about the South Downs and that they somehow represented English history and greatness, but when we tried a mutual analysis we discovered that "Southdown mutton" marked the extent of our definite ideas.

Shackleton undermines the emotive sensations he expresses when he and his party approach the South Downs by realising they are linked to nothing particular and his knowledge of the area is limited to mutton. Shackleton expects his patriotic enthusiasm for this part of the country to come from the region's association with history – the landing of the Romans or perhaps the 1066 invasion – and particularly due to its proximity to the English Channel. This sympathy towards the South Downs is shared by other writers and is in part related to the linguistic association of the *Home* Counties. The reason these counties carry the 'Home' title is because of their proximity to London, the cultural and administrative centre of the Empire and popular society. If London is the 'home' then these counties are the garden; the county of Kent carries the popular accolade of 'The Garden of England'. Hissey's first automotive travelogue, *Untravelled England* (1906), suggests that he is setting out to venture where no other 'traveller' has, and he is therefore able to cast new light on the country, its landscapes

and peoples; however, Hissey seems to merely reiterate traditional images of the South Downs and confirm existing stereotypes:

> These South Country villages—with their neat cottages, cottages that mostly possess little gardens gay and sweet with flowers, their spacious greens, and general look of homeliness, contentment, and sunniness—greet the traveller with an air of friendliness, and make very pleasant pictures to gaze upon. One and all, they are essentially English, but none the less attractive or beautiful on that account.[38]

Hissey identifies the villages and cottages in the South Downs with a hegemonic version of Englishness that connotes the familiar flavours of home. The cottage, emblematic of rural life and values, is at the centre of the picture reminiscent of a Gainsborough painting.[39] This steadfast image of a benign and familiar landscape signals the virtue and purity of the agrarian life. The distinctive 'homeliness' also signifies the maternal and perhaps the 'contentment' of childhood memories.

The coastline of the South Downs also adopts such cultural significance because it is a geographic and conceptual liminal space. It is a frontier where many forces and monarchs have rallied to defend England. The South Downs therefore developed a piquancy of national fervour and character, and became, as in Shackleton's description, a synecdoche for 'England'. The concept of the south coast as a gateway to England at large is imprinted into the very fabric of Kent.[40] This idea of the southern coast being the 'entry and exit' of the country is reinforced through looking at the purposes of these towns in their early pre-Roman history.[41] Beyond this, they are known as the sites of invasion and conquest. Maud Stawell confirms this impression when she writes:

> [...] for Dover in all ages has been our front gate, so to speak, and the Dover road has been the avenue by which, through century after century, our soldiers have gone to their wars and our lovers to freedom. For this road, or much of it, is Watling Street. Roman legions have passed this way before us, and from their day till the day of railways this was our road into the world, the road of kings and warriors, of adventurers and fugitives, the road of courage and of fear. Its very name stirs English blood.[42]

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[38] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 166.
[39] See Thomas Gainsborough's 'A Wooded Landscape with Cattle by a Pool and Rustics outside a Cottage' (1782) and 'Cottage Door with Children Playing' (c. 1778).
[40] The Cinque Ports on the south coast identified by A.G. Bradley in his book *An Old Gate of England: Rye, Romney Marsh, and the Western Cinque Ports* (1918) were instrumental in the defence of England during the Middle Ages and the development of the British Navy. Hilaire Belloc writes in *The Old Road* (1911) that the Kent coast and its sea-ports began as trading routes to England, and the city of Canterbury was the trading centre of the country.
[41] Hilaire Belloc, *The Old Road* (London: Constable and Company, 1911), pp. 18-19, 40-1. Quotation taken from p. 32.
[42] Maud M. Stawell, *Motoring in Sussex and Kent* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1926), p. 231.

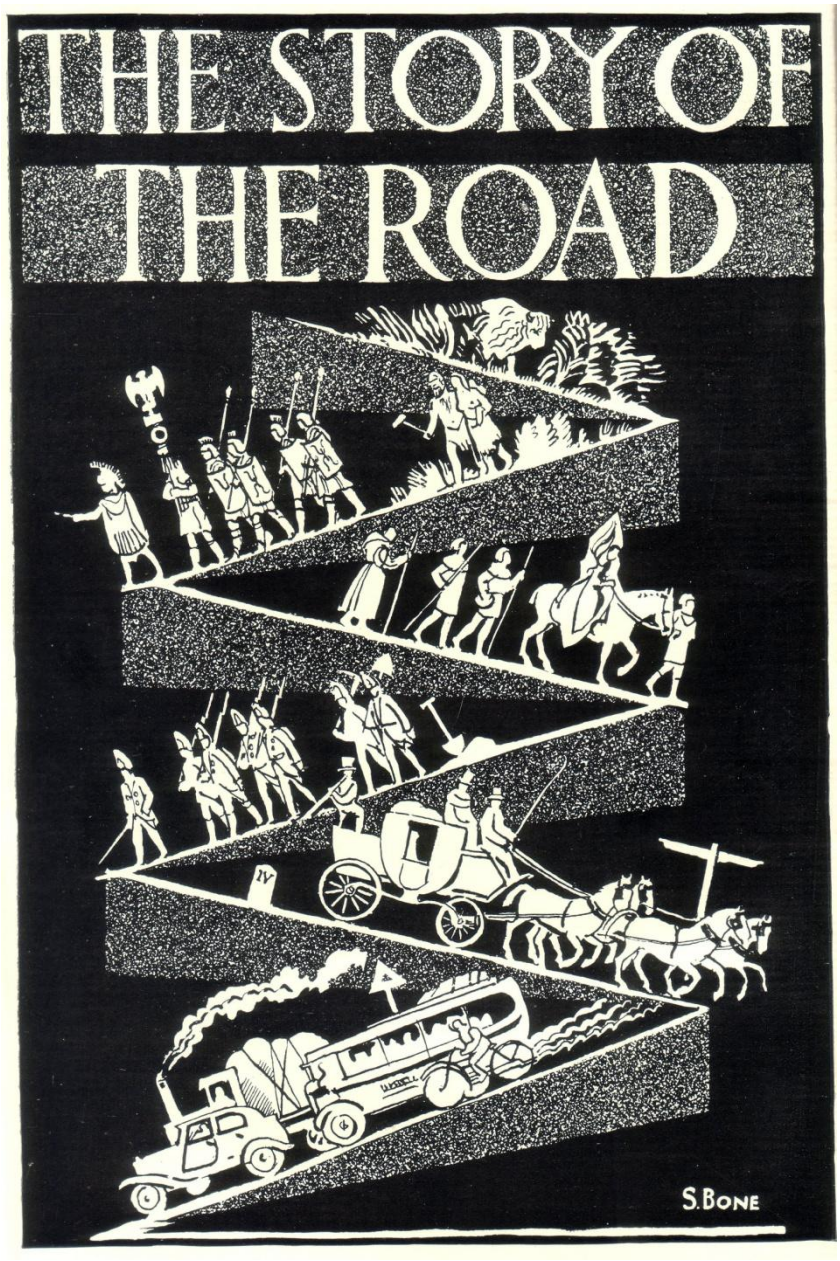

Figure 4.1 Inside cover image from J. W. Gregory's, *The Story of the Road; from beginning down to A. D. 1931* (London: Alexander Maclehose & Co., 1931). The significance of road travel in this image is similar to the way it is portrayed in the automotive travelogues; it also attempts to assimilate the car into a historical continuum.

Dover and the towns of Kent are described here, as in other works, as the places where English history takes place. The events that occur and the mobilisation of armies that affect the larger fate of England as a whole are decided in the south. This affirms to the reader that the southern coastline, where monarchy and supremacy have been contested, is the armour of England. This impression is also enforced by the presence of Martello Towers that are dotted along the coast, erected in haste during the Napoleonic Wars. Although they were never used in conflict, their existence encourages the idea that the underbelly of England is a vulnerable border that requires both military and ideological enforcement.

Considering the importance of London as the cultural and administrative centre of the Empire, it is not surprising that the motoring books aim to promote the ease of excursions into the countryside surrounding it. The Home Counties and the immediate outlying countryside serve an almost functional purpose for the 'town-tired soul': they are depicted as an antidote that bestows vitality on the metropolitan escapees. Writers such as Hissey and Shackleton emphasise that 'the real country' is also something specific to the South. The countryside of Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex became what Featherstone describes as the 'pastoral sanctuaries of nationhood'.[43] He further remarks that

> The journeys in search of England [...] were performances of both national identification and national exclusion. Travelling provided a means of establishing a cultural and political sense of the territory of Englishness but this was achieved through the consolidation of only a particular part of that territory as possessing essential national values.[44]

The version of Englishness that these motoring narratives represent is inherently upper class, and therefore both socially and geographically exclusive. It is an educated 'Englishness' that is politically and historically informed, and based within driving distance of London.

Morton's earlier book *In Search of England* (1927) is not guilty of omitting the north, after all he has to get to the Lake District, but he avoids any town, city or industrial centre. He follows a circuitous route that takes him up as far as Carlisle, via the Welsh border and up to the Lake District. He returns down the eastern side of the country through the medieval splendour of cities such as

[43] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 84.
[44] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 84.

Durham, York and Lincoln. The country that lies between the east and west coast is untouched by Morton. He recognises this oversight and looks to correct the omission in his follow-up work *The Call of England* (1928). In his preface to the latter he writes:

> In the earlier book I deliberately shirked realities. I made wide and inconvenient circles to avoid modern towns and cities. I went through Lancashire without one word about Manchester and Liverpool. I devoted myself entirely to ancient towns and cathedral cities, to green fields and pretty things. This book is an attempt to give a more general view of England, town and country. [...]
>
> This may displease the tourist, but the traveller may see in it an attempt to present a fair and accurate picture of Old and New England. England is an incredible jumble of romance and reality.
>
> In the other book I dwelt mainly in the south and the west, rushing, rather wildly, through the north. In this book I linger in the north. [...] No man who wishes to understand the country in which he lives can neglect the north of England. Almost within our time we have seen a great re-grouping in the distribution of human energy [...]. The Industrial Revolution, while it has planted an enormous population in the north, has at the same time distorted our ideas of that part of the country. We are inclined to think of the north as an extended Sheffield. The symbol of the north is the chimney-stack. It is only when we go there that we realize how very slightly the age of coal and steel has deformed the green beauty of England. Our manufacturing districts, vast as they are, form merely a scratch on the map in comparison with those miles of wild and romantic country, whose history and beauty rival anything the south can boast.
>
> The intelligent traveller will find it stimulating to talk to the men of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Sheffield and he will also discover, with perpetual pleasure and, I think, astonishment, that the north of England offers wider solitudes, more rugged beauty, more old castles and abbeys than the south.[45]

I have quoted at length from the introduction because I feel that this important admission by Morton touches on a number of issues at the centre of this discussion. He writes here how he was aware of his oversight and that he 'deliberately shirked realities' presenting only a partial view of England posing as a whole. It is an admission that he has previously been bound by his own prejudices; however, his writing was largely influenced by the need consciously to perpetuate this myth of rural England to cater to popular tastes.[46] Morton also positions himself and his work in the tourist-traveller debate by suggesting that tourists are only interested in familiar scenes and landmarks. By contrast the traveller has a more resonant understanding of the country through accessing areas 'off the beaten track'. This difference between tourist and traveller, 'romance and reality', falls into earlier nineteenth-century structures about the nature of the tourist-traveller dichotomy; tourism is represented as superficial

[45] Morton, *The Call of England*, pp. vii-viii.
[46] Michael Bartholomew, *In Search of H.V. Morton* (London: Methuen, 2006), pp. 113-4.

tokenism, whereas travelling fosters an enduring and profound attachment to the country and people. By including the urban centres and landscapes of the north, Morton hopes to strengthen his position and authority as a 'traveller', and distinguish his book from the spate of motoring guide books and maps that appeared in the 1920s. In this statement Morton also declares that the beauty of the northern landscapes surpasses those of the south; however, it is clear that he is still restricted to his concepts of 'Old and New England', the countryside and the metropolis, and scenes featured in *The Call of England* are destined to be labelled in one of these categories.

Morton is not alone in his initial distaste of the northern urban and rural landscapes. Areas of the Midlands and North were not only neglected but actively avoided in some texts. Hissey writes in *Untravelled England*

> At the junction of the roads we deemed it wise, for once, to consult our map, as north of Kenilworth lay Birmingham, with the Black Country stretching drearily beyond, and through that district of desolation we had driven on a former occasion, and felt no desire to repeat so doleful an experience. It is a truly gaunt and weird land, but not a beautiful one—and we were in search of beauty.[47]

These impressions of what lies beyond in the Midlands and North are shared by the majority of motor travel writers in this thesis. Robert Shackleton writes in his 1917 travelogue *Touring Great Britain* of heading towards Worksop through 'a countryside whose beauty has largely disappeared, defaced as it is by collieries and their debris, and by brick works and factories.'[48] The idea that 'beauty' has been forfeited for industry is a common misconception, as Morton himself admits in the preface to *The Call of England*. The Midlands and the North are associated with industrial wastelands: collieries, factories, industry, mines and, most importantly, labour. The sight of the working class, labouring for a meagre wage is not what the privileged motoring minority wished to see on their tour in search of 'beauty'. Morton describes a scene before him from the top of Pendle Hill, Lancashire, in the following terms:

> To the right of me, far away, lying against a slope of the Pennine Chain, were the manufacturing towns of Rochdale, Colne, and Nelson, lifting their tall chimney-stacks into a smoke-cloud. [...]

[47] Hissey, *Untravelled England*, p. 271.
[48] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 330.

> In the valley of smoke I could see little gasworks, little streets of houses, mills, high stacks, now and then a puff of smoke from the railway, sudden and white as a bursting shell, and reservoirs shining like silver spoons in the haze. [...] Over these hills [behind the Pennines] was another, fainter blanket of smoke which suggested the distant, invisible chimneys of Leeds, Halifax, Huddersfield, and Sheffield.
>
> And the other side of this picture? To the left of me was old Lancashire—old England. The lovely green valley of the Ribble, bounded by the wild fells of Lancashire and the blue moors of Yorkshire, lay comfortably, little field against little field, bridges, white threads that were roads, little white farms, church spires among trees. To the right, industrial England; to the left, rural England.[49]

It is evident from the extract that Morton's binary distinction of 'Old and New England' can never be reconciled. England in its natural state is the England to the left; the newly globalised economic markets are to the right. Even though in his second travelogue Morton is attempting to present a more balanced view of England that is inclusive of its northern industrial centres, these two Englands are never unified. As such, the industrial landscapes still remain isolated from concepts of Englishness. To Morton, they can only exist as two separate worlds that are helpfully geographically separated by the Pennines in the Lancastrian and Yorkshire landscapes. However, it never seems to appeal to him to visit these northern manufacturing towns. Simon Featherstone notes that by ignoring and bypassing these urban centres, writers like Morton were evading the very England that they purported to represent. In this sense they were not finding England at all, but were seeking to fictionalise and elegise contemporary England in visions of the past.[50]

In the work of Morton, Hissey, and others, the north is presented as the antithesis of the 'pastoral sanctuaries of nationhood'. Its geographical location also meant that it was not within easy reach of London for the purposes of weekend holidays. It was therefore geographically isolated from the wealthy trippers that took to motoring at the weekends. Morton recognised in *The Call of England* that the Peak District was actually the prime location for all northern middle and working class tourism. He wrote

> If a Londoner can imagine Dartmoor moved into Essex, he will have some idea of the meaning of the Peak District to the crowded industrial cities of the north. At the very doors of Manchester, and, on the east, Sheffield, are miles of the wildest country in England. Men and women from these cities can be lost in untamed hills in less time than it takes a Londoner to ride in an omnibus from the Bank to Hammersmith.

[49] Morton, *The Call of England*, p. 140.
[50] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 70.

> The ease with which the workers of Manchester and Sheffield can reach open country would be astonishing to any southerner who does not know this part of England. A Cockney in search of a similar escape into the same refreshing wilderness would have to go to Devonshire. Every week-end thousands of men and women leave the northern cities to fill their lungs with the sharp moorland air, for Peakland invigorates the body and mind of the industrial north.[51]

Whilst emphasising the dependence of the working class on the Peak District, what is most revealing is Morton's level of description for those living in the south of the country. He assumes, rightly or wrongly, that those residing south of Birmingham would have no idea about the beauty or scale of the Peak District. Its relatively close location to cities like Manchester and Sheffield are defined in terms that can be compared to London. Morton's description also throws into relief the cultural schism between the north and south of England. The north and its inhabitants are the 'other' England, dwelling in the 'wildest' and most 'untamed' parts of the country. Featherstone also notes in his cultural study of the 1930s and 40s that there is a complex process of 'othering' and he analyses the performativity of northernness in popular entertainers such as Gracie Fields and Frank Randle. He also observes how Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* 'presents the North as a defamiliarised England – a kind of primitive colony within the borders of the mother country'.[52] However, it is clear from the research into the motoring travelogues of decades earlier that this process of constructing the 'other' unfamiliar England began some time previously. The shortage of significant literary coverage granted to areas of the Midlands and the North is also very revealing about the writers as it exposes their own cultural isolation from the north and their highly partisan perspective of English national identity. The lack of interest in the large northern industrial landscapes perhaps stems from an unwillingness to 'rough it'. Social exploration clearly was not one of the motivating factors behind this tour; Hissey, Morton, Vincent and company are in search of the picturesque and of scenes worthy of inclusion in an anthology of England. However, the very ruggedness of the 'wild' and 'untamed' north also connotes adventure and offers frequent opportunities to get 'off the beaten track'. Morton recognises the appeal of this in his preface to *The Call of England*:

> [...]the north of England offers wider solitudes, more rugged beauty, more old castles and abbeys than the south. He will discover in the Peak District of Derbyshire a marvellous

[51] Morton, *The Call of England*, p. 161.
[52] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 87.

> wilderness as desolate as Dartmoor; in Yorkshire he will find little market towns in whose corners lurk the last vestige of the eighteenth century; in Lancaster he will find shepherds and their lambs within sound of the cotton looms; along the Northumbrian coast he will enter a district whose romantic wildness cannot be surpassed in any part of England.[53]

Morton clearly distinguishes the beauty of the northern landscapes from its southern counterpart and tries to assimilate the north into a vision of England. It is interesting that in his description of the Peak District he compares it to Dartmoor for the purposes of his supposed southern audience, as he assumes that they will be familiar with Dartmoor. The range of landscapes in the north and Midlands seem to offer such variety to the motor tourist that will test both their driving abilities and the engine of the car; the north can become part of the 'discovery' mission of the motorists. Its avoidance by many of the motor travellers in favour of the well-trodden ground of the south only serves to emphasise that these tourists were not out to 'discover' at all, but merely to reinforce what they already knew, placing it into familiar structures in a way that meant that national identity could be contained, enclosed, and replicated. Featherstone remarks on Morton's work that 'The England that was "found" in these journeys was both limited and evasive as the genre's codes were deployed to repress the ideological contradiction of tradition defined and rescued by the products of the modernity that it was set up to oppose.[54] He identifies Morton's subversion of the role of modernity in supporting the England that he tries to represent in *The Call of England*. Dean MacCannell notes that '*Tradition* remains embedded in modernity but in a position of servitude: tradition is there to be recalled to satisfy nostalgic whims or to provide coloration or perhaps a sense of profundity for a new modern theme.'[55] Morton stops short of recognising the profundity of his position and instead uses tradition as a way of distancing himself and the more distasteful aspects of modernity from the glories of the past. He also seems to overlook the fact that he is himself travelling by a product of modern manufacturing and engineering, effacing the car from the narrative; he never seems to link his reliance on the car to visit the out-of-the-way beauty spots with the more positive aspects of modernity and their role in supporting and shaping how he perceives England.

[53] Morton, *The Call of England*, pp. vii-viii.
[54] Featherstone, *Englishness*, p. 70.
[55] MacCannell, *The Tourist*, p. 34.

Regionalism, conflict and race

This section will focus on the ways in which narratives of regional tours feed into the idea of national identity. It will consider the regional tours of J.E. Vincent and George D. Abraham and will focus in particular on Maud M. Stawell's books *Motor Tours in Yorkshire* (1909), *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties* (1909) and *Motor Tours in the West Country* (1910). Stawell's extensive tour in Yorkshire is an exception to the northern rule and overturns contemporary ideas that the areas of the north were not compatible with versions of Englishness.

Stawell's narratives are remarkable for their depth of research and knowledge of the areas visited, providing the would-be-motorist with a solid historical guide to local areas. Her meticulous approach to historical research and its prominent role within her texts sets her work apart from the other pre-war travel books addressed in this thesis, in which the novel experiences of journeying in a motor car seize the spotlight. Unlike other travel writers who preferred to take longer tours around the whole of the British Isles, Stawell chose to concentrate solely on regional tours. This permits her to provide a far richer and more illuminating history of each location that she visits than she would be able to give on tours covering greater distances.

Stawell is obviously well-read due to the breadth of her sources and extent of her historical knowledge. Her sources vary from Tudor-era historian and writer John Leyland – quoted at length throughout all the books – to more modern writers and contemporary research, such as the records from the Archaeological Society of Shropshire. She carefully crafts accessible quasi-romantic landscapes of ghosts, fairies and local superstitions, and intricately weaves them together with a counter-balance of meticulous historical research. Through her idiosyncratic voice she demonstrates how regional histories of families and buildings had a national impact. In her tour of Yorkshire she goes to great lengths detailing the history and fortunes of the Clifford family in Skipton and illustrates how their high social status in Skipton also had a national impact and legacy.[56] Stawell took great care to emphasise that the fortunes of these wealthy provincial land-owning families in the north played a formative role in the history of the entire country. Rather than the 'other' England so much

[56] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in Yorkshire* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), pp. 6-11.

represented in the other motoring narratives of this period, these lands on the fringes of the country are accorded a role at the centre of the story of England. At Pembroke Castle, Stawell reminds the reader that 'there has been no lack of sieges here' in the wars between the English and the Welsh which she retells in the narrative.[57] Her approach to these areas on the fringes of England is more inclusive and she makes no distinction of 'otherness'. Rather than subordinate the narratives of the borderlands, she enhances them by furnishing their histories with a quality of richness and historical depth.

The areas that Stawell represents in her books all have something in common: they are areas on borders, where England politically begins and ends. Whether this be the coast, or next to the border with Wales, each tour has a narrative of invasion, attack, conflict and violence. In Yorkshire, Stawell recalls the successive waves of Viking invasion and settlement, and their use of the rivers Humber and Trent to make their way further inland.[58] In the 'border counties' the narrative is predominantly filled with the history of English and Welsh conflicts throughout the centuries, and in the tour of the West Country she recounts the Armada and numerous Cornish rebellions. Similarly to the discussion of the Home Counties on the south coast of England, these borderlands are utilised in the narratives as a way of consolidating England and the English. In so doing, the importance accorded to the Home Counties is disputed and the 'centre' of historical importance and English legacy is relocated.

In *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties* Stawell reveals that the border of the two countries was often in flux. She provides a detailed history of the various Welsh monarchs and noble families and chronicles the importance of all the castles in the wars between the two nations. Through detailing these conflicts and the fate of the thousands who died in centuries of wars, she constructs an image of a shared land with a history of occupation by both the English and the Welsh:

> Cardigan, once the "lock and key of all Wales," gives us no hint of its former greatness. It appears an uninteresting little town till one realises that it is the Aberteifi whose castle was taken and retaken, burnt, and shattered, and built again, through all the stormiest years of Welsh history; captured by the men of the north from the men of the south; defended by both against the Anglo-Normans; attacked by the Flemings; at one time the court of

[57] An example of this can be found in *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, pp. 201-3.
[58] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Yorkshire*, pp. 211-2.

> Llewelyn, the greatest of the northern princes; and at another the court of Lord Rhys, the greatest of the southern princes.[59]

Upon looking through the lens of its bloodied history, Stawell instantly finds the town of significant curiosity to her. Cardigan has been occupied by many different forces, and this sense of shared territory, a vested history and interest, is something that Stawell delights in bringing to our attention. It also signals a counter-narrative to other contemporary authors of travelogues, such as Morton; the history of the country is not simply one that lays buried deep in the southern counties, but one that has been rigidly fought and contested in Shropshire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Herefordshire and Wales. The narrative frequently describes the violence with which these territories are stamped, emphasising their historical importance in the shaping of a nation. These passages instil in the reader a stark sense of the struggles for ownership of a land where the rivers had run with the blood of its people. [60] However, Stawell also contradicts her own assertions of a shared landscape and history when she comments:

> Here, on the very border of Wales, one is conscious of the Celtic atmosphere. We left the quiet orderliness of England behind us when we dipped down into this little valley, where the sparkling, bubbling Ceiriog—every inch a Celt—calls us to follow it up into the hills.[61]

Stawell believes she is able to connect with the spirit of Celtic influence in the very appearance of the landscape. She directly contrasts this undertone with the familiarity and 'orderliness' of England. The river Ceiriog is the very embodiment of Celtic myth and spirit that beckons her onwards into the hills to pursue this instinct. In this respect, Stawell utilises Wales's Celtic heritage as a way of reinforcing notions of Englishness. Stawell oscillates between integrating Welsh and English history and establishing them as separate concerns. This kind of ambivalence about how to categorise and clearly label people, history and landscape is common in the travelogues. However, Stawell's narratives also undermine the assumptions of Morton, Hissey, and others who invest so much importance in London and the southern counties. Through her exploration of the borderlands in the regional tour books Stawell is subtly suggesting that national identity can be captured in areas where it has historically needed to be defined against a cultural other.

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[59] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, p. 219.
[60] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, p. 221.
[61] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, p. 67.

Regional identities, and particularly race, are a focal point in many of the texts of automotive journeys. George D. Abraham's *Motor Ways in Lakeland* (1913) emphasises the difference of Cumbrian people from their compatriots. The inhabitants of Lakeland are strong and sturdy, and most importantly, Viking.

> In appearance the resemblance is unmistakeable, with their big bones, muscular bodies, clear blue or light grey eyes, and broad faces crowned with hair fair as the sun-bleached sedges on the open fells. On the valley levels they have the same ambling gait as the Norse mountain men of to-day, and the walk still more noticeable in the Alpine guides. But on the hilly ground these men are at home, their feet and leg muscles are differently made to those of the lowlander, and woe betide the southron who attempts to follow them close at heel in a fell hunt.[62]

Abraham emphatically points out the strength and athleticism of the Cumbrians and links this to their Norse ancestry. They are different from other Englanders, sturdier and more suited to the ruggedness of the landscape. Instead of assimilating Cumbrians into the broader tapestry of Englishness, they are differentiated. Similarly Morton describes Norfolk as 'the most suspicious county in England', apparently due to the inhabitants' inherent anxiety of the Viking invaders from centuries past. The 'ancient complex bitten into the East Anglian through the centuries of bitter experience, is well grounded, and should never annoy the traveller [...] In East Anglia men are either neighbours or Vikings.'[63] Morton even stretches as far as to claim that he is able visually to identify English ancestors of the Vikings on the streets of Hull: 'The men are big, fair-haired pirates; the women are blue-eyed Danes. Their names are—goodness knows how—Robinson and Brown. Occasionally you find a Karl Thorgeld, or something like that, but it seems too good to be true.'[64] Morton appears willing and able to lend his judgment – which is capable of overlooking the social demographics of a few centuries - to trace people of Scandinavian origin living in Britain directly to Viking settlers. England's multiracial past and contemporary ethnic diversity do not permeate Morton's definition of 'Englishness' — these 'Danes' now have names like Robinson and Brown — and thus expose his own confusion as to how to address such subjects in the present. This radicalised discourse seems to be common in the travelogues, and shows how writers have turned the ethnographic eye inwards

[62] George D. Abraham, *Motor Ways in Lakeland* (London: Methuen, 1913), p. 11.
[63] Morton, *In Search of England,* pp. 231-2.
[64] Morton, *The Call of England*, p. 17.

rather than towards the empire. Enda Duffy states that the 1900s was a period of endocolonialization which he defines as the 'reimportation of the methods of colonial administration to the home country'.[65] Duffy specifically relates this term to the way in which space was organised in Britain, but I use it here to imply how ethnology and ethnography, used to categorise and organise subjects of the empire, now appear to be used in a similar way to study the racial heritage of Englishness. I also suggest that this is a way of disassociating certain areas and regional peoples from a broader national identity; a process of colluding with the past to justify decisions of inclusion and 'otherness'.

Morton is willing to accommodate the Romans into his scheme of English lineage because of their role in bringing Christianity to England. He writes:

> For Rome conquered England twice, once with a sword and once with a story, and as horns blew in the mist, and the warriors roared together at the palisades, the monasteries locked their doors on all that was left of civilisation or fled with their relics, still along the roads of Rome, conscious that they guarded the little flame of a new world.[66]

Morton's appreciation of the Roman invaders as bringers of the faith appears to be a way of distancing his concept of Englishness from the dark pagan history of the Celts and Britons. The Romans sowed the seeds of civilisation, culture and religion, and thus become central to his definition of Englishness.

In D. H. Lawrence's short story 'England, My England' (1922) the narrator becomes corporeally and spiritually enmeshed with a vision of the landscape in the pre-Roman days:

> His [the narrator's] heart went back to the savage old spirit of the place: the desire for old gods, old, lost passions, the passion of the cold-blooded, darting snakes that hissed and shot away from him, the mystery of blood-sacrifices, all the lost, intense sensations of the primeval people of the place, whose passions seethed in the air still, from those long days before the Romans came. The seethe of a lost, dark passion in the air. The presence of unseen snakes.[67]

The England in Lawrence's short story transcends Morton's Roman orderliness to reach back to its pagan and animalistic infancy. The primitive England awakens in the narrator a longing for, and belonging to, his natural ancestry. Historical exploration into the depths and beginnings of one's

[65] Enda Duffy, *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2009), p. 45.
[66] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 15.
[67] D. H. Lawrence, 'England, My England' in *England, My England* (New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1922), pp. 3-47 (pp. 33-4).

identity is a theme that arises frequently throughout all the travelogues in this study. The texts of writers such as Abrahams and Morton, whose readings of Englishness are dominated by isolated ethnographic studies, only belie their confusion over issues of race, mobility and modernity.

Archaeology and the historical tour

During the interwar period there was a huge interest in archaeology, spurred by the popularity of excavations in Egypt, which revealed the secrets of ancient civilisations. This is particularly evident in the work of Morton, a journalist for *The Evening Standard*, and in 1921, *The Daily Express* under the editorship of Lord Beaverbrook. Morton rose to national fame by reporting exclusively on the opening of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1923 with the eminent archaeologist and Egyptologist Harold Carter.[68] The combination of physical journeys and amateur archaeological investigations are also discernible in *The Call of England*, wherein Morton recalls an afternoon with his friends on which they partake in some amateur archaeology, digging at the end of a tennis lawn in Colchester.[69] The automotive travelogues featured in this thesis are littered with similar anecdotes and hint at a broader enthusiasm for archaeological exploration, which appears to contribute towards a sense of 'digging' for a national identity; returning to a source of 'Englishness'; going back to the roots of a race of people. In her travelogue *Motoring in Sussex and Kent*, Stawell writes of the discoveries of a Roman villa: 'Century after century history lay sleeping, undisturbed, unseen, her presence unsuspected, on the slopes above Bignor; until, in 1811, she was suddenly awakened by an irreverent plough to tell us her long story of Roman splendour.'[70] Stawell foregrounds these hidden stories throughout her four travelogues. The personification of 'history' makes it appear as though it were a long-lost ancestor waiting to be recognised. The significance of the location must be ploughed from beneath its material cover and made real. If we substitute the word 'history' in the first line of the extract for 'England', it captures the way that Stawell and Morton address their tour of the country: it is England that 'lay sleeping' beneath the soil that they reawaken for the main content of their narratives. What is also apparent is

[68] Batholomew, *In Search of H.V. Morton*, p. 67.
[69] Morton, *The Call of England*, pp. 10-11.
[70] Stawell, *Motoring in Sussex and Kent*, p. 55.

that these travelogues go far deeper than their topographical surface. The investigations into the history of certain landmarks show not only a keen adherence to historical research, but the willingness to engage with such subjects to form theories on the origins and purpose of these locations, such as Vincent's analysis of 'the Red Mound' at Thetford.[71]

In *The Motor Routes of England* (1911) Charles Ashdown and Gordon Home give accounts of places as they were during the Roman period and even provide small maps of where the Roman remains stand.[72] They always give the Roman place name where possible; for example they inform their readers that Wroxeter was Uriconium. This guide book is dedicated to old churches, Roman remains, and famous figures from history and literature. At the back of their book Ashdown and Home include a guide to dating different architecture and a list of the Kings and Queens of England and the length of their reign, with important events during their period on the throne.[73] A guidebook dedicated to such tours is testimony to the popularity of the historical tour and the way that England and Englishness are being recreated in the early twentieth century. It foregrounds the remains of ancient civilisations at the expense of modern cities and towns and the entertainments that they have to offer. The tourist is encouraged to travel back in time to see England how it was and to appreciate the glories of ages past.

Stawell frequently crosses the line of historical accuracy and allows her imagination to take over and produce an almost child-like fantasy. An example of this occurs in her description of Berry Pomeroy castle in Totnes, Devon:

> This is the kind of place where legend grows round history as naturally and quickly as the ivy grows over the stones. The walls themselves, it is easy to see, were raised by a magician; for the castle, seen from one side, is standing high upon a rock, while from the other it seems to be deep in a wooded valley. This is plainly due to a spell, and prepares the mind for tales of imprisoned ladies, and of wild horsemen leaping desperately into the chasm when they could no longer defend their castle from an angry king.[74]

This quotation is typical of Stawell's prose style and captures the 'high romance', to borrow a phase so frequently used by Hissey, in which these tours were undertaken. The word 'imagination' is

[71] Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car*, pp. 85-6.
[72] Charles H. Ashdown and Gordon Home, *The Motor Routes of England* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1911), pp. 7-12.
[73] Ashdown and Home, *The Motor Routes of England*, pp. 320-2.
[74] Stawell, *Motor Tours in the West Country*, p. 79.

frequently employed to mediate between the visitor, reader, landscape and history that the writers are describing. All that is required for one to make the leap back to the England of Berry Pomeroy castle is the means to get there – the car – and one's own willingness to be seduced by the romance of the scene. Stawell's narrative can be easily integrated into James Buzard's theory of 'saturation', which he describes as follows:

> the great importance repeatedly attached by travel-writers to the impacted meanings and pathos of history they found in antique settings seemed to militate against any precise observance of the actually existing life in those settings. [...] the teeming historical associations attaching to many favourite destinations on the European tour seemed to license an ignorance of the present in the veneration of the past. This seemed tantamount to transforming living communities into museums, into 'collection[s] of palaces and ruins' (as Hazlitt said Paris resembled) [...][75]

The inhabitants of towns and villages are almost completely absent, as Stawell prefers to write of noteworthy persons who have visited or resided there in the past. She comments of the town of Hay that '[...] there is nothing, no slate roof, no shop-window full of cheap blouses, that can make one forget the haunting presence of those that walk unseen in Hay—the undying ghosts of a hundred battles, murders, and sudden deaths'.[76] It is interesting here that these notable figures in history are described as 'unseen' as Stawell brings them and their stories to the forefront of her narratives. It is the ordinary and everyday people that to her are actually 'ghosts'.

Ghosts are frequently discussed in many of the travelogues studied in this thesis. Peopling a scene with ghosts becomes almost the ultimate proof of appreciation of a particular site. The most remarkable example of this comes from Stawell's *Motoring in Sussex and Kent* where she describes the ancient Pantiles area of Tunbridge Wells: 'Thrice happy are those who find it, [...] soundless, and empty of all but the dead. For this, truly, is a setting for ghosts and dreams. Here only dreams are true, and only ghosts alive.'[77] Stawell then provides what is almost a Who's Who list of eighteenth-century society, transposing these well known figures onto the scene and colouring it with people such as Samuel Johnson, Hester Thrale, and Sir Joshua Reynolds. This bizarre vignette is symbolic of the way that automotive travel writers were seeing and writing about places in England in the early 1900s.

[75] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, pp. 186-7.
[76] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, p. 234.
[77] Stawell, *Motoring in Sussex and Kent*. p. 111.

Historical fantasies can also be found in Morton's writing. He writes at Winchester: 'I wondered how many strange tales were whispered beyond the walls at night of ghosts in the old dead city on the hill.'[78] He then continues to imagine how the town, silent at night has many stories to tell, including men walking the ancient roads 'bearing a cross, the legions returning with shaven heads'. Morton is fond of writing about Roman legionaries and he scripts many an odd conversation with the ghosts of legions on the roads and on what they might be doing there. Ghosts, then, are the final stage towards complete acculturation; a sign that the writers hold a deep sympathy for the place and its former inhabitants. Nicola Watson notes that the sensation of ghosts and haunting are also a feature of the literary pilgrimage: '[...] tourists actively seek out the anti-realist experience of being 'haunted', or forcefully realizing the presence of an absence, a form of tourist gothic powerfully characteristic of literary pilgrimage to sites such as Howarth Parsonage [...].'[79] Winchester is not the site of a literary pilgrimage for Morton; he is scripting a dialogue between himself and the anonymous figures of history that inhabited the streets of the town centuries before. Winchester becomes a mythical space outside of time where structures of reality have been suspended. These passages allow Morton to write himself into the very fabric of the place amounting to a spiritual communication through the silence and the night.

The return of the king

Another important component of English national identity is the role of the Arthurian legends in the travelogues. The majority of works studied for this thesis include references to Arthur, some even attempting to retrace his final movements. At moments of national crisis the Arthurian legends become reinstated and the mythical Avalon and spiritual Glastonbury Abbey become places of national pilgrimage. Arthur's return to the English psyche is also joined by other national heroes such as Sir Francis Drake and Admiral Nelson who are warmly embraced within the scheme of Englishness. What distinguishes the presence of Arthur over other high-ranking English heroes is the language employed in the narratives which is mock-heroic, imitative of Thomas Malory's *Le Morte*

[78] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 15.
[79] Nicola J. Watson, *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 7.

d'Arthur. The discussion in this section will explore the notion of an 'Arthurian geography' suggested by Robert Allen Rouse and Cory James Rushton, and will delve into the reasons why Arthur, and his role in sculpting national identity in the early twentieth century, is so significant. Coupled with the Arthurian tour is the persistent suggestion throughout narratives, such as Hissey's, of questing and this distinctive feature of the travelogues will also be scrutinised.

Arthurian legends have a history of their own, from their re-appropriation by Geoffrey of Monmouth from the Welsh Bards, to monarchs such as Edward III and Henry VIII attempting to remould themselves in Arthur's image. Morton's poem at the beginning of *In Search of England* sets up his journey as a questing narrative in which he seeks to find the elusive Englishness bound up with the Holy Grail.[80] His writing may adopt this kind of quest narrative because he begins his preface by saying that he felt himself being called back to England by the countryside and rural byways while he was out in Palestine and Jerusalem. It is evident from the poem that Morton wishes the reader to perceive him as a knight on a quest: his motor tour of England has a far greater significance than a whimsical holiday in search of the picturesque. He cloaks his narrative from the outset in visions of Arthur to be pursued into the fields and lanes of England. This style is continued throughout his work. In an episode in *In Search of England* he supplies a young lady motorist with some petrol as her car has run out. He comments:

> [...] I was as relieved as most knights-errant were, I am sure, in days of the older romance, when, on examining the maiden in distress, they saw no trace behind her of a large and unpleasant dragon, but were requested merely to free a skirt from a bramble or to chase away a toad.
>
> You see, I had visualized the dragon: I had seen myself plunged in the entrails of that small but stubborn car [...][81]

In Morton's parody of a quest, the car easily assumes the menacing profile of the dragon. Morton's self-fashioning of himself of a knight on a quest is continued throughout his work through employing mock-heroic language. All the travelogues in this study dwell upon the Arthurian legends as a crucial part of the narrative of Englishness. The texts construct what Robert Allen Rouse and Cory James Rushton have coined 'Arthurian geography':

[80] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. v.
[81] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 24.

> The cosmopolitan nature of Arthur's court – which takes on something of the aspect of a chivalric United Nations – creates connections with a large number of different geographical locations, some real and some entirely fictional. Through this accretive process, Arthurian geography becomes a complex grafting of fictional, sometimes allegorical, places onto the real topography of the British Isles.[82]

In the travelogues featured in this thesis, the writers undertake a similar process of writing a mythical geography transposing ancient legends and events onto the landscape. This is never more apparent than through their interest in the legend of Arthur and the places attributed to his life. Glastonbury is of specific spiritual and historical importance to all the travel writers. Morton implies this unreservedly with the statement: 'if a man were looking for the roots of England, this is the place to which he would come: in Avalon the roots of the Church; in Athelney the roots of the State'. The reference to Athelney, a neighbouring town to Glastonbury, relates to Alfred the Great but it is clear that the importance of Glastonbury in the formation of England is highly ranked. Later he refers to Glastonbury Abbey as 'the birth place of Christianity in England'.[83] Although this is historically inaccurate, Morton is making reference to the staff of Joseph of Arimathea that is supposed to have taken root at Glastonbury Abbey and turned into thorn bush. Legends claim that the abbey was founded by a company of disciples, including Joseph of Arimathea, who came to Britain. The travelogues are occupied to a large extent with an interest in ecclesiastical tourism, and Glastonbury features prominently in these works and becomes the spiritual centre of this quest: the whereabouts of Arthur and Camelot become the foundation of the travelogues 'in search of England'. Morton describes the itinerary of his quest as:

> I will see what lies off the beaten track. I will, as the mood takes me, go into famous towns and unknown hamlets. I will shake up the dust of kings and abbots; I will bring the knights and the cavaliers back to the roads, and, once in a while, I will hear the thunder of old quarrels of earthwork and church door. If I become weary of dream and legend I will just sit and watch the ducks on the village pond, or take the horses to water. I will talk with lords and cottagers, tramps, gypsies and dogs[...][84]

[82] Robert Allen Rouse and Cory James Rushton, 'Arthurian Geography' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Arthurian Legend*, ed. by Elizabeth Putter (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 218-234 (p. 219).
[83] Morton, *In Search of England*, pp. 131-2.
[84] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 4.

Morton's ambition to 'shake up the dust' of figures of the past and raise them from the dead is comparable with Stawell's repopulating of scenes with ghosts. The mission of Morton's journey lies in his desire to journey back in time. Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) is a story of time travel and establishes a similar tone to Morton in the opening of the story when the narrator visits Warwick Castle and meets a stranger on a guided tour who begins talking to him:

> As he talked along, softly, pleasantly, flowingly, he seemed to drift away imperceptibly out of this world and time, and into some remote era and old forgotten country; and so he gradually wove such a spell about me that I seemed to move among the spectres and shadows and dust and mold of a gray antiquity, holding speech with a relic of it![85]

Although written over thirty-seven years prior to Morton's book, it is indicative of the popularity of the Arthurian legends and the vogue for narratives which purport to transport the narrator or reader back in time. In Stawell's *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties* she animates the feast of Arthur's coronation at Camelot in the style of a historical romance, interspersed with paraphrases from the account given by Geoffrey of Monmouth:

> Round its shining palaces grew up a world of legend. We all know about the fine doings at Arthur's coronation here: how he and Guinevere were crowned in different churches, and how the music in both was "so transporting" that the congregations ran to and fro between one church and the other all day; and how a banquet of great splendour followed, with Caius, the server, dressed in ermine, and Bedver, the butler, waiting with all kinds of cups, and hosts of noblemen handing the dishes; and how, after the feast, the soldiers got up a sham fight to amuse the ladies, who sat on the town walls and "darted amorous glances in a sportive manner." And in the "Mabinogion" we are given a more domestic picture of King Arthur at Caerleon-upon-Usk: a picture of him in his palace dozing upon a seat of green rushes covered with fame-coloured satin, with a red satin cushion under his elbow, while Guinevere and her handmaidens sit at their needlework by the window, and a group of knights are drinking mean from a golden goblet.[86]

Stawell placed this scene at Caerleon in Wales, which Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed was the original site of Camelot; however, Stawell was all too aware of the historically unreliable nature of his work.[87] She paints a rather colourful romantic picture of the Arthurian story, but significantly, she locates the site of these legends in Wales. In her *Motor Tours in West Country* she visits Glastonbury

[85] Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (free electronic copy available on iPad), p. 2.
[86] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, pp. 167-8.
[87] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, pp, 248-9.

Abbey and states that the reason the site is so important is because the Saxons and Celts believed it to be 'the first ground of God, the first ground of the Saints in England, the rise and fountain of all religion in England, [...]'.[88] She then continues to give the history of the site from a place of religious reverence and the foundation of the abbey, leading up to the Dissolution under the hands of Henry VIII. There is no mention of Arthur at all until this disclaimer is subtly inserted:

> And somewhere deep beneath the turf, near the spot where the high altar used to stand, is the dust of those bones and that golden tress of hair that some would have us believe were the actual remains of Arthur and Guinevere. [...] But now our minds [...] are "clouded with a doubt": for the historic Arthur, we are told, died almost certainly in Scotland, and never came to the Island Valley of Avilion to heal him of his grievous wound.[89]

This is the only mention of Arthur throughout the pages concerning Glastonbury. Stawell states with some authority that Arthur was buried in Scotland, and as seen in her book on the 'Border Counties', she relates many of the Arthurian stories to Wales. Far from holding him up on a par with St George, Stawell emphasises the Britishness of Arthur. Stawell is almost unique among the motoring travel writers in doing so. She writes at Castle Killibury, also known as Kelly Round, just outside Camelford in Cornwall:

> We are entering Arthur's country—a land of shadowy legend, a land that has been peopled for us with a host of adorable, improbable figures, a land of disillusionment, but none the less of unconquerable romance. For this round encampment by which we drive is thought to be one of the few authentic relics of the authentic Arthur, the kelliwic of the Welsh Triads, a stronghold and court of the British prince who truly lived, and fought, and died of a grievous wound—but not at Camelford.[90]

Here Stawell is claiming some sort of authority over the legends and is therefore able to dispute such popular misconceptions. It is significant that she calls him a 'British prince' rather than an English one. However, Stawell concedes that 'Tintagel seems indeed to be the heart of the world of dreams, the most perfect symbol of the mingled mystery and truth of the story of Arthur.'[91] The spell of romance that lingers over Tintagel cannot be removed. She also writes that the mixture of fact and

[88] Stawell, *Motor Tours in the West Country*, pp. 16-17.
[89] Stawell, *Motor Tours in the West Country*, p. 20.
[90] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, pp. 160-1.
[91] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties*, p. 164.

fiction that surround the stories of Arthur, are also true of Tintagel and that their histories complement each other and represent one another perfectly.

A similar notion is produced in Robert Shackleton who writes about the effect that Tintagel has over him; an impression compounded by the mists and gloomy weather:

> We felt the drear immensities of that drear coast [...] as a fit spot for tremendous and lost history, and our minds were full of Tintagel and Arthur.
>
> For there can be no doubt that King Arthur existed; the immemorial and unbroken tradition, the fixed belief of the people, the church bells of sunken Lyonesse still faintly ringing, as the dim old fancy has it, underneath the Cornish sea—how can even the soberest-minded doubt! There is no fixed and prosaic history of King Arthur, but there is something infinitely better, for there is that at which history aims in vain: a tremendous impression.[92]

The factual evidence, or lack of, is of little consequence to Shackleton. The legends that surround the castle have such a powerful influence over him that he is willing to dismiss any scepticism he may have. The conviction of the English that Arthur did exist is deemed enough for Shackleton to join in with the other tourists in imagining the Knights of the Round Table gathering at Tintagel to counsel Arthur. Lyonesse is an Atlantis-style mythical island that was supposed to have existed; many claimed that the Scilly Isles were all that was left of what was once there. According to Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, Lyonesse was the place where Arthur fought his last battle with Mordred and even where Arthur could be buried. The image of the church bells of Lyonesse still ringing under the sea haunts Shackleton's imagination, and he finds the overall effect too charming not to be believed.

The moment of national crisis during the interwar period, that had prompted the likes of Morton to go out and 'seek' an Englishness that they thought needed to be defined, could embrace Arthur as a national hero. The definitive story of Arthur by Thomas Malory sees him being carried to Avilion by five ladies to be healed of his battle wounds. However, Malory leaves the fate of Arthur open to imagination:

> Yet some men say in many parts of England that King Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu into another place; and some men say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross. [...] here in this world he changed his life. But many men say that there is written upon his tomb this verse:
>
> Hic jacet Arthhurus, Rex quondam, Rexque futures.

[92] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 124-5.

[Here lies Arthur, the once and future King.][93]

The legend that Arthur may rise again at a time of national need had a profound meaning in interwar Britain. Stephan Goebel communicates the impact of such folklore on public consciousness in interwar Britain and Germany:

> Embedded in funerary tradition, national mythologies and folk tale, enchanted sleep marked an intermediate stage between the departure and the return of the dead. The 'sleeping dead' rested in the no man's land between death and life.[94]

Goebel suggests that the myth of Arthur in an eternal sleep whose body and grave had never been identified was used after the First World War as a powerful symbol of the lost soldiers who had never been recovered from the battlefield.[95] The First World War creeps into Morton's narrative when he wakes one morning and stares into the mists on Salisbury Plain 'remembering so many mornings just like this, recalling to my mind so many good fellows, so many bad days.'[96] He also recalls how the 'sound of hard boots on cobbles' haunts Salisbury Plain. The idea of the lost soldiers of World War 1 haunting a landscape is highly compatible with the Arthurian legends as they died in the service of their country, and for many, whose bodies were never recovered from the battlefield, they, like Arthur, occupy a mythical dreamscape.

However, Morton does suggest that much of the famed spiritual aura surrounding Glastonbury and Arthur is the product of our own imaginings. He writes: 'In this pregnant dust of Avalon is drawn two of the greatest epics that have come from the English mind: one is of the Holy Grail and the other of a wounded king.' Our own conjuring of Arthur in the 'English mind' in the form of an epic links both linguistically and metaphorically with the pilgrimage or spiritual quest. The prominence of such folklore and its broader reference in fiction and travel writing shows how diffused the idea of a lost king and protectorate was in the broader public consciousness after the war. It also demonstrates the ways in which Morton and his contemporaries were using these ideas to style

[93] Thomas Malory, *Morte d'Arthur* (London: Wordsworth Editions, 2000), pp. 793-4.
[94] Stefan Goebel, 'Remembered and Re-mobilized: The 'Sleeping Dead' in Interwar Germany and Britain', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 39.4 (2004), pp. 487-501 (p. 488).
[95] Goebel, 'Remembered and Re-mobilized', p. 497.
[96] Morton, *In Search of England*, p. 53.

themselves as travellers, displaying a profound empathy with the places and sites they came into contact with.

Conclusion : returning home

Through the reinvention of the Arthurian legends and the new significance they are accorded in the travelogues, 'Englishness' is, in a sense, a Holy Grail: a chalice from which the legends and folklore of England can reinvigorate its people and heal the 'grievous wounds' afflicted by the war. The sanctity and solitude of the countryside and its villages that had changed little in a hundred years, were the key to locating such homogenous versions of Englishness. The ancient byways became the routes of personal pilgrimages that led the writers towards their ultimate goal of capturing what they felt had been lost. Mass industry, modern conveniences, and American cultural influences were severing the link between the country and its illustrious past. They needed to return to the familiar colourings of landscape paintings and byway narratives, away from the complex and evocative fragmentariness of high modernism. Morton wrote that most people who had toured England would relish 'the knowledge that they have fought their way back to the country and have planted their feet in the splendid sanity of English soil.'[97] This suggests that in order to uncover the grail of Englishness, one must 'travail' and sever one's connection with modernity. To connect with one's past requires a spiritual transition; a journey into the past through the organic routes of identity to find an Englishness based on rationality, certainty, and familiarity. In withdrawing into 'England' and its sense of historical continuity Morton is turning back time, to a time of youth and idealism, peopled with friends long since lost.[98]

J.B. Priestley's *English Journey*, published in 1934, is widely regarded as one of the foremost British travel narratives of the interwar period. His famous conclusion of the three Englands is arrived at through a detailed investigation into the condition of modern England. The 'Old England' he describes as 'the country of the cathedrals and minsters and manor houses and inns, of Parson and

[97] *The Call of England*, p. 204.
[98] This concept is also corroborated by C.R. Perry in 'In Search of H.V. Morton''In Search of H. V. Morton: Travel Writing and Cultural Values in the First Age of British Democracy', *Twentieth Century British History* 10.4 (1999), pp. 431-456 (p. 441).

Squire; guide-book and quaint highways and byways England [...]'.[99] This facet of England is the exact place that the likes of Morton, Hissey, Stawell, Shackleton and Vincent all subscribe to and attempt to valorise. Priestley asserts that the Old England is 'a country to lounge about in; for a tourist who can afford to pay a fairly stiff price for a poorish dinner, an inconvenient bedroom and lukewarm water in a small brass jug.'[100] This criticism directed towards figures such as Morton illustrates how these wealthy motor tourists in search of 'green fields and pretty things' were perceived by their high-brow literary contemporaries. To these idealists Priestley sardonically remarks: 'There are people who believe that in some mysterious way we can all return to this Old England; nothing is said about killing off nine-tenths of our present population, which would have to be the first step.'[101] Priestley undermines the values of the motor tourists and the very notion that Old England can regain its prominence from beneath the quagmire of industrialisation.

It is hard to believe that Morton's *In Search of England* predates Priestley's book by only eight years as they seem to be describing completely different worlds. Priestley spends most of his time in the north of England, remarking on the destitution of former mining towns and the fate of their inhabitants. He engages with issues of social reform and the condition of the working class and explores the lives of those at the lowest end of the social spectrum. This he labels the world of 'nineteenth-century England, the industrial England of coal, iron, steel, cotton, wool, railways; [...]'.[102] This England is largely absent from the travelogues, although its acknowledged presence simmers in the background like the dragon in the quest, forcing the motor tourists to take long and circuitous routes to avoid being caught by its sprawling suburbs.

The final reincarnation of England, Priestley labels the post-war 'American England', whose attributes he lists as:

> arterial and by-pass roads, [...] filling stations and factories that look like exhibition buildings, [...] giant cinemas and dance-halls and cafés, bungalows with tiny garages, cocktails bars, Woolworths, motor-coaches, wireless, hiking, factory girls looking like actresses, greyhound racing and dirt tracks, swimming pools, and everything given away for cigarette coupons.[103]

[99] J.B. Priestley, *English Journey* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1937), p. 397.
[100] Priestley, *English Journey*, p. 398.
[101] Priestley, *English Journey*, p. 398.
[102] Priestley, *English Journey*, p. 398.
[103] Priestley, *English Journey*, p. 401.

Although this American England is not articulated explicitly in the early motoring narratives, a collective disdain for the new suburban villas, mock-Tudor tea-shops and road-side fuelling stations are common throughout the work of Hissey and Morton.

The role of the car in defining these experiences of England is crucial. Without the freedom that automotive travel permitted, the carefree and serendipitous approach to travelling the highways and byways would not have been possible. The car gave the writers access to the Old England in which they wished to immerse themselves, and to fashion as the model of Arcadia in their work. The car was also advertised in ways that promoted it as a tool for visiting historical sites. Images of cars being advertised in front of familiar historical landmarks was a common marketing tactic of manufacturers throughout the period in this study. This can be interpreted as a way of integrating a new and unfamiliar piece of modern technology with familiar signifiers of 'Englishness'; aligning the car within existing frameworks of establishments. This not only familiarises the car, it domesticates it. Manufacturers are deliberately placing their products within historical frameworks, encouraging people to believe that the modern motor car is a natural descendant of its stagecoach forerunner. However, these adverts also do something more: they are positioning the car with organised notions of 'Englishness', and thus the car becomes naturalised.

Throughout the many travelogues that adopt the quest for Englishness, a very familiar pattern emerges: the desperation to find a line of historical continuity that would incorporate the modern technological age, and the idea that an English national identity still lay dormant and undiscovered in the rural towns and villages, whose health was perceived as the staple to England's existence. However, the manifestations of these themes in the travelogues show the writers' own confusion and anxiety as to the state of 'Englishness'. Their belief that the southern counties were the home of Englishness, coupled with their lack of engagement with contemporary issues and urban spaces, led these writers to reflect a partisan view of 'Old England'. Such nostalgic and detached depictions of

England found favour among the broader public who sympathised with the sentiments of the 'Romantic Moderns'.[104]

[104] A term borrowed from Alexandra Harris to connote how some writers in the modernist period valorised and reimagined the architecture, artwork and miscellany of various epochs, to form ideas about modernity that were rooted in the past. Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper* (2010).

5

‘She was either a lunatic or a pioneer, according to the way people looked at things’: the Automobile and Gender Identities

Women’s relationship with automotive technology has been the subject of much discussion since the invention of the car. Persistent jokes about women’s ability or inability to drive have never fallen out of popular use. Recently a new European court ruling taking effect from December 2012 inhibits insurance companies from offering lower insurance premiums to female motorists – because statistics show them to be safer drivers – on the grounds of gender discrimination.[1] Even though the statistical evidence shows that on the whole women have fewer accidents, women still bear the brunt of sexist jokes when it comes to motoring. Unlike their male counterparts it seems that women have to continually prove themselves capable of commanding such technology, whereas men inherit a natural entitlement to cars and the use of the road. Georgine Clarsen notes in the introduction to her book *Eat My Dust: Early Women Motorists* (2008) that the term ‘woman motorist’ recognises that they are somehow supplementary to the ‘normal’ male counterpart. The term ‘motorist’ is, in its neutral form, male.[2] However, women’s relationships with motoring in the first decades of the motor car are not imitative of male relationships. They created their own spaces and identities around motoring and supported this burgeoning pastime with automobile clubs which offered invaluable practical motoring advice. The Ladies’ Automobile Club of Great Britain and Ireland was established in 1903 to counter the refusal of the Automobile Club of Great Britain, later the Royal Automobile Club (RAC), to admit female drivers. However women were tentatively admitted to the Automobile Association upon application.[3] The assumption that the car was naturally a masculine technology, coupled with the

[1] Court of Justice of the European Union, ‘Press release 12/11. ‘Taking the gender of the insured individual into account as a risk factor in insurance contracts constitutes discrimination’. <http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2011-03/cp110012en.pdf accessed> 9.12.12
[2] Georgine Clarsen, *Eat My Dust: Early Women Motorists* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2008), p. 2.
[3] Sean O’Connell, *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender and Motoring* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 48.

refusal to allow female members in the Automobile Club, were partially responsible for this undying myth that somehow women were unnatural interlopers, out of place, and out of their depth, in a world of engines, speed, danger and mobility.

At the beginning of Virginia Scharff's highly influential work *Taking the Wheel: Women and the Coming of the Motor Age* (1991) she tries to create an image of a respectable American woman in the 1900s: 'Girded in corsets and petticoats and forty pounds of underskirts and overskirts, cloak, and formidable hat, she is clad in immobility.'[4] This description is crucial in informing us about how women were perceived as being the antithesis of uninhibited movement and the physical labour involved in motoring. Scharff continues 'The American lady is, after all, a delicate creature. Instead of subjecting herself to the rigours of public traffic, she belongs behind closed doors.'[5] Although Scharff is specifically talking about an American lady in this picture, the notions of frailty, respectability, and immobility were shared by her British counterparts. Scharff also brings to our attention that public transport in the metropolises at the time was crowded and people were in close proximity with other passengers; it could be dirty and impersonal.[6] Women's association with the home and domestic life posed a huge problem for them when attempting to justify their desire to go motoring. The very notion that they had to justify themselves indicates the inequality between the masculine right to motor and the perceived immobility of the female subject. Sidonie Smith notes, referencing Karen R. Lawrence in *Penelope Voyages* (1994) that: '[...] the idea of women as "earth, shelter, enclosure," as "home," persists, anchoring femininity, weighing it down, fixing it as a compass point.'[7]

The women who motored in the early 1900s were somewhat liberated from domestic obligations, and we may assume that any car-owning family of the 1900s would have been of the upper-middle class and upwards and that the wife of the family would therefore be the head of a number of domestic staff. However, it seems almost ironic that, so liberated by wealth from domestic responsibilities, strong associations between women and the home persisted to obstruct women from

[4] Scharff, Virginia, *Taking the Wheel: Women and the Coming of the Motor Age* (New York; Toronto: : Free Press; Collier Macmillan, 1991), p. 1.
[5] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 1.
[6] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, pp. 6-7.
[7] Smith, Sidonie, *Moving Lives: Twentieth-Century Women's Travel Writing* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota, 2001), p. x.

automotive leisure. It seems that these prejudices were formed by the environment from which women emanated rather from more practical realities. Scharff notes that

> Victorian Americans commonly represented women's and men's respective social roles as "separate spheres." This simple visual image often served as a shorthand description of complex relations not only between individuals of different biological sexes, but between feminine and masculine attributes (including passivity and activity), private and public life, household and workplace, homemaking and paid work, culture and politics. The automobile might be novel, but it could not escape entanglement in a web of meaning spun with the threads of masculinity and femininity.[8]

As Scharff reminds us, practical individual circumstances were not really a consideration; judgments on women's suitability to the car were continually based on an 'anchoring' to domestic, private, passive roles, which influenced public opinion at large. Deborah Clarke asserts that 'women on the road radically unsettles assumptions of domesticity, gendered identity, and gendered literature.'[9] Such arguments are critical in addressing the 'reconfiguration of home as mobile'. The motor car questioned the certainties of feminine homeliness and anxieties quickly formed about the implications of 'the home as mobile'.

Adopting an identity that celebrates a new-found mobility seems to be at the core of all studies on women's experience of automobilism, as female identities before this era appear synonymous with domesticity, and therefore stagnation. Sidonie Smith also indicates: 'When women took the wheel, they added emphasis to their radical displacement from the home. A woman out for a drive was a woman out of place.'[10] This displacement and dislocation of the connotations related to femininity and the home were the source of great controversy and argument. However, women's decisions to take up motoring were not always an overt and intentional rebellion against such notions. Many women, as we shall see, attempted to create respectable and credible identities around notions of the 'lady motorist'.

The first woman to pilot a car was Bertha Benz when in 1888 she took out her husband's prototype with the help of her two sons. They had to push it out of the garage and move it far enough away from the house so as not to wake its inventor when they started the engine. They drove the car

[8] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 40.
[9] Clarke, Deborah, 'Domesticating the Car: Women's Road Trips', *Studies in American Fiction*, 32.1 (2004), 101-128 (pp. 1-2).
[10] Smith, *Moving Lives*, p. 173.

sixty miles through the Black Forest and suffered numerous breakdowns.[11] Bertha's rebellion against her husband and determination to experience motoring for herself are indicative of other stories of women who sought to motor against the judgments of their male peers. However, it is vital at this early stage that we establish just who these women were. As previous chapters in this thesis have emphasised, before 1914 only the very upper echelons of society would have access to such an expensive and niche pastime. During the war this changed radically, with women learning new practical skills in order to relieve men of their everyday jobs to fight at the Front. In the 1920s, motor cars were associated with both the glamorous Bright Young Things who saw it as a heady symbol of excess and privilege. There were also many women who sought careers as professional drivers and driving instructors; however, as men returned home from the war there was an increased amount of competition for these positions.[12] Clarsen articulates these delicate social changes and their impact on women motoring:

> So, at the forefront of privileged British women's ambitions in the early decades of the century were the gendered dimensions of motoring within elite circles. The technology's status as highly valued masculine knowledge, its promise to open out new ways for women to circulate freely through public spaces on terms similar to men of their own class, and its scope for opening out new kinds of experiences are crucial to understanding upper-class women's interest in professional auto work in Britain during the years surrounding World War I. [13]

This chapter attempts to unwind some of these issues at their inception in the late nineteenth century onwards, looking at the obstacles women faced to gain acceptance as motorists and create identities, and occupations, for themselves based on mobility and the car. The period covered by this thesis, between 1896 and 1930, is one of enormous global upheaval and social conflict in political, class-based, and gender terms. Upon the revival of motoring after the First World War, a new attitude towards female motorists emerged that reflected their new social freedoms. It is also important to note that many of the female automobilists in the 1920s were the second generation of motorists, whose mothers had likely been discouraged from taking the wheel in the early 1900s.

[11] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 1.
[12] Peter Merriman, *Mobility, Space and Culture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), p. 105.
[13] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 35.

At the heart of my research on the author, translator and travel writer Maud M. Stawell, and her place within the motoring movement are questions of how female motorists transgressed the boundaries of their traditional situatedness to embrace a new technological mobility. It appears that there is a distinct irony in the contemporary advertising slogan which idealized the possibilities of 'the open road', in the fact that it was only 'open' to a minority. Stawell certainly embraced the possibility of motor touring, and capitalised on her experiences by producing four volumes of regional tour books. Stawell's work is deserving of some scrutiny due to the fact that she is remarkable for being one of only two female authors of a published travelogue in Britain during this period. In her four travelogues Stawell does not mention how her gender affects her access to, or experience of, motoring. It is also unclear whether she even drives the car herself. She reveals that she travels with a party and this may, or may not, include a chauffeur. This chapter will use Stawell as a case study in examining contemporary attitudes towards women behind the wheel, and will assess to what extent Stawell is typical, or exemplary of contemporary patterns of women motorists.

One of the most significant discussions in this chapter centres on a little-known book by Baroness Sarah Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz. Her memoirs, published as *My Motor Milestones: How to Tour in a Car* (1913), details her attempts at long car excursions through England, France, Germany, Italy and Algiers, and plots her relationship with automotive technology and aviation. Campbell von Laurentz, like Mildred Bruce - a motor car racing champion, speed boat racer, record-breaking pilot and notable horsewoman, who published a handful of works on her extensive journeys abroad in the 1920s and 30s - is a true pioneer of automotive endeavour. Her social status is indicative of the women who drove in the first pre-war period of motoring history. Certain passages of her work, especially concerning her enthusiasm for aeroplanes, are dominated by her husband's expectations of her. This chapter will examine *My Motor Milestones* in relation to social context and theoretical criticism to gauge the extent of her singularity and achievements. Astonishingly, apart from the odd cursory mention in three books, her work has never been fully discussed in any other academic study, even in those works that concentrate on women's relationships with early motor cars. This chapter is the ideal place for her work to debut.

This chapter will also focus on the fictionalised struggles of women's relationship with automobility depicted in Mary Kennard's novel *The Motor Maniac* (1902). Kennard was a notable automobilist herself and contributed to a number of motoring publications. Her novel follows the fortunes of Mrs Jenks on her foray into motoring, and will be used to demonstrate contemporary attitudes towards female automobility alongside other sources from *The Autocar*. Although there are few books published by women of car journeys in Britain, there are some articles published in *The Autocar* that indicate that women were making these tours and writing up their journeys. There is greater evidence of women making journeys abroad such as Mildred Bruce and Edith Wharton. It seems likely that most women motoring before the First World War had the wealth and opportunity to take their holidays abroad and made prolonged journeys on the continent rather than in their own country. Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies* (1930) begins on a ship crossing the channel to England where the narrator witnesses a Packhard car (a luxury American marque) belonging to Mrs Melrose Ape being hoisted onto the boat 'bearing the dust of three continents'.[14] This image is representative of the impressions of women motoring on the continent that dominate the bulk of publications in this period.

This chapter also attempts to combine existing studies and theory on gender and the car. Much ground has been covered in the writing of American women's experiences of motoring in early automotive narratives during the first decades of the twentieth century. Scharff's *Taking the Wheel* is often acknowledged as a core text in the study of femininity and the motoring movement. Although her work specifically relates to gender issues in the United States, many of her observations, such as the study of the respectable lady at the turn of the century and immobility, are directly relevant to the material in this chapter and will be woven in to this discussion for added depth. However, British women's automotive writing has barely been touched. This chapter will combine isolated studies of British women's experience of the automobile movement in other works to form a body of critical research that is developed through the case studies of Maud M. Stawell and Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz.

[14] Evelyn Waugh, *Vile Bodies* (London: Penguin, 1996), p. 7.

Social context

The arrival of the car in Britain coincides with a period of great social flux in which women's conventional domestic and public roles were being challenged. The starting point of this thesis is in 1896 during the fin de siècle; a term that connotes a specific set of concerns: the New Woman; the rise of the labouring class trade unions; the beginnings of socialism; the age of empire and imperialism; anxieties about the physical health of England's population; the policing of prostitution and the moral habits of the country; aestheticism; scandal and the new tabloid press; sexology; drugs; celebrity; music halls and, of course, the motor car. Deborah Longworth comments in her chapter 'Gendering the Modernist Text' that

> The turn of the century was certainly a period of widespread gender anxiety, marked by an urgent engagement with definitions of masculinity and femininity, as the hitherto accepted dominance of the Western male subject was beset by the challenges of organized feminism, a decadent counter-masculinity, the perceived feminization of modernity and mass culture, and the change in women's social and economic roles during the First World War.[15]

This period of extremes meant that the motor car was enveloped in dramatic social and political upheaval which in many senses radicalised the car. Georgine Clarsen notes that in America the car was being used as a political tool for campaigning for female emancipation. In this case, the car represented a feminine aptitude towards technology and meant that the campaigning area could also be increased. There is less evidence to suggest that the car was used in similar ways in England. Many of the female suffrage campaigners came from working class backgrounds, particularly in the north, and it would be less likely that they had access to motor cars. However, a popular photograph of Emmeline Pankhurst addressing a large crowd from an open-top car in New York demonstrates the possibilities of the car being used as a campaign tool. In the hands of female suffragists the car becomes an instrument of liberation and defiance.

The period leading up to the First World War was dominated by the issue of female suffrage. The establishment of the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903 led by the Pankhursts launched

[15] Deborah Longworth, 'Gendering the Modernist Text' in *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 156-177 (159).

public and high profile demonstrations. The organisation became increasingly militant and outspoken in the years prior to 1914 and it is important to recognise this struggle for enfranchisement as the backdrop for the texts studied in this chapter. After the First World War the coalition government, led by Lloyd George, made swift moves to grant women the vote, which became law in 1918. However, this was only a partial success for the pre-war campaigners as it only gave the vote to women over 30. Full enfranchisement only came in 1928 when the vote was extended to women over the age of 21; this was rather disparagingly known as the 'Flapper Vote', a term that connoted temerarious and pleasure-seeking young women. The 20s also saw further changes in the roles and rules for women: women were smoking in public; they were able to move in public spaces without chaperones; and they wore short skirts and short hair fashions. These elements indicated a progressive shift of women's accepted place and appearance in social spaces.

All forms of industry prior to the motor car, such as steam engines and manufacturing, were linked to masculine power and labour. Thus when the automobile coughed and burst into life, the product of innovative male engineers, it was assumed to be a masculine machine. The car was also perceived as a potent symbol of virility. The complicated engines, the physical nature of motoring, the dangers of excessive speed, and the mental aptitude required to master this new technology led to an association with masculinity. Even the very nature of car building was inextricably linked to male physicality. Scharff notes of the American automotive trade: '[...] car makers had begun to forge a concept of rough-hewn, muscle-bound masculinity central to the industry's developing self-image.'[16] Even though Scharff is specifically referring to American car producers, the image of a man in oil-soaked overalls toiling over the working mechanisms of the car was a central idea in early motoring. After all, the pioneering motor car manufacturers, such as William Morris, began production in busy sheds and garages.[17] Sidonie Smith also highlights the perception that cars were investing masculinity with a new sense of adventure.[18] Women were rationally positioned on the outside of such developments, as passive bystanders witnessing and waving at the magnificence of masculine science

[16] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 10.
[17] William Morris began his illustrious career repairing and building bicycles in a shed in his parents' garden. He later moved on to renting a large shed to assemble motorcycles, before working on a prototype of the hugely popular "Bullnose" Morris. Peter Thorold, *The Motoring Age: The Automobile and Britain 1896-1939* (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2003), pp. 70-1.
[18] Smith, *Moving Lives*, p. 25.

and achievement. They were the polar opposite of such identities, so how could they find a way to participate in current technological and social development?

As well as motoring running counter to women's established domestic roles, questions were asked as to whether their physical and mental composition stand up to the demands of motoring and its associated dangers. This question was also asked by medical authorities who actively believed and promoted the idea of women as cerebrally inferior beings who could damage their reproductive health if mentally overtaxed.[19] One correspondent in *The Autocar* from 1927 who goes by the name of 'S'TREWTH' writes in to the correspondent pages to describe an incident where he was overtaken in his Bugatti by three women who appeared to be racing each other and finding fun in excessive speed. The author considered this to be reckless and dangerous and concludes 'I did not chase after these people because I considered them to be mental defectives, and in this way hope to catch the eye of their keepers through your columns.'[20] The women in question seem to be guilty of nothing other than what young males were doing, but the fact that they are female outrages the author of the letter. His letter is a direct appeal to their fathers, husbands, or brothers, to restrain them and their enjoyment of motoring.

Clarsen observes that male motorists ridiculed women to legitimise themselves as the natural inheritors of motoring technology.[21] Many women may have been deterred by such persistent ridicule and discouragement. Sean O'Connell writes that publications such as the *Practical Motorist* 'recognised that pride of place in the front passenger seat, as map-reader and picnic organiser, offered women an obvious extension of the feminine role with which many middle-class women were content.'[22] In this way they were able to find a continuation of their domestic roles in automotive spaces. In contemporary pictures of motoring, emphasis is often given to the physical nature of motoring and the impact of driving on the body; this thesis has already introduced some of these arguments in earlier chapters. If one's body and physicality played such an important part in the male experience of motoring, women found it a necessity to refashion themselves and their bodies into

[19] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 2.
[20] 'S'TREWTH' [36349], in *The Autocar*, 2 September 1927, no. 1661, p. 432.
[21] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 28.
[22] Sean O'Connell, *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender and Motoring 1896-1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 62.

automobile identities. They did this through altering the clothes they wore so that they were suitable for driving; this set them apart as a new female identity by dress, but they also attempted to change the way that society thought about the physicality of a woman and their mental durability (see Figure 4.2 of Isabel Savory). As Clarsen notes 'these women identified the female body as a site of struggle'.[23]

O'Connell reminds us that it is important to note that women's access to motoring was only possible through male lines of authority. According to the law women were the legal responsibility of their fathers or husbands when they were on the roads. If they were to be involved in an accident, it was their fathers or husbands who would be required to answer the charges and pay off any fines.[24] This meant that women were ultimately disempowered when it came to motoring, and reinforced the perception that they could not be trusted on the roads as independent agents to drive safely.

Women as active consumers and drivers

The popular novelist and new woman Mary E. Kennard's fictional work *The Motor Maniac* (1902) is important for understanding the attitudes of British women towards the motor car and the obstacles they faced to become motorists. Kennard herself was a keen mechanic and motor enthusiast. The heroine of the novel, Mrs Janet Jenks, decides to purchase a car herself and visits numerous garages unaccompanied to see what is on offer. At the forefront of Janet Jenks's mind is practicality and engine efficiency; however, the male salesman dismisses her interest as he does not believe she has the authority to purchase a car alone.

> He raised his eyebrows, with a slightly bored and wearied expression. Indirectly, these female visitors represented male custom. Consequently, they could not be altogether ignored; but, on the other hand, they took up a great deal of time, and it required the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon to answer their numerous questions. When people knew what they were talking about, it was easy enough to get on with them; but, really, these fair pioneers were astonishingly ignorant.[25]

[23] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 9.
[24] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, p. 56.
[25] Mary E. Kennard, *The Motor Maniac* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1902), p. 24.

The salesman instantly categorises Jenks as being ignorant about cars because of her sex, and is dismissive about her genuine enquiries to purchase a car. Equally many male customers looking to purchase a car would have been largely ignorant about motoring matters and would know considerably less than Jenks, but her gender immediately demarcates her. It is also interesting that Kennard describes Jenks as representing a male, attributing some purchasing power and wealth behind her somewhere in the shape of her husband. The critic David Jeremiah writes of Kennard's heroine: 'Her practical down-to-earth personality was recognised as important in the formation of relationships with the motor trade and her chauffeur, as well as in her choice of motor car.'[26] Jenks's access to the world of motoring is channelled through male lines of authority and her curiosity about all things mechanical allow her to earn acceptance and respect as a serious motorist; she doesn't automatically have that right as other male motorists have.

Women were seen as key to the car consumer industry as they wielded an enormous influence over the appearance of the car. Sean O'Connell writes that car manufacturers recognised that women were highly influential as consumers and therefore, cars should be made to be aesthetically pleasing to appeal to female purchasers. A feminine influence over the purchase of a car would be discerning over the quality of the interiors and the colour and style of the bodywork. An advert featured in *The Autocar* for the American model Buick Country Club Roadster is addressed 'To "Miss 1926"', asking 'Could you imagine a car more handsome and impressive? Its appearance gives you just an idea of its underlying excellence.'[27] The car is described in terms almost suggestive of masculine physicality and power, and testimonies to the quality of the engine are coated in descriptions of its cosmetic appearance. Scharff notes that '[...] manufacturers tended to associate the qualities of comfort, convenience, and aesthetic appeal with women, while linking power, range, economy, and thrift with men. Women were considered to be too weak, timid, and fastidious to want to drive noisy, smelly gasoline-powered cars.'[28] Whilst this statement is certainly representative of a trend in advertisement, some manufacturers also recognised that there was a market for offering upper-class women fast and powerful cars, particularly in the1920s. Some women such as Annesley Kenealy and her six-cylinder

[26] David Jeremiah, *Representations of British Motoring* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 38.
[27] 'To "Miss 1926"', *The Autocar*, 9 July 1926, p. 4.
[28] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 37.

Napier, and Daisy Hampson in a 120 h.p. Fiat were notorious in society for their association with fast cars.[29]

As car manufacturers increasingly recognised women as consumers, brands such as Buick began marketing their cars with them in mind. The car's engine and working parts were made easily accessible for the female driver, the control pedals were fitted at a closer distance and car interiors were made to appeal to fashionable upper-class female purchasers. David Jeremiah notes that in contemporary car adverts 'images of women were used to add a touch of glamour, and to reassure the potential new motor-owners that the new machines were safe, reliable, and easy to control'.[30] An advert for the Rhode Motor Company demonstrates this:

> So the daughter of the house expressed herself and added-
> *"You see, I do all my shopping on it—run it to tennis—take it to Golf and pick a friend up on the way—never dream of 'training' it when I want to pay a visit to a neighbouring town—make calls on it—run the children out for a treat—take it to picnics—meet my friends at the station and—a thousand other things.*
> *Now could I do all that on a lordly limousine?"*[31]

This advert, featured in *The Autocar* in 1923, demonstrates cars being marketed to women for their usefulness and practical application. The advert deliberately refers to children in order to emphasise the safety of the vehicle and to incorporate the dimensions and demands of the family. It is also significant that the testimony is from 'the daughter of the house' showing that cars, rather than being symbols of excess and danger, can be practical and helpful, posing no threat to her reputation and moral conduct.

Electric cars were deliberately marketed towards women because the engine was less powerful than an internal combustion car; it had a far lower top speed and its comparative tameness was perceived to be ideally suited to lady drivers.[32] Many women felt reassured by this specification after receiving a barrage of warnings that they were physically incapable of commanding a car. However, many women saw this as insulting and disparaging and deliberately avoided purchasing electric cars for this reason; instead of being full motorists they were being sold an ersatz version of automobility; a cheap second-hand experience that inhibited them from claiming the speed and

[29] Jeremiah, *Representations of British Motoring*, p. 39.
[30] Jeremiah, *Representations of British Motoring*, p. 36.
[31] 'Rhode Motor Company' featured in the 'Advertisements—Supplement', *The Autocar*, 23 Friday March 1923, p. lxiii
[32] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 14.

freedom enjoyed by their male counterparts. Electric cars were also considered easier to understand and drive and therefore didn't require the more technical specialist knowledge required for the internal combustion engine. Clarsen writes 'Their resistance to the parlour-like comfort of electric cars [...] signalled their intention to refuse Victorian notions of women's dependency, refinement, and restriction to a world separate from men.'[33] This indicates that contemporary calls for equality between the sexes were being played out in battles over access to technology.

Women as mechanics

In order for women to participate in the motoring movement they needed to acquire a whole new set of mechanical skills from which they had been previously alienated; Clarsen writes 'they had to undertake a sort of intensive training in the technological arts.'[34] There are numerous accounts in the memoirs of the motoring pioneer S.F. Edge of the skill-based training that young men, including himself, had to gain in order to operate, and manage to a certain extent, the everyday maintenance of their cars. But there are also instances of women doing the same. Edge recalls his friend Mary Kennard, author of *The Motor Maniac*, busy at work in the garage on a car's engine. He comments: 'Mrs. Kennard had become a skilled mechanic. She had a suit of mechanic's overalls, and it was quite common for her to carry out her own repairs and overhauls in company with Brooks, her chauffeur.'[35] Comprehensive mechanical knowledge was a highly prized asset in a would-be motorist. Peter Thorold also relates stories at the turn of the century when car manufacturers and engineers themselves would pay visits to frustrated customers whose cars had broken down because there were so few people in the country with the necessary expertise to repair them.[36] Therefore, in this early pre-war period, mechanical knowledge conveys power, as only through this was one able to become independently mobile and exploit the benefits of this new technology. Of course, many didn't; the option of employing a mechanic or a chauffeur would purchase such experience. But in order for any

[33] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, 15.
[34] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 13.
[35] S.F. Edge, *My Motoring Reminiscences* (London: G. T. Foulis & Co., 1934), p. 74.
[36] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 47.

motorist to exert any independence, particularly significant for women in this period, and feel a certain amount of liberation, it must be worked for. In *The Motor Maniac* Mrs Jenks's motor-tricycle instructor, Mr Johnson, remarks: '"Mrs. Jenks is a born engineer, [...] I never knew any lady with the mechanical instinct so strongly developed. I venture to predict that ere long she will set a worthy example to her sex."'[37] Mr Jenks finds them in the afternoon still cleaning parts of the engine together and laughs jovially at his wife's appearance in her overalls and covered in oil:

> "Why," he exclaimed jocularly, "what have we here? A female mechanic? Upon my word, Janet, this is scarcely a lady's job."
>
> Perhaps he was right, but then there was no classifying Mrs. Jenks as an ordinary lady of the accepted type. She was either a lunatic or a pioneer, according to the way people looked at things.[38]

Jenks's aptitude for mechanics and her enthusiasm for all things automotive are a source of constant amusement to her husband who isolates her behaviour and thinks it strange and unnatural. Her femininity comes into question as does her social acceptance.

From the First World War onwards there was a much broader diffusion of automotive technology throughout the social spectrum. Clarsen notes that the Galloway car factory founded in Tongland, Scotland, in 1917 only employed women in mechanical and engineering capacities. The head of operations there, Pullinger, is frequently quoted as expressing the remarkable adeptness of women towards the engineering faculties. Some press reports labelled the enterprise as "an engineering college for ladies" where they would receive practical training in the construction of car building and engineering.[39] This factory was remarkable in creating the role of a woman as a mechanical engineer. Although munitions factories during the war also employed substantial numbers of women, the training at the Galloway car factory was instilling the ethos of women as trained and skilled professionals.

Kennard's Janet Jenks faces the presumptions that she will be unable to learn mechanical knowledge from her own chauffeur-cum-mechanic, and from her driving instructor. However Jenks, being a resourceful and knowledgeable New Woman, realises that the men are often inaccurate with

[37] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 176.
[38] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 191.
[39] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 49.

their diagnoses of car problems, as she reads every motoring magazine she can acquire, and knows the symptoms of certain engine ailments and how to remedy them. Jenks enjoys the challenge of the automobile, not just in the sense of driving, but also the engineering side:

> The subject was full of fascination for Mrs. Jenks. Its very difficulty made it the more interesting. It was tackling some gigantic problem which only brains could solve. She enjoyed sharpening her wits against obstacles. There was something stimulating in the process, and one acquired knowledge even from one's failures [...].[40]

Her inquisitive mind and intelligence embraces the challenge that the car brings and her mastery of it publicly demonstrates her skill and ability with advanced machinery. In this respect the car provides an education, the mastering of which is an achievement that Jenks, and other women, were able to claim for themselves. This extract also demonstrates that Kennard emphasises the intellectual requirements of driving and the need of a patient and logical mind, which Jenks certainly possesses, particularly when compared to her rather hot-headed and oafish husband. Jenks realises that her lack of knowledge about motor cars will be an obstacle to her becoming a motorist, so she proactively seeks to overcome this problem. She inquires at car dealerships for lessons about how to drive and the inner workings of the car, a sort of apprenticeship in all things automobile.

Not all women were as resourceful as Mary Kennard, or her fictional heroine Mrs Jenks, or knew how to access such help and guidance, particularly when faced with public hostility. Scharff addresses this issue and comments: 'Women, the men point out, suffer from natural impulsiveness and timidity, inability to concentrate and single-mindedness, indecisiveness and foolhardiness, weakness and utter estrangement from all things mechanical.'[41] This supposed biological aversion to 'all things mechanical' instilled the notion that women had to work doubly hard in order to find success with such ventures, struggling not only with the machine in hand, but with the hindrances of their own biological difference. After Mrs Jenks's first ride on a motor-tricycle she admits to her 'motor boy' that she was 'not altogether comfortable' on the tricycle. He replies:

> "I seed you didn't," he rejoined, with lordly patronage. "But there! mum, you can't expect to do as much as me. You must remember you're only a woman."

[40] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 59.
[41] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p.26.

> This was scant consolation for Mrs. Jenks, although kindly meant. She reflected on the cruel fortune which had ordained she should belong to the despised and inferior sex, whilst possessing all the energy and ambition of the stronger vessel. Talk of Nature, indeed! She made the most ghastly mistakes.[42]

Expectations of women as motorists and mechanics were low, and it seemed that women must do battle with nature to counter their own biological make-up in order to succeed. Kennard draws the reader's attention to the fact that the disadvantages lay only in the perception of women being 'despised and inferior', even though her own physical vitality was enough to match any man's.

Maud M. Stawell

Stawell's four volumes of travel books, published between 1909 and 1926, were heralded by her publishers Hodder and Stoughton in *The Times* of June 1926 as the 'best holiday motor books ever written [...]'.[43] The small, neat, red volumes, decorated with an embossed gold etching depicting a modern motor car certainly appear to be the authoritative and comprehensive regional motor guides advertised. The volumes also include, alongside the narrative, maps and a multitude of photographs. Stawell's narrative reads like a reverie: a striking blend of British history, mythology, dreamlike impressions, landscapes, and the practicalities of touring by motor car. Stawell herself never comments on the experience of driving, only the practicalities, and it may be assumed from this that perhaps she didn't do the driving herself. She comments on travelling with a party presumably made up of friends and family. It is also highly likely that she may have taken a chauffeur-cum-mechanic or that one of the males in the party drove.

The books appear to have been written under the guise of a leisure occupation, not undertaken to earn money, but as a pastime. However, historical records seem to dispute this, revealing something both intriguing and full of implications. The 1911 census, under the field of 'Occupation', instead of remaining blank like many other records for the 'Wife' of the family, reads 'Author'. A glance at her extensive bibliography of works tells us why: thirteen translations and eight solely authored books: a

[42] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 177.
[43] 'Hodder & Stoughton', *The Times*, 29 June 1926, p. 10.

total of twenty-one publications. At the time of the 1911 census, Maud Stawell was forty-five, and there is no record of any children. The family also has three servants. Therefore, it seems fair to conclude that the domestic demands placed on her were relatively minimal. Sidonie Smith also concurs with such judgments about the household demands on aristocratic 'motoristes': 'for the pre-First World War female motoring elite, such domestic concerns are not as pervasive. Yet by eliding the boundaries between car and home, they do open up the possibility of reconfiguring women's place as both situated and mobile, both domestic and independent.'[44] As Stawell was freed of such concerns, the new and exciting possibilities of travelling and motor touring remained available. However, there are other directions in which the census records are significant. The record shows that her husband was a 'Medical Practitioner'. It seems fair to assume that they belonged firmly entrenched in the respectable upper-middle classes. However, before 1910 motoring was exclusively the preserve of only the most affluent families, and it is surprising that Stawell had the financial means to undertake prolonged motor tours. Sean O'Connell writes that some families who would have fallen outside the financial threshold to own and maintain a car allowed other members of the family to work, for example a spouse or children, in order to become a car-owning family.[45] It seems entirely possible that Maud Stawell's extra income as an author and translator had allowed the family to own a car. O'Connell and Peter Thorold observe how rural doctors were quick to change to motorised transport as it allowed them easier and faster access to their rural patients, and they were able to see more patients as a result. However, in an assessment of the cost of a car in today's financial market, Peter Thorold writes:

> According to the official statistics, the average price of a new car in 1908 was £420, say £28,000 today. For a cheap and simple voiturette Dorothy Levitt quotes £230 plus fittings, say £300 (£20,000). But she also says that you could pick up a second-hand model for £120 (£8000). On that side of the equation alone, we might say that the price was not inordinately high. Once, however, we turn to the other side, to the income of potential buyers, it is a different affair altogether. The average annual mid-Edwardian wage for the top 25 per cent of earners was less than £6,500 in today's terms. Even the top 10 per cent would have had to pay out something like a whole year's earnings for Dorothy Levitt's second-hand vehicle, which anyway would not have lasted long. And it is worth remembering that only a tiny minority of the population possessed capital of more than a few hundred pounds.[46]

[44] Smith, *Moving Lives*, p. 4.
[45] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, p. 34.
[46] Peter Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, p. 76.

After a glance at this analysis, it now seems quite likely that the extra income of Maud Stawell's publishing career helped propel the household into the elite car owning bracket, that is of course assuming the car was actually theirs. The possibility that Stawell's access to motorised technology may have derived from her own potential to earn money makes her completely remarkable as both a motorist and author of motoring literature, and as an example of the progressive social change that was developing leading up to the First World War.

Stawell, not unusually for the time, published all of her travel books under her married prefix, 'Mrs Rodolph Stawell', thereby aligning herself with marital respectability. This may have been a clever marketing move on her, or her publisher's, part. Stawell's audience would be others from the elite class of motorist, and her married name may have provided the air of respectability that was required for her books to sell to their target market. The travelogues are rich with historical and architectural information, and the publishers, and perhaps Stawell herself, would have wanted to project an image of a reputable lady motorist, in line with the book's intended demographic. Indeed, Stawell prefixes her book *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Countries* (1909) by noting that some of the material in the book has already been published in *The Car Illustrated*, a high-end publication replete with the socialites and aristocracy of the day, including Edward VII himself. I will comment more on this magazine in the course of this chapter, but its reference here is used to demonstrate the target market for Stawell's work, and how she was trying to access the elite car-owning classes by creating an image of herself forged in the reputable pages of exclusive car magazines.

Considering her desire to market her respectability and credentials as a guide and historian, it is perhaps apt that she doesn't draw attention to herself as a female motorist, or ever mention driving. Whilst the country was in the throes of female activism, and the gender debate raged on in the pages of both the motoring and the national press, Stawell seems to want to remain aloof and keep questions of female motorists out of her publications. The books concentrate on the places she visits by motor car and the experience and feasibility of travelling by automobile rather than herself as a motorist. However, despite neglecting to mention the act of driving, she does expound on her love of travelling by motor car in numerous instances throughout the four texts. The reader is never able to forget Stawell's physical presence whilst reading one of her books because she asserts herself as the author

through her own distinctive voice. In *Motor Tours in Yorkshire* (1909) she instructs her readers: 'Let us pause for a moment and sit down', situating herself within the text and at the location with the reader, accompanying them on their journey.[47] She writes using personal pronouns that take her on the journey with her audience:

> We run on between Saddle Tor and Rippon Tor over hill and dale, till we look down on the famous goal of a certain historic grey mare —Widdecombe-in-the-Moor; [...] Here by the wayside the car must wait a little time, while we are carried to fairyland on a magic carpet of moss.[48]

The use of the present tense insists on Stawell's bodily presence with her readers as they make the journey themselves, whether this be literal or in the mind's eye. She instructs her audience on how to feel and perceive the landscape around them and asserts her voice and presence at these locations. It is therefore hard to overlook her authorship and femininity when reading her works.

Stawell also concerns herself with the histories of women: at Dover, rather than consider all the kings that have landed and departed there, she focuses on their brides and the varied stories that their lives had to tell.[49] This indicates to the reader the interests of the author, who parallels her own journey from Dover with journeys made by other women who have found themselves there under various political circumstances in the past. In a similar instance, whilst visiting the famous Pantiles area of Tunbridge Wells, Stawell launches into a vignette of an eighteenth-century scene at the location and she invokes all the famous faces that would be present. It is important to note that most of the names are of eminent women of the period such as Hester Thrale, Frances Burney, and Elizabeth Montague: women of literary note.[50] There is an obligatory mention of Richardson, Joshua Reynolds, and Dr Johnson, however these names are vastly outnumbered by the list of female literary celebrities. This may be read as Stawell aligning herself with a female writing tradition; she now walks where they had trodden. She is also suggesting that the women writers of the eighteenth-century should be foregrounded instead of their male counterparts. Through these subtle suggestions it is clear that Stawell is not quite the non-judgmental passive passenger that she implies, but actively

[47] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in Yorkshire* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), p. 132.
[48] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in the West Country* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 62.
[49] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in Sussex and Kent* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, [1926]), pp. 236-237.
[50] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Sussex and Kent*, pp. 111-2.

asserts her subjective narratorial voice, as much as she privately declared on the 1911 Census records that she had her own occupation: 'Author'.

Although Stawell does seem fairly progressive and consciously makes references to other women of her own trade here, she always refers to motorists, and travellers, as male in their neutral form: 'No motorist should really be satisfied till he has driven on all these roads' and 'he [the traveller] can choose his own time for visiting'.[51] It seems reasonable to accept this as standard for the time as such gender assumptions were common and Stawell would have certainly been making her political position clearer and more explicit if she had said 'he or she'. Also in keeping with her own contemporaneity Stawell refers to the car as female, calling it 'she'.[52] This was also common in this period and was possibly influenced by the French – the source of much British car vocabulary – who denote that the car is feminine ('une voiture' and 'une automobile'). However, it is still worth noting because Stawell does not challenge this vocabulary or adapt it as she is attempting to do with her own identity as both motorist and author.

It is difficult to assess Stawell as a 'motoriste' - another word also modified in the Francophone fashion - and author because she never comments on the circumstances of gender and automobility. However, her reverence for queens and female literary figures show an interest in the gendered perspective on history and she reads locations through their significance to her as a female author and historian. These occasions in the texts reveal an educated woman, author, and motorist: a thoroughly modern identity.

The new New Woman: motoring identities

Kennard's 1902 novel *The Motor Maniac* tells the story of its heroine's conversion over to motoring against the stern wishes of her husband. Mrs Janet Jenks is a New Woman, described by Kennard as

> a little, bright, sharp quick dot of a woman, who barely came up to Mr. Jenks's shoulder. She was his exact opposite in every way. If his brain were quiescent, hers proved correspondingly

[51] Maud M. Stawell, *Motor Tours in Wales and the Border Counties* (Boston: L.C. Page & Co., 1909), p. 155. Second quotation is from *Motor Tours in Yorkshire*, p. 5.
[52] Stawell, *Motor Tours in Yorkshire*, pp. 148-9; *Motor Tours in Sussex and Kent*, p. 81.

> active. Any laziness on his part was counteracted by superabundant energy on hers. At thirty-five her vitality was marvellous. As for her mind, it was always at work; eager to fasten on new ideas and reject old, humdrum ones; plotting, planning, seizing possibilities and foreseeing events. [...] The passive support given by her countrymen to new inventions filled her both with contempt and indignation. Like the heroine in Olive Schreiner's celebrated "Story of an African Farm," she could not conceive of a mental attitude which did not aspire to probe into everything. She, too, had an intense desire to try and experience. The groovy state of *status quo* offered no attractions to her.[53]

Kennard explicitly links her heroine to the nineteenth-century feminist writer, Olive Schreiner's, Lyndall; the intelligent, daring, active and outspoken resistor to closeted gender roles, marriage, and colonial repression in *The Story of an African Farm* (1883). Here Kennard uses this reference to characterise the active and engaging, forward thinking New Woman who applies her own female agency to achieve things independently. Mrs Jenks is eager to abandon the stereotypical gender roles created for her and seizes upon the motor car as a new and exciting opportunity for her own liberation from home and husband. By contrast Mr Jenks detests the car and is comfortable with his routine of leisurely and frivolous pastimes.

Kennard's protagonist is not interested in changing fashions and wears whatever seems most practical and comfortable to her. Like other New Women at the turn of the century, this lack of observance towards traditional popular feminine fashion often arouses the contempt of other characters in the novel.[54] Jenks orders a special divided skirt for the purpose of riding a tricycle which comes as quite a surprise to her husband. Kennard describes Mrs Jenks's appearance whilst motorcycling as: 'clad in an old covert coat, a sailor hat, whilst the redoubtable divided skirt was pinned closely round either leg with a large safety pin [...]'. Mr Jenks comments on her appearance by announcing:

> "Well," he exclaimed, with marital frankness, "you have made a guy of yourself, Janet. Upon my soul, in the distance I could hardly tell if you were a man or a woman. You will be the talk of the county if you go on as you are doing."[55]

The act of women attiring themselves for motoring was synonymous with masculinising oneself, which in turn, invited derision and scandal from others. Jenks is completely uninterested in what

[53] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 9.
[54] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 17.
[55] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 242.

others may think or comment about her and only cares for being able to use her car and motorcycle. However, contrary to the polarised position of the traditionalist Mr Jenks and his sporting and practically-minded wife, the reality of motoring dress for women was a far more considered political issue.

Women quickly realised that motoring presented both a dilemma for traditional femininity and a great opportunity to restyle it. Women created new motoring identities to find ways that made motoring both acceptable and respectable for this elite class of women. This self-imaging was a visible way of including oneself in this new technological phenomenon. Clarsen explains:

> Struggles over fashion were critical to women's strategies for developing their new identities. Motoring women's clothing constituted a visual declaration of their claims to new female ways of comporting themselves, new competencies, and new modes of independent movement. Their preference for particular fashions was designed to express the stand they wished to make. They were working to produce a physical display of entitlement, in which the way they appeared constituted a declaration of social change, enacted in a new technology and indicated through bodily signs. If their act was the public performance of their competence and independent mobility, then their clothes were the way they advertised that act.[56]

Indeed, there are numerous articles in contemporary *Autocar* magazines that support such claims. Alfred Harmsworth's edited volume *The Badminton Library; Motors and Motor-Driving* (1902) also includes detailed advice for women about appropriate dress when riding in motor cars. Rather than casting aside their femininity, as Sean O'Connell suggests, to enter a world that was dominated by masculine symbolism and language, they adapted it to create new forms of feminine motoring identities that were bound up with notions of modernity and liberty.[57] Even though women were attempting to cast aside such fixed rules of dress, they also seem to be creating a new sartorial code that allows them a more practical approach, but also distinguishes them as uniquely feminine.

In the early 1900s women attempted to find socially acceptable ways to become motorists. Leading public figures high up the social ladder who took to motoring became examples of how notions of respectability could also apply to driving a car. The upmarket magazine publication *The Car Illustrated* often featured such figures who promoted ladies' engagement with the new

[56] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 26.
[57] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, p. 45.

technology.[58] The Countess of Warwick and Miss Muriel Beaumont, – later Lady du Maurier, a famous actress and the mother of the writer Daphne du Maurier – are just two examples of wealthy women pictured driving their own cars.[59] However, you will notice in Figure 5.1 that the Countess of Warwick is pictured with her infant son; it seems that even as motorists, aspects of femininity and maternal womanhood are being reinforced to show that they have not been lost in the process of becoming 'motoristes' (see Figure 5.1). It also promoted the safety of the car as a means of transport as mothers were able to trust it carrying their children. Within the collection of *The Car Illustrated* are regular contributions from Mary Kennard, and a profile of Mrs Bernard Weguelin who is described as a 'plucky chauffeuse'.[60] However, there are articles in this magazine that reinforce the idea of women as accoutrements to motoring. 'My Motoring Diaries' by 'Cecilia' (pseudonym) talks about her experiences of being driven, either by herself or her husband. There is also the regular ladies' article 'Costumes and Chatter' which again trivialises women's relationship with motoring. The article is written as a letter between two friends as they discuss their motoring clothes and other frivolities.

Dorothy Levitt's popular book *The Woman and the Car; A Chatty Little Handbook for all Women who Motor or who Want to Motor* (1909) encouraged such ingenuity and adventurousness in women and made the broader public realise that women could be just as capable at driving and mending their cars as men. However, the title of the book serves only to trivialise women's relationships with automobiles and to add weight to the contemporary view that women were somehow inherently subordinate to men as drivers and mechanics. The introduction to the book is quick to emphasise Levitt's feminine build and conventional gender traits:

> The public, in its mind's eye, no doubt figures this motor champion as a big, strapping Amazon. Dorothy Levitt is exactly, or almost so, the direct opposite of such a picture. She is the most girlish of womanly women. Slight in stature, shy and shrinking, almost timid in her everyday life, it is seeming a marvel that she can really be the woman who has done all that the records show.[61]

[58] Women's identities in *The Car Illustrated* and other exclusive motoring magazines is the subject of recent research in Peter Merriman, *Mobility, Space, Culture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 118-120.
[59] A portrait of Muriel Beaumont features in the very first edition of *The Car Illustrated*, 28 May 1902, p. 27.
[60] 'The Expert Lady Driver', *The Car Illustrated*, 18 June 1902, pp. 123-4.
[61] 'Dorothy Levitt: A Personal Sketch' in Dorothy Levitt, *The Woman and the Car: A Chatty Little Handbook for all Women who Motor or who Want to Motor* (London: Hugh Evelyn, 1970), p. 4.

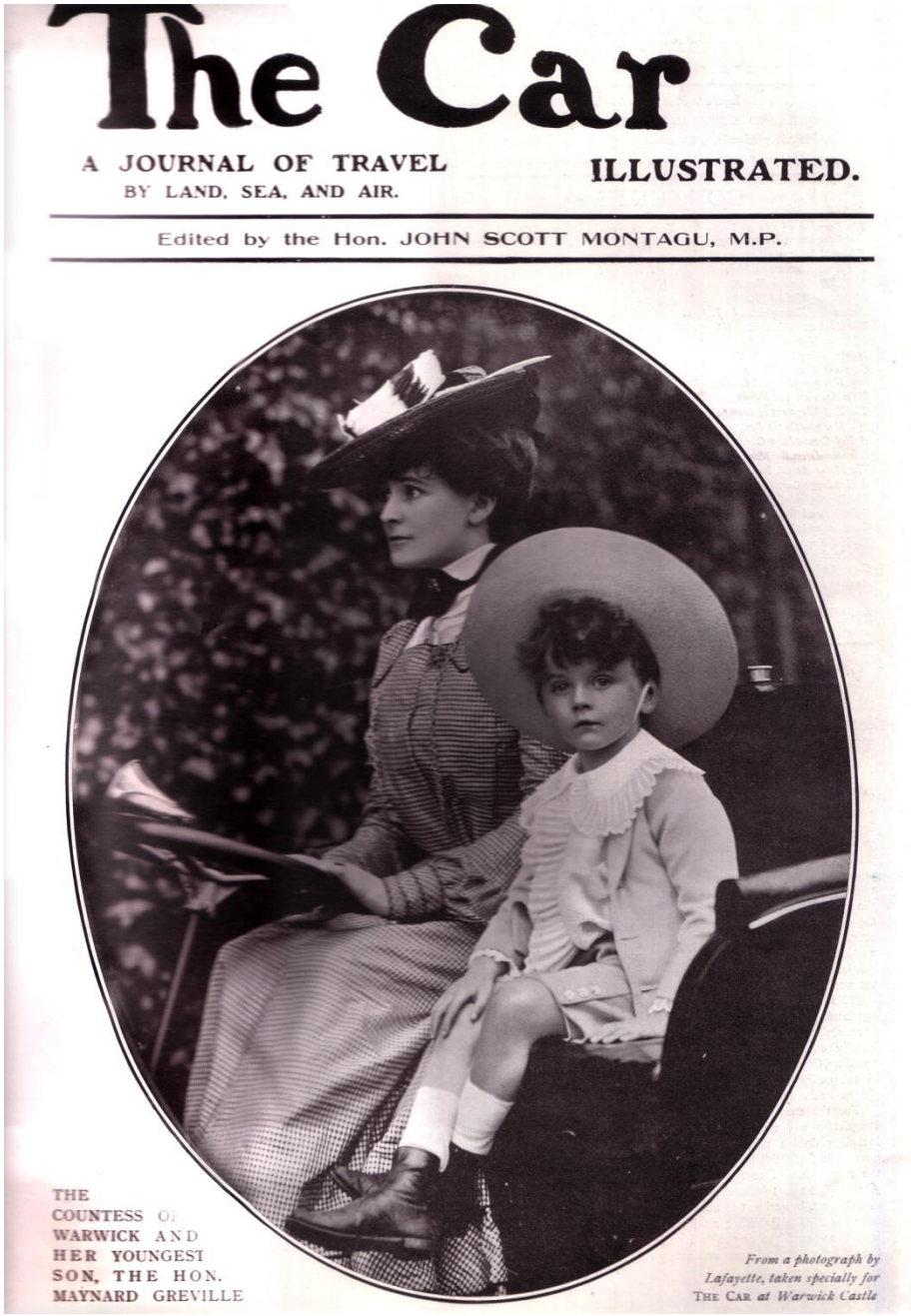

Figure 5.1: Front cover of *The Car Illustrated* showing 'The Countess of Warwick and her youngest son, the Hon. Maynard Greville'. *The Car Illustrated*, 11 June 1902.

Her physical build belies her masculine achievements and demonstrates that perhaps driving and mechanical ability cannot be denoted by muscle alone. Levitt was a driver for the British car brand Napier and was appointed to the role by the notable racing champion and car designer S.F. Edge. Levitt's professional association with Edge was one of contrasts; Edge was famous for his physicality (allowing him to become a successful cyclist), in contradistinction to Levitt's 'girlish' charms. It seems that in this case, the car operates to reinforce the perceptions of gender stereotypes and the danger motoring poses to femininity is controlled. Levitt uses the term 'automobiliste' and really seeks to occupy this identity within the narrative and by her physical appearance.[62] She writes of a small compartment in the front of the car:

> This little drawer is the secret of the dainty motoriste. What you put in it depends upon your tastes, but the following articles are what I advise you to have in its recesses. A pair of clean gloves, an extra handkerchief, clean veil, powder-puff (unless you despise them), hair-pins and ordinary pins, a hand mirror—and some chocolates are very soothing sometimes![63]

Levitt recommends other practicalities like carrying a large vanity mirror with you that you can hold up quickly to see if there's anything behind you (a precursor to the rear view mirror).[64] She also advises carrying a revolver with you for safety, and a dog is always good company.[65] Her book includes a chapter on the 'The mechanism of the car' to inform potential lady motorists of where the petrol tank is located, how to make simple repairs and advice on how to drive. Levitt also describes the progression of expectations of women:

> Almost every woman who can afford it is, of course, a motoriste in the sense that she owns, or has at her disposal, a motor-car. [...] Twenty or thirty years ago, two of the essentials to a motorist—some acquaintance with mechanics and the ability to understand local topography—were supposed to be beyond the capacity of a woman's brain. The supposition was simply due to the fact that woman's brain had never had occasion to approach these subjects. [...] the pastimes of cycling and motoring have made the understanding of maps a necessity to every active gentlewoman; indeed the average woman is probably quicker than the average man in gathering from a map the information which it has to offer.

According to Levitt the strength and vigour of women has increased over the previous decades to the benefit of society at large. The new demands of the technological age meant that women's mental and

[62] Levitt, *The Woman and the Car*, p. 17.
[63] Levitt, *The Woman and the Car*, pp. 28-9.
[64] Levitt, *The Woman and the Car*, p. 29.
[65] Levitt, *The Woman and the Car*, p. 30.

physical faculties had also undergone change, and their ability to adapt to these changes show them to be skilful and diligent. Levitt continues:

> So with mechanics. If a woman wants to learn how to drive and to understand a motor-car, she can and will learn as quickly as a man. Hundreds of women have done and are doing so, and there is many a one whose keen eyes can detect, and whose deft fingers can remedy, a loose nut or a faulty electrical connection in half the time that the professional chauffeur would spend upon the work.[66]

Here Levitt goes as far as to suggest that woman are more adept at such tasks and suited to the demands of engine work; their biological difference, rather than being the source of criticism, makes them more suited to the demands of the car.

Dorothy Levitt's public image attained that of celebrity status and she featured in a number of magazines and journals. David Jeremiah examines her portrayal in the press and notes that 'she was presented as the bachelor girl, with friends in society and Bohemian circles, who one day hoped to settle down in the country.'[67] This clean and traditional image of womanhood with admirable ambitions of making a quiet life in the country was a relief to the popular images of young partying celebrities dashing off to various costumed parties in fast motor cars. After many early successes in racing and endurance trials Jeremiah explains that Levitt

> became a real-live cover girl. She was photographed reading a motoring journal; overhauling a car; mending a broken water-pipe on one of her journeys; filling up with petrol; getting ready to start; participating in and finishing a trial competition; and looking glamorous with her ever-present Pomeranian. Levitt was presented as the model for the new woman – the 'plucky lady' who preferred to wear whatever was comfortable and suitable and, despite a conviction for speeding, was reported to be a 'considerate and careful driver.[68]

Unlike Kennard's Mrs Jenks who is derided for her unnatural manliness and unbefitting attire, Levitt created a successful and manageable identity that didn't forfeit any of her feminine identity. Levitt successfully navigated a path of respectability in an era when women, speed, and excess were popular subjects in the motoring publications and gossip pages of newspapers.

It is important to note the differences between Kennard's fictional account of motoring, Levitt's motoring handbook and the travelogues of Stawell, Wharton, and Campbell von Laurentz featured in this chapter. Levitt's opinions are much more subtly placed and her deliberately feminine

[66] Levitt, *The Woman and the Car*, pp. 86-7.
[67] Jeremiah, *Representations of British Motoring*, p. 39.
[68] Jeremiah, *Representations of British Motoring*, p. 39.

Photo *Elliott & Fry*
MISS ISABEL SAVORY, WHO NOT ONLY DRIVES, BUT REPAIRS HER OWN CARS

5.2 An image of Isabel Savory, whom Dorothy Levitt acclaims in her chapter 'Distinguished Women Motorists'. Savory, notes Levitt, never employed a chauffeur or mechanic and carried out all maintenance and repairs to her 10h.p. Cadillac herself. Notice that the motoring costume denotes Savory as a serious and professional motorist. There is a marked difference in her attire compared with the images of women included in *The Car Illustrated* . (Levitt, *The Woman and the Car*, opposite p. 84). Image reproduced here with the permission of General Books.

image, which was to some extent controlled by her publisher, nevertheless demonstrates Levitt's delicate management of her personal and social image through the narrative so as not to stir controversy but to gain support for the idea of a respectable lady driver and a racing celebrity. By contrast, Kennard employs a fictional voice to explore the problems of access to motoring, prejudices, and more broadly the dangers of motoring in this period, and is able to create a little distance between herself and the strong opinions and defiance of her heroine. Contemporary fiction has often been used to offer a counterpoint to travel writing studies and *The Motor Maniac* provides valuable perspectives on the world of female mobility during the era in question and therefore helps to inform this chapter, giving it a richer and more contextual approach.

During the First World War women were increasingly exposed to the workings of factory machines and car engines. The outcome of this experience was that, after the war, many women had a new found confidence with cars and their engines; they had been exposed to a world that they seldom would have frequented had it not been from the pressures of war. British women in World War 1 played an important role at home driving tractors and taxis while the men were at the Front. They also drove delivery vans, mail vans, and became carriers which were vital in maintaining the day-to-day running of the country.[69]

In 1907 Mabel St. Clair Stobart founded the Women's Convoy Corps to contribute towards the national defence, and by the First World War many upper-class women were prepared to take their cars to France to use them as ambulances and work in transportation roles taking men to and from locations and running vital links between bases. These women were perfect for the role as they did not rely on an income, they spoke good French so could also act as translators, they drove their own cars, and could affect repairs.[70] Scharff also notes that an American organisation called the American Fund for French Wounded were informally known as the "heiress corps"; their reputation of being from wealthy families created this image of well-meaning patriots who retained the same elite identities in

[69] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, pp. 91-2.
[70] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 94.

France as they did at home.[71] However, these women worked tirelessly and under dangerous conditions to support the allied forces on the front line.[72]

The First World War had, for many women, removed the head of the family or the controlling elder brother responsible for the conduct of the women in his household. With them away in France, or possibly killed, women for the first time had to rely on their own resources and become largely independent to 'hold the fort' at home. They became decision makers, workers, and more importantly, achieved a large degree of autonomy. After the war women refused to give up such freedom of decision making and rejected the limited domestic spaces of the pre-war era. The Flapper is a rather ubiquitous term now associated with the jazz and drug club scenes of the 1920s. Robert Graves and Alan Hodge note in *The Long Weekend* that the term was not originally pejorative, but by the mid-twenties the symbol of the Flapper as wild, sexually promiscuous, hedonistic and party-loving was predominant.[73] The car was a powerful symbol of this party lifestyle and Tamara de Lempicka's painting 'Autoportrait' (1929) captures this idea of an empowered female whose sexuality is fused with the power of the car. The collection of Gatsby's cars in F. Scott Fitzgerald's famous novel also instils the idea of lives lived at a fast hedonistic pace to a future which can quickly become unmanageable and uncontained.

Female (auto)mobility was an outright rejection of Victorian gender expectations and respectability. In the 1920s the car became a strong symbol of defiance and control. Flappers accompanied this with their short hair, heavy makeup, short hem lines, a cigarette, and most importantly, youth. To the majority of the elder generation, this was a frightening spectacle and a sign of the moral degeneration of society. It was even more surprising that this rebellion came from the upper classes possessed of wealth and education. As letters to the editor of *The Autocar* testify, the discussion of women's abilities as drivers was still a controversial subject, and the young, fashionable, sociable girl about town in her motor car was an image that inflamed such debates. These young women made deliberate attempts to destroy bygone Victorian notions of femininity with outlandish

[71] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 93.
[72] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, pp. 94-6.
[73] Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, *The Long Weekend: A Social History of Great Britain, 1918-1939* (London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1991), p. 43.

displays of excess, such as the popular 'treasure hunts' in their cars around London.[74] It is also important to emphasise that young men were just as much a part of this automotive frolicking as women, but the rights of young rich gentlemen to motor were never in question. The new freedoms of these young women, and their right to exercise them, were perceived as a rebellion and ultimately a desire for self-destruction and ruin. This was epitomised by celebrities such as 'it-girl' Elizabeth Ponsonby. She was the inspiration for the character Agatha Runcible in Waugh's *Vile Bodies* (1930). Runcible's drunken reckless behaviour at the wheel of an automobile leads to a crash in the novel, and ultimately her death.

Some of the mothers of these fashionable young 'mobilistes' were the New Women of the fin de siècle who flouted gender conventions in their own youth by riding a bicycle and campaigning for the vote and improvements in women's rights. Their daughters now reaped the rewards of their drawn-out campaign. Other mothers of the late nineteenth-century who epitomised the stoic Victorian ideal were less impressed by the close-proximity dancing, short skirts and short hair of the 1920s. To them, and a large faction of the older generation who had been too old to fight in the war, the Flapper amounted to a social scandal and was clear evidence that female mobility and behaviour needed to be checked and policed.

Feminine mobility is a keen subject in much modernist literature. Enda Duffy discusses Virginia Woolf's flaneuse, Clarissa, in *Mrs Dalloway*, in the scene where she is out shopping and hears the sound of the motor car, like 'a pistol shot'.[75] Duffy evaluates this scene as the final outing of the flaneuse in society, as represented in literature, as movement turned towards a 'post-flâneur modernity'.[76] Duffy concludes that the advent of speed as a new experience of modernity changed the modernist preoccupation with flanerie. Clarsen also notes the move away from flanerie towards automobility: 'During the late nineteenth century privileged women relished their newly won freedom to walk alone through commercial streetscapes, to shop in department stores, to ride on public transport, and to pedal bicycles. Their daughters welcomed with equal enthusiasm the opportunity to

[74] A phenomenon of the 1920s commented on in D. J. Taylor, *The Bright Young People: the Rise and Fall of a Generation 1918-1940* (London: Vintage, 2008), p. 58. Also in Sarah H. Bradford, Honor Clark, Jonathan Fryer, Robin Gibson and John Pearson, *The Sitwells and the Arts of the 1920s and 1930s* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), p. 204.
[75] Enda Duffy, *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 142-3.
[76] Enda Duffy, *The Speed Handbook*, pp. 146-7.

drive automobiles and fly airplanes.'[77] The idea of mobility for women was revolutionised in the period between 1896 and 1930, partially because of differing ideas about gender roles and partially because of new technology that empowered women to move around independently without a groom or driver to mind and tend the horses. A good command of a car allowed women to go wherever they pleased, often by themselves. The female companions and chaperones required before the end of the century had all but disappeared. Scharff adds to this debate: 'Like ragtime, jazz, and motion pictures, and the new public spaces associated with popular entertainments, the auto seemed to embody an attractive and dangerous modern "freedom in manners and morals" for those previously socially constrained.'[78] This technology allowed women to transgress traditional domestic spaces. When behind the wheel of a car the driver was no longer the same person as they were outside the car; they became a motorist first and foremost.

Concern naturally arose over the possibility that these young female motorists could be driving themselves to secret liaisons. Their unrestricted movement instantly caused panic among their male guardians because it was explicitly linked with sexual promiscuity. Scharff writes: 'No idea seemed more alarming or more irresistible to observers than the notion that, instruments of hedonism that they were, motorcars would make people more sexually demonstrative. From the earliest days of car culture, automobiles had been expected to provide a new space for courtship and sex.'[79] Equally, men driving cars came to be perceived as sexual predators; their masculinity enhanced by the power of the automobile. Robert Graves notes that in the 1920s the first female contraceptives also became privately available.[80] The personal choice to opt-out of traditional courtships, marriage, and family enflamed fears of the link between female mobility and sexual licentiousness. Sidonie Smith asserts that links between female mobility and sex are actually applicable in much broader terms, rather than restricted to those simply driving a car alone: 'Women in motion, even if only as passengers, became identified with sexual display, technological power, and pleasurable excess.'[81]

[77] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 5.
[78] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 138.
[79] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 138.
[80] Graves and Hodge, *The Long Weekend*, p. 105.
[81] Smith, *Moving Lives*, p. 173.

There was also a suggestion of a *liaison dangereuse* in motoring that took shape in anxieties over chauffeurs and their familiarity with their mistresses. Kennard's heroine in *The Motor Maniac* falls into this snare. In the salesroom where she purchases her Benz Ideal, she finds a motor boy in the exceptionally handsome Francis Bone. Bone is slovenly and certainly does not see himself as a regular employee; he 'addresse[s] her in terms of perfect equality'.[82] Mrs Jenks is shocked when he takes the liberty (he does take many) of smoking a cigarette in front of her whilst they are out driving. This makes Jenks feel uncomfortable but she doesn't know how to deal with the situation and she knows that Bone has over-stepped his place. When Bone does the same whilst Mr Jenks is in the car he turns around and knocks the cigarette out of his mouth and severely chastises him for it. Mrs Jenks is thankful that her husband is in the car to control the situation. There are other occasions when Mrs Jenks is out motoring in the car with the handsome chauffeur and he is referred to by an inn keeper as 'the young gentleman'. Jenks is intensely worried by the suggestion that he is of her own class, a brother perhaps, or even a lover, and she resolves to purchase him a uniform to make his situation clear.[83] Scharff also notes similar anxieties in her study of American automobility: 'The American public was titillated and alarmed by the question of what kind of relations rich women had with their chauffeurs, servants whose sexual power as men (particularly as working-class men) complicated a job that required physical intimacy with leisure-class women.'[84] Smith adds that much of the danger emanated from the self-imaging of the automobilistes themselves:

> Motoring women appeared to be flagrantly undomesticated and thus flagrantly available, conspicuous, and indiscrete. They might even become notorious. Moreover, the fact that working-class men, virile in their manoeuvring masculinity, chauffeured women of wealth in public made the automobile carriage a site of potentially transgressive cross-class liaison.[85]

It would seem that feminine motoring identities became infused with a brand of sexuality derived from the hitherto masculine associations of automotive power, speed and excess.

[82] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 94.
[83] Kennard, *The Motor Maniac*, p. 97.
[84] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 20.
[85] Smith, *Moving Lives*, p. 173.

The Baroness Campbell von Laurentz

Sarah Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz (Baroness) was the daughter of wealthy colonial merchant James S. Budgett of Stoke Park Mansion in Guildford. She married Edmund Kempt Campbell (Baron Campbell von Laurentz) in 1886.[86] Her book, *My Motor Milestones: How to Tour in a Car* (1913), begins with a dedication to Lady Edward Spencer Churchill who encouraged her to turn her experiences and journeys into a book.[87] This kind of upper-class camaraderie is indicative of the kind of support and respectability that female motorists sought to denote their credibility as serious motorists. Campbell von Laurentz opens her narrative by emphasising in the introduction that the purpose of her publication is to provide practical motor touring advice for others wishing to undertake similar excursions. However, the book has a more subtle purpose that is hidden in the achievements and high ambitions of Campbell von Laurentz: to promote the image of skilful, courageous, resourceful and reputable female drivers. She is fearless when it comes to motoring abroad, conquering mountain terrain in summer and winter, fording rivers, and motoring into the remotest regions of the western world. It is almost with a rather indifferent manner, as a matter of course, that she claims that the book is 'without any pretensions to literary merit' implicitly asking the reader to focus on her successes and adventures as a motorist rather than writing style.[88] This familiar disclaimer in women's writing in the nineteenth and early twentieth century is an attempt to protect the text from the contempt of male critics, and to try to focus the reader's attention on the content rather than narrative style. It can also be inferred that Campbell von Laurentz is aware of the vulnerability of her work in both authorship and as a motorist. She attempts to counter these criticisms in the book by listing things meticulously, whether it is miles covered on various stages of the tour, or total fuel and repair costs. The book offers practical advice as well as memoirs of her experiences, particularly to those wishing to take up motoring holidays abroad. Her advice covers a broad range of skills: how to correctly pack a car; advice on extra fittings for the car that may be useful for long excursions; how to obtain travel papers and information from automotive authorities; and advice on

[86] 'Baron Campbell von Laurentz', *The Times*¸15 January 1917, p. 10.
[87] Sarah Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones: How to Tour in a Car* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1913), p. vi.
[88] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, p. vii.

good hotels, tyres, petrol costs, and routes. She attempts to create a picture of someone who is writing about automobilism in a quasi-professional and experienced way. Of course, 'pulling rank' also helps with this process and her title is proudly stamped on the cover of her work. Campbell von Laurentz wasn't just from the wealthy upper-classes of society; she was one of the elites and her family are listed in *Whitaker's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage and Companionage for the Year 1907*.[89] Through the esteem and social status of Baroness Campbell von Laurentz, aspiring female motorists were validated; with the Baroness' recommendation, to take up motoring could seem a perfectly acceptable leisure pursuit for ladies of similar rank and title.

Similarly to Kennard's heroine in *The Motor Maniac*, Campbell von Laurentz recalls how she purchased their first car, a Locomobile bought in 1900, and blames their early trouble on the 'boy' they employed.[90] After exchanging the 'motor boy' for another she begins to enjoy the pleasures and benefits of automobile travel. She comments: 'If a woman and a boy can get such results out of a car, I think there can be no question as to its reliability.'[91] Here she does herself and her cause a disservice. By attempting to emphasise the ease of maintaining and driving a car she suggests her own incompetency and that of her chauffeur-cum-mechanic. Her use of the terms 'woman and boy' connotes a parental and domestic alliance of mutual inexperience. This portrayal belies their considerable knowledge and experience and suggests that they are ill-equipped to deal with the rigours of motoring. It also implies that their great successes are attributed to the technology and that their roles are limited to only the very basic demands of driving.

The Baroness does much of the driving on her first motor tour in France accompanied by her husband and the chauffeur. Unlike Stawell whose passive narrative omits any of the emotions of actually driving the car, Campbell von Laurentz comments on braking and gear changes, which she undertakes herself.[92] She writes 'The Lautaret Pass is one of the most beautiful in France. I had been assured that it was impossible for me to drive: 'No lady has ever done it," "It is too dangerous," etc.;

[89] *Whitaker's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage and Companionage for the Year 1907* (London: J. Whitaker & Sons, 1907), p. 224.
[90] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, p. 22.
[91] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, p. 37.
[92] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 30-1.

[image removed]

5.3 Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz pictured in the driving seat of a Serpollet. Her husband is the passenger and the small uniformed figure of their 'motor boy' can be seen in the back. (Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, opposite p. 40)

[image removed]

5.4 Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz driving a Rolls-Royce with the chauffeur, Smith, in the rear passenger seat. (*My Motor Milestones*, opposite p. 208)

the car climbed well, and I had no difficulty whatever.'[93] Here Campbell von Laurentz subverts the concerns of others and mutes them with two simple statements. She does not use these anxieties as an opportunity to argue about the gender stereotyping and the prejudices that she faces, but trivialises them with a comment that is mimetic of the ease in which these perceived perils were overcome.

In the course of the narrative the reader frequently finds that it is the Baroneness driving, sometimes whilst her husband accompanies the luggage on the train. [94] She is an intrepid motorist driving the car safely through a flood so high that it soaks the passengers (her husband and the chauffeur).[95] She also pilots the car up some perilous mountain passes in Algeria with little difficulty.[96] In another display of Campbell von Laurentz's very cool and practical approach to challenging routes she writes:

> This day was to see our highest climb, and I had been told by several chauffeurs that it was "most dangerous," that they hoped I had good brakes, and "you can't get round the corners with that long car,"etc. They little knew the Rolls-Royce. She flew up to Fort National (3,052 feet) at twenty miles an hour really splendidly. The turns were one above the other, so that I could see that the road ahead was clear, and that there was no danger.[97]

Campbell von Laurentz is never deterred by the opinions of other drivers, indeed she appears to respond to them more as challenges in which she can demonstrate her own skill and nerve. However, she firmly places the credit with the car itself rather than directly claim any acknowledgement for herself. The juxtaposition of modesty and willingness to draw attention to her triumphs highlights the ambivalence in her narrative style as she tries to negate gender assumptions about female drivers whilst retaining a sense of lady-like deportment befitting of her rank.

There are occasions in the text where her physicality does force her to question her aptitude to driving. When descending a particular mountain pass she writes:

> It looked rather dreadful, but the car ran down against compression, with only a touch of the hand brake at the hairpin corners. [...] We turned all the corners except one without reversing,

[93] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, p. 79.
[94] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 115-6.
[95] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 140-1.
[96] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 165-7.
[97] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 165-6.

> and that exception was my fault, for I let her run a little too far, as I was using the hand brake, and had not strength in one hand to turn the wheel so sharply.'[98]

Although it may sound horrifying to modern readers that Campbell von Laurentz seems to be making handbrake turns whilst descending winding mountain passes, her skill and daring in doing so almost without fault is commendable. It is interesting that she blames her one error on her lack of strength rather than a lack of understanding about what she is supposed to be doing. Contrary to contemporary criticisms that women panic and lose their nerve when under pressure, Campbell von Laurentz appears to remain calm and practical concentrating on driving technique rather than her own emotions.

Her understated sense of pride in her accomplishments permeates the narrative and as the book progresses her ambitions turn towards aviation. She met the Wright brothers in France, 1909, and hoped to go up in an aeroplane, but she was disappointed because the planes required repair. Two days later she was able to watch a test flight which again spurred her enthusiasm for aviation and her desire to go up in a plane for herself.[99] The following year she and her husband made a further tour in France to visit 'several aeroplane manufacturers'. At Farman Aerodrome, Mourmelon, she finally got to fly. She swapped her hat for a knitted cap and a pupil piloted the plane for her:

> Now came the difficulty of climbing into the seat with my heavy motoring coat on. Once seated, I tucked my dress well under me, and felt prepared for anything. "Shall I hold on by these?" I asked. "Pas nécessaire," replied the pilot. All the same, I did hold on. The engine was accelerated and off we glided. I did not know when we left the ground, all was so smooth. Very soon I loosed my hold of the wooden uprights, and just placed my hands under the seat. It was too delightful, better even than I expected. Round again we swept rising and dipping, but I felt no sensation of sea-sickness. I only longed to pilot it myself, and watched every movement. There was no more wind than one feels in driving a car, the propeller being behind, as is also the engine. The noise was not deafening as the air seemed to carry it off.
>
> We came down quite gently, the engine slowed a little, then on again to roll a few paces to the starting place. Climbing down was worse than getting up, and I had to ask a kind pupil to lift me out. I fear I shall never be content until I can fly a machine of my own, for now I know that I love it.
>
> After all, I did not take up flying, in the first place because my husband did not wish me to continue, and secondly, because I found that for a woman it could be only a selfish pleasure and excitement and could lead to nothing of use to anyone, but only to anxiety and

[98] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 166-7.
[99] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 125-7.

> probably sorrow for those she loved best. For a man who can devote his life to it as a profession, it is a very different thing. I bought a Rolls-Royce car instead.[100]

This extract marks a key moment in the text as her aspirations to pursue a life of technology and speed are thwarted by her social and marital obligations. She, and her husband, deem it a waste of time because she is unable to pursue a career. Her tone here seems almost mocking and insincere as though she is simply reciting dutifully what is expected of her; the final line of the extract uttered in defiance, as though she has found a way to escape the limitations placed upon her. Careers, let alone in aviation, are not available to Baronesses. Her wealth and entitlement may afford her a lot of things, including a new Rolls-Royce, but in this case they inhibit her. The other classes of young women who were learning engineering skills to help in the factories during the war were able to gain experience and careers in car production, but the Baroness, despite her superiority in social ranking, is not able to form the same relationship with technology.

Women of excess: Edith Wharton

Thus far the chapter has focussed on women's access to and experience of automobility and the contextual issues surrounding the literature that has featured in this section. The inclusion of Wharton in this chapter serves to compare her work with Stawell's and their male counterparts to see whether they write about their journeys in a uniquely feminine way. The novelist Edith Wharton exemplifies the woman of excess, wealth and leisure, touring the continent to pass the summer months. Like Campbell von Laurentz, Wharton was enraptured by the speed and social elitism of the car. Wharton begins her travelogue, *A Motor-Flight through France* (1908), with the standard declaration 'The motor-car has restored the romance of travel. [...] it has given us back the wonder, the adventure and the novelty which enlivened the way of our posting grandparents.'[101] She reiterates all the contemporary arguments I have discussed in previous chapters about the car's advantages over rail travel. In this respect there seems to be little that separates Wharton from her contemporaries.

[100] Campbell von Laurentz, *My Motor Milestones*, pp. 147-8.
[101] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France* (London: Picador, 1995), p. 17.

Photo by Keturah Collings
BARONESS CAMPBELL DE LORENTZ, THE FIRST LADY IN BRITAIN TO DRIVE HER OWN CAR

5.5 Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz who Levitt credits as 'the first lady in Britain to drive her own car'. This picture, unlike those of Levitt and Savory, show Campbell von Laurentz as an aristocratic lady rather than a motorist. This is a very different image to those chosen for Campbell von Laurentz's own book. (Levitt, *The Woman and the Car*, opposite p. 86) Image reproduced here with the permission of General Books.

Wharton's adoption of a motor car as a means of undertaking a sort of automotive European Grand Tour was becoming a popular pastime among the upper echelons of the motoring classes. As it did in Britain, it allowed travellers to visit more out of the way places at their own liberty. Wharton, like her British counterparts, also recognised the problem of speed versus perception. [102] She writes that the car brings 'the truest initiation of travel, the sense of continuity, of relation between different districts, of familiarity with the unnamed, unhistoried region stretching between successive centres of human history [...] .'[103] This is a new conceptualisation in automotive travel writing because although other writers, such as Hissey and Morton, have emphasised the historical continuity of time and place, they have never explicitly credited the car with fusing these things together. Wharton is expressing that the car is integral to the way we perceive the world around us and our own situation within that. Sidonie Smith conceptualises this relationship when she writes: 'As she situates land, landscape, language, and people, she also locates herself as a subject in motion through that world. Thus, the narrator is always engaged in the process of self-locating, and self-locating becomes an occasion for self-scrutiny, more or less consciously undertaken.'[104] This is certainly explicit in Wharton's narrative; the recognition of the situated landscape and objects around her, and how her relation to this 'outside world' stretches and adapts to her mobility and transience. Wharton writes:

> It is easy enough, glancing down the long page of the *Guide Continental*, to slip by such names as Versailles, Rambouillet, Chartres and Valençay, in one's dash for the objective point; but there's no slipping by them in the motor, they lurk there in one's path, throwing out great loops of persuasion, arresting one's flight, complicating one's impressions, oppressing, bewildering one with the renewed, half-forgotten sense of the hoarded richness of France.'[105]

The itinerary of a motor trip changes spontaneously and on a moment's whim, which in turn complicates the process of 'self-locating' and disorientates Wharton who is at a loss in deciding where to go and what to see. The motor car amounts to an unshackling of the traveller and allows her to make sensory judgments and perceptions both 'bewildering' and monumental. She comments: 'the spokes of the wheel radiate in so many different directions and lead to scenes so extraordinarily varied

[102] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, p. 47.
[103] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, p. 47.
[104] Smith, *Moving Lives*, p. 27.
[105] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, pp. 79-80.

[...] that to do them any sort of justice the comet-flight of the motor would have to be bound down to an orbit between Bidassoa and Garonne.'[106] The automobile invigorates Wharton with a sense of obligation to visit everything dutifully and do it 'justice', paying reverence where deserved. She also shares the same sympathies as Hissey of 'taking a town unawares, stealing on it by back ways and unchronicled paths, and surprising in it some intimate aspect of past time [...].'[107] Through adopting this approach to travel Wharton is able to distinguish herself as a true traveller and patron of all things obscure; a claim to culture and the genuine uniqueness of her trip. In a little-known Rouen gallery that she 'discovers' she takes great pleasure in the 'gentle sense of superiority and possessorship to which the discerner of obscure merit is surely entitled.'[108] Her earlier 'bewilderment' has now been rewarded as she can obtain what all 'real travellers' and connoisseurs of good taste and refinement may lay claim to: the discovery and ownership of a site worthy of pilgrimage.

Much of her difference lies in the physical and visual display that she created whilst out on the road. Of women like Wharton, Scharff writes 'Such modern females terrified traditionalists like [Henry] James with their public exhibition of spending power, and with their refusal to see constraint as protection, choice as "nightmare".'[109] People would gather around the car and stare at the lavish display of decadence and money that Wharton's motor trips symbolised. Wharton deliberately drew attention to herself through such public exhibitions. However, such extravagance required a tremendous amount of support. Edith Wharton's journeys through France were all conducted on a 15h.p. Panhard. Henry James accompanied Wharton and her husband on some of the journeys. They also had a chauffeur. Julian Barnes writes in the introduction to the Picador edition that 'There was, in fact, much textually suppressed domestic support on these motor-flights: half a dozen servants went ahead by train or van and prepared for the subsequent arrival of the principals.'[110] Behind Wharton's motor flights were these practical structures that ensured her journey was made as comfortable and leisurely as possible. On one particular occasion she notes that the motor party is waited on from the

[106] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, pp. 113-15.
[107] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, p. 17.
[108] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, p. 36.
[109] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 24.
[110] Julian Barnes, 'Introduction' in Edith Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, pp. 3-4.

car, being served coffee after they have left a restaurant.[111] All people in the vicinity of the car become subordinated to those within the car, as though it were a transportable throne demanding the submissiveness of all who behold it. Wharton is fairly candid about her prominent social class, and she accepts to some degree that her peers will have similar expectations of a motor tour. Thus Wharton gives advice about how to leave Paris avoiding the slums.[112]

Wharton's writing is unique in its explicit discussion of herself as traveller and her process of 'self-locating'. However, it seems there is little to differentiate Wharton's text as uniquely feminine work, if such a thing exists.[113] Instead, Wharton is aware of how she perceives things differently as an American in that she favours cultivated landscapes that have been worked into productivity.[114] Gender, in Wharton's case, is an issue of physical display and entitlement. Scharff notes that Henry James always associated Edith Wharton 'with a shiny new motorcar'.[115] This privilege is asserted in her identification with her motor car which reinforced her self-image of active femininity, luxury and excess, power and entitlement.

Conclusion

This chapter has consolidated existing theories on gender and mobility and to apply them to the work of neglected female authors of automobility to see how far their work is symptomatic of the problems women faced in gaining access to the motor car. Stawell's four travelogues show an opportunistic career writer who tried to profit from the burgeoning motor movement. However, her narratives do not raise the question of gender and mobility, and she seems to conform to traditional trends such as publishing under her married prefix and husband's name. Stawell realised that she could make a new career in writing from the motor car and undertook extensive tours and meticulous research to ensure her guidebooks stood up to those of her male competitors'. Stawell, in this respect, is unlike any of the

[111] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, p. 158.
[112] Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, p. 173.
[113] A long-held debate in modernist scholarship that Longworth discusses in 'Gendering the Modernist Text', pp. 172-6.
[114] Wharton appreciates the cultivated landscape that has been 'developed, humanized' and puts this down to her nationality. Edith Wharton, *A Motor-Flight through France*, p. 20.
[115] Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, p. 23.

other writers featured in this chapter because she is writing for profit. Her seemingly middle class background differentiates her from the social elites such as Wharton and Campbell von Laurentz. Stawell writes to inform and to furnish architectural, historical and topographical knowledge to motor tourists. At the heart of Campbell von Laurentz and Wharton's narratives are experience and memoir. Even though Campbell von Laurentz does include much information about the costs of shipping the car abroad and motor routes, this is for her social peers, rather than the motoring public at large. Herein lies a possible answer to one of the questions of this thesis: why was Stawell so exceptional in being one of only two women to publish travel books about motoring in Britain during the period 1896 to 1930? One of the responses to this question is her middle-class background. Stawell, the wife of a doctor, lacked the finances to undertake prolonged tours on the continent like Wharton and her contemporaries. The trend of motoring abroad tested one's ability at driving, often done through a mountain range, and crucially demarcated the affluent motor tripper from the elite motor pioneer. It also plays on notions of culture, education, and social mobility as the Campbell von Laurentzs of the social spectrum proved their superiority to the weekend motorists that headed for familiar cultural landmarks such as Fountains Abbey and Wordsworth's cottage. Motoring in mainland Europe was well beyond the means of Stawell, but launching into regional tours lasting a week or so was attainable, for Stawell and many others in the motoring classes.

Clarsen recognised that in the early days of motoring, female experience and literature operated as a sort of community, a forum for these opportunistic individuals to participate in this new form of modernity.[116] Women who elected to motor in the period that Stawell did were not isolated individuals operating on the margins of a predominantly male experience, but a social group at the centre of this technological revolution in motion. Predominantly through writing in magazines, touring guides, and establishing their own motoring clubs, they write themselves and their new identities into the modern age, and articulate female experience of this new technology. Clarsen notes in her study: 'In their words and actions they consciously located themselves as part of a progressive project of inventing and articulating new versions of what it meant to be a modern woman.'[117] The

[116] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 21.
[117] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 5.

numerous articles discussed and alluded to from *The Autocar* in this chapter concur with Clarsen's judgment. This uniquely feminine version of motoring, from facing prejudice and derision from other road users, to learning the new mechanical skills required, become central to the struggle of women seeking access to motoring and greater liberty at large.

The articles and books like Levitt's *The Woman and the Car* create a new, modern, practical, and increasingly mobile version of femininity in popular culture. Clarsen's verdict is also true of Mary Kennard and her heroine in *The Motor Maniac* who is resourceful and daring; she employs her own skills to seek the information and advice she requires in a masculine dominated industry. To Mrs Jenks, her modernity and progressiveness liberate her from the stoic and stuffy versions of femininity that departed with the last century (notably the century that Jenks' husband still ideologically inhabits).

The significance of the battle over the motor car to broader political arguments circulating at the time cannot be overestimated. The car provided women with the means to assert and display their attitudes towards traditional gender conventions in a very public way. [118] The automobile provided a vent for such tensions and appeared at a moment when all the notions of Victorian respectability and the morality behind empire building were being challenged.

Women such as Wharton and Campbell von Laurentz are surrounded by the idea of women as spectacles displaying the wealth and social status of the household and the fastidious female decorum expected of them.[119] David Jeremiah draws our attention to 'the society lady driving the latest model, and the celebrity.'[120] They used large, fast, and expensive motor cars to outwardly promote their own status and class; wealth and excess were proudly on display. Their mastery over these machines and their dominance of the road connotes ultimate power and submission of all they see from the car. The practical aspect of the car and its utility are completely given over to more vital forms of active femininity, power, social elitism and control.

[118] Clarsen, *Eat My Dust*, p. 6.
[119] An idea also articulated by Scharff in *Taking the Wheel*, p. 17.
[120] Jeremiah, *Representations of British Motoring*, p. 36.

6

Abroad: American Narratives of Motor Tours in England

'For England welcomes Americans, and whatever path is chosen makes that path easy.'[1] Robert Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain* (1917)

'[...] thanks to our trusty car, we have seen about all the points of interest that the average tourist would care to see and which it would have required several days to visit in the ordinary manner of travel.'[2] Thomas D. Murphy, *In Unfamiliar England* (1924)

A significant number of the travelogues that form the core research material in this thesis were written by visitors to Britain from the United States. Their motor tours of Britain construct England and Englishness in an alternative way to the narratives authored by their British counterparts. Their routes range from regional tours to more comprehensive journeys that include Scotland and Wales. Within these texts they also create versions of their own national identity based on cultural difference whilst simultaneously highlighting a sense of shared heritage. This chapter looks to the automobile travelogues of writers such as Robert Shackleton and Thomas D. Murphy to explore how the motor car affected perceptions of the country and created new tourist models of American visitors. Issues surrounding national identity and literary tourism will also be addressed to contrast their impressions of England between 1896 and 1930 with those of their British contemporaries.

Robert Shackleton was a prolific writer, producing numerous travel books of principal American cities, one of journeys made in Europe published as *Unvisited Places of Old Europe* (1913), and books on antique furnishings and interior design.[3] His journey of a motor tour of England was

[1] Robert Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain* (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Co., 1917), p. 4.
[2] Thomas D. Murphy, *In Unfamiliar England with a Motor Car* (Boston: L.C. Page and Co., 1924), p. 297.
[3] Many websites such as Internet Archive give Shackleton's birth as 1860 and death as 1923; however, this information is unverifiable.

first published in 1914 as *Four on a Tour in England*, and later reprinted and renamed by a different publisher in 1917 as *Touring Great Britain.*

Professional travel writer Thomas D. Murphy (1866-1928) wrote three solely-authored travel books about motoring in Britain, and is one of the contributors to *The American in Great Britain; an Automobile Tour of England, Scotland and Wales* (1915), an informative guide-book for American motor-tourists in Britain. Murphy estimated that his motor tours around the British Isles amounted to over twenty-thousand miles in 1914 and the memoirs of his journeys provide significant details about how the motor car affected his travel patterns, destinations, journeys, and perceptions of the country and its peoples.[4]

There is a long and rich history of cultural exchange between England and the United States that has produced an abundance of travel writing since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Allison Lockwood plots the development of these transactions in her comprehensive work *Passionate Pilgrims: The American in Great Britain 1800-1914* (1981) and notes how in the nineteenth century the two countries became embroiled in a debate of slavery versus poverty and relations between the two nations somewhat waned.[5] However, this is not to say that numbers of American visitors to England diminished; throughout the nineteenth century they soared. Independent trips undertaken by rail and coach were becoming less frequent as organised groups, including church congregations, societies, and Thomas Cook tours, ensured that American tourism to England thrived.[6] The literature of travel also peaked during the nineteenth century as diaries and accounts of journeys were written up enthusiastically. Traditionally the tour in the nineteenth century consisted of a whirlwind of famous historical and literary sites which were visited in such haste that writers frequently commented in their travelogues on the fatigue that they suffered. Lockwood notes that at the end of the nineteenth-century the tour, conducted by a combination of rail and coach,

> had narrowed itself down to visits to the enduring trinity of Stratford-on-Avon, Warwick Castle, and the Kenilworth Castle ruins; stops at Chatsworth and Haddon Hall; a quick spin through the Lake District; a brief foray into "Scott-land"; a once-over-lightly tour of the

[4] Thomas D. Murphy, *On Old-World Highways, a Book of Motor Rambles in France, Germany and Britain* (Boston: L.C. Page & Co., 1914), page unnumbered [p. 2 of Preface].
[5] Allison Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims: The American in Great Britain 1800-1914* (London: Associated University Presses, 1981), p. 16.
[6] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 292.

> Lakes of Killarney, followed by a quick trip to the Giants' Causeway; and, last but not least, a sojourn in London.[7]

This list of whistle-stop tours and tourist objectives changed slightly towards the turn of the twentieth century when there was a revival of pedestrian and bicycle tours as they were perceived to bring tourists closer to the 'real' spirit of Britain.[8] Although visits to the sites listed by Lockwood still prevailed, the motor car built on the trend started by bicycle and pedestrian tours and encouraged more leisurely and exploratory journeys into the countryside of the British Isles. Like their British counterparts, Americans turned their focus towards achieving a certain sense of kinship with the country, its history and its people. The dissemination of automobile travel in the early 1900s made this focus more viable and also permitted a greater variety of touring throughout Britain.

The American narratives frequently feature information on how the author came by a car in England and offer advice on how to make such arrangements. Robert Shackleton explains that the cost of hiring a car was twenty dollars a day and that shipping his own car was extortionately expensive, so he and his companions settled on buying and selling a car in England, and made these arrangements (including finding a buyer) before they had even seen the car itself.[9] Shackleton expresses a certain amount of self-satisfaction at his shrewd arrangements in securing his party the best possible deal for a motor car.

John Dillon's *Motor Days in England* (1908) begins with a brief account of the transatlantic crossing and ends his narrative by including a chapter on 'Practical Suggestions' for touring with a car. His advice ranges from suitable motoring clothes to spare parts, and he also recounts various car troubles he suffered on his journey. Dillon's text seeks to consolidate the information contained within a guidebook with a memoir narrative and practical motoring considerations. It demonstrates how the car is being constructed within the narrative as a new method of transportation that allows fresh perspectives on landscape, and a vehicle for leisure. Such travelogues suggest ways in which the traditional touring guides and memoirs of journeys were adapting to accommodate a novel way of journeying and perceiving the country. In the early pre-war period of motoring the automotive

[7] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 314. For accounts of the fatigue suffered by travellers see pp. 315-6.
[8] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, pp. 374-8.
[9] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 2-3.

travelogue was a hybrid genre and the complexities of how to construct the car figuratively and practically into these journeys was still being negotiated. Practical considerations pertaining to motoring would have been especially important to American drivers as motoring infrastructures in Britain were different from those in their own country where the car enjoyed a broader dissemination through social classes and numbers of car ownership were far higher.

An American in Great Britain: An Automobile Tour of England, Scotland and Wales, Taking in the Great American Shrines and Places Famed for their History, Beauty, and Literary Associations (1915) is a hard-backed book that contains 254 glossy pages, strewn with adverts throughout for anything from cigarettes to brake and clutch linings and automobile clothing. This book is significant because it indicates through its recommendations and adverts a very distinctive type of modern tourist: one for whom the practicalities and freedom of touring in a car are blended with advice about how to locate and access sites that are perceived to be significant in forming impressions of England, and places that are particularly relevant to Americans. This is a guide book of the very directive sort that efficiently and easily guides the motoring American to the sights that are worth seeing.[10] The book was commissioned by the Touring Department of the Royal Automobile Club and co-written by Thomas D. Murphy (whose other works will feature prominently in this chapter), Charles G. Harper, and Gladys M. Giller. It gives very concise and practical advice to the American wishing to make the tour. An advert for 'Robinson's Luxurious Motor Char-a-Bancs' lists the key descriptors of what their product can offer: "Explorer", "Pathfinder", and "Ramble".[11] This advert clearly illustrates the new focus of American travel in England which is no longer limited to certain familiar routes, and a transfer of the significance from destination to journey. *The American in Great Britain* also includes other practical advice such as notes on British currency, advice as to traffic rules and hand signals, and speed restrictions and caution signs. One independent advert placed in the book by the town of Cheltenham reveals exactly what they think the American tourist would be looking for in a town, and

[10] James Buzard gives a thorough account of guide-books of this type and describes how Baedeker became 'a symbol of inerrant efficiency in the myriad details of guiding tourists to, and preparing them for, the sights they journeyed to see.' James Buzard *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to 'Culture' 1800-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 66. This precedent to motor guidebooks was the standard-bearer and model for the form of literature that tourists wished to carry with them.

[11] 'Robinson's Luxury Motor Char-a-Bancs' in Gladys Giller, Charles G. Harper and Thomas D. Murphy, *The American in Great Britain; an Automobile Tour of England, Scotland and Wales* (Cheltenham: E. J. Burrow & Co., [1915]), p. 111.

lists its promenade, spa, royal and literary associations, golf course, and presumably its modern electricity supply as the advert reads 'the most brilliantly lighted town in Great Britain'.[12] It proclaims that Cheltenham is 'the Queen of British Inland Health Resorts'. This advert reveals certain assumptions about American tourists: they like their modern conveniences, have a penchant for relaxation and leisure, a thirst for cultural landmarks, and a concern for their health and well being (perhaps a stereotype formed from the awareness of various temperance movements and prohibition lobbying). The concept of a town acting as a resort is a relatively new one; it connotes the idea of escape and leisure, a contained and self-sustaining space. It caters to all needs and requirements and is suitable for every type of tourist. This type of advert seems specifically to target American tourists as it emulates the language of the large American hotel resorts that capitalised on hot springs and mineral baths.

All the lists of towns covered in the guidebook provide very rote and minimal descriptions, boiled down to the facts of when the town was established, by whom, details about the church, and of course, any noteworthy figures who were born, lived, or died there. The publisher's foreword to the book notes that Britain has typically been assimilated into broader tours of Europe by American visitors to the continent:

> It has been the custom of most tourists from the United States, particularly those coming to England for the first time, to combine a visit to these shores with a more or less comprehensive tour of the continent, and under such circumstances their sight-seeing in this country has necessarily become somewhat limited.[13]

This subtly criticises the ethos of the nineteenth-century tour and advocates a new model built around the automobile. It implies that much of the country has been left unseen by previous tourists constrained by time and a certain amount of prescriptivism. The class of tourists able to travel by automobile are largely free from these concerns, therefore their visits should not be directed by the tours of the past. The foreword also advises that as long as the First World War continues on the continent, mainland Europe will need to be avoided and visitors should stick to the British Isles. There is some consolation for the tourist in this earnest advice as it notes that Great Britain has 'great

[12] Anon., 'The American Tourist should Visit Cheltenham', *An American in Great Britain*, [unnumbered page included with other adverts after the index].
[13] 'Publisher's Forward', in *The American in Great Britain*, p. 1.

historical associations and the glamour of tender and stirring romance.'[14] This implies that the American tourist will be enthralled by the enchantment of the country and 'romance' hints at the wealth of literary landmarks and landscapes that they tourist may enjoy. Similarly, contributor and independent travel writer Thomas D. Murphy, writes in the book that 'Those who have travelled exclusively on average American roads can have no conception of the delights of motoring on the British highways.'[15] This assertion highlights the difference in automobile experience between the U.S. and Britain, and encourages the prospective tourist to embark on a new type of motor journey, one where independent travel can lead to a realm of possibilities and adventure, truly a new way of touring and 'seeing' the country.

This chapter examines some of the issues that arise in the American travelogues that offer a counterpoint to the themes developed by their English contemporaries. Those Americans of British ancestry were taught British history, nursery rhymes, and literary heritage throughout school so it seems understandable that by travelling to England they were in fact locating something that was already deeply ingrained within them: a sense of belonging, identity, and self-discovery. Lockwood quotes Frederick Law Olmstead from 1850 who described a visit to England as a journey to "the paternal home" and speaks metaphorically of the process of travel as "rummaging about in the garret among their [the tourists'] father's playthings."[16] Lockwood comments that such 'parent-child relationships' were common in accounts of visiting Americans in the nineteenth century as some were in fact in search of ancestry and living relatives. Lockwood suggests that waves of immigration into the United States affected the Protestant Anglo-Saxon hegemony and that these concerns over the steady influx of migrants into the U.S. caused them to seek solidarity and reassurance of their own identity.[17] The notions of returning home and familiarity will be explored at length as they contribute towards a sense of adopting an English identity.

American automotive tourists were setting out to see the same visions of rural England that their native British contemporaries were popularising, but also tried to retain a sense of the

[14] 'Publisher's Forward', in *The American in Great Britain*, p. 1.
[15] Murphy, 'The American Motorist in Britain', in *The American in Great Britain*, p. 12.
[16] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 11.
[17] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 288.

nineteenth-century tour and the familiar 'must do' sites. Murphy writes in his solely-authored work *British Highways and Byways from a Motor Car* (1908) of a Yorkshire village: 'A small village nestles in the valley, a quiet, out-of-the-way little place whose thatched cottages were surrounded by a riot of old-fashioned flowers and their walls dashed with the rich color of the bloom-laden rose vines.'[18] The journey 'off the beaten track' between destinations became the focus of touring, as in these commonplace and rural 'resorts' an essence of England may be captured. As we have seen, this view was also promulgated by British travel writers, newspaper articles, and car manufacturers. However, the American-authored narratives offer different perspectives and new themes that identify them as both foreigners and relatives, both at home and abroad.

Making comparisons

Descriptions of England as an ancient relic and pastoral idyll were as common in the American motoring narratives as they were in the British counterparts. However, the ancient and historied landscape of Britain was frequently contrasted to the 'young' United States of America, whose buildings and literature were considered still in their infancy compared to the established traditions of Britain. Obviously this overlooked the indigenous population of the U.S., but the largely white European ruling population looked to Westernised culture as a model to emulate. Lockwood states that 'Old World' and 'New World' labels abound in nineteenth-century travel writing.[19] She characterises the attitude of American visitors to England leading up to World War One as 'consist[ing] of an ambivalent mixture of national confidence, plainly chauvinistic at times, along with a reverence for the old country where he hoped to find his lost past.'[20] Robert Shackleton observes at an 'old-time' coaching inn that he is able to get a glance of the kitchen, and is surprised to notice that it lacks any form of modern kitchen utensils; the stove is an open fire. He muses

> one is often forced to wonder why the keeping of the old is allowed to mean the keeping of the inconveniences and shortcomings of the old. Most Americans love the old, but they want

[18] Thomas D. Murphy, *British Highways and Byways from a Motor Car* (1908) [imprinted new edition by Dodo Press], p. 130.
[19] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 283.
[20] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 284.

> facilities and conveniences also, whereas most of the people of England do not love the old, yet hold obstinately to all its inconveniences.[21]

Shackleton is indicating that American tastes for historical artefacts and buildings are purely aesthetically motivated, perhaps even somewhat superficial, and when it comes to modern living it is almost unthinkable that anyone should shun the latest technology. In this respect they are visitors to historical sites that are conveniently contained and located in a particular place, from which they may depart when they want to return to the twentieth century, turn on their electric lights and make a telephone call. The motor car, like other modern conveniences, waits for Shackleton outside the venue for when they are ready to be transported back to their own time. By comparison, the rural coaching inns that still remained largely undeveloped were an inconvenience and reflected a slight backwardness of vision and progressiveness. Shackleton wonders at Carnarvon Castle how the inhabitants must have kept warm centuries ago: 'Of course they did not have American steam heat, nor did they have the equivalent of it, but so far as that is concerned they do not have it in England even yet.'[22] There is an irony, considering that Americans came so readily to find the past and seek out examples of ancient history, that they decried the lack of modern conveniences, such as electricity and elevators, which they were used to in their own country.[23]

The theme of comparisons between the two countries is addressed by Shackleton in the opening of his book where he proclaims that the success of his journey was partially due 'to the constant recognition of the very simple fact that we were motoring to see Great Britain and not to compare Great Britain with America.'[24] Nonetheless these comparisons still make their way into the narrative. This proclamation of intent comes in the first few pages of the book and reads almost like a concession: it is pointless to compare Great Britain with America, which is modern and advanced in both technology and socio-economic development, so the courtesy should be given to reject the urge to directly compare the two. He continues, 'Now and then somewhat of comparison was inevitable, but it did not matter to us in the least that the Thames is not so wide as the Mississippi or that the Eildons are not so lofty as Pike's Peak; it was enough that the Thames flows out of illimitable history

[21] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 84-5.
[22] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 41-2.
[23] Another example of this complaint can be seen in Murphy's *On Old-World Highways*, p. 379.
[24] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 5.

and that the splendid Eildons brood over a region of immortal romance.'[25] Shackleton here concedes that although the grandeur of the landscape may not match up to the sublime prospects of the United States, the weight of history and literature grant the British vistas a special place in the mind and cultural consciousness of those that visit. Sir Walter Scott memorialised the Eildon Hills in his poem 'Thomas the Rhymer' and even a hundred years later his poem still coloured the vision of visitors who were seemingly unable to separate it from the work. This sense of perceiving a particular landscape *through* literature that is so important to tourism is something that the American landscape had not yet developed. The western models of literary reverence of landscape were something that they seemed keen to adopt and create for their own country. This discussion will be expounded in a later section of this chapter that focuses on literary tourism.

Landscape comparisons can be found frequently in the American-authored travelogues. Thomas Murphy comments, whilst sympathising with an Englishman's reluctance to migrate to Canada: 'And yet one can hardly wonder at the reluctance of the native Englishman to leave the "tight little island," with its trim beauty and proud tradition, for the wild, unsubdued countries of the West.'[26] It seems as though the literary traditions and the centuries of agriculture and cultivation create a sort of homely feel that evoke familiarity and comfort compared to the parts of the American west which had still to be reached by motor car and sculpted by human hands. John Dillon, author of *Motor Days in England* (1908), agrees and writes that

> Topographically America far excels England. Nature with us is in a broader, more sublime mood. But let us confess cheerfully that as regards the ornamentation of the landscape, America suffers greatly by comparison. The farms, villages, roads, in England are component parts of the whole and lend beauty and pleasing effects to the general landscape.[27]

Perhaps this indicates that the western traditions in landscape painting, architecture, and cultural aesthetic are so pervasive that he is unable to appreciate the landscape that has not been crafted and tamed by human civilisation. By contrast he says that American towns are built with an assortment of brick-fronted buildings that are 'the very nadir of fine domestic architecture.'[28] He continues

[25] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 5.
[26] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 186.
[27] John M. Dillon, *Motor Days in England* (London: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1908), p. 157.
[28] Dillon, *Motor Days in England*, p. 158.

> And again let us gracefully admit our great inferiority in the matter of picturesque farms and farm buildings. In England each is a picture in itself; a scene which abounds in picturesque and poetic feeling. The little farmhouse of stone or cob is frequently snugly nestled between two noble elms or oaks, or even amidst more numerous trees.[29]

Here Dillon laments the design of American towns because they do not evoke the same sentimental emotions that the aesthetically pleasing English villages are able to do. He describes the scene as though it were a model or painting being recreated on a smaller scale within the confines of the postcard. This scene has been carefully constructed by Dillon to contrast with what he sees as the uniform arrangement of buildings in America.

Thomas D. Murphy remarks on his foray into Scotland that the effect of poetry has not quite predetermined his perception of the country and he is disappointed by scenery which is much overestimated, particularly for the eyes of Americans:

> The Motor Union representative had remarked that we should probably want to spend several days at Braemar, famous for its scenic surroundings—the wild and picturesque dales, lakes and hills near at hand; but to Americans, from the country of the Yellowstone and Yosemite, the scenery of Scotland can only be an incident in a tour.[30]

Although the region offers some merit, it is not comparable in scale or impression with the landscape that his own country has to offer. He also notes that Snowdon fails to meet the full height of his admiration due to the superiority of American landscapes. He writes: 'Snowdon, the king of the Welsh mountains—though tame indeed to one who has seen the Rockies' and then adds meagrely 'Snowdon, the highest in the United Kingdom, rises not so much as four thousand feet above the sea level.'[31] These impressions seem somewhat exaggerated and overstated as Murphy could have easily ascertained the height of Snowdon before his visit from one of the numerous guidebooks he carried with him. Perhaps the sense of bathos comes not from the mountains' failure to impress, but his lack of empathy with the sentiments of bards and authors who immortalised the mountains.

An important point of comparison in the American-authored narratives are the towns visited that are twinned with others in America. Thomas Murphy writes that '[...] you will pass scarce a town or village on all the highways and by-ways of the Old Country that has not its namesake in

[29] Dillon, *Motor Days in England*, p. 158.
[30] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 107.
[31] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 87.

America.'[32] These force comparisons between the original British towns with their new counterpart in the former colony. Often the 'twin' American town or city has outsized its namesake and become a more prosperous and progressive place. This is a sign that America has truly stepped out of the shadow of its parent and determined a new and better destiny for itself, free from the fetters of monarchy and rigid social hierarchy. It is therefore unsurprising that the narratives of American travel in the British Isles are much more inclusive of the larger manufacturing areas and towns, which we have seen are actively avoided by the British writers. Shackleton writes that although Manchester

> is not attractive from a tourist standpoint [...] [it] has really a very considerable degree of interest to an American, for her growth has been like that of an American city. [...] and an English city that can grow with the swiftness of one of America assuredly possesses claims to observation.[33]

This interest in Manchester's commercial ventures displays a more modern and commercial sensibility than the British who seem keen to ignore towns and cities, and in some cases, as we have already seen, to erase them from the mind and the page. Although Shackleton is interested in these towns because their development shadows that of some American manufacturing towns, he is still surprised to see 'enormous clumsy tandem traction-engines, with enormous trailers, weaving their ruthless and sluggish way through the narrowest and busiest streets.'[34] This is an indication that modern manufacturing methods still have a long way to go to catch up with the speed and efficiency of the American industrial machine that was dominating global production markets.

The narratives of American journeys in the British Isles are most notably different from their British counterparts because they include landmarks and sites that are of specific interest to Americans, particularly when it comes to the founders of their state. Thomas Murphy includes references to sites linked to the Pilgrim Fathers and those that sailed upon the *Mayflower*, such as the village of Bawtry in Yorkshire that was the home of at least one of the principal passengers of the *Mayflower*, as of extreme interest to any American.[35] Sometimes these are just passing references to small churches that were linked to the movement and at other times these are more extensive. The

[32] Murphy, 'The American Motorist in Britain', p. 17.
[33] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 7.
[34] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 7. He also comments on the operations of a porcelain factory he visits in Worcester. (p. 74)
[35] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 135. He also notes on pp. 157-8 the village of Haverhill in Essex that had similar links.

motor car is pivotal in allowing Murphy to access these small churches and conduct a more thorough investigation into the importance of place. At Boston, Murphy noted that this was where the first attempt of the Pilgrim Fathers to reach America began, and the modern town failed to inspire the reverence which Murphy wished to accord it. He wrote:

> We can get a pretty good idea of the reasons which led the Pilgrim Fathers to brave everything to get away from their home land. One may still see in the old town hall of Boston the small, windowless stone cells where the Fathers were confined during the period of persecution against the Puritans. [...] The hotels are quite in keeping with the dilapidation and unprogressiveness of the town and there is no temptation to linger longer than necessary to get an idea of the old Boston and its traditions.[36]

Murphy makes the journey to Boston for the purpose of seeing the town that sent forth the icons of American history, but after visiting the essential sites he finds that, like the Pilgrim Fathers, he feels the need to leave the decay of the town to memories. Murphy has paid his respects to the suffering undergone by those who fled religious persecution to found his native country, and cannot help but think that the old Boston over time has stagnated while the new Boston has thrived.

Many of the visits to places are pre-planned, owing to their special significance to American history. Other places are remarkable because they are 'discovered' rather serendipitously. Robert Shackleton profits from one such circumstance at Chester Cathedral when he finds some flags used in the battle of Bunker Hill during the American Revolution. The party are also shown a plaque commemorating the life of Frederick Philipse who opposed the revolutionary forces in America and had to live a life in exile. The party discover that his estate in America lies at Yonkers next to the Hudson river. This revelation and others concerning the history of the Philipse family cause Shackleton to exclaim, 'How one country interlocks with another!—and all this from a forgotten tablet on a pillar in this ancient English cathedral.'[37] This is a poignant reflection: Shackleton came to England to search for the roots of American history by celebrating the shared past with Britain, and in so doing realises that this is an ongoing process of exchange, whether it be through uncovering a thread of history that once again strengthens the union of the two communities, or by the actual process of visiting and touring, as Shackleton is doing, to celebrate and continue Anglo-American transactions.

[36] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, pp. 140-1.
[37] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 19.

This sense of shared history is a complex one in the narratives. As towns like Boston were all but neglected by British writers, some American authors, such as Shackleton, felt as if the town and its importance actually belonged to America rather than Britain. The proliferation of travel by automobile meant that itineraries could be adapted and selected more easily and he exclaimed excitedly, 'we could not but feel thrilled, as Americans, for we were looking at the tower of Boston, the home of the Pilgrim Fathers.'[38] He adds that 'we had the curious feeling of having been there before or at least as if the city belonged to us.'[39] Here Shackleton attempts to forge an intimate connection with the founding fathers, as though their history and experience were actually his own. This evokes feelings of ownership and possessiveness over the sight that does not just belong to the history of his country, but to him personally. Shackleton does not share Murphy's dislike of the city in comparison to its American namesake, but instead finds lots of positive common features. He writes enthusiastically: 'the pleasant, open market-place of Boston, bright with flowers and fresh fruits—good markets are a tradition of the American Boston! [...]'.[40] Rather than isolating the English Boston in the past and discarding it in favour of the new and prosperous American model, Shackleton looks for new connections and ways of continuing the relationship between the two places. It is poignant that he seems particularly pleased with the coincidence of the markets, for they themselves connote an exchange, a process of negotiation, a meeting place and interaction.

Many places that are noted as being of interest to the American tourist are places of religious importance. There is also a broader interest in religious martyrs that is largely absent from the travelogues of their English counterparts. Murphy includes a small paragraph on the sufferings of the Quaker George Fox, and mentions the party's visit to Jordans, a centre of Quakerism and the burial place of William Penn.[41] At Jordans they find the Quaker meeting house and attend a meeting there. Murphy also makes a special trip to the village of Westerham because it was the place where General Wolfe, 'the hero of Quebec', was born.[42] These detours and changes to the itinerary are particularly

[38] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 226.
[39] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 227.
[40] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 228.
[41] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, pp. 158, 163-5.
[42] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 189. Shackleton also makes a similar visit described in *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 195-6.

prominent in the automobile narratives and allow the tourists to revise their priorities, follow up 'leads' and wander both physically and figuratively at their own choosing.

It also seems that although the *Mayflower* sailed centuries ago, the return journey made by many Americans in the early twentieth century is akin to a type of pilgrimage; they are returning to the foundations of their religion, and to a certain extent, the foundations of their own state; the ancestral homes of the important figures that were to shape the formation of the United States, and the cradle of dissenting religious orders that were to find freedom and sanctuary in the new world. Murphy includes a colour illustration of Sulgrave Manor, the ancestral home of the Washington family, opposite the title page in his book *In Unfamiliar England with a Motor Car* (1924) which sets the tone for the rest of the narrative.[43] Another interesting example of this sentiment can be seen in Shackleton's visit to the church of St. Mary Redcliffe where he writes that

> the American thinks this church especially interesting because here the father of William Penn is buried. His armor still hangs high on the church wall, with a lengthy inscription beneath it giving title after title that he won, for he was a great commander of the English fleet, [...] One does not wonder that Admiral William Penn looms very much higher in the English mind than does his son William, who merely founded a great commonwealth.[44]

This final comment outlines the different agendas of American tourists: Shackleton seems perturbed at finding that the great heroes of the United States are not revered at all in their country of origin due to political differences, and this slight is at odds with Shackleton's, and he suspects others', sensibilities.

Places to see and things to do: the automobile, the Grand Tour and literary pilgrimages

The Americans that travelled to England at the turn of the twentieth century, like those who made the journey in the century before them, did so with a great sense of expectation as to what they were going to see and do. Itineraries and pre-planned excursions to various places that were considered essential to any tour of England were still common; however, the ease of travelling in a motor car changed the way in which these obligatory destinations were being perceived. Robert Shackleton writes: 'It is a run of only five miles from Wells to Glastonbury, so thick crowded are the places of

[43] Murphy, *In Unfamiliar England with a Motor Car*, page unnumbered.
[44] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 100.

interest in England. At times one almost believes that he can scarcely motor for the sights, for they do demand so much attention!'[45] This implies that the country is a much smaller scale to their own and perhaps the car is responsible for moving them too quickly in between their destinations. When Shackleton arrives at the destination it appears that he has done so rapidly and abruptly and his journey has been interrupted. There is a noticeable tension here between the desire to pause and to continue moving.

The strict tourist route had been diversified by the use of automobiles and one's route and itinerary could be expanded and moulded to individual tastes. Shackleton's thirst for sights could be easily satiated by the motor car's ability to whisk him away to the next place on the list. However, the obligation felt by Americans to see all the sights could sometimes be restraining. Shackleton also expresses the desire to 'explore a comprehensive England', which includes sights and experiences both within and beyond the guidebook that could only be achieved through the use of motorised technology.[46] There is also the insinuation that the car provides the motorist with a deeper experience of places. In *Touring Great Britain* he remarks that he aims to 'get at the very heart and essence of England, Scotland and Wales'.[47] This idea of transcending mere tourism through the use of the car to penetrate something deeper and infinitely more meaningful is the focus of the broader travel narratives of this period and is not peculiar to American narratives. However, as a foreigner, this intimacy with the 'heart and essence' of another country, albeit an Anglophone one, indicates a clear sentiment of longing to adopt some of this identity. Shackleton writes that 'We tasted the full flavor of all three lands. There was no waste of time, nor was there omission of anything essential.'[48] There is a clear contradiction here with the 'leisurely lingering' of the line that follows the extract. He urges an experienced and meaningful connection with the country, whilst also advocating the efficient management of time. Through the process of motoring and 'leisurely lingering' Shackleton perceives that the spirit and essence of the country has penetrated his senses in a kind of glutinous way and invokes the language of feasting to describe this. This description of a 'kaleidoscopic paradise'

[45] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 105.
[46] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 16.
[47] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 1.
[48] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 1.

perhaps predetermines the nature of Shackleton's tour as a leisure jaunt through the countryside of British summertime.[49]

Americans were encouraged to travel during the 1900s because crossing the Atlantic had never been quicker, easier, or cheaper, and many sought to capitalise on this opportunity as they thought that the chance may never come again.[50] Luxury liners that were fitted with every possible commodity and entertainment were frequently making the crossing, and travel in the lower decks also allowed less affluent travellers to make the trip at considerably less expense. Ranella and Walton emphasise the importance of the Atlantic crossing as a transition phase both geographically and conceptually:

> Oceanic travel could open up imaginative possibilities far beyond the space of a ship's decks. With the improvements in the steamship making travel across the Atlantic as easy as, if not easier than, overland travel to California and other western destinations on the American continent, crowded and time-worn Europe began to emerge as a locus of the imagination that was as powerful and evocative as the untamed American West.[51]

John M. Dillon's 1908 travelogue *Motor Days in England* begins with the journey on the steamer slowly making its way to England. He describes the voyage as 'Uneventful' and lists the various habits of the other passengers as they all keenly await their arrival in England. Dillon is the only writer to include the sea voyage in his travelogue; however, it is important to acknowledge this necessary part of the journey to and from the British Isles as it reinforces the distance, difference, and symbiosis of the former colony and its mother country; the journey at sea becomes a crucial part of locating the past/self.

Lockwood comments that in the nineteenth century many of the Americans travelling to Europe were students who hoped to study at Europe's finest universities, or at least to improve their languages. In this sense it was almost like a modern version of the Grand Tour where an education could be continued in Europe. Murphy writes in the preface to *On Old-World Highways, a Book of Motor Rambles in France, Germany and Britain* (1914) that 'travel itself is one of the greatest of educators and civilisers. [...] it widens our horizons and tones down our self-conceit.'[52] The self-

[49] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 1-2.
[50] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, pp. 283, 295-301.
[51] Mark Ranella and Whitney Walton, 'Planned Serendipity: American Travelers and the Transatlantic Voyage in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *Journal of Social History*, 38.2 (Winter 2004), 365-383 (p. 370).
[52] Murphy, *On Old-World Highways*, page unnumbered [p. 2 of preface].

improving qualities of travel that the Grand Tour advocated can still be detected here and Europe was still being perceived as the location in which this process could take place. The British Isles was assimilated into such tours, as *The American in Great Britain* testifies, and therefore would have to compete with the cultural allure of other glamorous European cities. After the proliferation of automobile travel, motoring tours across Europe had a vast attraction to those who could afford it. However, war on the continent in 1914 curtailed such adventures and consequently motor tours in the British Isles became enormously popular. These tours still held many of the Grand Tour connotations as England symbolised the bastion of the western literary canon. Therefore a trip to England to visit places of historical, cultural and literary significance was an extension of one's education and experience, especially for the young. Touring Britain was considered a vital part of one's social finesse; John Forney, a nineteenth-century American journalist, noted that three former presidents had done the tour and thus it should be considered as a prerequisite to any political career.[53] The Grand Tour ethic is perhaps marked in such works by the characteristic of having tourist objectives and outcomes, rather than focussing on travelling as experience and a pleasure within itself. In this respect the journey in the automobile becomes a happy by-product of the desire to reach and see certain sites and fulfil lists of expectations. These younger generations, whom I have already asserted were in search of an identity of their own having witnessed waves of migration at home, saw England as the paragon of civilised and intellectual society and the homage they paid to the relics of the Old World were both devout and sentimental. Murphy advises his readers that

> In order to get all that should be gotten out of a five-thousand-mile tour by motor car, one would have to be familiar indeed with England's history and traditions, as well as conversant with her literature. There is little opportunity for studying hand-books as one goes along. A few weeks of preparation, of well selected reading and the study of road-books and maps would make such a tour doubly valuable in saving time and in an intelligent understanding of the country and the places worth seeing.[54]

In the conclusion of his travelogue he lists all the places and sites that he did not visit on this occasion because he had done so on a previous tour. He remarks of Chatsworth House and Haddon Hall that 'No one who makes any pretence of seeing England will miss either of these places.'[55] Although he

[53] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 287.
[54] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 197.
[55] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 201.

advocates travel by automobile because it allows the tourist to picture more of rural Britain in between destinations, he still strongly associates the tour with the nineteenth-century itinerary and tourist rationale of 'seeing' or 'doing' the more well-known places.

The importance accorded to viewing famous literary and historical sites as a part of one's greater cultural education are clearly linked to notions of one's own identity. American travel to Britain abounds with associations of returning home; Murphy makes frequent references to England as the 'Motherland' and 'homeland'.[56] This sense of familiarity, and the familial, stems from a shared history, ancestors, culture, and above all, language and literature. The dominance of literary tourism in the American auto-travel narratives cannot be overlooked as it contributes to a broader sense of a Grand Tour journey: a tour taken for educative and cultural purposes. The literary tour can be defined as 'a practice designed to link text to place by supplementing reading with travel.'[57] Although the American tourists are not alone in such interests, the sense of a literary pilgrimage is much more potent in their writings than their British counterparts'. Nicola J. Watson acknowledges that the texts that are written by Americans or marketed towards American tourists to Britain are

> intent upon redacting the experience of visiting the old country for their readers in the new, and especially alive to the act of coalescing familiar text with the ambiguously familiar and yet foreign landscape to which they were related so as to include some version of Britain as well as its literary canon with an amplified Anglophone heritage.[58]

This notion of uniting their experience with their untravelled audience who are only familiar with the landscape from works of fiction is important as it automatically renders the landscape familiar and personalised to the reader. The literary tours featuring in the automotive journeys of Americans in Britain have a sense of transposing imagined versions of landscapes onto real ones. As Watson identifies, this process has a much deeper significance as it enables American visitors to forge a connection between their British ancestry and their contemporary identity as Americans, and as foreigners.

[56] Murphy, *On Old-World Highways*, p. 145.
[57] Nicola J. Watson, *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 5.
[58] Watson, *Literary Tourism*, p. 9.

Aspiring travellers to England were expected to be familiar with the works of eminent British writers, and the landscapes associated with both the text and the authors. Lockwood cites an example of this when she writes:

> In order to get the most out of his trip, the American traveler headed for Great Britain was now advised, by Moses Sweetser, to brush up on the novels of Dickens and Thackeray for London; the romances of Scott and the poems of Burns for Scotland; the lives and poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey for the Lake Country; Lever's stories and Moore's poems for Ireland...[59]

The idea that works of fiction should be read as a guide to specific locales is also reinforced in the motoring narratives. After all, if one is able to see more of the country than any other type of tourist, one is better able to develop a broader sense of Wordsworth's 'country' and take in more impressions that are guided by these texts. John M. Dillon opens *Motor Days in England* (1908) by declaring the intention of his book:

> The beautiful in landscape and architecture are remarked and commented on, as well as places and building, sacred and profane, of historical interest. It is, in a way, a sort of literary pilgrimage to the homes and haunts of many men eminent in the world of English letters. For these reasons it has been thought that the record related here might be useful and of some interest to others and especially to those who contemplate a similar journey.[60]

This corroborates the fact that these tours of the British Isles were designed like Grand Tours enveloping all the sites of importance to an Anglicised education, and idealising models of European culture. Dillon's hope that the book will be of use to others wishing to undertake such a tour demonstrates the popularity of such touring in this period.

The car obviously played a vital role in this process as it eased access to some of the more remote shrines. Murphy writes in *The American in Great Britain*, 'Nor did the masters of English literature [...] always make their homes in the easily-reached centres' and gives the examples of Charles Kingsley and Tennyson.[61] The dedicated literary pilgrim must endure hardship in order to reach the places that they most acclaim; however, the motor car has made such journeys much easier and now the literary tour can, in effect, be extended to incorporate more landmarks. Murphy begins the narrative of his 1908 motor tour in England with Stratford-on-Avon and writes enthusiastically: 'Far away we caught the gleam of the immortal river, and rising from a group of splendid trees we

[59] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 294.
[60] Dillon, *Motor Days in England*, pp. vi-vii.
[61] Murphy, 'An American Motorist in Britain', p. 12.

beheld Trinity Church... the literary shrine of the English-speaking world, the enchanted spot where Shakespeare sleeps. [...] Our car slowed to a stop, and only the hum of the motor broke the stillness as we saw Stratford-on-Avon from afar.'[62] The river here appears to be a timeless fount of genius, embodying Shakespeare and distinguished as the source of his imagination. Watson identifies these sentiments with a tradition that began in Stratford-on-Avon much earlier. In August 1769, David Garrick staged a festival commemorating Shakespeare's work. Instead of hosting this in the popular theatres of London, fashionable society was directed up to Stratford to celebrate in the town that marks both Shakespeare's birth and death.[63] Garrick emphasised that the surrounding countryside of Stratford and nature itself inspired Shakespeare. Watson writes that Garrick is responsible for the 'suggestion that Shakespeare simply dreamt his material, asleep on that green turf, surrounded by fairies... ascribing the origins of the writing to the landscape'.[64] It is clear in Murphy's description of his arrival at Stratford that the influence of Garrick's notions of the relationship between author and divinely mythical landscape persists. Murphy tries to create the impression that the soft 'hum' of the car is unobtrusive and imitative of the natural surroundings such as the view of the river in the background and the rustle of the trees in the foreground. However, the car is still present and audible; Murphy's ambivalence about whether he is representing a spiritual Tudor landscape or a twentieth century perception of Stratford demonstrates how the car is being constructed both ideologically and culturally; he is clearly attempting to position and integrate the car within the landscape and the narrative.

Robert Shackleton begins his 1917 travel narrative *Touring Great Britain* by establishing his as a literary tour. He continually refers to the small town of Knutsford as Cranford, as its known in Elizabeth Gaskell's novel of the same name. He writes 'as Cranford it will forever be remembered by all who love sweetness and charm and clear and kindly visualization of character and life.'[65] Shackleton views Knutsford through the ideological lens of Gaskell's work, rather than as he finds it. He opens his chapter subtitled 'The Start' by entering Gaskell's fictional creation: 'We like to think

[62] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, pp. 1-2.
[63] Watson, *Literary Tourism*, pp. 61-7.
[64] Watson, *Literary Tourism*, p. 67.
[65] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 6, 12-14.

that we began at Cranford, for Cranford was so near the actual beginning of the tour and is so full of interest as the town in which is located one of the finest of all English stories.' The 'piquancy' of officially beginning their tour in Knutsford/Cranford (as Shackleton has already passed through and commented on Manchester) is then further extolled when he declares, 'from Cranford we went forth to the exploration of England, with every mile and every moment of our journey opening up new horizons.'[66] Here, the literary version of Knutsford-Cranford acts as a gateway to the rest of the country and allows Shackleton and his party to pass through a privileged portal from which he will be able to see the countryside as a seasoned and educated traveller. Shackleton continues that 'There are still the little houses, and the little bowed windows, and the lupines and the wall-flowers in the gardens; there are still the gently-winding narrow street and lanes, there are peacefulness and a general quietness of atmosphere and the people are still busy with petty things [...]'[67] Shackleton gives the impression of a model village, waiting expectantly for the arrival of the tourist to enact their everyday lives in the style of Cranford. The repetition of 'little' again reinforces the idea of a model village: lives lived in microcosm, estranged from any 'outside' reality. Their visit is rounded off with a visit to Gaskell's grave at the 'little' chapel in the village. Grave-visiting is a common pastime in many of the American narratives and one that Watson perceives as a 'desire to re-experience the text by interpolating the reader's body into an imperfect dialogue with the dead author.' Watson continues:

> The reader goes to pay homage to the dead, or 'goes to see the author', or even, goes to be the author – to follow in their footsteps, to see with their eyes, to inhabit, however briefly, their homes and haunts. This typically takes the form of a fixation upon the author's body, which in turn leads to an emphasis upon locality.[68]

Shackleton and his party take great delight in 'digging Wordsworth daffodils from Wordsworth's very spot'.[69] After visiting Wordsworth's grave and his cottage, which they are dismayed to find closed to the public, Shackleton says it is of little consequence as 'the real Wordsworth is seen in the neighbouring beauty of water and trees and flowers and mountains.'[70] Through the use of the car he is able to explore the landscape of Wordsworth's poetry; it affords him a greater intimacy with the

[66] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 14.
[67] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 12.
[68] Watson, *Literary Tourism*, p. 13.
[69] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 313.
[70] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 317.

landscape as he is able to locate and secure it. Shackleton's party also collect 'Ruskin irises' from the banks near Ruskin's home which they intend to take home and plant in their own gardens.

Like Shackleton, Thomas Murphy is also a devotee of the literary tour and he takes full advantage of the opportunity to visit a house or village associated with a canonical writer such as Jane Austen at Chawton, Laurence Sterne at Coxwold, the birthplace of Tennyson, and a visit to Newstead Abbey, the home of Byron.[71] Murphy even phrases his quest in the idolatrous tones of a tourist when he comments that 'Our first pilgrimage was to the poet's [Robert Burns'] tomb [...].'[72] Murphy expresses the immediate desire to visit the tomb before continuing with his tour in Scotland as though the visit would almost pass as an admittance badge to the rest of the country. It is as though the visitors are seeking permission from the national poet to travel through 'his' country. He also ventures to assert that the only reason that Scotland is found romantic at all is because of the enduring poetry of Burns and Walter Scott. Murphy adores the countryside for this very reason: he perceives this landscape through the lines of the poems and the eyes of the poets.[73]

Nicola Watson identifies a tendency towards populating literary landmarks with the characters from the texts, and this trend is particularly commonplace in the American-authored travel narratives around Britain. Shackleton writes at Dorchester that:

> It really seems, here, as if the interest in Hardy lessens one's interest in other things, and one retains a vivid impression of such an intrinsically ordinary scene as that of half a dozen heavy grain wagons grouped together, each with three horses, just because the mayor of Casterbridge was a dealer in grain. We were not satisfied until we had identified the window of the second-story room of the inn where he was given a great dinner.[74]

This description of the town is dominated and almost haunted by the characters from Hardy's novels (namely *The Mayor of Casterbridge*), and indeed the whole purpose of the visit seems to be to locate these characters within a 'real' landscape and topography: actualising Wessex. Watson comments that 'Hardy's geography is essentially animated by imaginary personal histories, and Hardy's Wessex depends principally for its existence upon a readerly knowledge of the fates of Hardy's fictional

[71] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, pp. 53, 131-2, 138-40, 135-6.
[72] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 94.
[73] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 114.
[74] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 140.

characters in relation to local topography.'[75] This knowledge again emphasises the link between American education and the idea of travelling as an extension of their learning. Watson also notes that

> over this first decade of the twentieth-century Hardy's fiction, with its complicated and tense relations with modernity and shockingly progressive views, was being rapidly smoothed out into a physical record of heart-warming and wholesome rural authenticity, still available to the sensitive traveller whether transported by bicycle or armchair.'[76]

Shackleton's approach to Hardy's novel adopts this perspective as he displays a sense of nostalgia and sentimentalism when he imagines the rural communities that Hardy captured so well. Shackleton's esteem for *The Mayor of Casterbridge* overrides all else going on around him; he is even able to write out the motor car from this experience and any other more commonplace observation of Dorchester.

There is also a palpable sense of disappointment at many of the sites if they do not live up to the romantic image that the American readers have created in their own minds. Shackleton writes:

> We run into the plain little village of Nether Stowey, and here we pause for a few minutes to look at the house where Coleridge wrote the "Ancient Mariner," for assuredly such a house is a place of a great achievement. It surprises us that Coleridge could have chosen to live in such a very plain house, on this very unattractive street, for the house has always been plain and the street has always been unattractive [...] but it is for his use of words and not for his choice of home surroundings that the world remembers him; perhaps at severely plain Nether Stowey he was able to put into his "Ancient Mariner" a certain grimness that he could not have achieved in, for example, the charming Lake Country.[77]

In this case the location seems incongruous with the author's great work and leaves Shackleton in amazement as to how such genius could be the product of such an ordinary and commonplace house and village. It is clear that Shackleton places emphasis on the landscape as the source of inspiration, spurring Coleridge to create the famous work. His feelings of disappointment in finding the house of a literary genius so ordinary and plain are repeated when he acknowledges that many of the places made famous by great literary works are not as deserving of praise as other similar, or more beautiful places. He writes of 'Tintern Abbey' that although the poem never even mentions or references the abbey itself, 'The fact that the famous Wordsworth used the name in his title helped materially to make the abbey famous; its name is far more famous, for this reason, than is the still more beautiful Fountains Abbey [...]'.[78] Although Shackleton highly esteems places of literary heritage, we see signs

[75] Watson, *Literary Tourism*, p. 174.
[76] Watson, *Literary Tourism*, p. 192.
[77] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, pp. 109-110.
[78] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 90.

of his disillusionment here as the influence of the romantic poet is lifted and he is able to compare the landmarks for himself and form his own independent impressions. More importantly, these sparks of connoisseurship display his adeptness in aesthetic judgment, moving him beyond 'mere tourism' towards the coveted role of a cultured and highly educated traveller.

The car in the countryside

Automotive 'vacationers' retained their sense of individualism throughout their accounts because their mode of travel allowed them to see things that they wouldn't have seen had they been travelling by mass transit, such as by railway, or part of a Thomas Cook tour. In the 1920s popular package tours were also mobilised by automobile technology and the desire to escape associations of crass and mass-produced tours were now threatened by virtue of automotive transportation being made accessible to all classes of tourist.[79] However, this feeling was not new, as Lockwood recognises a similar complaint in earlier nineteenth-century narratives: 'As his numbers multiplied, the individual compelled to travel by excursion party began to sense that he was missing out on the status and freedom of the independent traveler.'[80] Lockwood perceives this to be associated with a growing awareness of social status amongst Americans. She continues: 'Inevitably, it became the habit of increasingly class-conscious Americans, especially those with sufficient money and leisure to travel on their own, to sneer at the group of tourists.'[81] Herbert Gunnison writes to similar effect in 1905 that '"Railway trains will do for those who wish to see the cities and to follow in the old, beaten tracks of travel, but to see the country and find out how the people live and explore out-of-the-way places which even Baedeker has not found, one must go by automobile!"'[82] The automobile was able to offer these tourists means of distinguishing themselves and the ability to broaden and refine their British tours. Shackleton comments that 'day by day in the course of our journeyings we realized how slight is even a very considerable knowledge of a country compared with the both broad and intimate

[79] Lockwood quotes William Dean Howell's complaint of this kind in *Passionate Pilgrims*, p.318.
[80] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 317.
[81] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 318.
[82] Quoted in Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 386.

knowledge that comes to those who go by motor car.'[83] Similarly, in *On Old-World Highways: a Book of Motor Rambles in France, Germany and Britain* (1914) Murphy's insistence on visiting a canonical list of places had almost disappeared: '[...] we have lost a good deal of our ambition for doing palaces; half-forgotten and out-of-the-way places appeal more strongly now.'[84] This remark reveals that new travel patterns, linked to the proliferation of automobile travel, altered perceptions of what a tour of Britain should entail. Although he acknowledges that he visited many landmarks before on previous tours, the transferral of emphasis from destination to journey is crucial to recognising how the automobile transformed notions of travel. It also demonstrates that aesthetic tastes were shifting away from the idea of iconic landmarks as synecdochic expressions of Britain, towards immersion in the rural commonplace. He recognised that his understanding of the British Isles was greatly improved by travelling by motor car; however, he also accused the car of being responsible for what he called an "American Invasion". Here is perhaps an acknowledgement of a larger trend in American leisure patterns that show wealthy Americans looking to use Europe as a touring ground for their new 'sport' or pastime. However, this derogatory term also indicates a slight contempt for Murphy's countrymen who only wish to enjoy the same liberties.

Murphy's desperation to escape the crowds led him to the isolated Dunnottar Castle on the east coast of Scotland. His party were the first American visitors to sign their names in the book and left the custodian astonished that Americans had made it to the remote spot. Murphy wrote that he 'was more than ever impressed as to the manner in which the motor car will often bring the tourist from the States into a comparatively undiscovered country.'[85] In this short extract 'the States' symbolises familiar and recognisable domestic structures and cities, rather than the vast and diverse landscapes of North America. The car allowed him to explore unknown areas of a foreign territory, reminiscent of the discourse of nineteenth-century journeys into the African continent. Murphy adds on a later occasion, after finding the mystic Wishing Wells at the small village of Walsingham, 'This illustrates one of the queer and not unpleasing features of motoring in England. In almost every out-of-the-way village, no matter how remote or small and how seldom visited by tourists, one runs across

[83] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 5.
[84] Murphy, *On Old-World Highways*, p. 148.
[85] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 109.

no end of quaint landmarks and historic spots with accompanying incidents or legends.'[86] Murphy also credited the car with their discovery of Ludlow and wrote that 'But for the motor car, it would have remained undiscovered to us. With the great growth of this method of touring, doubtless thousands of others will visit the place in the same manner, and be no less pleased than we were.'[87] By adopting an automobile on a tour Murphy was able to move beyond the boundaries that he believed separated tourism from genuine travel, although recognising that other car owners could also make the same claims of discovery.

Charles G. Harper described in 'American Pilgrim Shrines in England' (1915) that 'there can be no doubt at all that in these opening years of the twentieth century England is being re-discovered, alike by Englishmen and Americans.'[88] He credited this revision of the tour to the motor car and the new possibilities it brought. This resonates in other travelogues in the way the car is seen as 'opening up' the countryside and is aligned with the spirit of adventure and exploration. Harper noted that traditionally the tour of England would involve London, Stratford-on-Avon, and 'the Washington landmarks' whereas in his time the car allowed tourists to gain a better idea of the variety of the country: 'Twenty years ago it was unthinkable that the stranger should penetrate into those remote parts; to-day no place is hidden from the autocar and the chauffeur.'[89]

One of the subjects in the American narratives which distinguish them from those of domestic travellers is their perception of the car itself and how attitudes towards automotive technology differ from those in America. They note with some amusement the number of places in which cars are forbidden, usually on private estates where they must leave their car and travel by horse and carriage. Murphy notes the change in attitudes at some of these locations when he comments that 'I have learned that the embargo on motoring through the Dukeries is at least partially raised—another step showing the trend in England in favour of the motor car.'[90] His attitude here suggests that England is still behind compared to America in its acceptance of the motor car as a permanent and progressive

[86] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 143.
[87] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 48.
[88] Charles G. Harper, 'American Pilgrim Shrines in England' in *The American in Great Britain*, p. 33.
[89] Harper, 'American Pilgrim Shrines in England', p. 33.
[90] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 135.

mode of transportation. The old establishment, signalled by the metonym 'the Dukeries', still requires some persuasion to rescind its conservative apprehensions.

In *The American in Great Britain* the publishers note in their preface that the road is both a physical and a metaphorical continuum which links the present day tourist with the idealised romanticism of the past:

> The highway has a native intimacy that the iron road lacks, and it also more surely bridges the present and the long ago. Almost without exception the roads of England today, saving for their improved surface, are as our forefathers knew them, the same hedgerows border them as when Shakespeare and Raleigh lived; just such old honeysuckle-and-rose covered cottages stand by the roadside as they were accustomed to see, the same scenes of coppice, hillock and buttercupped meadows, stately manor-houses and village fanes as endeavoured the English countryside to them greet our vision as we speed along the roads, and the peasants respond to our greetings in just the same rustic dialects as were spoken in the days when the Pilgrim Fathers set out to found New England.[91]

This strange phenomenon seems to suggest that even though the road itself is a path of progressiveness that steers modernisation into the countryside, the elements that are off the road are unaffected by the developments in technology, and pleasingly the people who live there lead exactly the same lives as the characters in popular novels, the very thing tourists have come to see.

The American-authored travelogues demonstrate an awareness of rural poverty, a consequence of the ongoing Agricultural Depression, and the detrimental effects of modern industry. Shackleton noted near Durham that they 'passed through several very black and ill-built colliery towns and a desperately bare and uninteresting neighbourhood; an overworked and underfed sort of neighbourhood.'[92] Murphy also commented on rural poverty which often blighted the picturesqueness of the scene. He wrote that they came upon 'a desolate-looking little village, merely a row of gray stone, slate-roofed houses on either side of the way, and devoid of a single touch of the picturesque which so often atones for the poverty of the English cottages.'[93] Although images of rural poverty do find their way into the narrative, it is done in a pejorative and insensitive way that shows more concern for the tourist looking upon the villages than for the people who live inside them. John M. Dillon was oblivious to the broader contexts of poverty and depression when he described the beauty of the country labourer's cottages:

[91] 'Publisher's Forward', *The American in Great Britain*, p. 9.
[92] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 243.
[93] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, pp. 61-2.

> The inmates, too, seem happy and contented, with health and good humour depicted on their smiling countenances. [...] These hard-working, God-fearing country peasants are apparently without care or worry. Certainly there are no manifest signs of disturbance. Their lives seem to be based on the faith and the assurance that all is well planned in the laws of nature and its process, and will so continue in peace and happiness: man's duty lying in submission and contentment and his comfort resting in the hope of the future.[94]

This rather simplistic and idealised vision of the English agricultural labourers is untroubled by any underlying economic issues; there are much broader national problems that Dillon is either not aware of or deliberately fails to engage with. By reading this scene superficially, Dillon disowns any social obligation or responsibility for bringing the plight of rural poor to the reader's attention. He casually dismisses any protestations that the labourers may have by insisting that their lives are mapped out by nature and faith, and that their 'submission' to the conditions imposed upon them will maintain a form of social balance.

More broadly American travellers in England are more inclined to mention certain political or cultural events and occasions. On reading the gravestone of the widow of Isaak Walton which declares her '"adorned with true humility and blessed with Christian meekness"', Shackleton ponders 'an admonition not likely to be taken with any great seriousness by the suffragettes of to-day.'[95] He is far more aware and interested in current events and social situations than, say, Hissey, who is wholly wrapped in a bygone age of 'romance' and tradition. Shackleton shows an awareness of working conditions in England and the work of unions in the towns and cities.[96] He also comments about witnessing a strike in Keighley, Yorkshire, and the standoff between the strikers and the policemen.[97] These depictions of the lives of the poor labouring classes anticipate the social realism of J.B. Priestley who investigated the conditions of the working classes in the slums of northern industrial towns in *An English Journey* (1934).

The American authors of travel narratives also speak very candidly about what they perceive to be the evils of feudalism which they assert still kept a large proportion of Britain's population in servitude. Shackleton writes:

[94] Dillon, *Motor Days in England*, p. 141.
[95] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 72.
[96] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 139.
[97] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 325.

> This very ancient village is an excellent example of good results from a system that must needs in itself be evil. For every particle of land is owned, and always has been owned, by the lord of the manor; or the lady of the manor, as it is at present, who holds everyone in the village in the grip of a short lease in place of the leases for three lives, of the past; and that the present owner is a beneficent despot who appreciates the value of retaining the old-time charm and quaintness does not assure the future of Clovelly.[98]

Shackleton warns that the picturesque delight of the village comes at a cost to the inhabitants who are kept as tenants working for the landowner. Obviously this too closely imitates the coloniser-colonised relationship and is therefore seen by Shackleton as a force of evil that must be overthrown. The issue of landownership is crucial to ideas of 'the American dream' and is intertwined with the concept of freedom ingrained into all Americans in the form of the Declaration of Independence and the constitution, derived from the Lockeian principles of life, liberty and property.[99] Shackleton's statement is also tinged with American exceptionalism that Ranella and Walton define as '[...] an age-old disposition to see America as a new, fresh, democratic and "reformed" alternative to the entrenched ways of an hierarchical, aristocratic, and corrupt "Old World."'[100] Shackleton frequently remarks on the democratic workings of aspects of British society and it seems to preoccupy his thoughts on the tour. He remarks in Manchester that 'Lancashire, of all the counties of England, distributes its land among the greatest proportionate number of owners; an important thing, this, as one comes in time to realize.'[101] Shackleton leans towards more liberal policies and the hints of exceptionalism are certainly detectable. However, it is ironic that someone with so much wealth as to take motoring trips in Europe should be so concerned with the rights of the poor in Britain. This suggests a deeper concern over the fundamental politics on which a nation state is built, rather than any serious socialist intentions. Murphy too dedicates a small section of his narrative in *On Old-World Highways* to renouncing 'the handicap of outworn medievalism'.[102] He continues: 'If I were to give my own humble opinion as to the chief disadvantage from which the country suffers and the most depressing influence on national character, I should place feudalism first of all and by this I

[98] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 121.
[99] Stephen Fender, 'Introduction' in *American and European National Identities: Faces in the Mirror*, ed. by Stephen Fender (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), p. 13.
[100] Ranella and Walton, 'Planned Serendipity: American Travelers and the Transatlantic Voyage in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', p. 365.
[101] Shackleton, *Touring Great Britain*, p. 8.
[102] Murphy, *On Old-World Highways*, p. 361.

mean the system of inherited titles, offices and entailed estates.'[103] This disdain demonstrates the American distrust of the old regime and why America's democratic and financial successes are constantly compared to Britain's poor and the lack of modern progress outside urban centres. Stephen Fender remarks that exceptionalism functions on 'the assumption that all the arts, philosophy, legal, civic and constitutional institutions, and canons of personal behaviour come from Europe to America, then become utterly transformed in their translation.'[104] It is from this removed platform that these 'transformed' visitors to Britain observe a state which they perceive to be unchanged from when their ancestors fled oppression; the visible signs of such a draconian system still having influence of a population at large thus appear tyrannical and outmoded.

Souvenirs, memories and cultural capital

Americans were often perceived as being destroyers of historical artefacts as their interest in relic gathering became something of a sport to some tourists.[105] They desired the physical object of acculturation, not mere copies and postcards, but the genuine articles. John Urry states that artefacts and postcards demonstrate ways that people and places become 'visually objectified' which 'enable the gaze to be endlessly reproduced and recaptured.'[106] The items that tourists can take home with them act as signifiers and form part of the tourist codification process. Lockwood notes that the evidence of this shameless endeavour was so blatant and overt in the travel accounts that Americans rightly deserved such a reputation.[107] However, Thomas Murphy believed that it was uncommon for Americans to be blamed for desecrating these historical sites. He wrote:

> This vandalism is not often charged against Americans, but rather against local English "trippers," as they are called—people who go to these places merely for a picnic or holiday. No doubt this could be overcome [...] by the charge of a moderate admission fee. People who are willing to pay are not generally of the class who commit acts of vandalism.[108]

[103] Murphy, *On Old-World Highways*, p. 361.
[104] Fender, 'Introduction', p. 13.
[105] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, pp. 362-6.
[106] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage, 2002), p. 3.
[107] Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 363.
[108] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 136.

Americans were therefore able to distinguish themselves from the trippers by their wealth, the visual sign of which was the motor car. However, Murphy failed to recognise the similarities between his sweeping visits to these places and those of the trippers; he thought that class separated them entirely rather than acknowledge the motivation that united them. Murphy was delighted by the prospect of a shop named the "largest souvenir shop on earth" at Stratford-on-Avon and added 'Here we hoped to secure a few mementos of our visit to Stratford by motor car.'[109] He also requested that an elderly custodian of Rievaulx Abbey supply them with postcards as token souvenirs of their visit.[110] The groundsman did his best to accommodate them and took them into the kitchen of his old cottage to show them some small postcards that they might purchase. Evidently, some areas of the country were slower to recognise the changing patterns of mass motorised tourism. In *The American in Great Britain* there is a large advert placed that reads: 'William Pearce, Shakespearean Depôt – for souvenirs of Shakespeare's Birthplace' offering 'Souvenir Spoons, Pictorial Post Cards, Views, [...] Models of the most interesting Shakespearean Relics. A large stock of Brass Knockers, Sundials, Candlesticks, and quaint brass articles always kept.'[111] This is indicative of the kind of demand for souvenirs and articles which act in place of experience when at home. This way experience can be placed on display. Andrew Gross notes the transformation of the significance of postcards: 'the symbols used to market commodities themselves become commodities' and explains that 'The early postcard industry developed in tandem with mass tourism.' [112] This demonstrates that the tourist desire to take something home acts a validation of their experiences and is part of the greater cultural exchange between the traveller and their audience once they have returned home.

There are vast numbers of photographs in the American touring narratives, noticeably more so than the English narratives. Dillon's *Motor Days in England* (1908) contains sixty-four altogether and a map. In discussion of Emily Post's *By Motor to the Golden Gate* (a record of a journey made in 1915), Gross notes: '[...] the manner in which road books and postcards work together generally: scripting a performance, both patriotic and consumeristic, by targeting a nostalgic object that

[109] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 49.
[110] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 130.
[111] 'William Pearce, Shakespearean Depôt' advertisement, in *The American in Great Britain*, p. 201.
[112] Andrew S. Gross, 'Cars, Postcards, and Patriotism: Tourism and National Politics in the United States, 1893-1929', *Pacific Coast Philology*, 40.1 (2005), 77-97 (p. 82).

disappears as soon as it is reached. These multiple framings of narrative and image are the precondition to both the enjoyment of "America" and the discovery of its patriotic significance.'[113] The vogue for purchasing souvenirs or stealing relics from certain sacred landmarks meant that tourists could say that they had visited or owned a part of history. This urge for ownership and possession of historical monuments also signalled a larger movement that saw wealthy American plutocrats buying up large English estates from the relatively bankrupt English land-owning class. Murphy also noted this trend when he wrote:

> Many of the historic places that have for generations been in the possession of members of the nobility have been sold to wealthy Americans or Englishmen who have made fortunes in this business. These transactions are made possible by a law that permits entailed estates to be sold when the owner becomes embarrassed to such an extent that he can no longer maintain them. And some of these places are sold at astonishingly low figures—a fraction of their cost. It is another of the signs of the changing social conditions in the British Empire.[114]

Murphy shows an astute awareness of the changing economic climate in Britain and its effects on its rigid class system. Comments of this kind are remarkably frequent in the American narratives, much more so than in the British travelogues. The reader gets the sense that British decorum and the taboo of openly discussing monetary matters inhibits financial discussions regarding the poverty of aristocratic estates and the lucrative ventures of American businessmen in England.

Conclusion

There is undeniably a pervading sense of performativity within the tradition of the American tour of the British Isles that hampered the early automobile tourists; they felt duty bound to visit certain popular locations even though the motor car had essentially freed them to roam wherever they liked. American writers fused a tour that incorporated the traditional places of tourism with their own that were important to the development of their home country. This process of working together a patchwork of sites and biographies was noted by Stephen Spender, who remarks about the nineteenth-century travelogues written by Americans visiting Britain "that in reentering the traditional sources of

[113] Gross, 'Cars, Postcards, and Patriotism', p. 91.
[114] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, pp. 184-5.

their own country, they were piecing together their divided selves."[115] The feeling that the author is almost becoming English is common in many of the American-authored narratives, and they recognised a shared sense of patriotic pride at some of the most revered sights. Murphy wrote: 'As we became better informed, we were only the more interested in the history and traditions of the Motherland, and we almost came to feel something of the pride and satisfaction that must fill the breast of the patriotic Englishman himself.'[116] Here Murphy adopts some dignity of character at esteemed landmarks simply through the association of his ancestors, notably when he refers to the country nostalgically and familiarly as the 'Motherland'.

Many of the commemorative plaques and monuments in Britain were funded by American subscriptions or societies, and this is a clear example of Americans taking an active role in the commemorative process, controlling legacy, and choosing which British landmarks should be marked. Harper noted that the south chapel of Boston church was restored by donations from Americans 'in memory of John Cotton, the persecuted Vicar' who emigrated to the States in 1633.[117] He also recalled a similar occurrence in Scrooby, Nottinghamshire, whereby the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth, Massachusetts, paid to erect a tablet at Manor Farm to commemorate some of the original pilgrims on the *Mayflower*.[118] These examples of commemoration reverse the process of the tourist removing something as a souvenir and possession to take away; instead something is being left behind and established to remind the 'Motherland' of its kin. These cultural transactions, founded in the annals of a shared history, connote the symbiotic development of modern English and American identities that were being negotiated in the same space, both geographically and narratively. The car facilitated this process and offered the opportunity for these identities to be mapped and redefined.

The huge influx of American motorists to Britain in the first decades of the twentieth century led to widespread criticisms levelled at American tourists. Thomas Murphy recalled that

> In the words of an observant English writer: "It seems a trifle self-conscious—its famous old rows carry a suspicion of being swept and garnished for the dollar-distributing visitor from over the Atlantic, and of being less genuine than they really are. However that may be, the

[115] Quoted in Lockwood, *Passionate Pilgrims*, p. 288.
[116] Murphy, 'The American Motorist in Britain', p. 17.
[117] Harper, 'American Pilgrim Shrines in England', p. 36.
[118] Harper, 'American Pilgrim Shrines in England', p. 37.

> moment you are out of these show-streets of Chester, there is a singular lack of charm in the environment.[...]".[119]

The writer (who is not named) recognises that the tourist trade in Chester is responsible for the upkeep of certain traditions and appearances in the town, and so the place has become a site of commercial tourism, much like a showground, rather than a residential community. The writer is evidently displeased with such trends; however, he fails to recognise that such tourists are responsible for providing the money for the maintenance of the town centre, and perhaps the town would be less to his liking without the vital investment from tourist sectors. In a later stage of the narrative Murphy writes, whilst visiting Scotland, that the north of the country is 'rapidly becoming little more than a pleasure-ground for the people of the Kingdom, and its attractions are yearly drawing a larger number of Americans.' He adds soon after that 'It is only a natural consequence that Scotland, outside the three or four largest cities, is becoming, like Switzerland, a nation of hotelkeepers—and very excellent ones they are.'[120] This statement acknowledges that Scotland has now become a tourist attraction because of its tourist infrastructures and facilities.

This chapter has frequently remarked on how the car and travelogue diversified through the use of automotive transportation, and Murphy's comment asserts that the landscape and domestic infrastructures were simultaneously being transformed to cater to this new form of tourism. The popularity of American visitors to Britain for the purposes of a motor tour no doubt increased the development of these tourist structures. The tour was marketed as a new opportunity for Americans to see Britain in a way that had not before been possible. The ease and independence of motoring permitted them to define their own version of England; crucially, one that included traces of themselves. Access to loci of religious and ideological beginnings meant that Americans could map an identity rooted in connections to tradition and permanence. It is important to emphasise that this is a distinctly modern phenomenon. The car itself connotes the product of mass industrial processes and the pinnacle of engineering achievements. In the travelogues the experiences gleaned at various historical and literary locations are frequently juxtaposed with images of America, and their expectations as Americans. The delight expressed at staying at an old coaching inn is matched with

[119] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 37.
[120] Murphy, *British Highways and Byways*, p. 102.

remarks about the lack of electric lighting, running water, and other modern conveniences.[121] Such extracts explore a continuum between the old world and the new, both in terms of Anglo-American relations and reconciling notions of the past with modernity. The American-authored motoring travelogues around Britain offer a unique reappraisal of the country and sense of self.

[121] Murphy, *On Old-World Highways*, pp. 376, 379.

7

Conclusion

From the outset, the title of this thesis has served to emphasise the duality of the study's objectives: to reflect attitudes towards the use of automobiles and how travelling by car changed touring and tourism patterns in Britain, but also how Britain was perceived differently from the road atop a car. The introduction outlines the aims of the research and establishes the scope of the subject matter, theoretical perspectives, existing research in this field, and how the thesis is structured.

The second chapter in this thesis, 'The Open Road', attempts to provide a socio-historic framework of automobilism in Britain onto which the issues and complexities of the narratives can be transposed. As this chapter details, the introduction of the car in Britain during the last decade of the nineteenth century was gradual, and issues surrounding its use on the roads in Britain were contentious; much animosity existed between those who could motor, the affluent upper classes, and those who stood by the roadside and were covered with dust when a car flew by.[1] Contemporary concerns that the car was part of a progression towards humans becoming complete automatons have also been noted. J.E. Vincent parodies the criticisms levelled at motorists when he comments: 'The motorist is not an infatuated adjunct of a hurtling machine;[...]'.[2] This meeting zone of driver and machine is fraught with contradictions, and chapters two and three explore the criticisms, fears, and optimism addressed in the travelogues regarding how the driver's mind and body adapt to the demands of motoring.

In the early 1900s leading up to the outbreak of the First World War the presence of the car on the road and speculations about its benefits and usefulness were highly divisive issues; influential individuals that sought to stifle the motor car, such as hostile MPs and those with interests or shares in the railways, hampered amendments to motor bills and aided the police in imposing heavy sanctions

[1] Peter Thorold, *The Motoring Age: The Automobile and Britain 1896-1939* (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2003) pp. 49-51.
[2] J.E. Vincent, *Through East Anglia in a Motor Car* (London: Methuen, 1907), p. 227.

for speeding and car accidents.[3] Issues pertaining to the prosecution of motorists and police speed traps, the problem of dust, and the car as a source of tension on the roads are manifest throughout these early motoring narratives. However, there was simultaneously a tremendous amount of enthusiasm among a great proportion of the general public who were enraptured by the glamour, excitement and novelty of the vehicle; the early motorists also expound the fresh perspectives on the landscape and the country at large afforded by car travel.

The third chapter in this work focuses on the experience of speed and the car's relationship to modernity. Enda Duffy's assertion that speed was the pinnacle of twentieth-century modernity, although contestable, emphasises how speed and its effects on the individual were pervasive in the early twentieth century.[4] This chapter also highlights a central idea of this thesis: that the automobile – along with speed, being one of its key attributes – created new subjectivities of landscape, English national identity, gender roles and definitions, and the home tour. As chapter three demonstrates, this also caused a certain amount of tension in the narratives about how the car and its presence in the landscape and the home tour narrative model should be integrated and represented. Writers such as J.J. Hissey often discussed the strange incongruities between the machine and antiquated landmarks, and places of historic significance. Tension is also apparent in the way that travel by car radically alters the traditional Victorian 'highways and byways' narrative style. The car could take its occupants further and faster than they had been able to travel previously, and as mobility became freed from the constraints of organised stops to change or rest the horses, the narrative style also desired greater freedom from its outmoded precedent.

Wolfgang Schivelbusch's *The Railway Journey* has been hugely influential in developing a discourse around speed and perceptions of time and space. This project has attempted to develop these concepts and demonstrate how some of the concerns of the automotive travel writers were a continuation of those from nineteenth-century railway journeys. Whilst perceptions of speed and the transgression of space and time seem to have a clear precedent in the railways, some of the issues, such as the individual's responsibility and independence, are particular to motoring. Hissey often

[3] Thorold, *The Motoring Age*, pp. 8, 39, 41.
[4] Enda Duffy, *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism* (London: Duke University Press, 2009), p. 1.

comments on the boon of motoring and how the individual can move around without planning any route at all, and pausing wherever one pleases. In the narratives, there exists a certain elasticity in the way that time and distance are portioned out between attention to travel and experience in the car, and the depth of detail at locations. Maud M. Stawell often prefers to give more thorough information on the locations she visits; however, incidental remarks about the places she passes through in the car often provide the reader with a sense of accompanying her on her journey. This is one of the most remarkable features about the introduction of the car to the home tour: the journey itself is perceived as part of the tour, and incidents that occur on the road become part of the narrative, rather than just a series of arrivals at various locations of interest. The practicalities of the journeys, issues about gradients and petrol, the direction and route of travel, and the roadside repairs that the car often required make their way into the narratives and form a crucial part of the literary representation of the journey.

Viewing the country in a new way meant, to the writers of automotive travelogues, journeys into the farther stretches of countryside and 'getting off the beaten track'. The countryside provided an open ground for motorists away from the congestion in the towns and cities. Once there, the writers established a version of Englishness that foregrounded the importance of the countryside in the past and the vital role it had to play in the future. Such conclusions were partly instigated by increasing levels of industrialisation in the cities, but also by the relative poverty of rural communities who were suffering under the long-term effects of the Agricultural Depression which had been ongoing since the 1870s.[5] The countryside was depicted as the lungs of England: a living, breathing, and feeling mythical entity that nurtured King Arthur and invested Shakespeare with his genius. The cities, coal fields, and mines of the north were squandering and choking this Arcadian retreat that ultimately gave life to the population of the country. As we have seen, the complexities of modernity were a troubling issue for the automotive travel writers to negotiate. Modernity was the antithesis of what many travel writers were trying to glimpse as their ideal of England; the hustle and bustle of the cities and the industry it harboured was abandoned for a 'sleeping' and 'undiscovered' rural idyll. The motor car, then, was an object of tension in the texts because although it represented all that the motorists

[5] Trevor Rowley, *The English Landscape in the Twentieth Century* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), p. 250.

deplored about England, writers appreciated the physical experience and the increased level of intimacy with the countryside that it permitted. This ambivalence has been closely discussed in the third and fourth chapters of this work along with the various ways that writers divulged their uncertainties about how to write the car into the home tour. This new version of England attempted to use the road, and by association, the car, to fuse together nostalgia for a prosperous agricultural community with the progressiveness of modernity. In the travelogues it is apparent that writing is a process to make sense of the machine and to ascribe it a place amongst traditional narratives and cultural structures. In undertaking this task they attempted to subvert fears that the car and its infrastructures, tourism, and modernity were erasing rural communities and historical legacy. Thus writing and articulating an automotive journey around the British Isles became a process of strengthening these bonds and assimilating the car into both traditional and modern complexes. By doing so, the alienation and fragmentation of modern life could be drawn back to a root; a fount of Englishness that had a cohesive effect on modern life, and crucially subsumed such modern anomalies as the car. In fact, the car was seen as vital in bringing about this enlightened view and was credited for showing the motorists such visions and disharmony that needed to be reconciled. The motorists, by going out 'in search of England' in the countryside, brought vital investment to rural infrastructures, including the old roadside inns. Hissey frequently remarked in his automotive travelogues that motorists were the patrons of these wayside inns and such investment from motorists would return them to their former glory.[6]

Other travellers of the British Isles also saw the usefulness of the car in strengthening their own definitions of travel: a movement away from the famed sites of literary and historical pilgrimage towards the 'highways and byways' and the rural commonplace. As we have seen, this led to problems of selection and representation. These narratives favoured the Home Counties, the south west and the Lake District, whilst omitting vast swathes of the north, particularly the manufacturing districts. The exploration of national identity was at the forefront of all of the travelogues that were memoirs of their journeys by car. This thesis has developed the understanding of how ideas of national identity were sourced and maintained by looking at the borderlands: places that were used

[6] J.J. Hissey, *The Charm of the Road: England and Wales* (London: Macmillan, 1910), p. 97.

tactfully to reinforce ideas of Englishness where there had been conflict with other cultures. Maud M. Stawell's regional travelogues, particularly *Motor Tours in Yorkshire*, did go some way to rebalance such London-centric visions of England, by using areas like Yorkshire and the counties on the edges of England, where sovereignty and dominion had been formerly contested, to show a more localised picture of England. However, ultimately she used these areas to strengthen questions of national identity in contrast with a cultural 'other': the Welsh.

Stawell's work is one of a host of formerly neglected materials featured in this study. Chapter 5 focuses on the automobile and gender identities, and examines how women's relationship to cars was different to those of male contemporaries. It analyses the work of Stawell and Elizabeth Campbell von Laurentz, to understand the facets of the newly mobile version of femininity. Whilst Campbell von Laurentz has received scant mention in a small handful of academic works on the history of women automobilists, Maud Stawell has never been mentioned in any study of automotive history or associated writings as far as I can discern. Campbell von Laurentz's series of adventures in a motor car on the mountain terrain in Algeria and Europe between 1907 and 1912 show the car not only as a means of transportation, but as a vehicle for exploration. Using the car allowed her to escape the motor routes in England for more testing landscapes and trial not only the reliability of the car but also her own prowess as a traveller. Issues concerning wealth and class were just as important in these female-authored works and conclusions about Maud Stawell as a writer and motorist enliven burgeoning scholarly debates about women and mobility more broadly by bringing to light significant new material.

In T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), the character Sweeney, who also features in Eliot's poems 'Sweeney Among the Nightingales' and 'Sweeney Agonistes', personifies seedy and disreputable sexual venture, and appears driving a car to collect Mrs Porter in the last lines (ll. 196-206) in 'The Fire Sermon'. 'The sound of horns and motors' is juxtaposed with the nightingale's call of 'Twit twit twit/Jug jug jug jug jug jug'.[7] The industrial accompaniment to Sweeney's entrance shows a contemporary association of motor cars and louche and licentious behaviour. Sweeney's

[7] T.S. Eliot, 'The Waste Land' in *The Norton Anthology of Poetry, Fifth Edition*, ed. by Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, and Jon Stallworthy (New York; London: W.W. Norton & Co., 2005), pp. 1344-56 (pp. 1349-50).

advances on Mrs Porter in *The Waste Land* depict the motor car as a 'vehicle' for providing access and mobility for such conduct, and as a symbol of decay. As the fifth chapter in this work on gender and motoring has shown, similar issues seem to coat contemporary perceptions of women's access to automobility. The occupation of spaces outside the home and the freedom of movement often hindered women from engaging with this new technology. Pervasive notions of the car as a masculine space that required the intelligence and aptitude of a skilled mechanic isolated women and prevented them from exploiting the uninhibited independence that others enjoyed. Jean Baudrillard remarks that 'The car achieves an extraordinary compromise, for it makes it possible to be simultaneously at home and further and further away from home. It is thus the centre of a new kind of subjectivity, but a centre bounded by no circumference, whereas the subjectivity of the domestic world is strictly circumscribed.'[8] The idea of a domestic space that is able to elide the regular restrictions of the home is particularly important to female drivers as it both reinforces their attachment to the home and their status within it whilst transgressing other socials norms associated with domesticity.

The sixth chapter of this thesis explores the significance of the large number of works about touring Britain in an automobile written by visiting Americans. The number of works that focus particularly on this brand of foreign tourist attest to the popularity of Britain as a place to conduct a motor tour. These travelogues challenged contemporary ideas about Englishness and formed their own impressions of England, and crucially, used these notions to debate American national identity. Although these travellers were by nationality foreign, they were also British through a shared ancestry and cultural heritage. These travelogues can be read as transactions and negotiations between their own culture and writing a distinctively American version of Britain, but also questioning and challenging pervasive versions of Englishness. Their tourist vision uncovered aspects that travelogues authored by their English counterparts were less inclined to investigate: industrial and urban areas were featured as places of interest, areas of the north that were so frequently omitted from English versions of England are included, and broader discussions about the purpose and function of the titled classes, that were also the cause of tensions up into the 1920s, were being debated. These narratives provide another perspective on travel in Britain during this period and serve to contrast with the

[8] Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (London; New York: Verso, 2005), p. 71.

travelogues written by English authors that found so much popular favour during the first decades of the twentieth century.

In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* Ford becomes a deity and humanity is formed from test-tubes to confirm to the collectives of class stereotypes. The society is dependent on leisure after workers' nine-to-fives are complete: sport and sensory gratification. Such depictions of a dystopian modern society that were dependent on machines, consumer products and luxury goods were certainly prevalent anxieties in other contemporary works. It has been asserted by Sean O'Connell that in highbrow literature the car was certainly seen as distasteful.[9] As the motoring movement burgeoned in the 1910s and 20s the motor car's popularity and proliferation amongst the lower and middle classes made it seem common and déclassé. In Max Beerbohm's popular novel *Zuleika Dobson* (1911), the undergraduate Duke of Dorset attempts to woo Zuleika and boasts about the power of his motor car, to which she retorts "Oh, I never go in motors,' [...] 'They make one look like nothing on earth, and like everybody else."[10] This kind of antipathy towards the car is mirrored in the travelogues as they enjoy the experience of motoring and privilege yet denounce the other motor tourists, especially charabanc parties. I have already explored the anti-tourist sentiment in chapters two and three, but it is important to recognise that the motorists rarely associate themselves with the destructive side of tourism that they so often renounce in the texts. By targeting their derision at other lower-class tourists in charabancs they attempt to disown their discomfort with how tourism radically alters the places that they visit.

The authors of these travelogues were attempting to construct the car both ideologically and culturally. This process was carried out to distinguish the motorists as a new breed of traveller whose tourist gaze was exclusive and privileged because they were able to gain new perspectives on the landscape through the use of an automobile. This project has moved beyond viewing the period between 1896 and 1930 as simply a 'golden age' to uncover the complexity of ideas and perceptions of the car and motoring in Britain that led Sean O'Connell to his conclusion that the car was both 'a

[9] Sean O'Connell, *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender and Motoring 1896-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 185-9.
[10] Max Beerbohm, *Zuleika Dobson* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), p. 46.

critique and celebration of modernity'.[11] This thesis turns our attention to a critical stage in transport history, one that is often overlooked due to the car's prolific and accepted use. The focus on travelogues as a means of gauging ideas about travel, the home tour, and automobilism is new; these are the largely forgotten narratives of a revolutionary period of travel. Whilst much attention has focussed on the democracy of travel in the United States little has been written about the impact of car journeys in Britain and the travel narratives they produced. This work has brought together existing travel writing theory, the socio-cultural history of the car, and tourism theory to craft new definitions of automobile travel in Britain and its literary representation, the integration of which has enriched our understanding of how a revolution in transportation radically altered the way that travel, travel writing, and perceptions of class, gender, and national identity between 1896 to 1930 changed.

[11] O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, p. ix.

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