

---

# CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
INTRODUCTION	6
CHAPTER 1: <i>MARQUE MASCOTS</i>	11
CHAPTER 2: <i>ACCESSORY MASCOTS</i>	98
CHAPTER 3: <i>GLASS MASCOTS</i>	122
CHAPTER 4: <i>CORPORATE &amp; PERSONAL MASCOTS</i>	129
CHAPTER 5: <i>COLLECTING EXPERIENCES</i>	150
ACCESSORY MASCOT MANUFACTURERS & OUTLETS	157
BRITISH MOTOR INDUSTRY MAJOR MARQUES	158
INDEX	159



Triumph was one of many car makers with origins in the cycle industry. (Courtesy National Motor Museum)



One of the earliest car mascots was this St Christopher, which was bolted to the dashboard of John Montagu's 1899 Daimler. It accompanied him when he became the first MP to drive a petrol-driven car into the House of Commons yard. (Courtesy National Motor Museum)



Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt achieved a similar feat when he became the first American politician to drive to Congress. This motoring bear mascot is said to commemorate the event.



The British Bulldog was immediately popular as a mascot. This one is standing on the Union flag. Finished in brass, it cost 32 shillings in 1912.

Portent of Doom or Good Luck charm; at the turn of the century, a motoring mascot could be called either. Much depended on whether you were a pedestrian or driver ...

We accept that Daimler and Benz built the first production cars in 1886. But it is impossible to say exactly who built the very first internal combustion engine, as various people experimented with the idea without their results being reported. Others, however, were quick to make false claims, and this has led to great debates over the origins of the first true motorcar. The origins of the first motoring mascot are similarly unclear. We do know that John Montagu of Beaulieu had a mascot fitted to his 1899 Daimler, and that it was fitted when he became the first MP to drive a petrol-driven car into the House of Commons yard.

Certainly by 1910 motoring mascots were commonplace. An article in the *Autocar* of that year describes a gnome engine and propeller mascot as "the least meaningless of the many mascots to be met with." A later article in 1911 describes the seven-cylinder engine as being "nicely machined out of cast aluminium." The manufacturer was R. Beney & Company. Apparently, if the driver of a contemporary car was wicked enough to cruise at 60mph - the speed limit was 20mph - the mascot engine would spin around at 12,000rpm! 1911 also saw the Coronation mascot, a competition-winning design offered by Morris, Russell and Company of Hatton Gardens. Reproduced in brass, part of the purchase price of this mascot went to the Edward VII Memorial fund.

Motoring mascots could be bought from Dunhill, Gammages and Harrods. They also began to be widely available from motor factors







Hassall policeman with rechromed base. Originally it would have been nickel plated.

lecting: is it preferable to have a well-worn, perhaps battered, example, or a pristine refurbished item (*i.e.* replated)? Both are, of course, much more desirable than a reproduction mascot, but more of that later! My decision then was to

choose the Hassall policeman with a rechromed base and clearer porcelain face, rather than an example where the body was worn down to bare brass. Both examples were good original mascots but, with the benefit of hindsight, I would, today,



Hispano-Suiza Stork, probably a 1980s reproduction!

choose the unrestored mascot.

Another of my early mascot purchases was an Hispano-Suiza stork designed by F. Bazin, a leading French mascot designer/sculptor. It was during a speculative visit to a London vintage car dealer who had a small showcase of mascots, many of which, the owner pointed out, were reproductions. However, one of the mechanics told me he had an original H.S. Stork for sale and, after a short discussion and exchange of money, I became the owner of this attractive stork (see illustration), which had slightly pitted chrome and was signed F. Bazin on the base. I do not now believe that this mascot is original; it just does not feel and look right in terms of quality of finish, the underside of the wings in particular. I have been told that it is probably a good Spanish reproduction, but there's no certainty of origin.

A word of warning here to any new collector: there are many reproductions on the market, particularly of the more expensive mascots such as Rolls-Royce, the Austin "Winged Wheel," MG Midge, etc. Take time and ask advice; feel and handle as many mascots as possible. If in doubt, control the passion to purchase and reconsider. A good repro-



Radiator mascots were fixed by wires which bent around the slats.

In order to view the mascots on the day, we decided to be in London by 9am. On this occasion I was accompanied by two good friends, both car enthusiasts and, incidentally, organisers of the well-known autojumble and classic car weekends at Tatton Park, Cheshire. (These

weekends are well worth a visit to see the cars and possibly pick up the odd mascot.)

We left Northwich at 4am and were having breakfast near the RAF museum in Hendon at 7am; it had been a good run down the M6/M1 from the North West. The RAF Mu-

seum is, in itself, a splendid sight, but when vintage and classic cars are displayed amongst the historic planes it is spectacular. Firstly, we had a quick look around the cars and then went on into the sale room at the back of the massive aircraft hanger.

The automobilia comprised petrol pumps, globes, picnic sets, lamps, books, literature, spare parts, pictures, mascots, badges and more. The mascots, mainly, were lined up on the shelves behind the counter and could be inspected and handled on request.

After looking closely at many of the mascots, including several Laliques (outside my collection interest and price range), I was particularly interested in two items - an MG Midge and an Alvis Firefly. Many MG Midges have appeared at auctions recently as a number have been reproduced, and I would normally steer clear of Midges. However, this example looked bent and had a nice rubbed-down patina. In fairness to Sotheby's, the mascot had been listed as a "Midge-type," to show that its originality was uncertain. All the major auction houses have recently tried to isolate the large number of repros of certain mascots currently on the market, hence the caution in listing certain items in the catalogue as "-type."

I was lucky enough to get the Midge for £150 and, although I cannot be certain, a number of 'experts' have since indicated that they believe it to be genuine. This example clearly demonstrates that, whilst many reproductions are poor or relatively poor, with giveaway casting lines, it is not always possible to be certain either way.

The second mascot of interest to me was the Alvis Firefly, as I wanted this to help complete my