

## CHAPTER V

### Helliwells

The firm of Helliwells was started in 1889 by a man with that name at a factory in Fountain Street, Dudley, to make fenders, fire irons and the like. They appear to have carried on with this class of work till the early 1930's when they branched out into folded metalwork and made a speciality of car windscreen frames. From this it was a natural extension to making windscreens and cabin tops for aircraft and this was done at the time of the expansion of the RAF in the late 30's. They also had a factory at Treforest, Glamorgan, for this sort of work but details are scanty. Within a week of the formation of the original firm a Mr. H. Parsons wrote applying for the job as a ledger clerk and was taken on at a salary of 4s. a week. Fifty years later he had risen to the highest ranks of the firm. Another individual who was to play an important part in the development of Helliwells was Eric Sanders who joined it in 1933 at the age of 27 and who had previously been employed by Auster Triplex, who at that time made a very large proportion of British car windscreens. Helliwells was then expanding rapidly with this class of work and had extended the factory across the street and even into larger premises in Oakeywell Street. Sanders was a man of vision and realising that further expansion was hampered by out of date machinery and limited factory space he sold out to his principal competitor which enabled him to raise the capital for an improved factory and modern machinery. Thinking that if he was going to make aircraft parts he ought to be on an aerodrome he applied to the Walsall Corporation to build a new factory on their aerodrome. This was approved and the factory was started in the summer of 1938 (the Harrow crash at Walsall Aerodrome was seen by men working on the roof of the new factory in July 1938). There was an article on Helliwells in the 16 Feb. 1939 issue of *Flight*, which talks about the recently opened factory at Walsall but does not give a precise date.

#### Blockidge Dudley Almanack

1893-1896	Helliwell, J. H.	Manufacturer	Fountain Street, Dudley.
1897-1898	Helliwell, J. H.	Manufacturer	Fountain Street, Dudley.
	Helliwell, E.	Manufacturer	Nelson Road.
1899-1902	Helliwell, J. H.	Manufacturer	Oakeywell Street, Dudley.

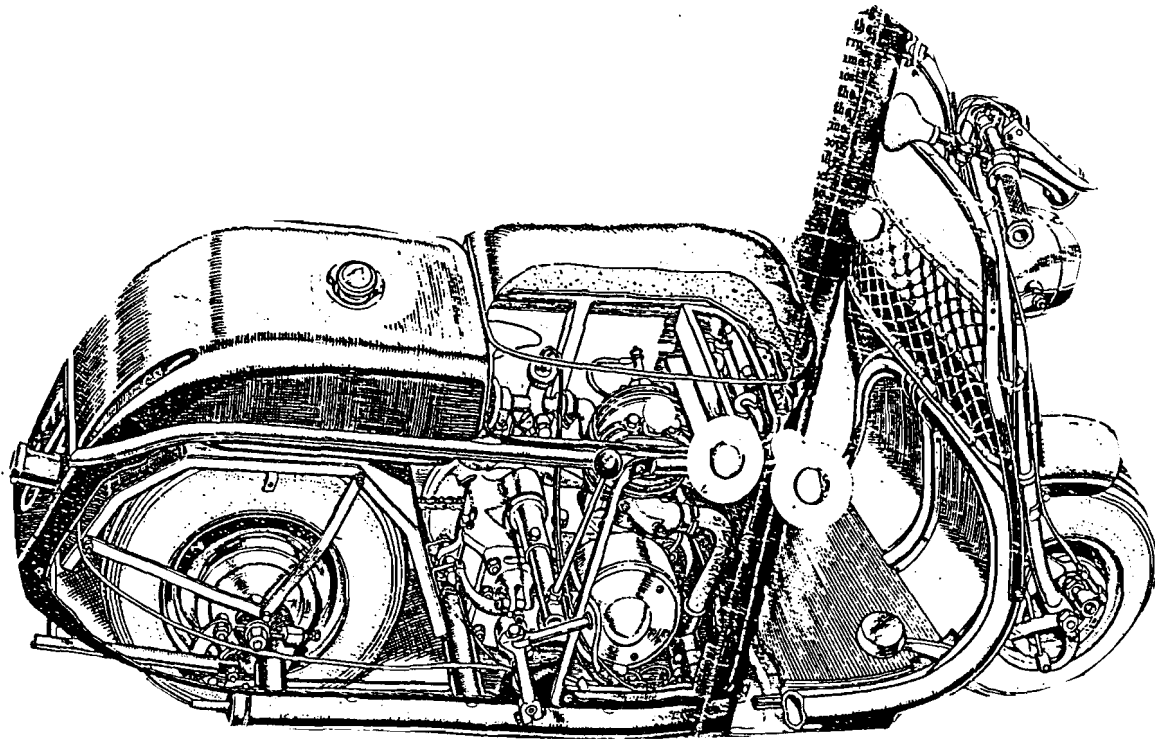
From 1903, the format of Dudley Almanack arranges businesses in *selected* Street order rather than alphabetically in Surname order. Unfortunately, Oakeywell Street and Fountain Street are not listed.

#### Worcestershire Trade Directories

1916	}	FENDER MAKERS	Helliwells Ltd., Fountain Street, Dudley.
1921			
1924			
1933		FENDER & FIRE IRONS	Helliwells Ltd., Tunnel Foundry.
1936		HELLIWELLS LTD.,	
		WINDSCREEN MANUFACTURERS	Fountain Street & Oakeywell Street.
1940		HELLIWELLS LTD.,	Fountain Street & Oakeywell Street, Dudley.
		AIRCRAFT COMPONENT MANUFACTURERS	
		No Helliwells listed under Fender Makers.	

Around this time another well known firm had been developing, which was to affect Helliwells. William Lyons had started a firm to manufacture side cars for motor cycles in 1922 at a factory in Bloomfield Street, Blackpool, under the name of Swallow Sidecar and Coachbuilding Company. They were popular and had a stand at the Motor Show in 1923, so Lyons and William Walmsley formed a company to continue this work and moved to larger premises in Cocker Street. They prospered and even exported their side cars to Europe. So now they turned their attention to making bodies for cars and in 1927 produced a very attractive body on the Austin Seven chassis and in 1928 a Morris version. However they had difficulties in getting components from the Midlands, which was then the heart of the motor industry. So in 1928 they decided to move to Coventry and set up a factory in Browns Lane. Within 2 years they had recovered from the move and had had a larger production than previously at Blackpool.

As they were then known Swallow Cars became popular and in 1931 they were offering a Seven Coupe and a 16 HP saloon priced at £310. I remember going down from Cambridge for the Motor Show and being impressed with their appearance. Then in 1935 Lyons changed the name of the firm to S.S. Jaguar, and over the next 4 years they went from strength to strength though they were still using main components made by Standard Cars. The next development was to start designing their own engines, but they were still producing side cars for motor cycles along with the cars. However in 1939 car production had to stop as their capacity was fully taken up with a large order of side cars for the army. After the war car production was restarted and the side car business sold to Helliwells at Walsall. The latter firm decided to expand this type of work and produced the Swallow Gadabout with a Villiers 125 c.c. engine, which was one of the first scooters and this received good reports in the motoring press.

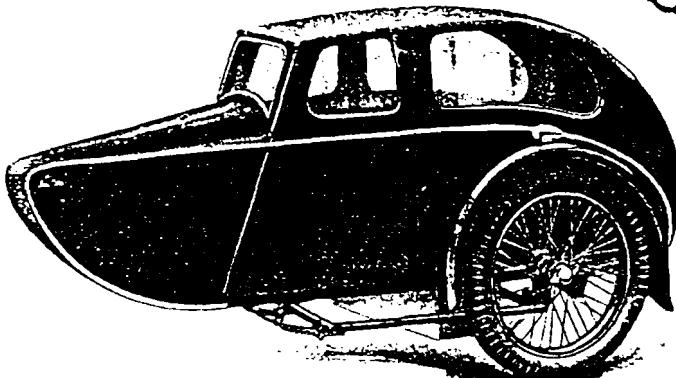
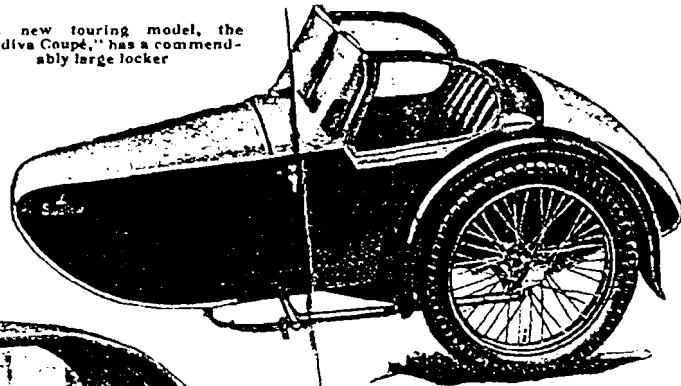


#### Distinctive Swallow Sidecars—

is exceptionally roomy and is built on more conventional lines. It has a three-piece screen with a fabric front apron and screen frame, and a hood. Locker space is ample, and access to it is gained from behind the seat. The price is £18 18s. Body only, £11 10s.

The list of new sidecars is completed by Model 15, the "Ascot" two-seater saloon. In this body an adult has comfortable accommodation in the rear, and there is ample room in the front for a person of 5ft. Access to the rear seat is gained by hinging the backrest of the front seat forward. A detachable apron

This new touring model, the "Godiva Coupé," has a commendably large locker



A well-built two-seater design—the "Ascot" saloon

is stretched over the roof. The body has nicely flowing lines, and the finish is relieved by a chromium strip. This sidecar costs £25 10s. Body only, £18.

The "Syston Sports," Model 7a, remains unaltered and is an attractive sports job costing £17 19s. 6d. Body only, £10 15s.

Designed as an adult two-seater, the "Hurlingham," Model 8a, has been greatly improved. The tail has been given a downward sweep, and a disappearing hood is fitted. In the rear seat,

the passenger is unusually well supported and there is a grab-rail which assists entry and exit. The price is £22 10s. Body only, £14.

A light two-seater is known as the "Kenilworth," Model 8D. It accommodates an adult and a child and is now longer, wider and has more room in the rear seat. It is an enclosed sidecar with a fabric-covered head and detachable waterproof top, and it costs £19 15s. Body only, £12 15s.

The "Bedford" tourer, Model 9D, is

improved by having a downswept and flared tail, a large locker with a rear opening door, and a body 2in. deeper. It has fluted shoulders, a one-piece screen on a hinged dash, and a hood. Its price is £19 10s. Body only, £12 2s. 6d.

An occasional two-seater is the "Bedford Tourer de Luxe," Model 9a. It is on similar lines to the other "Bedford," but has large, framed side screens and a disappearing hood. This model costs £22 15s. Body only, £14.

The "Standard Launch," Model 10, is now known as the "Severn" and remains unchanged. It costs £19 5s. Body only, £11 15s.

The "Avon de Luxe Launch," Model 11, is greatly improved. Its deck slopes slightly downwards towards the bow, it has a new and better-looking tail, increased locker space, a luggage grid on the back, a disappearing hood, a three-piece screen and a two-colour finish. It costs £24 10s. Body only, £16.

Lastly, comes the "Marlowe Sun Saloon," Model 12. It is unaltered and is a full saloon with a launch-like nose and a streamlined roof. The price is £22 5s. Body only, £14 2s. 6d. The "Universal" chassis costs £8 15s.

## Swallow Gadabout

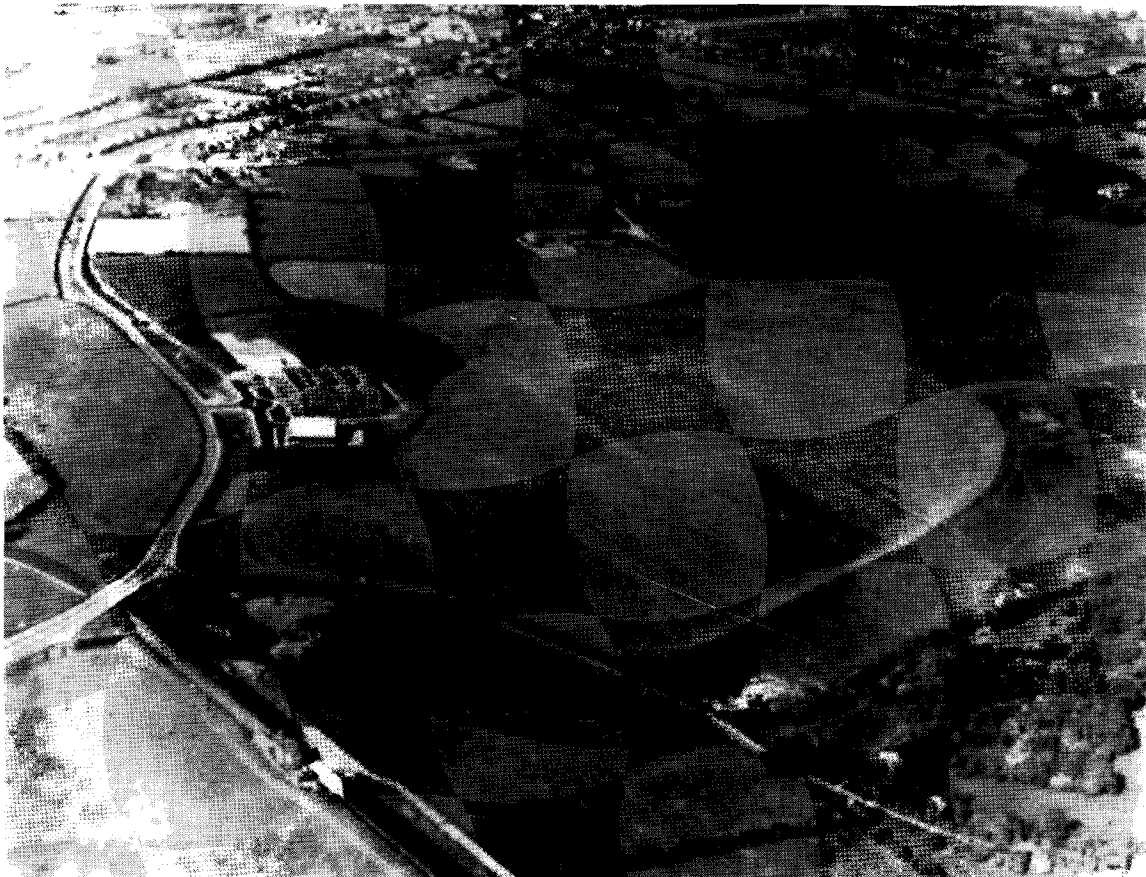
It was called Two Wheeler, or Mr. and Mrs. Everyman. This small machine was ideal for short distance travel in town or country. The prototype was a Mark I Swallow Gadabout, which was on loan to staff at the *Motor Cycle Magazine* for a couple of months.

The frame consisted of two 1¾in. diameter 16 gauge tubes running forward from each side of the rear wheel. Joining the two side tubes, towards the rear, are two transverse tubes — one forward, one aft, of the engine. The braking system consisted of 5in. diameter internal expanding brakes fitted to both wheels. The 125 c.c. Villiers two-stroke engine unit was supported by two transverse frame tubes. The gearbox was three speed. Ignition was by flywheel magneto, which incorporated 6 volt coils for lighting. The petrol tank was fitted to the rear of the machine and had a capacity of two gallons of petrol. The seat was a hinged arrangement, and when raised it disclosed the tool tray, alongside the fuel tap. During the two months trial at *Motor Cycle Magazine* feedback concerning performance was very favourable.

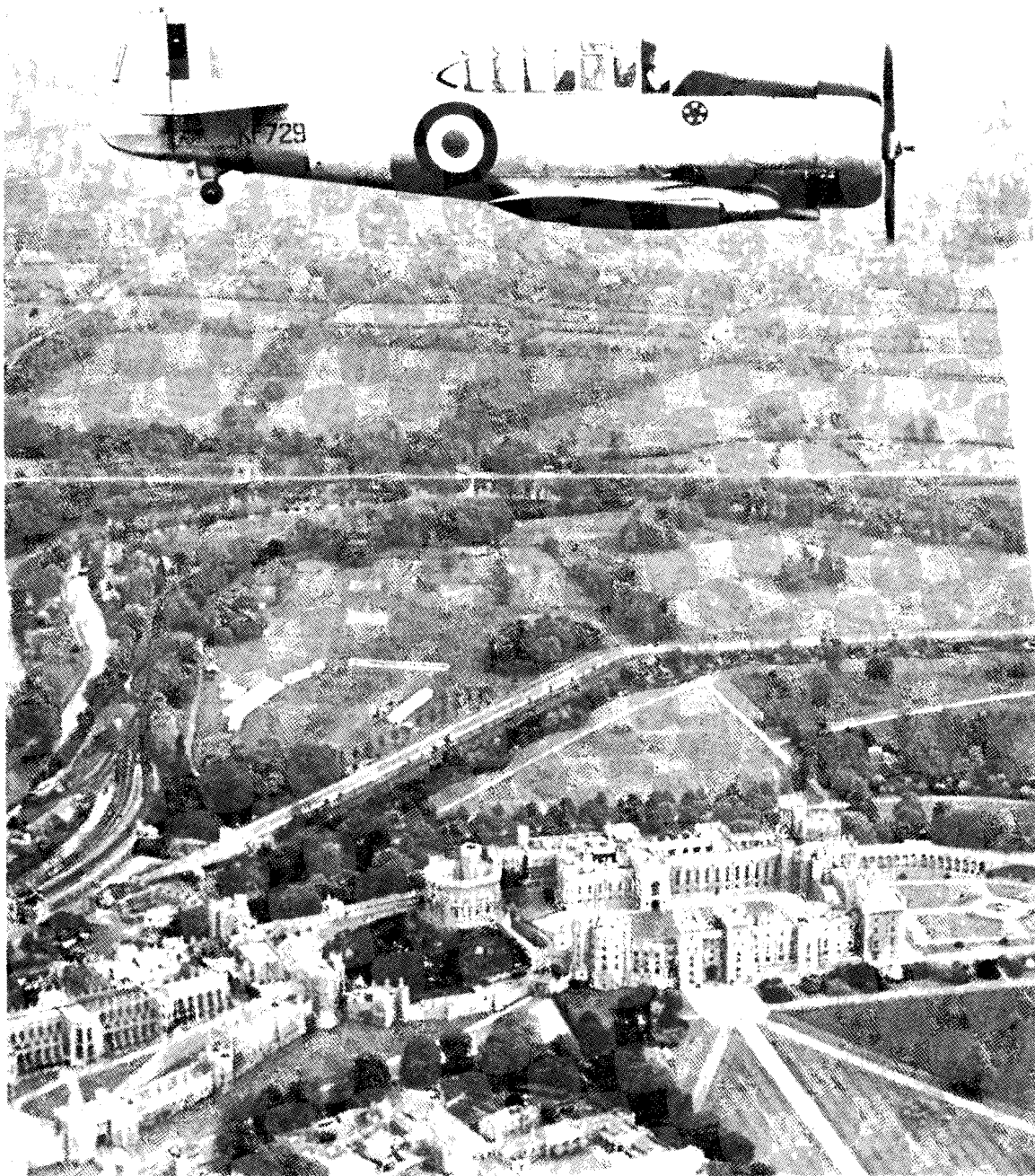
However, I must return to Helliwells and the war. In June 1938 the British Government had announced that our own aircraft industry could not manufacture enough aircraft to meet the expansion of the RAF and it was to buy 200 Lockheed Hudsons and 200 North American Harvards from the States. This decision was universally unpopular as it was thought that it would be at the expense of our industry but was expedient as the latter was fully engaged in producing Hurricanes, Spitfires and the like. The choice was wise because the Hudson had the range to fly the Atlantic and were badly needed to guard our Western approaches. All we had then was the Anson 1 which was a delightful aircraft to fly but limited in range and performance. Also we did need a modern type of trainer and the robust Harvard met our requirements; deliveries of these started early in 1939 whereas the British equivalent, the Miles Master, did not come off the production line till the end of 1940. I was to know the Harvard well as we had them for introduction to Hurricanes and Spitfires in fighter OTU's in the Middle East. Early in 1943 I flew a Harvard on a 1300 journey up the Nile Valley from Carthago, near Port Sudan, to Cairo (Heliopolis) and Ismailia in the Canal Zone and back when investigating the move of my unit. This necessitated 3 stops each way as its range was limited.

In 1938 Helliwells obtained a contract to make bomb beams for Wellington aircraft, these were about 20 ft long and they made about 8 a week. Next year they also got a contract to do servicing and repairs for Harvard aircraft, which the larger U.K. manufacturers were too busy to undertake. Some of these jobs were also done at their other factories at Treforest, Glamorgan, Kings Norton and Bescot. Later during the war, aircraft servicing was extended to working on Seafires (naval version of the Spitfire) and other types. Civilian ground engineers who had worked for flying clubs were recruited to help with these jobs.

## THE AERODROME — 1946/7



Helliwell's test pilot during the war was Peter Clifford, who later went to become pilot to the firm Ductile Steel. There was also another pilot, Ron Bradley, who moved on to Westlands at Yeovil. One of the civilian ground engineers recruited during the war was Ted Roberts, who was still at Walsall servicing aircraft in 1956. He reports that during the war overtime and weekend working was commonplace. On one occasion he worked on a Harvard KF.729 which he later saw pictured in a newspaper being flown by the Duke of Edinburgh at Smith's Lawn, Windsor Great Park. On another



*H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh flies over Windsor Castle in a North American Harvard II during his flying training after World War II. He received his wings in 1953.*

occasion he had to warn off a Flying Fortress with a red Very light as it was circling the aerodrome apparently with the intention of landing and the runway was much too short for such a large aircraft. Another aircraft flown by a Canadian Air Transport Auxiliary Jack Fitzgerald, attempting to land at Walsall in 1941, claimed that the wet grass prevented him stopping his aircraft in time and he overshot the runway colliding with a lorry on the road, the driver of which was killed. At the Coroner's Inquest, a local man, Charles Haden of Gladstone Street, Walsall, gave evidence that he got off his bicycle having seen the aircraft circling the aerodrome and intending to land. He realised that the aircraft was travelling too fast to stop and tried to warn the lorry driver but the latter had failed to understand his

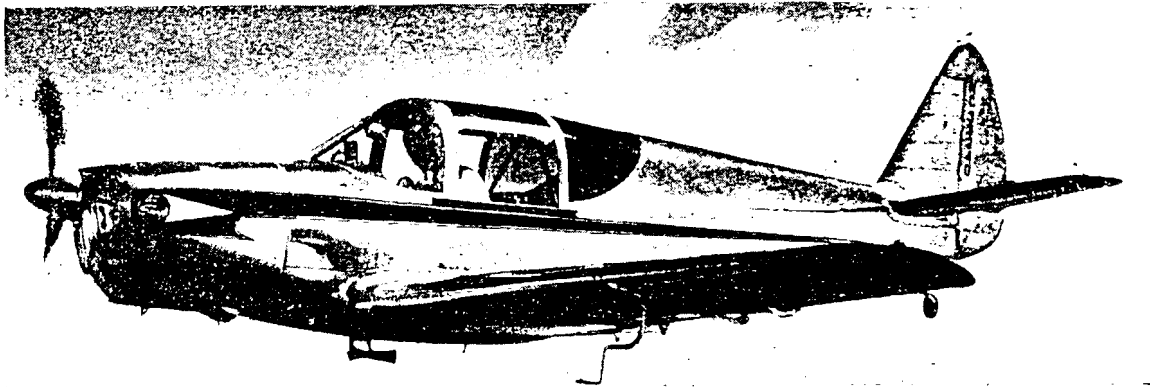
signals. He, himself, had to fall flat on his face and the aircraft passed over him; later he found the body of the driver in the ditch. The verdict on the driver, John Fox of Great Barr, was accidental death.

Towards the end of the war Helliwells were still servicing various types of aircraft, some Bostons with Free French markings, Ansons and a number of Seafires, were seen at Walsall, though exactly what work was done on them is not known. Around this time Helliwells acquired a Globe Swift from the Texan firm. This aircraft had a Continental 6 cylinder opposed engine which gave it a cruising speed of 140 mph, a short landing and take off run and being a four seater would have been ideal for private owners. Its range was just over 500 miles, burning about 7 gallons an hour. They also had a similar low wing monoplane, a Percival Proctor G-AHGT, with a Gipsy 6 engine. With Peter Clifford flying it the Proctor was used for a variety of jobs. On one occasion he took up a child with a persistent whooping cough for an hour's flight and it is reported that the cough was cured! In July 1947 this aircraft was used to give air experience to the 16th Walsall Air Scouts who were given trips over Cannock Chase and Sutton Park. Clifford had had a Pilot's "B" Commercial Flying Licence since 1931 and put in a lot of flying. These aircraft were used for air taxi work and the fares quoted as examples were Jersey £31, Ireland £48. It is reported that a firm called Kennings Airways (presumably an offshoot of the garage) also operated from Walsall, but little information is available about them.

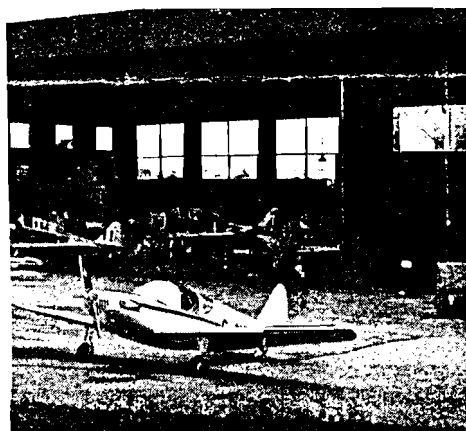
In 1948 the future of the aerodrome was discussed by the Walsall Chamber of Commerce and in subsequent years in the Walsall Council. There had been some pressure to have the aerodrome extended so that it could take larger and more modern aircraft and this would have entailed buying up more land. Flying activity had been increasing up to 1951 and Helliwells had promised their co-operation should the aerodrome be extended. Their lease extended till 1958. It is thought that as both Birmingham and Wolverhampton were extending their aerodromes about this time the Walsall Council had considered that further commercial development at Walsall was a doubtful proposition.

As stated earlier in parallel with their aviation work Helliwells resurrected the motor cycle side car construction after the war and produced one of the first motor scooters. In 1950 Helliwells sold off the side car business to Watsonian, an established manufacturer in this line, but as far as I can find out some construction work on side cars went on at Walsall up to 1956, so it would appear that the conditions of sale included such co-operation. Eric Sanders was still concerned with activities at Walsall Aerodrome and as he happened to be a friend of Sir John Black, the head of Standard

*Extracts from an unknown Aviation Journal.*



A YANK IN ENGLAND.—Powered by a Continental flat-six engine, the Globe GC-1B Swift is now flying in England. It has a variable-pitch airscrew cruises at 140 m.p.h., and does some 500 miles on 28 U.S. gallons of fuel in just over 3½ hours.



A firm, a subsidiary of Tube Investments, Ltd., use is pictured at Helliwell's main base, Walsall Airport.

### The Globe Swift

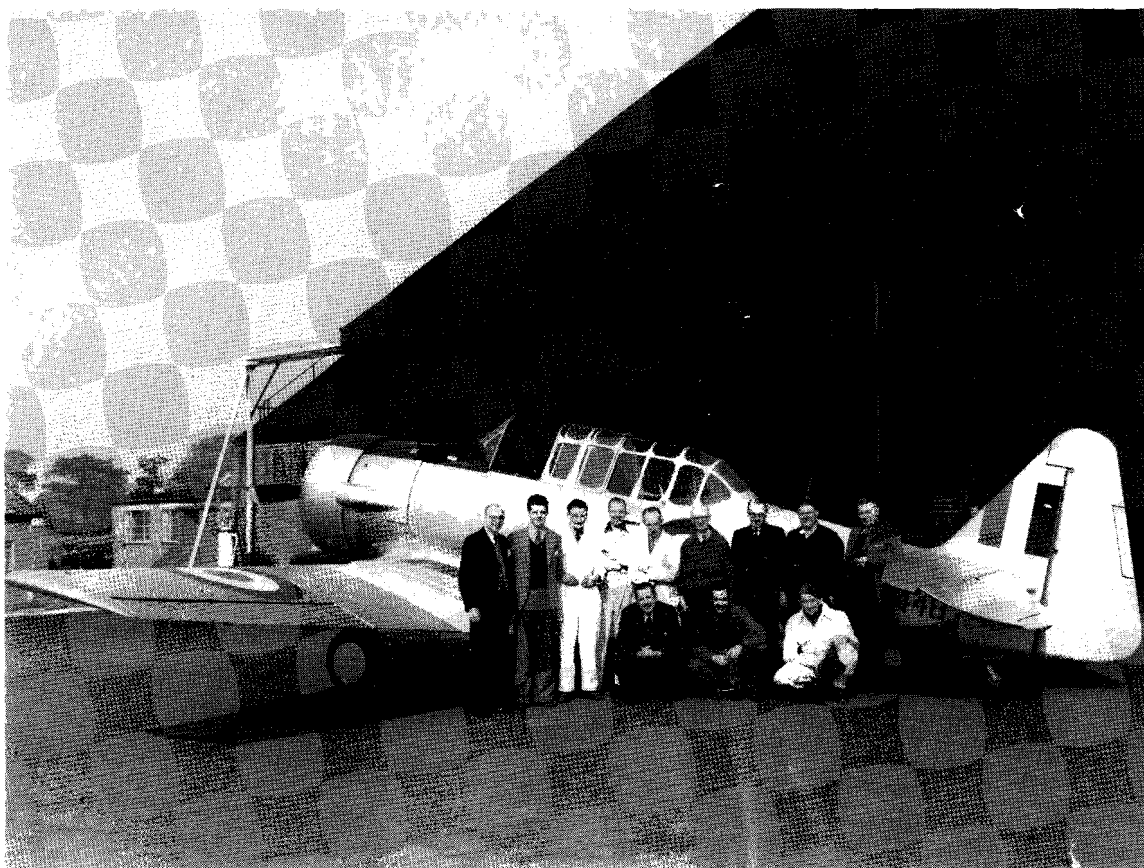
THREE GLOBE SWIFT light aeroplanes are now on the British Civil Register. One, G-AHUU, is already at Walsall, Staffordshire, and is owned by Helliwells, Ltd. The Swift, with two side-by-side seats in a roomy cabin, is one of the cleanest-looking of American personal aircraft and has a Continental C-125 six-cylinder horizontally opposed air-cooled engine, which gives 125 h.p. at 2,550 r.p.m. for take-off at sea-level.

Three versions of the Swift, differing in power plant, etc., have so far been awarded Civil Aeronautics Administration certificates corresponding to our C. of A., and the 125 h.p. Swift, with a variable-pitch airscrew, is now being mass-produced at the Globe Aircraft Corporation Works at Fort Worth, Texas.

A maximum speed of 150 m.p.h. at 2,550 r.p.m. at sea-level is claimed for the GC-1B Swift with the Continental C-125, and at a cruising speed of 140 m.p.h. (2,300 r.p.m.) the range is 512 miles, using the complete tankage of 28 U.S. gallons. Take-off run is just over 216 yds., climb 1,000 ft. in the first minute, and touch-down is made at 48 m.p.h., pulling up in under 125 yds. The service ceiling is 16,000 ft.

The sole Temto Globe Swift on the British register is this machine, G-AHUU, owned by Helliwells Ltd. Full designation of this two-seater is GC-1B, and it will be recalled that just after the war, Helliwells were considering producing the type under licence. Power plant is a 125-h.p. Continental, and the top speed is 150 m.p.h. Span is 29 ft. 4 in.; and all-up weight 1,710 lb.





*THE LAST HARVARD AT WALSALL — 1953 (Aircraft KF 729 serviced by Ted Roberts)*

*Back Row: Holroyd U.K. Williams Roberts Hawkins Walker Robson Salter Lambert  
Front Row: Harris Gudrun Mills*

Triumph Cars, it is easy to understand how Helliwells became involved with the construction of a sports car based on Triumph TR2 components and intended for the American market. Some discussions took place with a Mr. Arthur Anderson, whose firm the Rome Cable Company of Torrance, California, was to arrange the importation and marketing of this car in the States. The car was to be called the Swallow Doretti, though if any Italian design work was involved is not known; it could have been an advertising ploy to attract American customers. It was a pretty little car with a steel tube chassis and aluminium panelled bodywork, obviously intended as a competitor to the M.G.B. which was then very popular in California. About 300 cars were produced of which some 200 were exported to the States where it sold for around \$2700; then production abruptly ceased and the reason why is obscure. However in 1950 Helliwells were taken over by the Tube Investments Group and the Swallow Doretti was actually produced while under the control of T.I. It was rumoured that pressure had been brought to bear on them by another of their larger customers, a motor manufacturer who did not want to have a competitor with this type of car.

Eric Sanders was largely responsible for getting the T.I. Group to produce the Swallow Doretti and he had put his plan to Sir Ivan Stedford, their Chairman. It was, of course, good business for the T.I. Group, who would be supplying most of the materials for the chassis and body framework. An established engineer, Frank Rainbow, had been commissioned to design the car and he and Anderson discussed details. Work began on the design in January 1953 and Rainbow was given 9 months to produce a prototype. The chassis was to be 50 ton Chrome Molybdenum steel tube and the body light alloy sheet. It was actually longer and wider than the Triumph TR2 though it used the latter's coil spring and wishbone suspension. Lockheed hydraulic drum brakes were fitted at front and rear. There were bucket seats covered in leather and it was reported that the hood could be erected in half a minute. The prototype was completed on time and shipped to the States on the "Queen Mary" for Anderson to drive round the Standard Triumph dealers for comments. Sanders refused to allow Rainbow to make any changes though there had been some criticism particularly on inadequate room for luggage and production was started to the prototype design. Perhaps this was one of the reasons for its short run as the design appears to have been planned as a racing car and was limited as a two seater. Apparently Rainbow wanted the car to be used in competitions realising that this would give it publicity and help sales but Sanders was against this and he is reputed to have stopped one being entered for the Jabbeke Ostend motorway race. It could be that he thought the performance was not good enough though it had a two-litre engine, twin carburettors and a 4-speed box; in the States some "hotting-up" had been done. However the car received a "good press" and



*Ted Roberts servicing a Seafire (circa 1946/7)*

sold steadily in the U.K. and the States but it could be that it fell between two stools as being neither a racing nor a sports car. This theory is supported by the fact that a Mk.2 version was designed called the Sabre on the 2+2 plan, with small seats behind suitable for children and a proper boot for luggage. Production still continued on the original version which appeared at the 1954 Motor Show, and the price was £777 or £1,101 with tax, the top speed being given as 101 mph. Although the factory had by then been taken over by the T.I. Group I think the car was marketed as being built by Helliwells at Walsall Aerodrome.

In California, Anderson arranged a promotion display for the car at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. All seemed to be going well but in February 1955 it was decided to reduce production from 15 cars a week to 5 and later that year it ceased altogether. No explanation was given for this and the car appeared to be selling well, was the rumour about external pressure from a competitor correct?

Helliwells had been a firm which looked after the welfare of its employees. In 1946 their amateur dramatic society produced a pantomime "Aladin", which was shown at the Avion cinema in Aldridge and elsewhere, raising £150 for the Red Cross. This was an entirely amateur production being written by Len Harper and Jack Ludford, Eva Brown was Aladin and Phyllis Haighway the principal boy, though the orchestra was borrowed from the South Staffordshire Regiment. Somewhat later they took on the lease of Aldridge Lodge at £750 p.a. and planned to spend £5,000 on renovations. This was then to be used as a social club with the grounds available for football, cricket, tennis and bowls.

*THE SWALLOW DORETTI*



*Property of Cdr. L. D. Vaughan, USN(Rtd.)  
Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.*



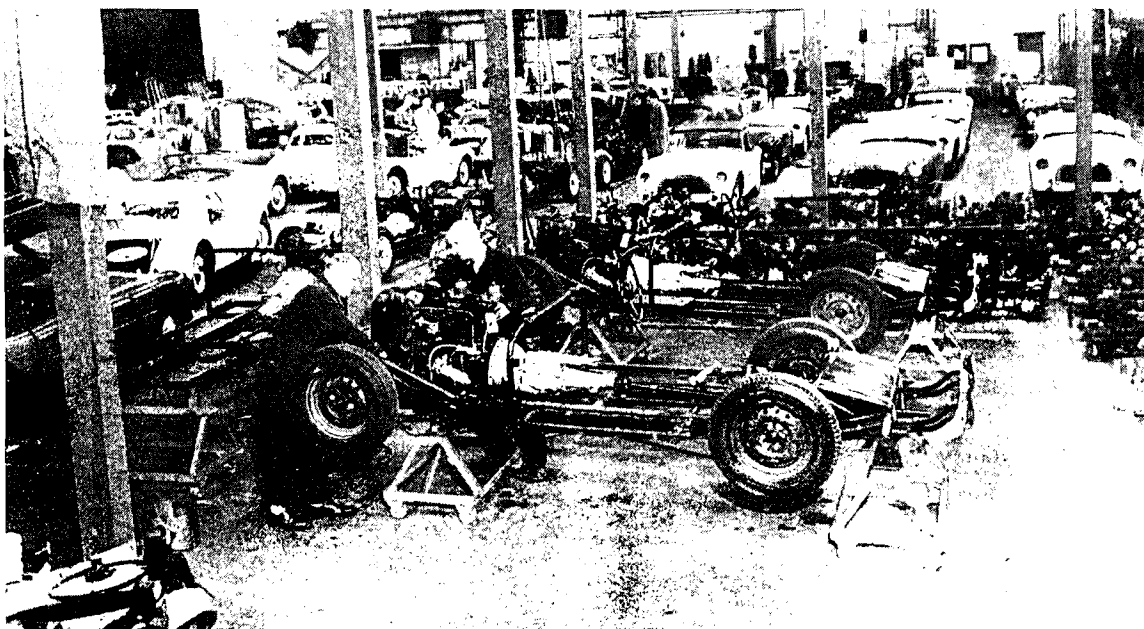


However the aerodrome itself was in decline as Helliwells had transferred their aircraft servicing to Elmdon though they still kept a flying school at Walsall. On 8 Oct. '56 Helliwells wrote to the Town Clerk surrendering the lease of the aerodrome as it was costing them too much to run single handed and the last Harvard had been serviced in the summer of that year. Talbot Stead took over the lease though they did not want to use the aerodrome. They had ideas about building a scientific research station there but this was refused by the three Councils concerned, Walsall, Aldridge and Staffordshire being averse to further industrialisation of the area. In spite of this, Talbot Stead kept to the terms and conditions of their lease and provided a sports centre with facilities at Aldridge Lodge. In the following year, 1957, Tube Investments made a planning application for a smaller unit which was not to extend beyond the existing building line. Walsall Council approved this but made stipulations that the frontage was to be improved with flower beds and trees. The firm of Helliwells had made the decision to cease aircraft work at Walsall some two years earlier as they reckoned the aerodrome was costing them £2,000 a year to run. The announcement about this in the local papers made the rather extraordinary remark that the aerodrome had only been used by "seven aircraft in the last four years", which surely must be wrong as Helliwells were servicing aircraft there. Perhaps they meant that there had been only 7 genuine visitors in that time, or did the reporter just get it wrong!

Helliwells were to carry on their motor and motor cycle business at the aerodrome in the existing factory, though later Tube Investments made this into their computer unit. The Swallow Doretti has not entirely disappeared and at least 4 are known to exist, though there could be more in the States. One belongs to Cdr. Lynn D. Vaughan, who was kind enough to supply the photographs that are included here and this car appears to be almost in showroom condition; he keeps it in Honolulu, Hawaii. An article on the Swallow Doretti appeared in the *Classic & Sports Car* in Sept. '88, which was written by Mike Lawrence and describes an expedition made by him with photographer Phil Rudge and Duncan Rabagliati in two Swallow Dorettis to call on the designer of the car, Frank Rainbow, in the West Country where he was enjoying retirement. A fourth belonged to a Mr. Hughes, of High Street, Willenhall was raced by him and his son Danny got to hear that it still existed in Scotland. Having traced the owner he made an expedition there to recover it and brought it back to Willenhall where he hopes to find mechanics who worked on the original manufacture of the car to help him restore it; he is also looking for a handbook for the car.

By the end of the war Helliwells had become a sizeable concern with a number of rather scattered factories. Though the headquarters and aerodrome was at Walsall the main manufacturing was done at factories at Treforest and Aberdare, near Cardiff, and the total workforce had been over 3,000. When T.I. took over the firm in 1950 some consolidation took place and in particular they expanded the Aberdare factory and abandoned the one at Treforest, which was unsuitable for the larger components for aircraft they were then making. They had really started with Harvards and worked up

*Extract from a Motoring paper.*



## Old sports car

Now I'm sure this picture will rev up some marvellous motoring memories.

It shows the shop-floor of the Swallow Side Car Company at Aldridge Lodge Estate where they used to build the old Swallow Doretti sports car.

The picture was

thought it was just too good to leave parked in his old photo file.

Only 100 of these super sports cars were made at the factory and I reckon that most of them are in the picture.

It was certainly a far cry from the car factories of today and there was no question

As I wrote on November 11, Mr. Danny Hughes wanted former mechanics at the plant who worked on the car to get in touch and give him a hand rebuilding his Swallow Doretti.

So let's hope this fine photo will start up some memories and we can get the

## FILMED BEFORE FIRST FLIGHT



### ST. MATTHEW'S AIR SCOUTS — JULY 1947

*Party of Walsall St. Matthew's Air Scouts alongside Helliwell's Proctor V, before taking off for their first flight. Chief pilot at the aerodrome Peter Clifford said he hoped more of these flights can be arranged and that it will encourage others to learn to fly.*

*Before taking their first flight in a Proctor V, from Walsall Airport, on Sunday, St. Matthew's Air Scouts were filmed by Mr. L. G. Stanley, the Walsall Sea Scouts' Scout Master.*

an association with the North American Aviation Co. so that they assembled the bulk of this type sent over here under the "Lease-Lend" programme. These arrived at Walsall in the CKD (completely knocked down) condition. They were still doing overhauls on Harvards in 1953 and two test pilots, Jack Gudrun and Roger Mills were kept busy at Walsall doing flight tests. They also made engine cowlings for Canberras and serviced the Ministry of Transport Civil Aviation Fleet with a unit at Stansted, which had one Avro XIX, five Consuls, 5 Doves, 3 Princes and one Chipmunk. The Managing Director was then Mr. George Taylor Powell, who had joined the firm in 1947. They also had factories at Bescot and Kings Norton, though these were closed down in the late 1950's with the contraction of their aircraft work. The factory at Walsall has now been taken over by the parent company, Tube Investments Ltd., and accommodates their computer unit.

Mr. C. J. Waterfield of 21 Scott Road, Walsall, who was once employed by Helliwells and then lived close to the aerodrome, has given me notes on a number of aircraft he saw at the aerodrome. These are:

Tipsy G-AFSC owned by R. V. and M. H. Smith, at Walsall in 1945 but still existing.

Aeronca 100 G-AEXD, owned by M. A. and R. W. Mills, ditto.

Auster demonstrator belonging to Kennings Ltd.

Two U.S.A.F. Piper Cubs noted to have invasion white stripes and believed to be used for artillery spotting.

Sparrowhawk G-ADNL, B. A. Swallow G-ADMF, Aeronca 50c G-AFJC, Aeronca 100 G-AEXD, Avro Avian G-ACKE, Miles Whitney Straight G-AEVA, Wicko G-AENU, plus numerous Harvards were all seen at Walsall while he worked there between Sept. '45 and Feb. '46. Helliwells owned and used Percival Proctor G-AHGT and Tiger Moth G-AHLA in the late 1940s or early '50s and at that time they were working on a number of Seafires (Naval version of Spitfire). A Westland Wallace and a Mosquito were on the scrap heap at the back of the hangars.

The aerodrome at Walsall lasted for a mere 22 years but its existence is fairly obvious to passers-by even now thirty years after it closed, which is more than can be said for many RAF and other airfields which have reverted to agriculture or even been built over like the nursery of private flying at Stag Lane. If this little book has served to keep alive some memories of an entirely creditable period in the history of Walsall it will not have been written in vain.

Finally, Helliwells seem to have had original ideas about advertisements and I am including here 3 which may be of interest.





#### THEY WHO LOOK AHEAD

*For I dip into the future, far as human eye  
could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder  
that would be;  
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of  
magic sails,  
Pilot of the purple twilight, dropping down with  
costly bales.*

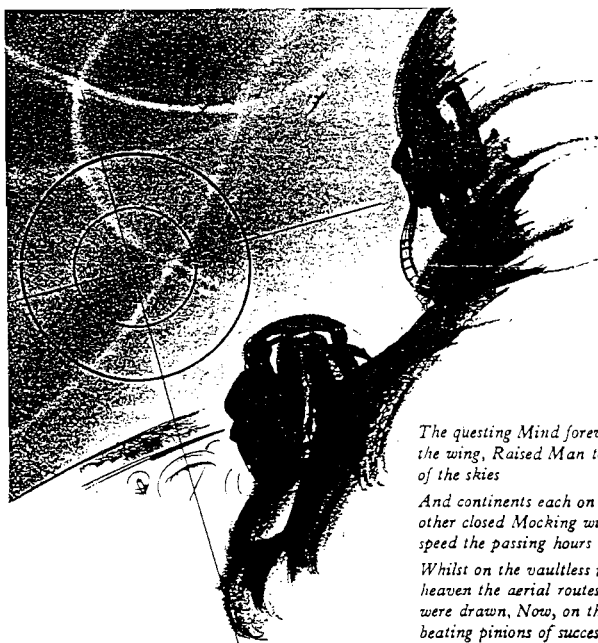
Tennyson's "Locksley Hall"

Painted by W. James for  
**Helliwells Ltd.**  
PART OF BRITAIN'S AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY  
HEAD OFFICE, OLD TOWN, STRATFORD-ON-AVON

HALF A CENTURY  
OF KEEPING FAITH



FIFTY YEARS OF  
PROGRESS



*we salute you . . .*

*The questing Mind forever on  
the wing, Raised Man to mastery  
of the skies  
And continents each on the  
other closed Mocking with  
speed the passing hours  
Whilst on the vaultless roof of  
heaven the aerial routes of trade  
were drawn, Now, on the  
beating pinions of success  
Man looks once more beyond  
the stars  
And in the outermost  
darkness sees Bright visions of  
new conquests*

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THEY WHO LOOK  
AHEAD

*THE SKY IS MY HIGHWAY  
THE EARTH IS MY PARISH,  
I WILL LOOK DOWN  
OVER THE SEAS AND CONTINENTS,  
TELESCOPING TIME,  
AND IN CONSTRUCTING DISTANCE —  
SEEK AMONG THE MYRIAD PEOPLES  
OF THE WORLD —  
MY NEIGHBOUR*

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