

## BENTLEY BRACE



A recent visit to Bentley Motors in Crewe revealed two significant models on display in the heritage lobby. Pride of place goes to the oldest surviving Bentley, a 1919 model and the second only 3-litre prototype model. The advanced engine features an overhead cam with four valves per cylinder, cross-flow head, pent-roof combustion chamber and twin spark plugs per cylinder. The car is owned by Bentley Motors and has featured at many international concours shows including Pebble beach.

The second car currently featured has long been associated with the 'Blue Train' challenge through France from Cannes to Calais. The race had been initiated by Rover in 1929 but Bentley chairman Woolf Barnato decided that the earlier attempt could be bettered in his 6 ½ litre car. The Rover success in outrunning the train brought the company excellent publicity, and Barnato believed that the Rover record could be easily improved on. So with confidence he laid £100 bet that he could not only be in Calais before the train, but in his London club before the train would arrive at its French coastal destination. With friend and co-driver Dale Bourne the challenge took place in March 1930 and records show that the pair were in their club a full 4 minutes before the train arrived in Calais.

