

E. AFRICA

C O
58245

FROM
CROWN AGENTS

DATE
22ND NOVEMBER 1921

28 NOV 21

FOR CIRCULATION :-

SUBJECT

- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr. Grindle
- Sir H. Lambert
- Sir F. Reid

MOTOR CARS

Reports on question of purchase of British makes instead of those of American make. Recommends "Rover" and "Cubitt" varieties. Calls attention to practise of ordering locally from American Agents.

- Sir J. Masterton Smith.
- Mr. Wood
- Mr. Churchill

Previous Paper

MINUTES

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The Automobile
A useful letter
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 24 Nov 21
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Subsequent Paper

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(Copy right) 1921

Mr. Hatch's ~~Dear~~ ^{Dear} ~~and~~ ^{and} 27/11/21

In the year to the last

one of the pages of

this letter '28' should

read '24'. Does your

share have 3 pa. sent to

the Colonial Secretary

making the correction

Yrs

25.11.21

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4. MILBANK

WESTMINSTER

LONDON, S.W. 1.

22nd November, 1921

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 52591/1921 dated 3rd November on the subject of encouraging the purchase of British cars in the Colonies in place of those of American make.

2. We are in entire agreement with the principle put forward and desire to make passing mention of the fact that it has always been our practice so far as possible, to act in accordance with this principle in making recommendations concerning the purchase of motor cycles, cars, and lorries to the various Colonies.

3. We are of the opinion that the two cars you mention, viz. the 8 HP "Rever" 2-seater, and the 16/30 HP "Cubitt" 5-seater colonial model, are the cheapest and represent the best value for money obtainable at the present time, the present price of the "Rever" being £220 less 10% and the "Cubitt" £442 less 20%. Moreover, we consider that they are the only cars we could put forward as substitutes for the "Ford" and other low priced American vehicles. Both these cars are of comparatively modern origin, being post war productions. They have already become very popular and the few minor defects which manifested themselves in early models have now been eliminated and the present chassis in either case should be well able to give satisfaction under average colonial conditions. In special cases, where the running conditions are

exceptionally

The Under Secretary of State,

Colonial Office.

Co
52591

exceptionally severe, the "Rever" could be improved by fitting larger tyres and adding extra leaves to the springs in order to give additional strength, but it must be remembered that this is a very light car and if stiffened up where the conditions do not really warrant it, the riding comfort would be adversely affected.

In the same way, the "Cabitt" 5-seater colonial model (which, by the way, has a wheel clearance equal to that of the Ford) extreme conditions have already been catered for as this vehicle is a stouter edition of the firm's standard, 4-seater, being suitably strengthened and equipped with a large radiator. It represents the outcome of experience gained during a recent extensive tour in the Dominions. Particulars of this colonial model are not yet given in the firm's catalogue though the general appearance and leading dimensions are very similar to those of the models therein illustrated. We understand that its price will be the same as that of the standard model. We consider that where a 2-seater is required, the "Rever" would be a suitable car (as previously "Ford" 2-seater runabouts have been used, and similarly, that the "Cabitt" 3-seater would be a suitable substitute for the "Ford", "Dodge", and "Hupmobile" 3-seaters. The petrol consumption of these two British cars are very much less than those of the American cars, which fact should be a special advantage in the central African territories where the cost of petrol is extremely high. The "Rever" 2-seater shows a petrol economy of not less than 40 miles per gallon of fuel and the "Cabitt" 28 m.p.g. as against about 24 m.p.g. for the "Ford" and 20 m.p.g. for the "Dodge" and "Hupmobile".

Although both these cars are priced extremely low **671**
British productions go at the present time, there is no
taint about either of the shoddy workmanship so common
amongst some American cars, and the cost in upkeep for
repairs and renewals is likely, in consequence, to be
much less.

4. So far as touring cars are concerned, it is
doubtful whether the demand for such cars for Government
purposes is likely to be sufficient to warrant other
British firms being approached with a view to their
producing special colonial models where their standard
productions may not be adaptable. There is, however,
a far greater opening for light lorries, both as
regards the requirements of the Colonial Governments
and private users, and it is principally in this
direction that British manufacturers should be
encouraged.

5. Our records indicate that the Kenya and
Nyassaland Governments have purchased considerable
numbers of American cars and lorries locally viz:
(Hupmobile, Autocar, Dodge, Packard, Reo, and Ford)
probably from the East African Expeditionary Force, and
doubtless from their point of view, they are inclined to
favour adherence to these makes when adding to their
fleets in order to simplify the stocking of spare parts,
rather than to introduce additional makes by the
purchase of British vehicles. Also other colonies,
viz: Nigeria, Gold Coast, and Sierra Leone have
purchased considerable numbers of American light lorries
locally, notably "Ford" one-tonners and "Ford" cars
adapted to carry 6½ cwt on a commercial type body.
The severe restrictions in the two latter colonies
which impose a very low limit on the laden weight of
any vehicle, prohibit the introduction of any British
commercial chassis having a carrying capacity of one

ton and upwards. Until quite recently, nett, loads of one ton and under have not been catered for by British Manufacturers and the market for such vehicles has been entirely in the hands of the Americans so that in the absence of a suitable British vehicle, these colonies were compelled to buy from the American market. However, since the war, a few British Manufacturers have put on the market vehicles which are light enough to be admitted into these colonies, viz "Belsize". 12 cwt. net load capacity, "Cubitt" 15 cwt. and "Beardmore" 15 cwt. Of these the cheapest, and in our opinion the best value for money is again the "Cubitt", the list price of the chassis being £398. off which we are allowed a discount of 20% which brings the nett cost excluding packing etc. down to about £319. The list price of the "Beardmore" chassis is £525, and the "Belsize" £500, and the discount obtainable on these does not exceed 15%. The "Cubitt" Light Lorry would appear to be the most favourable substitute both for "Ford" One-tonners and "Ford" 6½ cwt. Vans. It might be as well to mention that the "Cubitt" Van Chassis is not the same as that of the "Cubitt", Touring Car but is of more robust construction suited to the load to be carried.

6. We would draw attention to the fact that during the last twelve months, the Gold Coast Government have been seriously trying to solve the problem of finding a satisfactory substitute for the American Light Lorry and have ordered for experimental purposes, one car and two lorries of "Belsize" make, one "Albion" 25 cwt. lorry, one "Vulcan" touring car chassis adapted to carry one ton, and one 15 cwt. "Cubitt"

The letter which was indented solely on our recommendation, has only recently been ordered and has not yet been delivered, but all the other vehicles have been shipped.

The Governor of the Gold Coast who is now on leave in this country has taken the opportunity of examining the "Lub. 11" and is so favourably impressed with it that he has ordered a further twelve.

We may say that the "Lub. 11" is a very good motor oil and is well adapted for use in the tropics. It is designed for use in motor cars and light lorries.

The "Lub. 11" is the only motor oil of its kind in the world.

Mr. J. A. G. ... is writing to modify the firm's ... to a great extent in order to meet official requirements.

In the cases of certain classes of officers who are assisted by their Governments to purchase Touring Cars and Motor Cycles for official purposes, we have always endeavoured to persuade these officials to purchase British products and to avoid the purchase of vehicles of foreign origin. We have confined our efforts to this at present to the "Lub. 11" and "Lub. 12" and have been very promising in our efforts to persuade them to purchase these products. It is very gratifying to find that they have been in our hands for at least twelve months.

10. Our remarks have dealt only with the consideration of Touring Cars and Light Lorries. With regard

regard to the heavier types of commercial vehicles, the question of foreign competition does not arise as British Manufacturers have hitherto always been able to hold their own. In colonies where the roads will take heavy vehicles, such as Straits, Federated Malay States, Hong Kong, Ceylon, Uganda, and parts of Nigeria, all the Government lorries are of British manufacture so far as we are aware.

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11. We would draw attention to a point in connection with the purchase of motor vehicles by the Colonial Governments from local agents in that we have no influence as to choice of such cars etc. as the transactions are not conducted through us. It is only when spare parts are occasionally ordered through us that these local purchases are brought to our notice. In carrying out the policy of encouraging the purchase of British products, this aspect of the problem might well be kept in view.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. D. Watson

For Crown Agents.

*Today's mail
bes. 11.10 am*

82

Downing Street,

24 November, 1921

Sir,

With reference to my telegram of the 21st November and previous telegraphic correspondence on the subject of motor-cars for the Kenya Government service, I have the honour to transmit to you for your information the enclosed copy of correspondence with the Crown Agents, together with some copies of ~~the~~ *sample* catalogues relating to the cars referred to *in this case*

(Signed) WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

DRAFT.

KENYA NO 1798

GOVERNOR

MINUTE.Mr. Batterby *24-11-21*

Mr.

Mr. *Batterby 24/11*

Mr. Grindle.

Sir H. Lambert.

Sir H. Road.

Sir G. Fiddes.

Mr. Wood.

Mr. Churchill.

3 Nov

22 Nov

*Mr. Churchill
(to the Hon. Secy
of State)*