Sailplane and Gliding

2/6

August 1958

VIC CARR
C.F.I.—COVENTRY GLIDING CLUB

(Photo by P. H. Partridge)

Vic Carr has always been keen on flying. He served in the R.A.F. from 1943 to 1947, and was selected for Air Crew. To his great disappointment, changes made in service policy at that time prevented him from going on with flying training, and he spent most of his service years as a Radar Operator. He first became interested in Gliding when he saw a copy of "Sailplane" in a N.A.A.F.I. canteen in Singapore, and on his return to civilian life started gliding at Dunstable in 1948. After a rather slow early progress, he had gained two Silver C legs and had just become an Instructor when he married another Dunstable member in 1950, and moved to Leicester where he joined the Leicester Gliding Club.

The Leicester Club however had just about ceased active flying at that time, and although Vic continued to be a member as Dunstable till 1953, travelling difficultiet meant that he was rather out of touch with gliding for some time, until the then new Coventry Club was able to provide facilities to the Leicester Club Members.

I well remember the day in the summer of 1953 when Vic first came to visit us at Baginton. He was obviously keen, alert, and with a very observant pair of blue eyes, and he at once set to work to do his full share—and a bit more—of the jobs on the flying field. After a few months Vic was able to arrange for the Leicester Club Olympia, then on loan to Dunstable, to be transferred to Baginton—thus giving us our first high performance aircraft. We were delighted when, in March 1955, Vic made the first Silver C distance flight from Baginton back to Dunstable, so completing his Silver C Badge requirements and being the first pilot to do so from Baginton. Since then his flying has gone from strength to strength. He became Deputy C.F.I. of the club in the middle of 1954, and was appointed C.F.I. in September 1956, in succession to George Thompson. He did his 300-kilometre Gold C distance flight in an Olympia on 30th April, 1957, flying from Edge Hill to Mevagissy in Cornwall; and on 27th May, 1958, completed his Gold C badge with a climb to 11,600 ft. in a storm cloud.

Not only is our C.F.I. a first-class pilot in his own right, but he has proved himself to be a born leader and an excellent instructor. As an instructor it is noteworthy how well he handles pupils; he is a sound psychologist who knows just when to encourage the diffident, instill confidence into the hesitant or, on the other hand, to restrain the over confident, and reprove the offender yet without giving offence. As a leader in the club he is always able to look at our affairs with a fresh and pioneering mind—for instance, to him must be credited much of our Edge Hill development—and he can be most persuasive in committee if he wants to get a new project approved. Not only has Vic been a tower of strength on the purely flying side of club activities, but his knowledge and skill on the aircraft and general engineering side has been equally valuable to the club. In fact he is as good an all-rounder as any club could wish to have for a C.F.I. and the club is indeed grateful to him for the tremendous amount of work, energy, and time he has given to furthering its aims. We must not forget to thank his charming wife, Mary, for the part she has played in supporting Vic in all his efforts.

H.N.G.

Sherburn Cable Retrieving Apparatus Project

by E. Haswell and J. C. Riddell

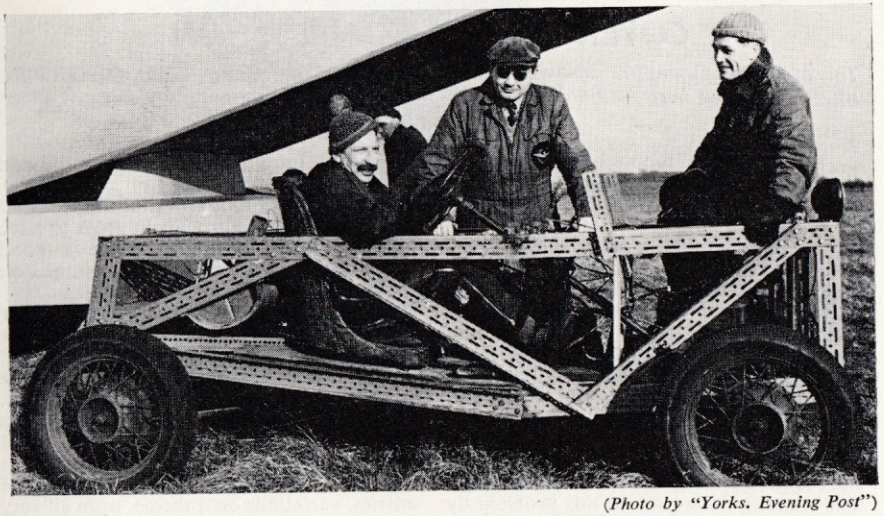
Once upon a time Ewey and I were mulling over some ale in the Club bar when the conversation turned to the problem of retrieving the winch cable. We had a rather senile tractor. True, the redoubtable Lewis had managed to get it to go the length of Sherburn Aerodrome, and it had arrived boiling in silent indifference, while we boiled with articulate concern as thermal after thermal popped like some hideous breakfast food.

The tractor had to go. We sold it to a good-natured man who gave us £3 more than we expected. That removed the problem of the tractor, but it also removed our only retrieving vehicle. Clearly the time for action was with us. We bought a car from a man who was glad to see it go. On the first day we used it on the aerodrome, the rats, who hitherto seemed quite contented with their lot, deserted it. On reflection I agreed with them. It had no brakes. The offside door was held open with rope, so that drivers could change more easily. This happened after every launch. We were running out of new members to drive it. We had a crisis.

There remained one encouraging feature. Ewey was quite pleased with its mechanical condition. I said "Let's make a car out of Dexion." I burst out laughing. Ewey didn't. He just said "yes" after some thought. I stopped laughing and drew up a scheme on the back of the flying list. Then together we laid down the principles of the ideal retrieving car.

1. It must be cheap.
2. It must be light so that fuel consumption would be low.
3. It must be reliable, and therefore accessible, so that components are easily changed.
4. It must have the minimum of parts so that there would be less to lose.
5. It must be strong to withstand the uneven aerodrome surface.

The solution was to use the components we had and fit them into a framework. We used Ford spares, as they could be bought from wreckers for next to nothing. The Ford Ten engine seemed to have enough power and used little fuel. The tyres on our old car were good, so we were all set to go. I suggested that we should stop flying and



(Photo by "Yorks. Evening Post")

The novel "Dexion" cable retrieving car made by the Yorks. G.C.
L. to R.: E. Haswell, J. C. Riddell and A. Hawkins