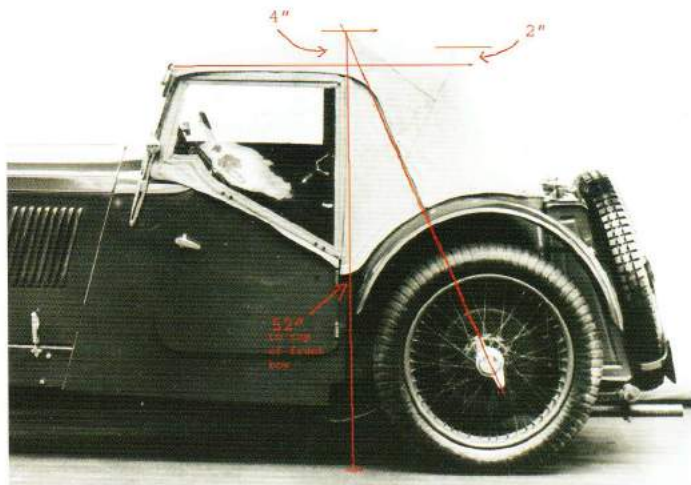




Everything you've always wanted to know about J2 hoods, but were afraid to ask!

By Simon Johnston

When I finally picked up my J2 from Oliver Richardson after he had done such a marvellous job in taking over and completing a restoration that had begun nearly 40 years before, the one thing left unfinished was the weather equipment. At the last moment, the hood frame that was with the car was discovered to be incorrect nor did I have any side curtain frames and at that time none of the Triple-M specialists had either item in stock. We got through that first summer with only a full length tonneau cover, but the vagaries of the weather in Northern Ireland meant that we really did have to organise some proper weather protection. The research that went into this, in terms of how the original hoods were constructed and fitted and the shape and construction of the side curtains, infill panels and tonneau cover, kept me busy over most of the winter of 2012/13, aided and abetted by John Morris across the Atlantic in Wisconsin.



Picture 1

When I first started asking for information on the Triple-M Register Forum, the overwhelming response was something along the lines of *'you don't need a hood on a Triple-M car'; 'I've never put mine up in xxx years of motoring'; 'just wrap up and get wet'* and so on. Having got thoroughly wet, and I mean *thoroughly, horribly* wet, driving a TD with a hood, but no side curtains, around Killarney in the west of Ireland many, many years ago, I was unconvinced by this advice. And so too was Mrs J who made it very clear that after the Killarney experience in the TD as a teenager she wasn't going anywhere in the J2 as a pensioner if it didn't have a hood and side curtains! I can only conclude that many of those (but not all, clearly) who proffered this advice only take their cars out for gentle drives on sunny days.

Nor am I convinced by those who claim that no one bothered with hoods pre-war. No doubt some hardy souls regularly braved the elements, but did the ordinary J2 driver like my Dad really leave his car sitting in the rain overnight with the hood down? Did he drive to his office in his suit in the rain with the hood down? I doubt it. The hood and side curtains may not have been absolutely weatherproof, but they sure as heck were an improvement over the Rudge motorbike he used as a student and I'm quite sure he made use of them.

The other intriguing aspect of the search for information was the apparent lack of interest in how the hood and side curtains (and the tonneau cover as well) were constructed and fitted. Requests about technical points were often met with responses along the lines of *'it doesn't matter'; 'do it whatever way you like'; 'get on with your life'* and so on. I did find that perplexing in an environment where the most arcane detail of mechanical originality can be discussed ad nauseam. Three pages of discussion on the correct brake light switch for a P-type, anyone? And it's not even visible as it's bolted to the undertray under the driver's floor!

We persevered though and what follows represents the joint conclusions of John Morris and me after many, many email exchanges both between ourselves and with other Triple-M owners around the world who generously sent us information about, and photos of, cars, hoods, tonneau covers and side curtains in varying states of originality and decay. At the end of the day though, these are only our conclusions and you, dear reader, may draw different ones!

The Hood Frame

Let's start with the hood frame itself. It is mounted on two pivots, one on each wheel arch, and the challenge is to determine where

these pivots should be attached to the wheel arches to give the hood frame its correct position. Indeed, what is the correct position for the hood frame? Such information as there was on the Forum seemed to revolve around measuring the distance from the rear of the body tub to the rear bow, from the front bow to the windscreen (the gap between front and rear bows is fixed when the hood frame is fully extended) and also the distance from the rear of the body to the pivots themselves. Since no two bodies are going to be the same, and that's even before you take into account the positioning of the windscreen, these distances were clearly not going to be a reliable guide, a conclusion borne out by the wide variation in measurements that ensued.

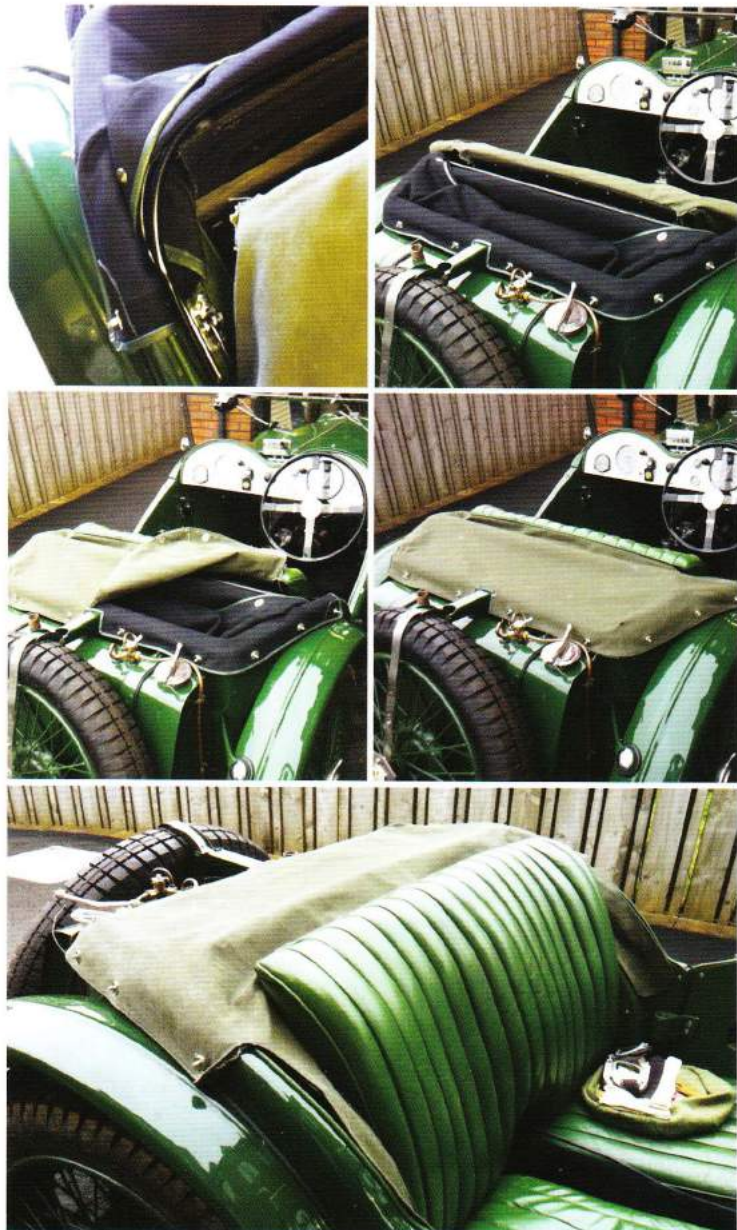
Even had we had the good fortune to have a complete and original car to measure, the problem of differing body dimensions, wheel arches, windscreen locations and so on would still remain, so how could we establish a consistent and reliable way of locating the hood frame correctly? The answer, clearly, was to concentrate not on dimensions that could vary from car to car, but on dimensions that would be consistent from car to car. Knowing that the F2 body and the J2 body were essentially identical, we therefore worked from one of the factory photos showing the F2 prototype with hood and side curtains in place.

Picture 1 shows the relevant section of this photograph and you will see that the front bow is positioned directly above the door 'B' post, with the rear bow set a little lower. This is the key to the correct positioning of the frame. Get these two right and everything else just falls into place. Honestly! Using the 19 inch rear wheel to provide a scale, it was then fairly easy to calculate that the front bow sits roughly four inches above the top of the windscreen and that the rear bow sits about two inches above the top of the windscreen.

All other dimensions, i.e. from screen to front bow, from rear bow to body, etc., now become irrelevant. Simply locate the frame as described (a simple jig using lengths of two inch by one inch timber resting on the windscreen and held horizontally would suffice) and attach the pivots to the wheel arch to suit. The pivots aren't bolted to the wheel arch, but are attached with wood screws to a block of timber underneath the wheel arch which is shaped to fit its curvature and which also serves to act as a locator for the inner edge of the wing.

It may be, however, that the pivots don't actually come down as far as the wheel arches, in which case the little blocks of timber sometimes found between pivots and wheel arch now make sense. We believe that when these little blocks were fitted originally, this was possibly done for two reasons: first, to, if necessary, raise the hood frame a little to tension the hood fabric and second, to accommodate the angle of the wheel arch when fitting the pivot. It would seem though that not all cars had them and not all wheel arches require them. Hence the choice is up to you. In any case, the idea that these little blocks were fitted to increase headroom seems fanciful as anyone under six feet in height will have at least two to three inches of headroom with the hood positioned correctly. An extra half inch wasn't going to make any difference!

Correctly located like this, the hood frame will be self-locking when the hood is erected as the forces on it from the tension of the hood act to keep it locked in place. Get its position wrong though and it will have a tendency to collapse. Don't ask me how I know!



Picture 2

In order for it to be possible for a single piece of material to be fitted to the shape of both the hood frame and the body, there are two darts in each side. One dart runs forwards at an angle of around 40 degrees from the screw securing the hood at the corner of the rear bow, along the line of the frame underneath and continues to the leading edge of the hood at the door opening, finishing about two fifths the way up. In Picture 1 it can be seen that the leading edge of the door opening lies along a line from the rear wheel centre to the corner of the front bow and there should be a smooth curve of approximately six inch radius connecting the line of the rear of the door opening to the horizontal edge of the upper door opening. The second dart runs backwards from the corner of the front bow at an angle of around 45 degrees, along the line of the frame underneath, to meet the line of the dart from the rear bow approximately half way along it. The seams for the darts are external ones, flat-fell or lapped, and top stitched.

Looking at the factory photographs of the prototype J2 and F2, the lack of a line of stitching about one inch from the edge of the hood around the door opening would suggest that there was no stiffening/strengthening strip sewn on here, although there does appear to be such stiffening/strengthening where the hood fits to the body. Later hoods such as on the P-type had this additional

stiffening/strengthening around the door opening and it seems sensible to add this. Likewise, the J2 didn't have the locating strip sewn to the inside edge of the hood along the top of the side curtain, but, again, it makes sense to add this as it provides some degree of location for the top of the side curtain. As this strip is purely there to help locate the side curtain, there is no benefit to continuing it along the rest of the opening down as far as the lower corner of the hood.

In order to give the edge of the hood a finished look without any visible cut edges, the hoods seem to have been edged with material similar to the hood material itself (and not with rexine or other edging, but see our comments later when discussing hood materials and colours). With only a single line of stitching visible, we believe that the edging strip is first sewn face down on the outside of the hood, then folded over the edge of the hood to the inside, thus hiding the stitching, and then sewn to the inside of the hood with the line of the stitching following tight against the fold on the outside, but not through it. Only a single line of stitching is therefore visible.

At the front, the hood should simply be folded over the top of the screen and fastened to it with six Lift-the-DOT sockets positioned vertically. As there is no need for the webbing straps, there is no need for any double length Lift-the-DOT studs in the windscreen and in fact we could find no evidence in any contemporary photographs of any long studs on the windscreen. The folded over edge of the hood should also slope downwards on each side from the second stud to the outer stud which is set slightly lower in the windscreen frame.

This is seen very clearly in *Picture 3* which shows the Platt and Archer J3 at Folkestone in the January 1933 Monte Carlo Rally. This is in fact the only photograph we have come across of a production J-type with its hood erected and side curtains in place. As an aside, one of the reasons for there being so few contemporary photographs of production Triple-M cars with their hoods up may be that, in the 1930s, slow film speeds and the very small lens apertures of cameras meant that one needed fairly bright sunlight in order to take decent pictures, in which case the cars would usually not have their hoods up.

At the rear, from our experience of our own cars, and from discussions with those whose cars have bodies which appear to be substantially original, we believe that the ten Lift-the-DOT studs should all be double length ones. The reason for this is very simple: the double length studs are there to enable the tonneau cover to be attached over the top of the folded hood while it remains attached to the body. However, the stud on each side adjacent to the upper door hinge is a short one as only the side curtain flap is attached to it as we explain below.

The Lift-the-DOT sockets around the rear of the hood were sometimes positioned horizontally with the 'dot' facing outwards at the rear and forwards on each side, rather than vertically with the 'dot' at the bottom. We think this makes sense as it makes them easier to undo and it makes it easier to access and undo the vertically mounted sockets on the tonneau cover which sit on top of them. The shallower depth of the sockets on the hood when placed horizontally also makes it easier to ensure that the tonneau cover completely covers the hood.



Picture 3

As for the rear window, the original half round shape, which is about 15 inches wide and seven inches high and is centrally positioned between the rear bow and the rear edge of the body, is perfectly sufficient to provide a clear view behind, given the small size of, and the close proximity of the driver to, the rear view mirror. Even with a scuttle top mounted mirror some 50 per cent wider than the standard horn button mounted one, the field of view to the rear is actually no wider than the standard rear window, so a wider window wouldn't actually enable you to see more.

Side Curtains

Our investigations identified three different styles of side curtain frames and three different methods of construction. However, we could find no way of determining which style and which method of construction applied at any given time. It seems to be one of those things where it very much depended on what was available. The three styles are shown in *Picture 4*.

All three show the driver's side with the horizontal cross bar which provides support for a hinged triangular flap below it, enabling the driver to give hand signals. From experience I would also add that the flap is essential to enable the driver to grasp the top of the door, or even the outside door handle, so that the door can be properly closed. Trying to close the door by gripping the lever on the inside of the door lock just doesn't work! As the passenger's side curtain has a full depth window and therefore doesn't have this flap, the driver always has to close the passenger's door and fit the top of the side curtain inside the edge of the hood, before getting in himself (or herself).

We never came across an example of the first style of side curtain which can be seen in factory photographs of the J2 prototype. Examples of the other two styles are relatively plentiful, but with no obvious way to determine which might be correct for any particular car. I opted to go for the cutaway 'Monte Carlo J3' style as it doesn't have the sharp corner poking out at the front, waiting to catch out unsuspecting passengers.

The actual construction can be of 3/8 inch round bar, or 1/8 inch flat strip steel. If the latter, while the lower section of the frame where the side curtain mounting pegs are attached is 1/2 inch wide, the upper section can be either 1/2 or 3/8 inch wide. Once again, there is no obvious reason for one style or the other.

The side curtain mounting pegs are attached to brackets that are affixed to the flat strip frames using bolts, washers and nuts. We have seen instances of special bolts with distinctive hexagon heads having been used, but we concluded that slotted, round head 2BA screws are probably the easiest solution. Although we can't be certain, it would seem that if the frame was made from round bar, then the pegs were directly welded or brazed on to the frame. The pegs themselves seem to have been either 5/16 or 3/8 inch with most examples we came across being 3/8 inch.

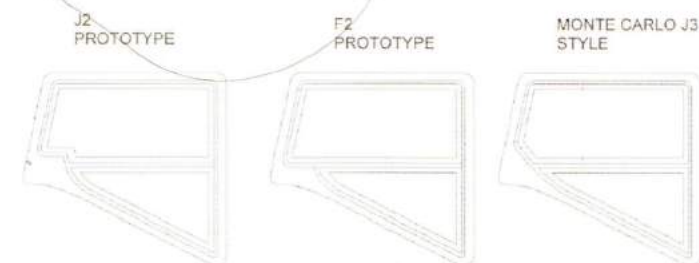
Despite the variation in the size of the pegs, the holes in the door sockets for the pegs are 3/8 inch and clearly some allowance needs to be made in sizing if 3/8 inch pegs are used. The holes in the sockets are eccentric to enable some compensation to be made for slight variations in the distance between the pegs, although the slotted holes in the fixing brackets allow for plenty of adjustment.

The top of the side curtains should tuck between the outer edge of the hood and the locating strip sewn on the inside. The outer edge of the hood should come down as far as the metal frame of the side curtains, with the proviso that the edge of the hood has to slope downwards at the front to accommodate the location of the outer Lift-the-DOT stud on the windscreen frame. They should fit neatly against the windscreen, tucking behind the 'B' nut assembly.

There does not seem to be any specific provision for the storage of the side curtains, but I have found that they fit neatly on either side of the transmission tunnel – see *Picture 5*. Note too, that they should be positioned between the seat adjuster cross bar and the folded hood frame and not between the cross bar and the seatback, because in the latter position they will end up caught between the seat adjusters and the seatback which will damage the windows. We are aware that there are examples of rexine storage bags for the side curtains being fixed to the back of the seat squab which have leather pads to try and offer some protection for the windows when caught between the seat squab and the seat adjuster. I'm not sure how effective these leather pads are in practice and the fact that there is no reference to these storage bags in the Parts List leaves us sceptical as to their provenance.

Side Curtain Flaps

The side curtain flaps are more or less triangular pieces of material which fill in the gap between the rear edge of the side curtain, the leading edge of the hood and the body. At their lower end they are fastened to the short Lift-the-DOT stud beside the upper door hinge. At the top, they have a Lift-the-DOT stud attached to them (not a DOT Durable² press fastener) which fastens into a Lift-the-DOT socket in the hood positioned directly below the front hood bow. Rather than set vertically, this socket seems to have been fitted to follow the line of the hood at the corner of the door opening. At the rear corner, the flap has a Lift-the-DOT socket



Picture 4

²DOT® Durable™ is also a registered trademark of the Scovill Corporation



Picture 5

which fits underneath the hood on the foremost long Lift-the-DOT stud on the body. Two DOT Durable press fasteners secure the rear edge of the flap to the leading edge of the hood between the rear corner and the top of the flap.

Along the inside of the leading edge of the flap a locating strip, similar to that along the upper edge of the hood, is sewn on and the rear edge of the side curtain fits between the flap and the locating strip. This helps to keep the side curtain in place and ensures a good seal against the elements provided the flap remains taut. This is why a Lift-the-DOT fastener (which will not come undone when under tension), rather than a DOT Durable press fastener (which may come undone under tension), needs to be used at the top – it ensures that the flap can be kept in tension between the Lift-the-DOT fasteners at each corner obviating the need for any stiffening to be inserted in it. The DOT Durable press fasteners, however, are sufficient to secure the rear edge of the flap.

Having driven my J2 in torrential rain, I can vouch for the efficacy of this system with negligible ingress of water in or around the side curtains or flaps. Furthermore, the car can be driven without the side curtains and with just the flaps in place (with the hood up, obviously) and they retain their tension and don't billow out in the breeze.

Factory Style Tonneau Cover

When the Works refer to the tonneau cover, they mean the cover that fits over the space behind the seats and not a full length cover as this was never actually offered for the J2. Virtually all contemporary photographs of production J2s show the car with the tonneau cover in place. Today, hardly any cars are so fitted, so there was little by way of reliable information as to fit and finish. Careful scrutiny of period photographs and email discussions with a few people who actually have had sight of original items and who had even copied them for their own cars, would suggest the following:

As can be seen in **Picture 6** which was taken when my car was new, the tonneau cover is an ever so slightly loose fit over the rear of the car so that there is room for the hood and frame to push it up slightly as discussed above. It is fairly crudely made, with just a dart at each rear corner to enable the sides to be turned down. The sides have vertically positioned Lift-the-DOT sockets which fit onto the Lift-the-DOT studs over the top of the hood. The edge doesn't seem to have been finished in the same way as the hood edges, but rather just turned over and stitched.

The front edge of the tonneau cover is fixed to the back of the seat squab, with enough slack in it to permit the seat squab to be adjusted forward if necessary. This results in a somewhat unsightly gathering of material behind the seat if the seat squab is set fully back (see **Picture 6** again). The tonneau cover is attached to the seat squab using a strip of half round timber which is nailed to the back of the seat squab with the tonneau cover sandwiched in between. The strip of timber needs to be bent slightly as it is fitted in order to follow the curved line of the top of the seat squab.

The tonneau cover has a flap hanging down on each side of the seat. The purpose of these flaps is to provide protection for your sleeve by preventing it catching on the folded hood frame. It has been suggested that these flaps were secured to the wheel arch at their lower end to prevent them blowing about in the wind, but we could find no evidence in any of the contemporary photographs of any sort of fastener being used. In fact, several of the photographs of my own car in its youth show the flaps tucked in behind the seat squab suggesting that there wasn't any way of securing them to prevent them blowing around.

What I can say with certainty, however, is that if they are not carefully tucked in under your arm, or tucked behind the seat squab, they do indeed blow around in the wind when on the move, so some sort of fastener would probably be a good idea.

Materials and Colour Schemes

In the October 1932 J-type sales brochure, the hood for the standard black exterior paint finish was specified as '*black rubberised twill*.' In the case of the duotone colour finish, the hood was again black rubberised twill '*except on the two-seater models in which case it is of coloured rubberised twill to tone with the external colour scheme*.' Alternative paint finishes were available at extra cost, but there is no indication of what hood material would apply in such cases. And of course the small print says that '*the right is reserved to vary this specification without notice*.'

In the October 1933 sales brochure, there is no reference to rubberised twill and the hood colours are simply given as black for black finished cars and red, green or blue for the relevant duotone finishes. Again, no mention of what happens with non-standard paint finishes and of course the same disclaimer about varying the specification without notice is still there.

So what are we to make of this? Anecdotal evidence would suggest that few, if any, J-types left Abingdon with coloured hoods. The general consensus seems to be that, despite many of the factory photographs showing what appear to be fawn or tan hoods, most cars, if not all, were supplied with black hoods. M.G. seems to have had form in offering coloured hoods in the sales brochure, but not actually making them available in practice. There is a well-known M.G. colour chart showing five different colours for M.G. TA hoods, but there seems little doubt that all TAs left the factory with black hoods.

There is also little factual information on what exactly 'rubberised twill' was, but it would seem to have been a generic term in those days for any type of rubberised cotton which usually consisted of two layers of cotton with a vulcanised rubber interlining. By the 1920s, the technique of producing such materials was well established – think of Mackintosh raincoats which were made this way – so it seems reasonable to assume that this may have been used. Whether it was a twill weave, which has a diagonal



Picture 6

appearance to the weave, or a plain weave, which has a square appearance, remains a mystery. There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest that some hoods may not even have been rubberised, but were simply plain canvas.

So what are our options for hood material today? Well, we basically have three possibilities. The one most people think of in the context of 'vintage' cars is double duck which is two layers of heavy plain weave cotton (or 'duck' from the Dutch *doek* meaning cloth) with a rubber interlining. It is therefore essentially the same construction as rubberised twill, but with a plain weave, not a twill weave. It is a heavy material, weighing about 30 ounces per square yard (for comparison, heavy denim jeans are about 12 to 14 ounces per square yard) and is widely available in both black and fawn/tan, but not in any other colour.

Another option is similar to double duck, but is made from two layers of plain weave wigan cotton (so named after the town of Wigan where it was apparently originally made) as opposed to duck and again with a rubber interlining. It is of lighter weight at around 24 ounces per square yard and is currently only available in black, although at the time of writing (autumn 2013) there is an on-going project in the United States to manufacture some in fawn/tan. This hooding material is generally simply referred to as 'wigan.'

The last option is to forego cotton canvas altogether and use modern solution dyed acrylic fabrics which are available in a range of colours. For some unknown reason these fabrics are known in Britain as 'mohair' which is a most misleading term as they have nothing whatsoever in common with the expensive hooding materials that were once made using genuine mohair. The construction of these acrylic hoodings is not dissimilar to double duck and wigan in that there is an outer layer, in this case acrylic rather than cotton, a rubber interlining and a cotton or polyester backing cloth. This backing cloth is usually black or tan in colour and sometimes has a geometric pattern to it in which case it is known as 'dobby.' These acrylic fabrics come in differing weights that approximate to both double duck and wigan. Two of the best known are Twillfast® and Stayfast®, both made by the Haartz Corporation, with the former being similar to double duck in weight (and a twill weave to boot) and the latter (a square weave) being equivalent in weight to wigan. Haartz also make a fabric called Sonnenland® in both twill and square weaves which is also about the same weight as wigan. The black versions of these fabrics are pretty well indistinguishable in appearance from duck and wigan and the coloured ones offer all sorts of possibilities for matching duotone paint finishes.

So which material to choose? Double duck and wigan have pretty much the same physical properties, i.e. they shrink over time as a result of getting wet and they fade over time when exposed to sunlight. We have heard of examples of such fabrics more or less disintegrating in the past as a result of the rubber interlining suffering UV degradation. This seems to have been more common with the fawn/tan wigan which may account for its lack of availability today. Modern double duck and wigan, however, do not seem to suffer from this, but certainly in the 1930s hoods were reckoned to have a life of only a couple of years before they'd need replacing.

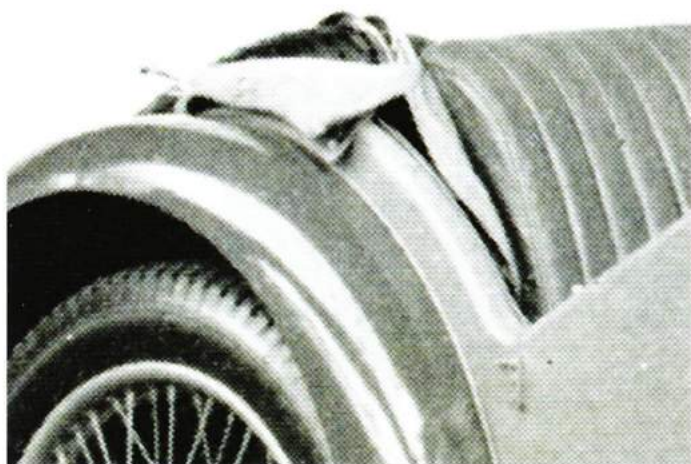
However, being natural fabrics, they also have a degree of stretch which, I am told, makes them slightly easier to work with when trying to get a good fit on a hood frame and body that may not be exactly true.

Acrylic fabrics on the other hand do not shrink and do not fade, but nor do they have any stretch which can potentially make them tricky to fit compared to duck or wigan. One trimmer told me of trying to get an acrylic hood fabric sufficiently taut between the hood frame and the windscreen of a drop head coupé and when he went to close the doors, found that they wouldn't fit as the body had been pulled out of shape by his efforts to get the 'mohair' taut. An extreme case perhaps, but one worth bearing in mind.

I decided not to go for an acrylic fabric as the eventual fading, and yes, even the shrinkage, of double duck or wigan would add character to my J2 as it aged. The car is not intended to be a museum piece, but is to be used as much as possible. It will inevitably get a bit worn around the edges and a hood that always looked like new would start to stick out like a sore thumb. Much better, I thought, to have my hood age with the car (and me!). I eventually opted for wigan rather than double duck as the latter is a very heavy material and it is likely to be difficult to fold a double duck hood neatly enough to fit under and around the hood frame as described above. For this reason, if opting for the acrylic fabrics, I would suggest going for the lighter weight ones such as Stayfast® or Sonnenland®.

A last word on coloured hoods: despite the lack of any firm evidence that coloured hoods were ever actually provided, some contemporary factory photographs would seem to show a contrasting edging to the hood where it can be seen peeking out from underneath the tonneau cover. This example in **Picture 7** is the swept wing J2 prototype (the same chassis, J0251, as the original prototype, but in a new party frock) and the light coloured tonneau cover is obviously fitted over a darker coloured hood with what seems to be a contrasting edge trim. This contrasting edging is perhaps what was meant by the coloured hoods mentioned in the 1933 sales brochure for duotone (swept wing) cars, which this one clearly is. Such contrasting edging can be achieved today by using modern coloured vinyl edging which will, however, often give a slightly shiny finish depending on the exact type of edging.

If you want to go the whole hog and go for a coloured hood, the range of colours available in acrylic fabrics such as Stayfast® and Twillfast® are such that matching a duotone colour scheme should be perfectly feasible. For a single colour car such as my green J2, however, I personally felt that a green hood and side curtains would be a bit overpowering; hence my choice of black wigan.



Picture 7

Of course the side curtains and flaps are made from the same material as the hood. The windows in both the side curtains and the hood are nowadays generally made from 0.040 inch Vybak sheet. This is thick enough to give sufficient rigidity to the windows without at the same time making them too rigid and liable to crack. Celluloid is also an option, but it is rather more rigid and more liable to crack in cold weather.

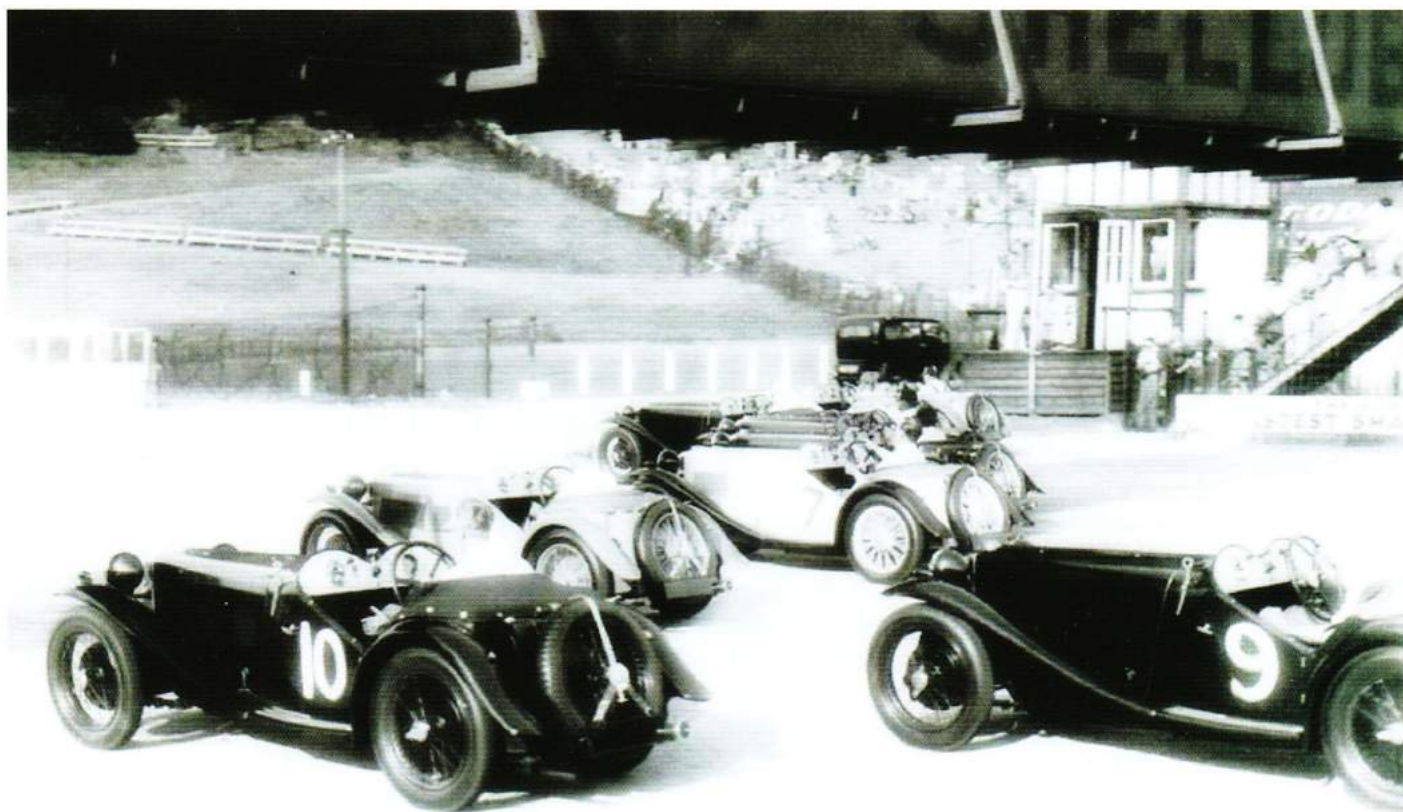
The eagle eyed amongst you will have noticed that in reviewing hood materials, I have made no mention of the tonneau cover. Nowadays, to most people, a tonneau cover means a full length waterproof cover to protect the interior of the car from the weather when parked and such covers are usually made of the same material as the hood. But as explained above, the J2 tonneau cover was simply a cover over the rear of the car which covered the hood when it was folded away. The tonneau cover is actually listed in the J-type Parts List under 'Seats and Fittings' rather than under

'Hood and Side Curtains' and is described as part of the seat squab, although sold separately, which would suggest that it wasn't considered as weather equipment and therefore probably wasn't made from rubberised twill. Indeed in later cars including the N Magnette and the TA, the tonneau cover was apparently made of rexine, in some cases the same colour as the interior trim and in other cases just plain black. Contemporary photographs, such as **Picture 8** which shows L2s at Brooklands in 1933, as well as photographs of my own J2, also show that the tonneau cover was provided in a light colour (or colours) as well as in black.

It seems possible, therefore, that the tonneau cover was plain canvas rather than rubberised and was perhaps (and I use 'perhaps' advisedly) in a colour to tone with or match the colour of the car or the interior trim. For my green J2 with apple green upholstery, I opted for a khaki/green 18 ounce canvas from a Land Rover specialist which goes nicely with the colour of the car and has sufficient flexibility to accommodate the folded hood underneath it.

So there we have it, dear reader. If, like me, you live where it rains more often than not, decent weather equipment is essential if you are to use your Triple-M car for more than just gentle runs on sunny summer days. We've put quite a few miles on our J2 in pouring rain with the hood up and side curtains in place and I can honestly say that it isn't really all that much noisier than with the hood down. It's certainly cosy and there's very little elbow room, but at least we were dry.

So if you're going to have a hood, then why not do it properly and follow the factory style? In his article in last year's Yearbook, Mike Allison commented how unattractive he thought Triple-M M.G.s were with their hood up, but I'm with The Autocar who said in their PB road test, *'the trim appearance of the Midget is not lost when the hood is raised.'*



Picture 8