

## A MEMORABLE MORNING AT PENDRAGON HALL

### First Demonstration Of New Model Car At Reading

School children at Pendragon Hall, Bath Road, Reading, had the happiest morning "break" of their young lives on Thursday when they ran out on to the lawn to see a new model motor-car standing there for them to do just whatever they liked with. It was not by any means an ordinary model motor-car, for it had an engine, gearbox, brakes, pneumatic tyres, a clutch, accelerator pedal and a self-starter.

It was, in fact, the "Atco Trainer," the remarkable little machine produced by Whitworth Works, Birmingham, and it was the first demonstration of the vehicle in Reading.

Just to make sure that everything was all right, Mr. G. D. March, principal of the school, had first ride. He found some difficulty in fitting in his legs, but the lusty little one horse-power engine made light of the load. All the children cheered him indulgently as he set off, but, as the minutes went by and he was still merrily buzzing round the lawn, there were some murmurings to be heard. The feeling seemed to be that he was making the ride last a bit too long, and there were expressions indicative of "about time, too," when at last he cut off the engine and climbed out.

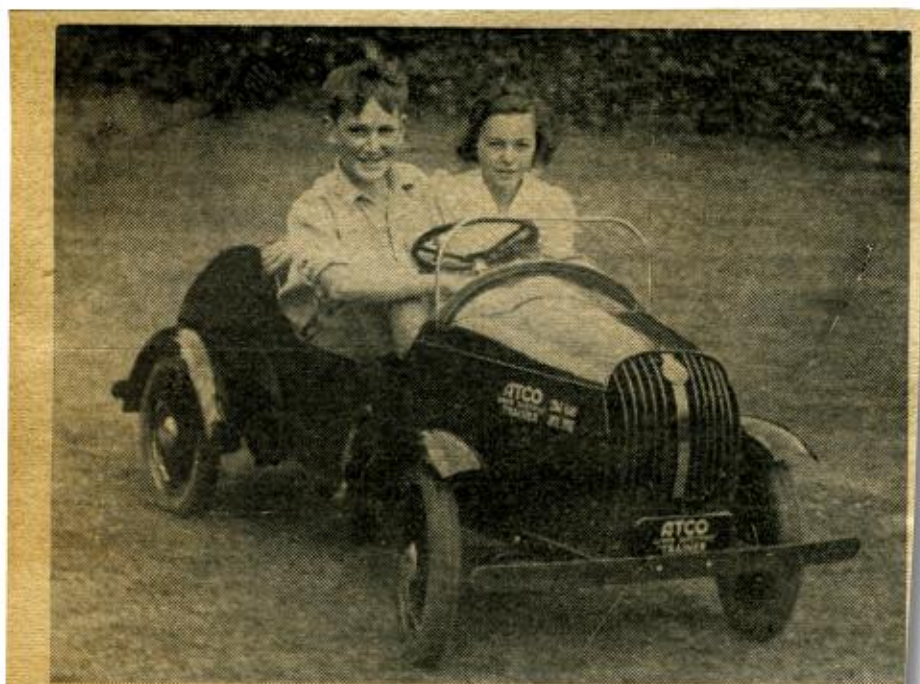
The Atco demonstrator started to instruct some of the older boys in the art of driving, but he was evidently trying to educate experts, for he was almost literally swept away in the rush. Several boys took turns to drive, taking schoolgirls as passengers, and it spoke volumes for the simplicity of the controls that at no time did they experience any difficulty. At its maximum of 10 miles per hour the little car was swerved right and left. It was stopped, reversed and manoeuvred by boys and girls not yet in their 'teens, and it was a sad moment when the time came to go back to the classrooms.

The "Atco Trainer" has been produced not only to give children undreamed-of pleasure, but also to enable them to learn road sense. It aims to make them familiar with the driving of mechanically propelled vehicles at an age when the impressions gained and the lessons learned will be vivid and lasting.



Catalogue number ATC07  
Price code C (1 of 3)  
Date 6/7/2007

IceniCAM Information Service



THE ATCO junior safety-first trainer, a demonstration of which was given at Pendragon Hall, Reading, this week.

*Reading Mercury*  
15th July 1939





*Country Life*  
 15th July 1939

### TEACHING THEM YOUNG

NOTICE with great interest that the Atco firm, famous for their lawn mowers, have introduced a miniature car with a 1 h.p. engine and with a maximum speed of 10 m.p.h., for use in schools or any private grounds, where it need not be registered. It is intended for use in teaching children to drive, and as I was driving a little car of my own at the age of six and have been at the wheel practically continuously since then, I am naturally

in favour of starting early. When my legs grew long enough I graduated on to larger cars and drove them for many years on private roads, before I was old enough even to have a licence to ride a motor cycle. Incidentally, I taught several older relations to drive long before I was old enough to have a licence myself, and in all cases, I am proud to say, they are excellent examples of what car drivers should be to-day.

There are, of course, people who are practically born with a car sense, and those can become good drivers even when they start at a really advanced age. I think, however, it can be said that if every driver of to-day had been driving since the age of six, road sense, quick reflex, and mastery of controls would long ago have become instinctive. If it becomes possible through "trainer" cars like this Atco model to teach children in schools what driving is like at an early age, I think we shall find that accident statistics of the future will show a very large improvement.

I believe that more than 10,000 schools

in the United States of America include tuition in motor driving in the curriculum.

The Atco Junior Safetyfirst Trainer is propelled by a 1 h.p. two-stroke internal combustion engine using a mixture of petrol and oil as fuel. It is a similar engine to that used in the well known Atco lawn mower, and the car is fitted with one forward speed and reverse, the controls consisting of a gear lever, clutch pedal, accelerator pedal, and foot-brake pedal, placed according to standard motor-car practice. It has, in addition, a hand brake.

In appearance it is a smart two-seater, the engine being mounted over the rear axle. The price is £35.

My own electrical car was designed and built by a local electrician and had two speeds, with large batteries at the back delivering the current through resistances. I soon found, however, a secret method of cutting out these resistances, when I could get a speed of about 10 m.p.h. for short distances.



#### MINIATURE CARS FOR CHILDREN'S SAFETY LESSONS.

To the adult world, the training of children in road safety methods is a matter of serious, not to say desperate, importance. To the children themselves, however, it is happily as interesting and entertaining a subject as most of their other lessons to-day, and since lessons enjoyed are more easily and thoroughly learnt than those which bore, the more entertainment value given to safety instruction, the better.

Boys and girls will certainly consider themselves lucky if they have a chance to handle the new miniature cars which have been

designed as "trainers" for them. The product of a famous engineering firm, these little machines are faithful reproductions of the modern motor car, as regards control layout, with gear lever, clutch pedal, accelerator pedal and foot brake placed in the normal positions.

There are two gears—forward and reverse—and an engine of 98 c.c., or 1 h.p. A speed of 10 m.p.h. is possible, and complete safety assured, for the chassis is strongly constructed, efficient bumpers are fitted front and rear, and the car will not overturn even if the wheel is put hard over at full speed.

*Hamilton Advertiser*

*15th July 1939*