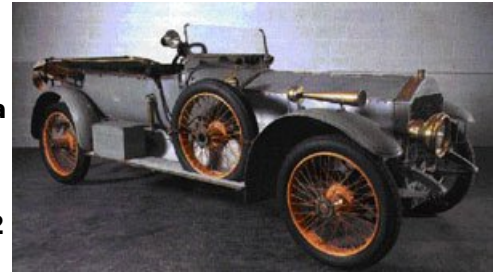


CLASSIC DRIVER

[22 April 2002 Bonhams at RAF Museum, Hendon, London Preview](#)

Bonhams' sale of some fifty cars at the RAF Museum, Hendon, on Monday 22nd April, is preceded on the Sunday by a substantial offering of veteran bicycles and cycling memorabilia. There are nineteenth century tricycles and even a quadcycle, plus the usual selection of automobilia, toys and models.

But on to the cars. The highest estimate of the sale is placed on a **1902 Panhard-Levassor** which, with its 2.4-litre 4-cylinder engine and four forward speeds, has been a frequent entrant in the London to Brighton Run. The car's consistent success in the run pays tribute to Panhard et Levassor, a manufacturer at the leading edge of early motor sport. Carrying registration number "A 504" and an unusually full history for a car of this age, the Panhard-Levassor is expected to fetch £120,000 - £150,000.



Second in terms of value is another early model: the **1908 Napier 8**, 650cc 6-cylinder racing car, offered from the estate of the late Ivor Read and hoped to fetch £70,000 to £100,000. It is one of only two known survivors of the racing-type chassis, although fitted with a later c.1913 touring body. Read bought the car from fellow Cambridge undergraduate Edward Rayson in 1925, after Rayson lost his licence for speeding. This incident is a story in itself: Rayson was heading from Cambridge to London for his obligatory Sunday lunch with mother and since anything less than 60mph caused the Napier to overheat, Rayson swept through Baldock at the prescribed speed. Unfortunately, the church was disgorging its congregation at the time and the crowd duly scattered as the Napier scorched past. Rayson lost his licence and sold the car to Ivor Read for £35, on two conditions: first, that he prove himself capable of driving the car and second, that he agreed to act as Rayson's chauffeur every Sunday.

Also from the estate of Ivor Read is a **1908 Napier 45hp T23 Open Drive Limousine** ; and a **1925 Vauxhall 30-98 Velox Tourer**.

Please see the [Provisional Auction Entries](#).

Text: Charis Whitcombe

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