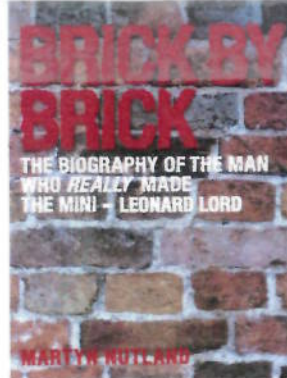


“Brick by Brick”, by Martyn Nutland. Authorhouse, 1663 Liberty Drive, Bloomington, IN 47403 USA. Softback, 280 x 210mm; 311 pages inc 10 pages of mono illus. ISBN 978 1 4772 0318 7. £15.04 from Amazon UK.

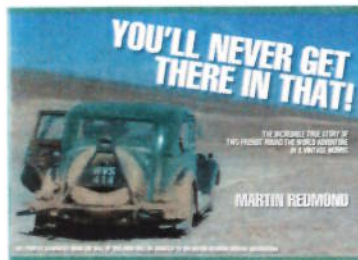
This book’s subtitle, ‘The Biography of the Man who Really made the Mini – Leonard Lord’, immediately highlights its controversial line and challenge to accepted wisdom. In the course of 279 large and unillustrated pages of densely-packed text, Martyn Nutland, a friend of the P&DVCC whose home is in Paris, forcefully makes his case: that posterity has judged Leonard Lord harshly, and his contribution to the British motor industry was substantial and predominantly positive, and this has been belittled by earlier writers.



The biographer’s task in the case of Lord is all the more demanding because not only did he fail to see that historical material about his career was preserved, but even took steps to hide his humble origins. A private man, indeed. Nutland’s remarkable persistence and diligence have paid off, and a balanced view of Lord’s personality and achievements emerges. His latter days as the head of BMC have led to him being labelled as the man who oversaw the destruction of our motor industry, but in truth, and with hindsight it is doubtful if anyone could have done much better when faced with the overwhelming political and labour obstacles that Lord had to address. Lord’s BLMC successors certainly failed to reverse the decline.

Many readers will feel that Nutland has been unreasonably hard on Issigonis, that he has attacked the design engineer’s sublime reputation to enhance the standing of Lord. On the kitchen scales, this large soft-back book weighs 2.3 kg, over 5 lbs; more than half the weight of the average new-born baby. It is not a ‘light’ read in either sense. But I read every word with real interest, and now have a better understanding not only of Lord’s career and the firms for which he worked, but of the history of the whole industry over a thirty-year period. Inevitably, with a work of such controversial content, finding a publisher was fraught. There are 10 photographs grouped as an appendix, and a useful bibliography, a lengthy listing of models made under his reign, and a proper index complete a remarkable publication. JW

“You’ll Never Get There in That!”, by Martin Redmond. Published by the Motor Neurone Disease Association; softback, 150 x 210mm; 66 pages, prof col illus. Available via our member Tom Taylor 01772 316598 or t.taylor@o2.co.uk, £5 if delivered by hand. Tom will advise on postage.



This is a very worthwhile book, in part because all profits are being passed by the author to the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Worthwhile, too, as the gripping story moves at a fast pace, even at times leaving the reader wishing for a little more detail. A 1938 Morris 25hp saloon was bought and prepared for a daunting expedition round the world, by way of Europe to Greece, then through Turkey, Georgia, then the bandit country including Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan; Mongolia and Russia to Vladivostok. America was crossed from LA to NY via Chicago.

Author, Martin Redmond and his colleague Roger Gaunt brought their expertise in older cars and travel planning to the project. The paperwork, visas routes and all such