



Two jags Tom!

# for STRESS

By TOM FARRELL

**M**mm! Fiat 124 Sport, slight rust problem. No! Ford Capri 1300L, tiger seat covers, radio with six foot aerial. Definitely not! Jaguar XJ6 2.8 Litre, slight engine problem. No. Jaguar XJ6, new model, genuine reason for selling. Indeed! Ah! This is more like it! 1965 Jaguar 3.4 S Type, one owner, full history, automatic, silver with red interior, price £350. That's the one for me, one owner and history, it should give me years of enjoyment...

The Jaguar S Type was introduced in 1964 with 3.4 and 3.8 Litre engines. It was not met with an enthusiastic response as it didn't have the magic of other Lyons creations. Sir William Lyons, owner of Jaguar Cars Ltd, was a master at creating beautiful cars and he seldom put a foot wrong. Many feel he was having an off day when he designed the 'S' Type. He married a miniature version of the Jaguar Mk 10 rear end onto the Mk 2 body. This new addition had twin petrol tanks, larger boot and independent rear suspension (a la E Type and Mk 10). The front end of the car came in for a bit of surgery as well with the side lights

being moved down next to the new style indicators, the head and spot lamps grew brows and the grille was slightly restyled. The convex roof was flattened to make the car look long and low. Inside it was slightly more luxurious with the centre panel being covered in walnut as opposed to Rexene. Oddly it didn't have rear picnic tables but had one in the front. The heating system was 'helped' (when it worked) by hydraulics which opened the scuttle mounted flap for fresh air. Compared to the Mk 2, it wasn't a big seller with 9830 3.4 models and 15070 3.8 models produced, most for export. Although heavier than the Mk 2, motoring writers felt that it handled better.

I don't remember seeing any S Types when I was growing up, but some time in 1978 I got a bee in my bonnet and had to have one. I looked at adverts for a while and eventually found one out near Portrane. I remember the lovely narrow country lanes and beautiful fields (probably under a million houses now) as I drove it. It was like an extra from 'The Sweeney', looked like shit, but went like stink! The price was £150 and all I had

was £125 and it didn't become mine.

But I was bitten by the bug and saved my pennies and looked out for a suitable car. In November 1978 I found one in the paper, a Cavan registered 1965 3.4 S Type automatic. Its colour was gunmetal grey with a red leather interior and was a one owner car with all documents and tools. The interior was good but the body needed some attention. After coughing up £340, G10 770 was mine. The arrival of another Jag at home (I had two Jags before John Prescott!) was not treated with joy as I already had a 1969 240 as my everyday car, "what do you want another one for?"

However within two weeks of getting it, I was unexpectedly chosen to serve overseas with the UN and two Jags outside my parent's house were not welcomed! Salvation came in the form of a young Garda, who was going out with the sister of a close friend of mine. He suggested that he go halves on the car, we would do it up and sell it for profit and better again, he would store it in his father's house. Relief all round! The 'S' was duly delivered and in time I departed for overseas service in Lebanon.



Stress-Type!



Restoration underway

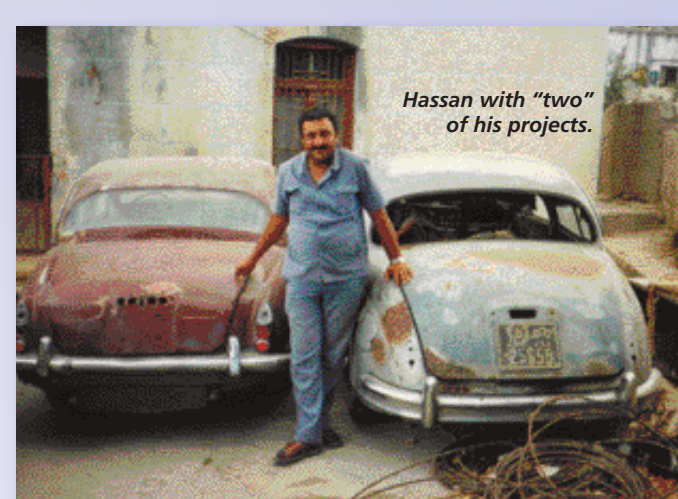


Finished product



Left) Gallows Green

Air conditioning Lebanese style



Hassan with "two" of his projects.

My home for the duration of my tour of duty was a bomb damaged house called Gallows Green. It was in a range of mountains over 3,000 feet above sea level in a village called Tibnin, which was built around the ruins of a crusader castle.

One of the many tasks the Military Police had was to investigate traffic accidents, especially those involving local motorists crashing into UN vehicles, an event that was on the increase, mainly because it meant dollars in compensation for the locals.

I remember one occasion when one such local took a sledge hammer to his car and redesigned the front wing after a minor accident. Unfortunately for him, he bashed the wrong wing, so the UN slot machine didn't pay out that day!

A few weeks into my tour, I heard a big row going on in front of the house. A local man was arguing with some of my colleagues over damage to his car, a Jaguar 'S' Type! It was a 1965 3.4 Litre manual overdrive. Later I got talking to the owner, Hassan Ismael, a local electrical contractor and told him my 'S' Type was the same vintage as his. I got to know him quite well to the extent I was invited to his home regularly.

He was a Jag nut. He had two Mk 2s, three 'S' Types and a Mk 10. The Mk 10 was a minter except for a neat line of bullet holes along the roof. Hassan was driving home from Beirut to Tibnin, when he was fired on by an Israeli Air Force F 11 fighter on its way back to base just over the border!!

Hassan offered to get me an 'S' type, however even in those pre-weight restriction days, a Jaguar weighing a ton and three quarters would be stretching it! I accepted a set of chrome wire wheels instead.

On my return to Ireland, I immediately went to see my 'S' Type and was horrified to see its condition. It had been parked in a paddock without cover. A blazing row ensued, resulting in me deciding to take my car back. I came back the following day prepared with a battery, petrol and

spark plugs. The noise produced on starting it was ear splitting! I'd say it could have been heard in my parent's home! The road was narrow and the car wouldn't go fast and pretty soon I built up a following. However with the timing being out, the car sounded like a 21 gun salute as it boomed and exploded along the road, with flames shooting from the exhausts, causing the convoy behind me to shrink back after every bang! With every mile my mood matched that of the car.

The lights at Whites Cross were red and as I stopped, the dark blue Hillman Avenger behind me coughed out two overcoats, which turned out to be detectives! More guards! I let fly about the idiot Garda who ruined my car. They were stunned by my outburst, they then looked at each other for a moment and burst out laughing. It seemed they knew the 'member' in question. "Mind how you go and get de' old exhaust fixed"!

The car would need restoration and I cast my eye around at garages in the business.

I knew a guy I regarded as a friend who painted and serviced cars. I had him assess the car and terms being favourable arranged for it to be brought to the garage.

Over a period of several weeks I called in regularly and watched the progress. In the usual fashion, costs began to spiral. I was clear in my recall of the terms but they weren't. It was almost there, I wanted the car finished but nothing happened. One day when I was visiting, the manager sidled up to me and in a conspiratorial manner told me that the County Sheriff was about to close the place down and everything would be seized. I would be smart to get the car out. I knew it was a ruse but collected it anyway. I should have known that anyone with the maxim "for every punter I screw, there's nine I haven't", wasn't going to exclude friends.

The car looked good but mechanically needed to be tweaked. I needed an expert and was pointed to a certain

individual. After a phone call, the car was delivered and work commenced. I got a call about a week later to say it was ready and got a lift to collect it. It was expensive but I drove home a happy man.

A few miles later I heard 'noises' and a quick check on the oil pressure and temperature gauges revealed all was okay there. The noises rapidly increased in volume and I swiftly pulled over onto the footpath and switched off.

Getting out of the car revealed the obvious source of the noise as the car gave birth to the Red Sea! Transmission fluid oozed all over the road! Jesus! Why did I buy it? Jaguar 'S' Type? Jaguar Stress Type more like! I stormed off in the direction of a bus stop. By the time I got home I had built up a good head of steam. I got my Jag 240 and hired a car transport and returned to collect the offending 'S' Type.

When I arrived at the 'experts' house I got no answer. I decided to leave the car in his drive. That produced the desired effect and he was out of the house like a light. On seeing the leaking fluid he did a nanny dance around the street expressing himself freely. I contributed a few well chosen words myself! In the end and with bad grace, he agreed to fix it and I collected it a few days later. Its gearbox was still not right and I left it in to a gearbox specialist. As usual it was more expensive than the estimate and after coughing up the price of the bill, I decided I had enough of it. I left it outside my parent's house, doing my best to ignore it. A friend of mine suggested he could sell it and I was glad to see the back of it. I delivered it to him and never saw it again...

A few weeks later I called and noticed the 'S' Type had gone. When I brought up the subject of payment there was an embarrassed silence. The buyer didn't pay for the car, he was then diagnosed with cancer and he lived with his aged mother...

I have owned and enjoyed many Jaguars since. You'll understand why none of them were 'S' Types!