



Touch Wood: The Autobiography of the 1953 Le Mans Winner

Duncan Hamilton

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Duncan Hamilton won the classic Le Mans 24-Hours race in 1953, co-driving his workcentered C-Type Jaguar with Tony Rolt. In 1954 the same pair finished second, losing to a much larger-engined V12 Ferrari and by the narrowest margin in years. In all, Duncan Hamilton competed in nine of those great Le Mans endurance classics. Having cut his racing teeth in such pre-war cars as the R-Type M.G and the Bugatti Type 35B, Duncan graduated to one of the immortal Lago- Talbot Grand Prix cars—which he subsequently mislaid in a French coal-hole. After a hugely eventful racing career—only Duncan could get himself fired by Jaguar for winning the Rheims 12-Hours race in 1956—he eventually hung up his racing helmet in 1958. As Earl Howe wrote in the original 1960 foreword to this book, though the drivers of this age were fiercely competitive, there were also "friends to meet, stories to tell and almost certainly a party to be enjoyed..." Duncan Hamilton was certainly a little larger than life, and this book tells the story of a man who wasn't just one of the most successful drivers of the 1950s, but also the man who trespassed at Brooklands, who spent the war in the Fleet Air Arm accidentally trying to drown American Admirals, and who was once stopped for speeding on the Cromwell Road, rushing to take part in a TV program on road safety. It is a must for any classic car enthusiast's bookshelf.

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