VINTAGE Motorcycle News

LA ROUTE A JAMAIS - RIDE T… R WEG IST DAS ZIEL

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The Ner-A-Car motorcycle

VINTAGE Motorcycle News

A motorcycle publication for the motorcyclist enthusiast.

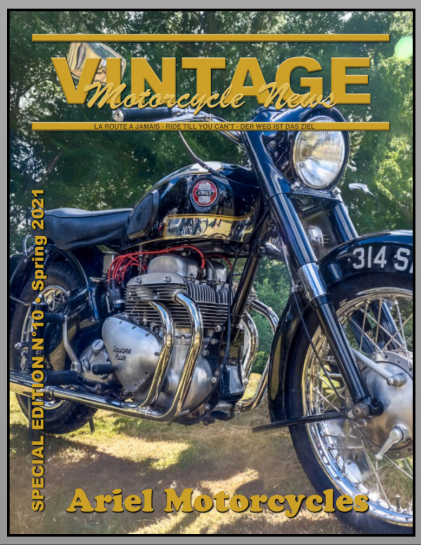
EDITOR
Pat Castel
VMN.Editor@rogers.com

COVER PAGE
Manfred on his 1923 Ner-A-Car

Notice

Next Edition

Ariel was a bicycle, motorcycle and car brand from Birmingham, whose adventure began in 1847. The first company product was a light bicycle which was given the name Ariel, meaning the Spirit of the Air.



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

In this issue we will have a look at the Ner-A-Car motorbike. These machines were, together with the Megola and the Böhmerland, among the most peculiar in the history of motorcycles.

Sam Neracher from Syracuse NY built in 1921 a motorcycle which was a dream of many designers after the First World War. The name of the machine pronounced "***Near-A-Car***", expressed exactly the purpose for which the vehicle was designed: ***"The smallest, funiest, most reliable and cheapest motorcycle apart from a car."*** This at least was the slogan used by the representatives of the Ner-A-Car company. The slogan was aimed at people wishing to own a comfortable vehicle, which could be easily driven like a car, but cost much less.

> ***Did you know:*** *A de-luxe model was introduced in 1926 with swingarm rear suspension controlled by quarter-elliptic leaf springs, a bucket seat with air cushions, a fairing with an adjustable Triplex windshield and an instrument panel. A countershaft concentric with the swingarm pivot was driven by a chain from the transmission and drove the rear wheel. The addition of rear suspension increased the wheelbase of the de-luxe model to 68.5 inches (1,740 mm).*

It was not easy to collect the info and documents related to this bike. Even though they are still a lot of them around, not too many reports have been released on them and there is no Ner-a-Car club. Fortunately, we have received plenty of info sent by owners.

In a previous issue on the Art Deco era, we talked about the Henderson motorcycle. Frank Westfall's Henderson bike was on the cover of the newsletter, he is also the owner of the Ner-A-Car museum in Syracuse NY (see page 40). And if you want to know everything there is to know about the Ner-A-Car, I can only suggest the book written by Ken Philp now available on Amazon or Apple e-book store.

I am also sharing some archives from 1921 and 1922 on the Ner-A-Car.

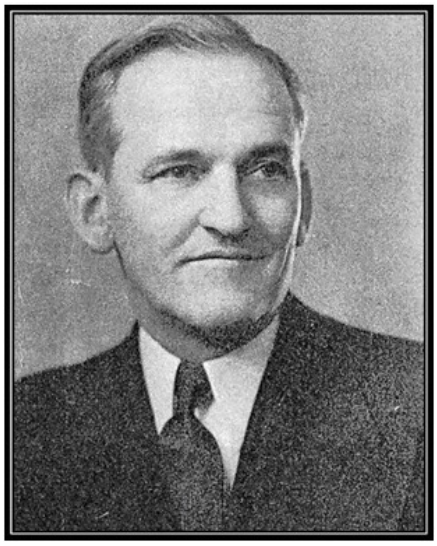
As this edition is almost done, I keep receiving photos of Ner-A-Cars which are owned or rebuild by people from far away. Have a look at these pictures, some are just plain fantastic. They simply just look like machines coming out of the production line.

Actually, when I work on these newsletters, I feel like a time traveller. It looks like I can travel thru time and be there with those machines. The feeling is hard to explain but sharing what I was able to gather thru contacts or the Internet makes me feel good. Whilst I am preparing this issue (March of this year) of the newsletter it is still winter here in Canada and the bikes have been parked for a while now, so any kind of therapy I'll take and it will help me wait for the next riding season...

On top of that, the world has been hit by a pandemic. Most of us have been confined into our home for what might be like a month or so. Social activities are now forbidden and who knows when we shall be back on the road...

Till next time... Ed.

The short story of the Ner-A-Car Motorcycles



Designed by American Carl Neracher during the First World War, these unusual machines were built first in England and then later also in Syracuse, New York.

They featured a low-slung steel chassis with hub-centre steering and transmission by friction drive to the rear wheel on early designs.

The steel chassis, which was more like that of a car, housed a two-stroke engines of 221cc or four-strokes of up to 347cc in sv and ohv configuration. The Model C of 1924-25 had a Blackburne engine.

The design met some resistance in the United States and in 1919 backing was found in Shefield, England where the Simplex company agreed to build the machine for Britain and its colonies, excepting Canada.

Simplex began production in 1921, and the following year backing was also found in the USA where the first machines left the Ner-a-Car Corporation's Syracuse, New York factory.

In 1922 the strange little contraptions were soon the talk of the town after Cannonball Baker rode one coast to coast, NY to Los Angeles, in 8 days. He spent 172 hours in the saddle, and averaged 30mph. He stayed off the freeway.

A report on the 1924 Motor Cycle Show reads, in part:
Model B, of the Ner-a-Car, has been considerably modified. The flywheel magneto is discarded, and its place is now taken by an ordinary h.t. magneto, which affords easier starting. A steel flywheel is now fitted, which increases the efficiency of the disc driving gear. The price has been reduced from 457 Jos. to 450. The new model C, has a Blackburne engine and Sturmey-Archer three-speed gear box. Provision is made for the adjustment of the driving chain, and a Best and Lloyd oil pump is part of the standard equipment.

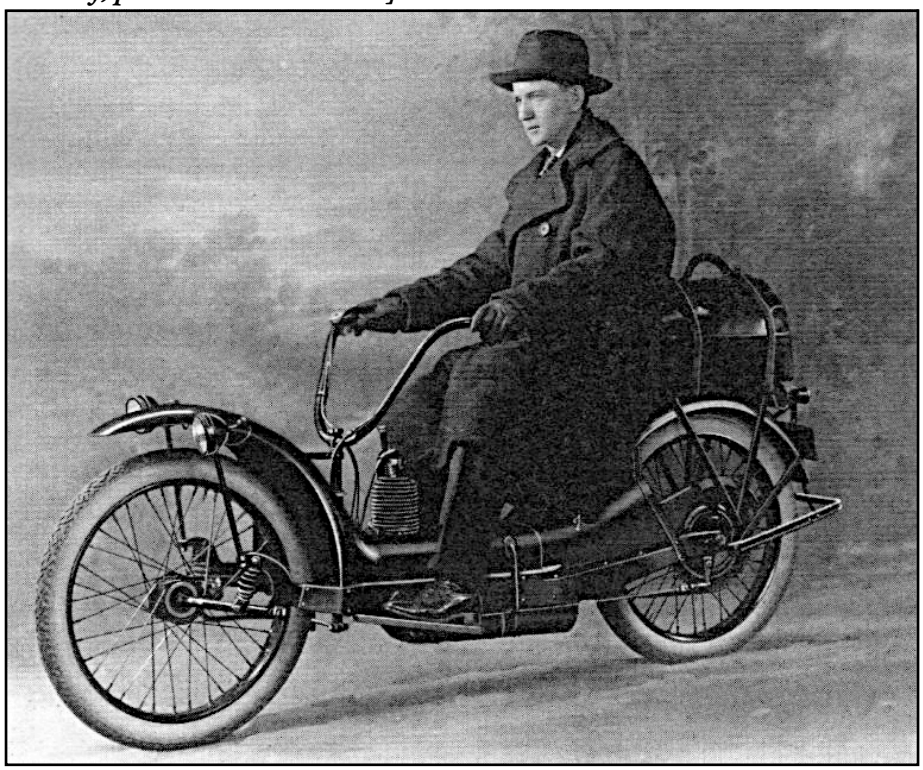
ROAD TEST: 1923 NER-A-CAR *by Paul D'Orléans from the VINTAGENT*

Carl Neracher was born to make the Ner-A-Car; it was his name, after all! That double pun – his motorcycle was both 'nearly a car' and a mis-spelling of his name – was auspicious wordplay, for while his 1918 design was only built for seven years (from 1921-28), it sold very well, with a combined 16,500 units built in both US and British factories.

The Ner-A-Car remains the most successful hub-center steered motorcycle ever built, far eclipsing the sales of similarly constructed machines from the 1905 Zenith Bi-Car (not many built!) to the Bimota Tesi of 2008 (417 produced).

Carl Neracher designed his radical hub-center steered motorcycle in

The designer Carl Neracher himself aboard a 1922 Neracar [via Bruce Lindsay, published in TMIINYS]



1918, right after WW1, and it was designed from the start to feature a car-type chassis and fully enclosed bodywork that protected the rider from road grit.

It steered with the same mechanism as an automobile, and offered much the same protection, so it was indeed 'Ner-A-Car', as it was sold in Britian; in the US, it was sold as the 'Neracar'.

The Design

Carl Neracher (1882-1962) first emerged on the motor vehicle scene as a sales rep for the Smith Motor Wheel Co, that produced an auxiliary motor attachment (fixed on a third wheel) for bicycles.

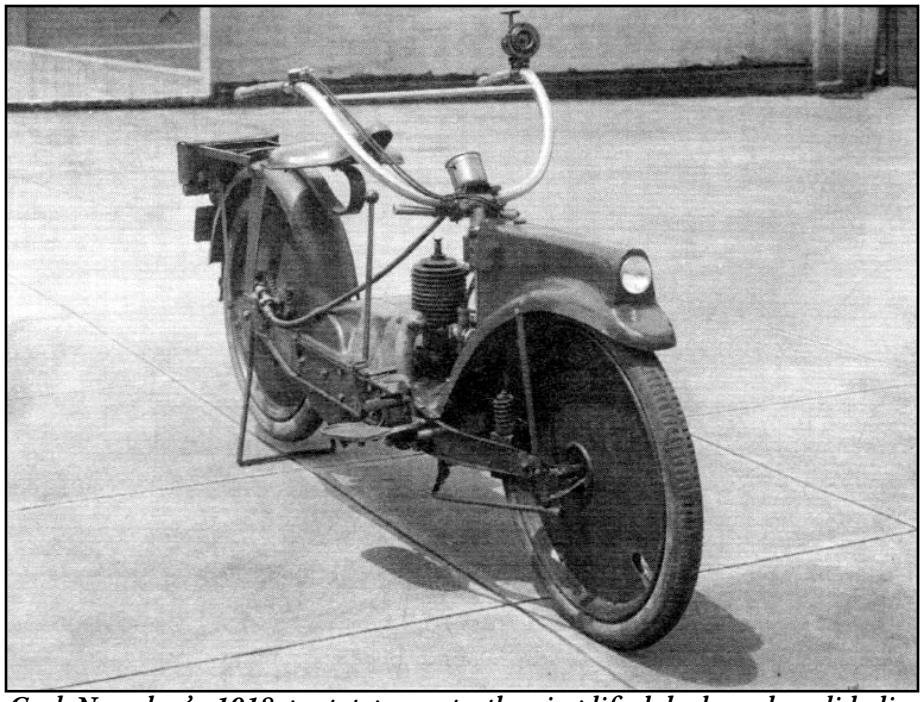
He was next the Chief Engineer for the Cleveland Motorcycle Mf'r Co, reportedly designing their distinctive lightweight two-stroke single, with a cross-ways (transverse) mounted engine, that necessitated a 90deg bevel-drive to complete the transmission with a chain.

The little Cleveland had some sales success, and was used by the US Army as an on-base courier machine during WW1.

The Cleveland's 221cc transverse two-stroke single-cylinder motor would reappear in the Ner-A-Car a few years later.

Carl Neracher didn't invent the Neracar in a vacuum: hub-center steering had been in production since at least 1904, in Britain with Tooley's Patent Bi-Car, which the Zenith company licensed and sold at the Bi-Car from 1905.

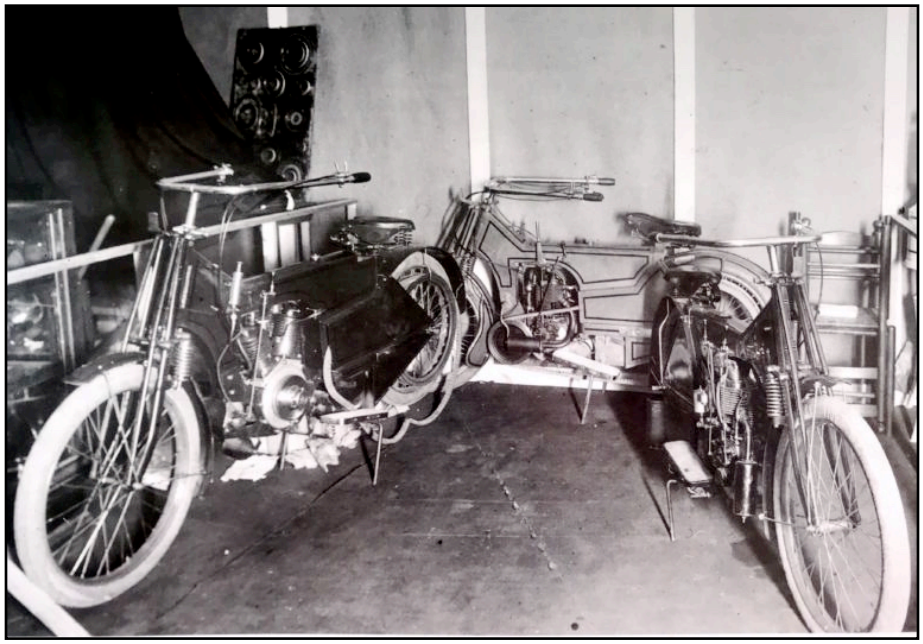
The Bi-Car used a low-slung tubular chassis with its hub-center steering, but in the US, the Militaire of 1911 used a C-section sheet steel frame very similar to the Ner-A-Car, which held the front



Carl Neracher's 1918 prototype; note the simplified bodywork, solid disc wheels, and headlamp blended into the front fender, but also the fundamental similarity to the production machine. [via Bruce Lindsay, published in TMIINYS]

wheel between extended chassis arms. Strangely, neither of these machines was referenced in a Patent plate affixed to the Neracar chassis in the US; it credits patents granted to John J. Chapin of the Detroit Bi-Car Co. of 1911. According to a 1911 edition of The Bicycling World, the Bi-Car was *"an attempt to construct a two-wheel*

The 'Midget BiCar' as seen in 1908. The design originated in Reading, England, in 1905, produced by JT Brown. The rights to the design were purchased by the Walton Motor Co of Long Island, NY, in 1908. The frame was built of channel steel girders, with light steel pressings covering the chassis. It seems likely this is the patent referred to on the Ner-A-Car build plate? ['American Motorcycles: 1868-1914', Wright]



vehicle embracing many desirable features of the automobile." Which principally meant protection from road muck for the rider, and stability on the road, in an era when motorcycles handled terribly, with very high centers of gravity, and zero understanding of using rake/trail adjustments in combination with a suitable wheelbase and good weight distribution to achieve stability. Compared to any other machine on the road in 1911, a hub-center steered motorcycle must have been a revelation, as they're stable to the point of being safe to ride hands-off.

Production

In the immediate aftermath of WW1, aircraft factories like Sopwith, Bleriot, BMW, and Sheffield Simplex found themselves without orders, turning to motorcycles to keep their factories occupied.

Motorcycles offered similar requirements for technical sophistication in manufacture, and offered a degree of panache/danger that seemed a natural fit for an aircraft firm.

The 1922 British Ner-A-Car brochure [author's collection]

The American Ner-A-Car factory in New York in 1922 [Motorcycle Illustrated, April 13, 1922]

Sheffield-Simplex manager H.H. Powell was coaxed by J. Allan Smith (Carl Neracher's business partner) to visit the USA and assess their new design in early 1919. Sheffield-Simplex's rival Sopwith Aviation had already committed to production of the flat-twin ABC motorcycle by 1919 (designed by Granville Bradshaw and the equal in radicality to the Neracher's design), which may have encouraged Powell to take out a license to produce Neracher's design in Britain.

In late 1919, the Inter Continental Engineering Company was formed in London, with Board members including many Sheffield Simplex executives, plus J.Allan Smith and Carl Neracher, and H.H. Powell himself.

Sheffield Simplex set up a factory for motorcycle production in Tinsley, near Sheffield, with a second assembly plant at Finningley, near Doncaster.

The Ner-A-Car, as it was called from its 1921 press announcements, was slightly altered from Neracher's blueprints, and the introductory engine was a Sheffield Simplex two-stroke single of 221cc.

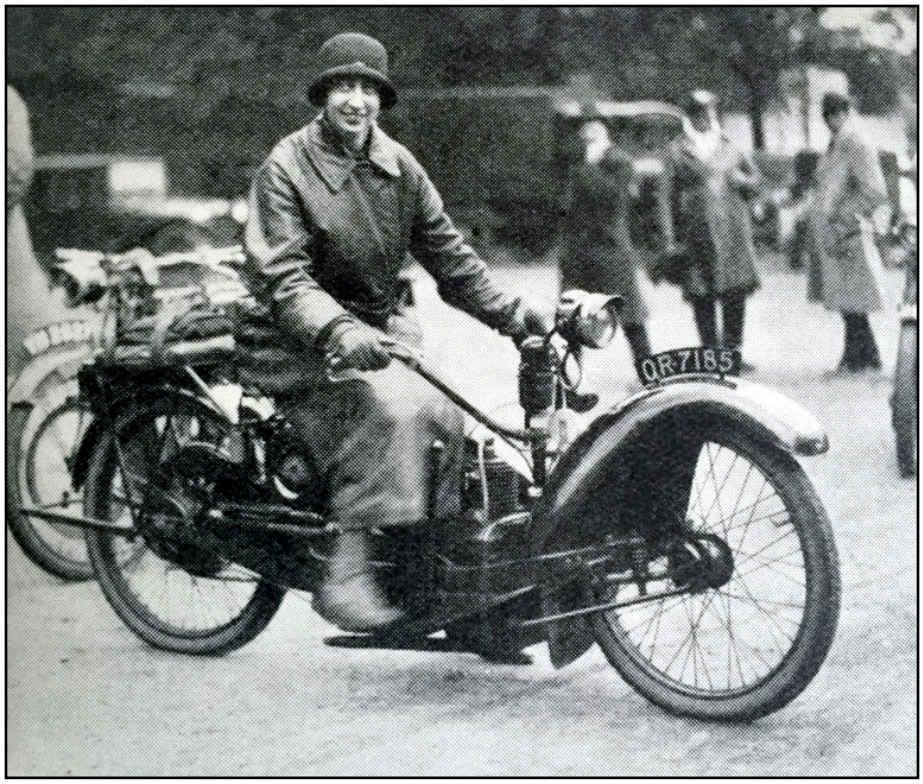
In the US, the Ner-A-Car Corporation was formed in late 1921 with financial backing secured domestically, and a factory set up at 196 S. Geddes Street in Syracuse. NY. The first appearance of the American 'Neracar' was at the Chicago National Motorcycle, Bicycle and Accessories Show in late 1921.

Positive Reviews

In 1921, Gwenda Janson makes an observed 1,000-mile ride to gain an ACU Certificate, and she gained a second Certificate in December that year for a non-stop ride of 300 miles.

With its full enclosure, easy starting, and very stable ride, the Ner-A-Car was heavily marketed to women riders, and their advertising and brochures make an emphatic appeal to ladies, who had only very recently gained the right to vote in both the UK (1918) and the USA (1920).

It was an era when motorcycle factories in the UK and Europe made direct appeals to women



In 1922, Mrs GM Janson became well known for riding her Ner-A-Car in various observed trials, on-road and off-road alike. "It behooves me to bestow a word of well-earned praise on the Ner-A-Car." [The MotorCycle, Dec 1921]

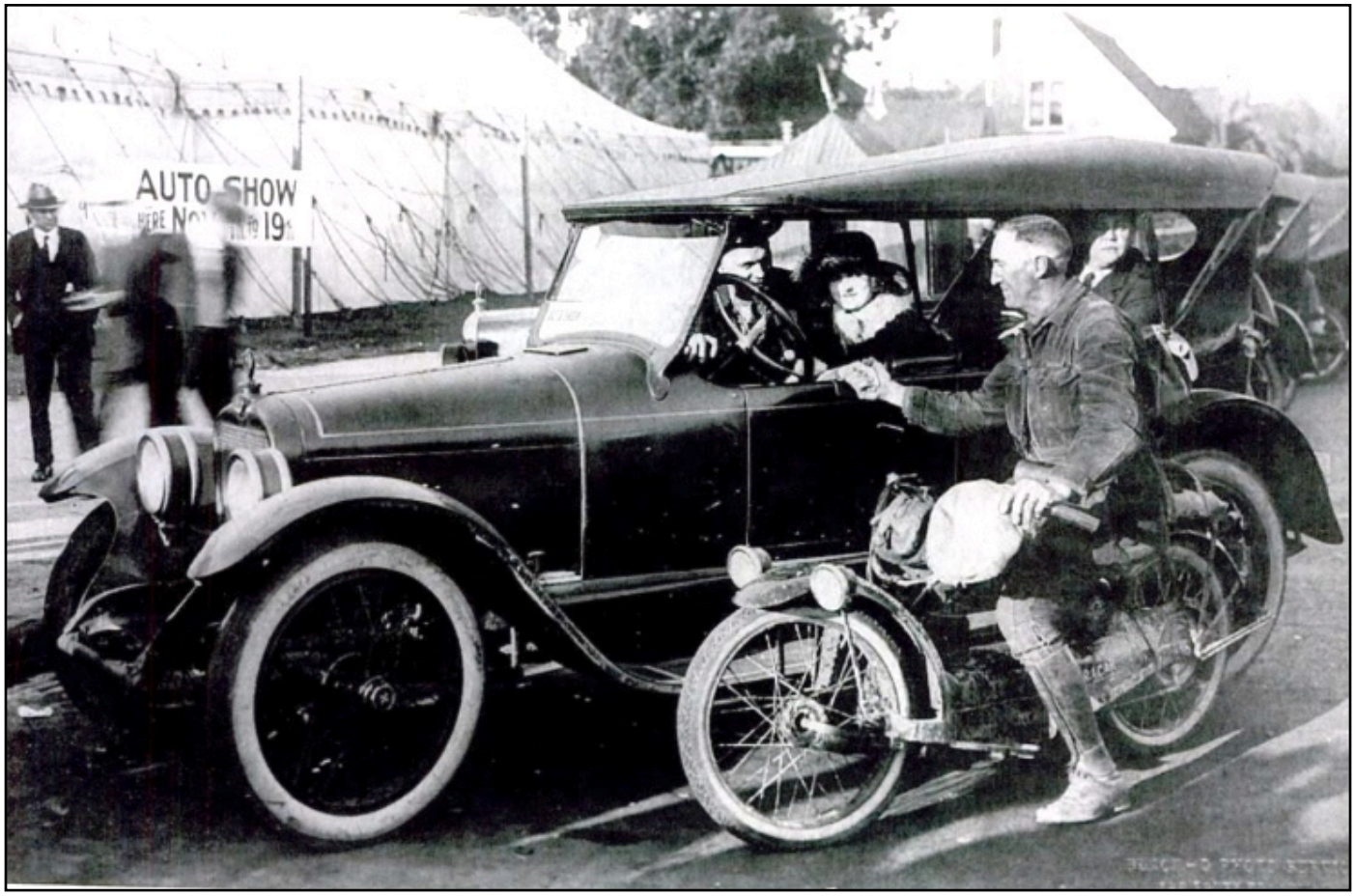
riders in brochures and advertising, and built 'Ladies' Models' – similar to Ladies' Bicycles – to accommodate their clothing styles, before women wearing trousers became commonplace.

In that sense, Ner-A-Car catered to a feminist revolution, supporting women's identity as independently mobile individuals, whose competence mastering a motorized vehicle was unquestioned.

This my seem normal today (except in Saudi Arabia), but the early 1920s was still the Victorian era, when women's social roles were extremely restricted, as were their property rights, and of course their right to vote.

In November of 1922, 'Cannonball' Baker rode a Neracar across the USA, traveling from

Erwin 'Cannonball' Baker at the embarkation point (New York City) of yet another of his grand cross-country adventures, in November 1922, that took 27 days. Was he subsidized by the factory? [Unknown]



New York to Los Angeles, a trip of 3364.2 miles, in 27 days, 5 hours, 28 minutes, using 45 gallons of gasoline and 5 5/8 gallons of oil, at a cost of $15.70.

He averaged 19.41mph over the horrific unpaved 'roads' of the day, and averaged 74.77mpg.

Baker had a few things to say about the Neracar, and was quoted in a 1960s interview, *"I have ridden a lot of fine handling motorcycles in my day, but I NEVER RODE ANYTHING that would come so near to steering itself as a Neracar." A popular demonstration of this Neracar by dealers and salesmen who sold it was to stand up on the footboards, ride it over rough roads, with hands behind their backs. I have pictures of Neracar riders standing in the saddle, other kneeling on the saddle with their hands locked in handcuffs."* The word on the street, in the press, and in the ads proclaimed the Neracar as the most stable motorcycle ever built.

Press response was very positive among reviewers. In the Spring of 1922 Motorcycling and Bicycling featured a road test of a Neracar by LE Fowler, who was impressed by the bike's easy handling, and how clean the bike remained over muddy roads. After familiarizing himself with the machine on a trip from Syracuse to Auburn NY, he rode the Neracar standing on the footboards, with no hands.

Evolution

By 1923, the English Ner-A-Car Model B got a larger motor (now 285cc), which gave a little more power, and the carburetor was moved to a more convenient location.

The 1922 catalog caters explicitly to lady riders [author's collection]

The next year the Model C offered a Blackburne sidevalve engine of 350cc, which abandoned Neracher's original friction-drive system (that gave a kind of 'automatic transmisson') in favor of a conventional clutch gearbox chain drive.

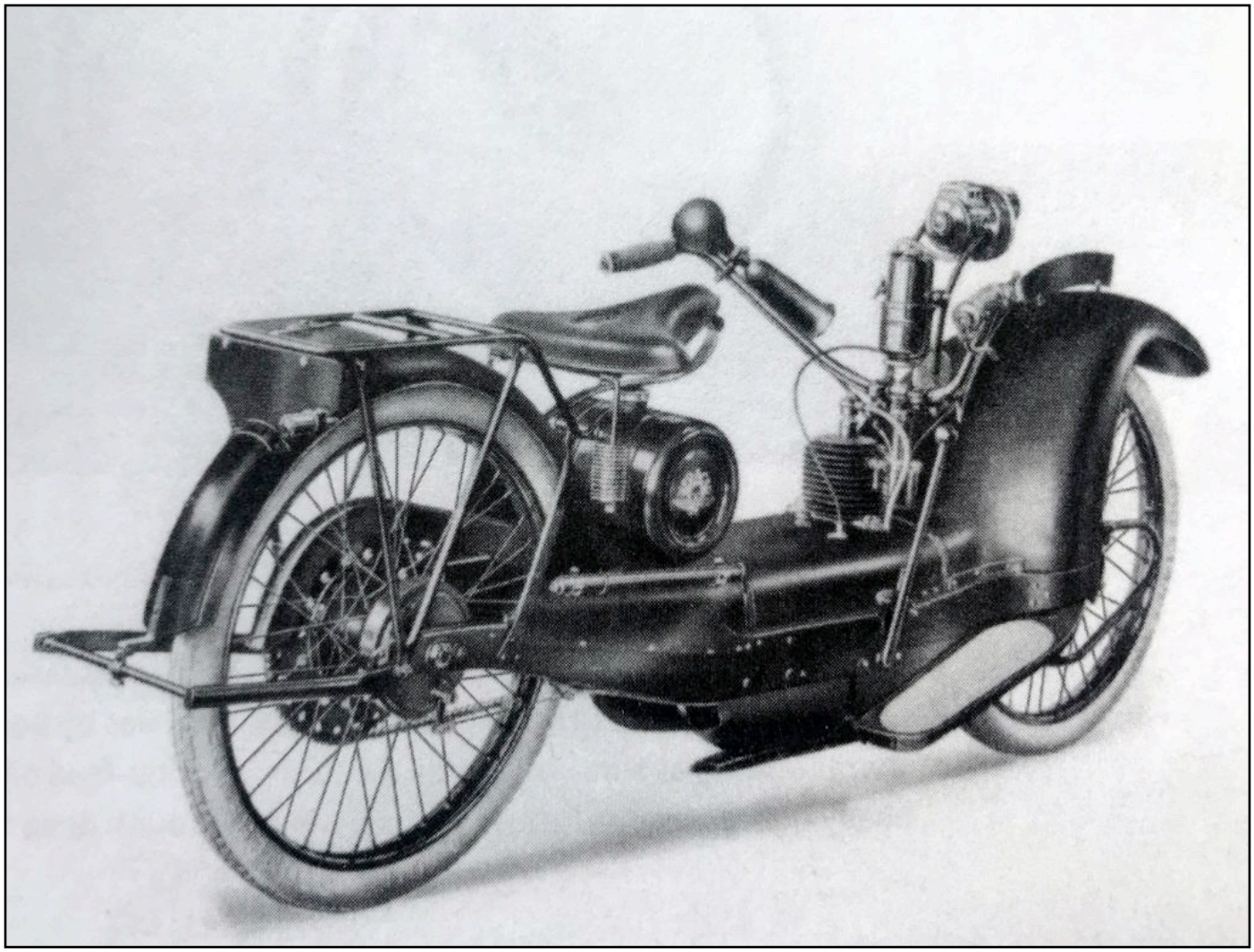
In 1925, Ner-A-Car upped the ante even further, offering a 350cc OHV Blackburne engine for the Model C.

As the front hub was unchanged, there was no front brake, and the dual rear-wheel brakes of the Ner-A-Car would have been sorely tested by an 80mph motorcycle, although the chassis was quite capable of handling the speed.

A further model was offered with rear springing and a car-type seat (shades of the Wilkinson), but by 1927, British production was finished, after 6500 machines were built.

The American Neracar started out with a 221cc motor, which was increased to 255cc in 1924, and the original chassis configuration with friction drive was retained throughout the run of 10,000 machines.

Over time the engine got better cooling fins, larger springs for the



By 1923, the British Ner-A-Car gained a deeper front mudguard. On the British version, electric lighting remained an option for several years, whereas it was standard on the American version. [Hockenheim Museum Collection]

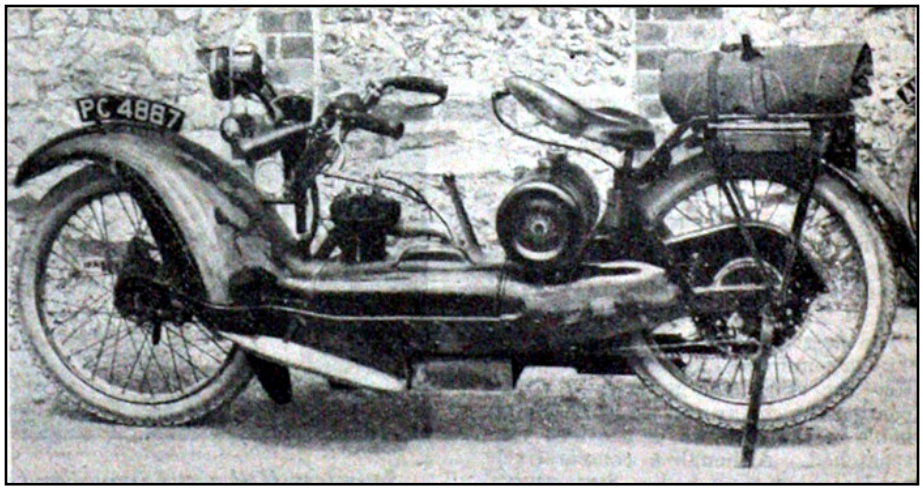
front suspension, a one-piece crankcase for better gas (and oil) sealing, and the carburetor was relocated to the left side of the engine, providing better access to the carb, and helping the intake mixture stay cooler.

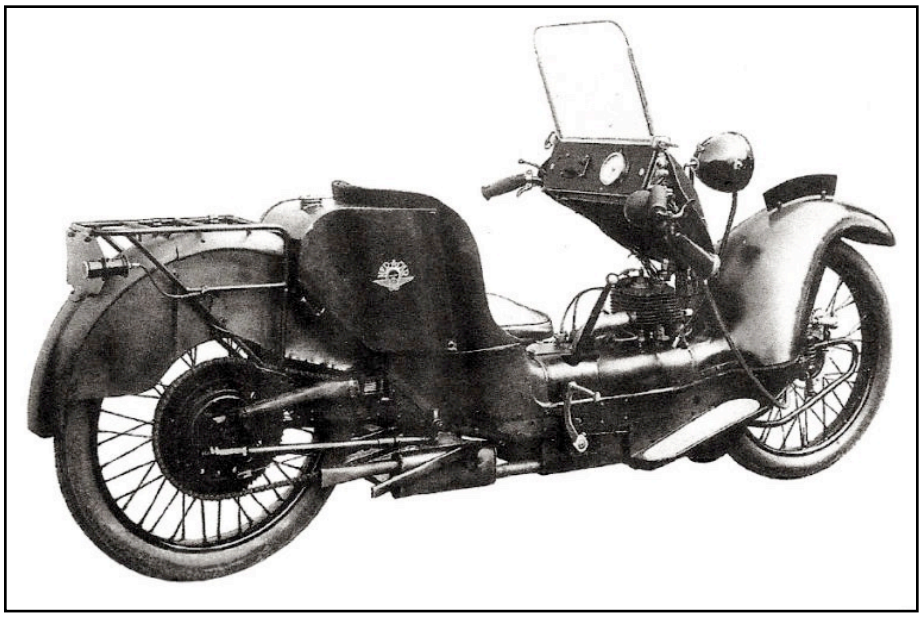
Options like balloon tires and carriers were available, and a second rear brake was added as required in most markets.

Both Ner-A-Car factories struggled as the ’20s progressed and motorcycles became more competent, and many more small machines became available.

The Ner-A-Car was a bright idea that had had its day, and without significant further development to keep up with the times (which might look like the Majestic?), sales faded. Production figures, while the highest for any hub-center motorcycle in history, were still far less than the factories were capable of producing, and expected to produce.

A Blackburne-engined model, with sidevalve 350cc motor and standard clutch/gearbox [Hockenheim Museum Collection]





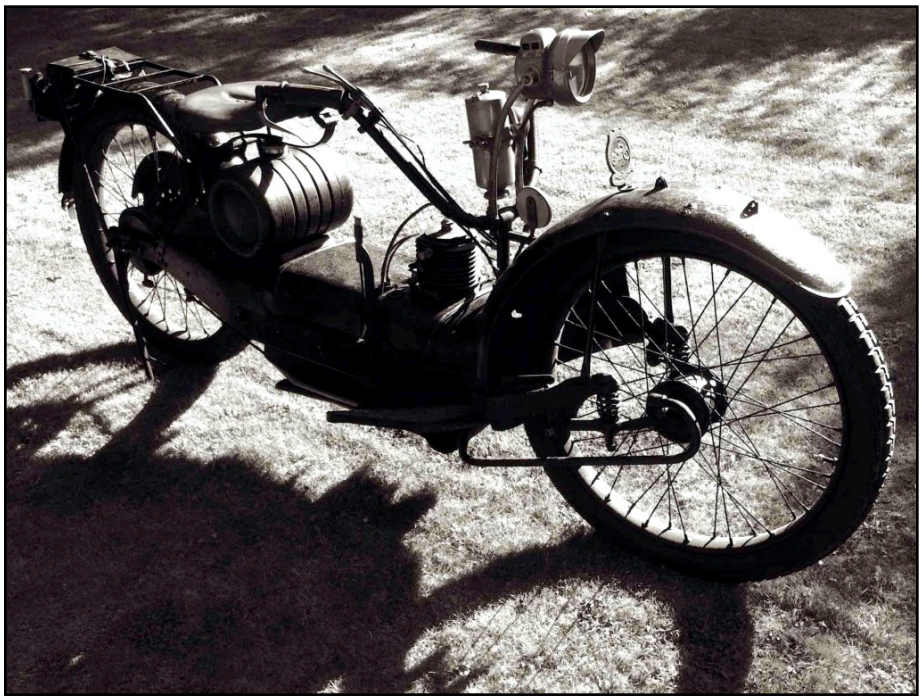
The late British model with car-type seating and a windscreen, plus the Blackburne 350cc sidevalve motor, and rear suspension. [Hockenheim Museum Collection]

Radical or 'better' ideas have rarely been wildly popular in motorcycling, although most factories have tried one or two in their history, Wankel motors, hub-center bikes, fully enclosured bodywork, feet-forward riding positions, etc.

None have proved to be big sellers, not even something as mundane as a 4-cylinder motorcycle, which the American industry proudly produced from 1909 onwards, with no profitability for any 4-cylinder manufacturer (Henderson, Indian, Ace, Cleveland, Militaire, Pierce, etc).

It took the Ariel Square 4 (1931), and then the Honda CB750(1968), to prove a Four could be profitably sold.

The Jon Dudley 1923 Ner-A-Car loaned for our test [Jon Dudley]



A Test Ride

Although I'd seen quite a few Ner-A-Cars in museums and at motorcycle shows, I'd never seen one actually ridden until I was presented with a test machine, at the Vintage Revival Montlhéry event of 2013.

The original-paint, oily rag machine was the property of Jon Dudley, who'd purchased it while searching for 'something unusual'.

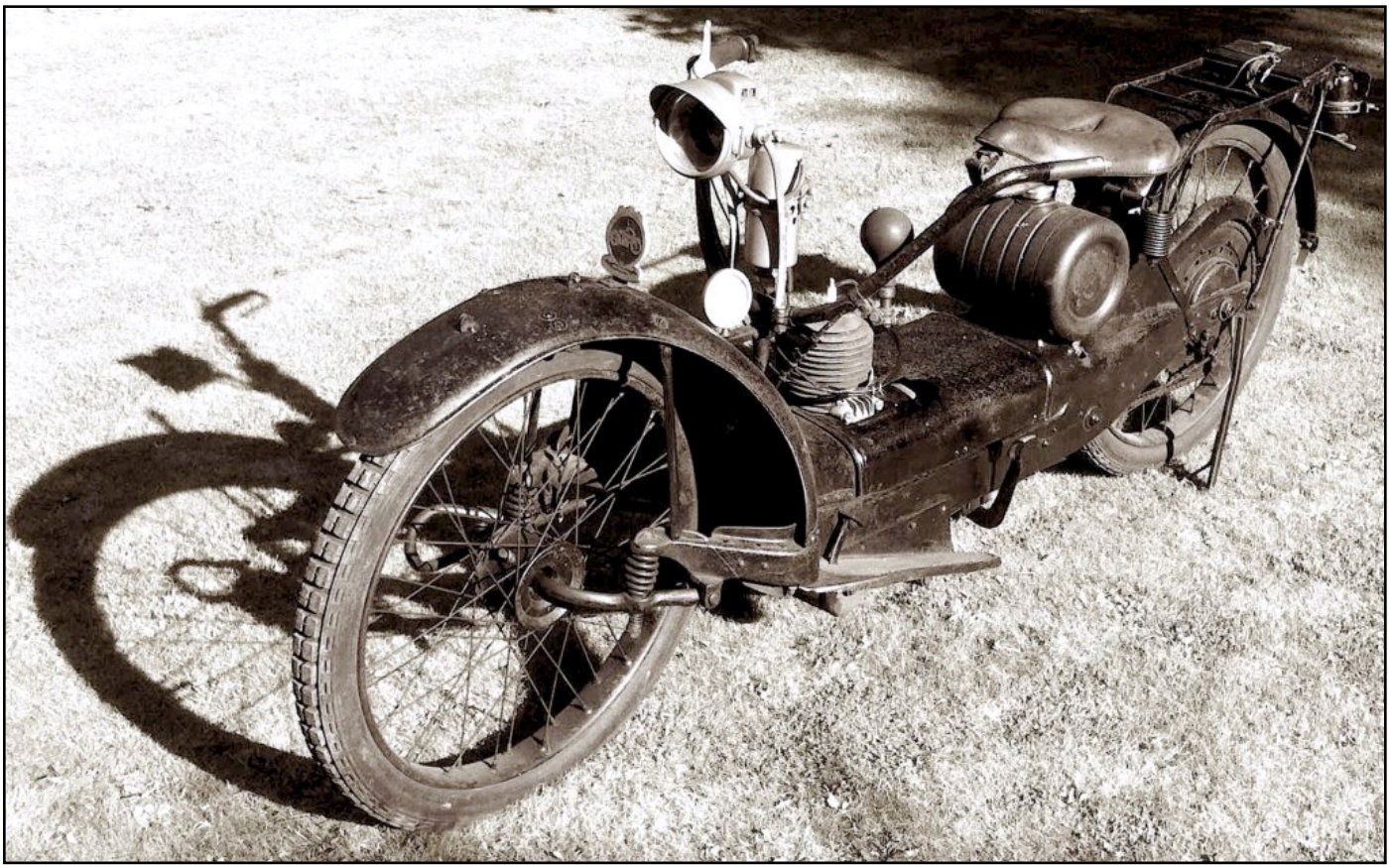
He certainly got it, although of course the clergymen and nurses who were the Ner-A-Car's primary customers in the UK didn't mind, and appreciated not getting their clothes filthy during a ride to work. That function would be classified as 'scooter' today, and in some ways the Ner-A-Car fits the definition, barring its exceptional handling.

Pushing the bike around with a dead engine doesn't inspire confidence, with a wiggly feel transmitted between the front wheel and handlebars, which had the earlier, simpler linkages, which were replaced with ball joints on later models.

But no matter, once the carb is tickled, one steps on a starter pedal mounted just behind the left side footboard, in the manner of an early BMW.

With only 221cc, it's an easy start with a decent spark from the flywheel magneto, hidden within the very housing that drives the friction wheel and hence the rear wheel – true design economy. An easy press down and the motor is soon pop-popping away underneath that bodywork, while the exposed cylinder top heats up.

Fuel mix is controlled by a lever throttle on the right handlebar (with an air lever for starting), and



Our road test subject; a 1923 Ner-A-Car as built by the Sheffield-Simplex Company, in 'oily rag' condition [Jon Dudley]

on the left 'bar is a twistgrip (funny they didn't use one for the throttle!) which dis/engages the flywheel friction drive.

There isn't actually a clutch, but the twistgrip disengages the friction wheel from the flywheel that drives it.

With no gears and no clutch plates, engaging the drive is more akin to a lever-pull automatic transmission, starting with the long 'shift' lever in low, and pushing through the five notches on the lever gate to 'high gear', at which point you're north of 30mph. Ner-A-Car didn't like top speed quotes, and the Board actively sought to keep top speeds DOWN to reduce intimidation for new riders, but the two-stroke version of the Ner-A-Car is good for 35mph, which can apparently be maintained ad nauseum.

Such was my experience anyway, as I burbled onto the steeply-banked historic autodrome, and pulled the lever all the way to the 'bar, and the speed lever all the way forward.

A muted two-stroke howl and a stately pace soon led to a realization that my hands were no longer required on the 'bars, and so I commenced to take photos of all the other riders passing me by, as I hugged the inside of the course.

Even through the chicanes set up to bring riders off the banking and slow them down, the Ner-A-Car needed no assistance, only a shift in weight to arc through the curves, and so I carried on that way...for 3 full laps of the circuit!

There's no rear suspension, so Montlhéry's notoriously bumpy concrete surface was felt through the sprung leather saddle, and although the front end did bounce gently over the worst of it, the plot never wavered from straight ahead.

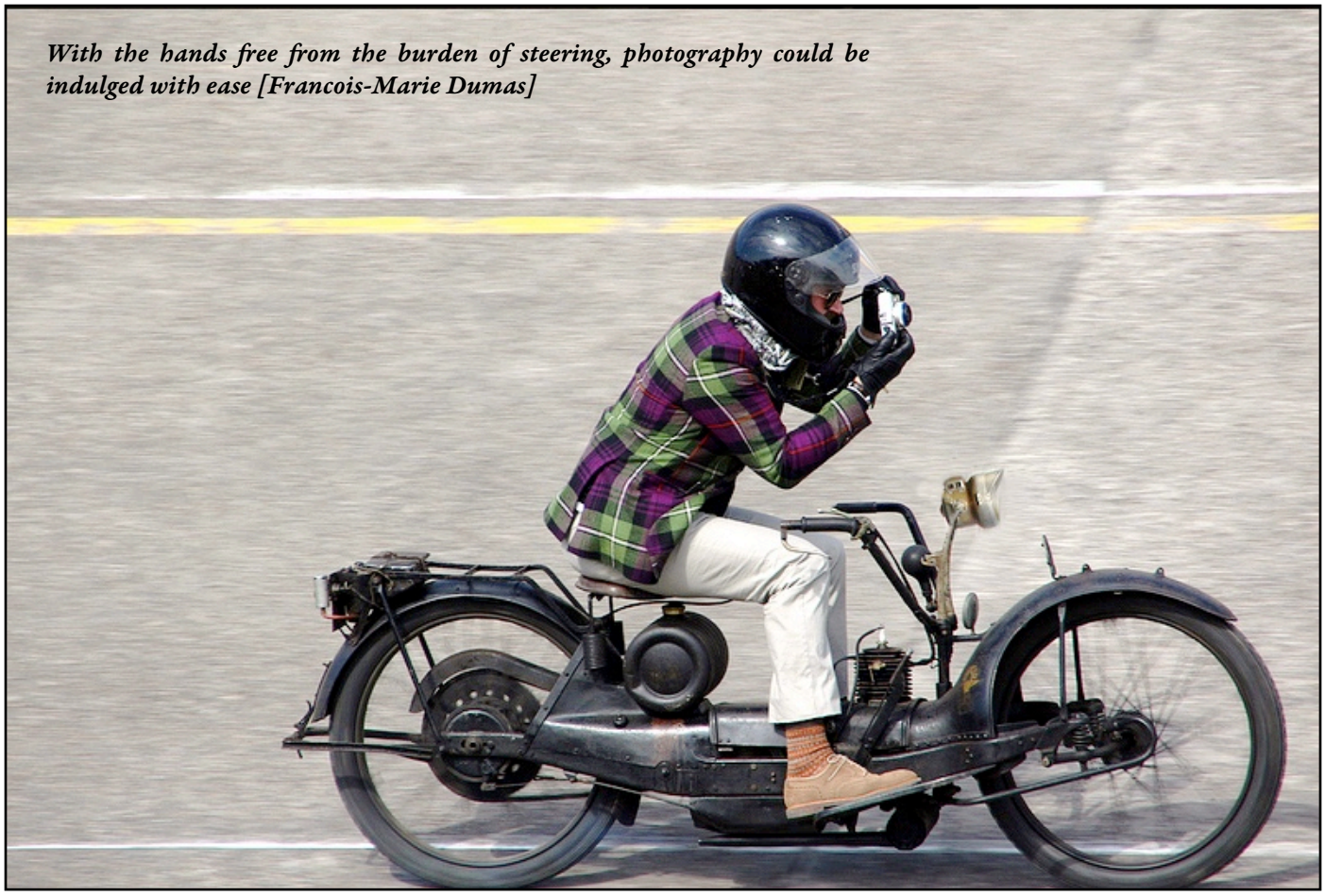
Such is my experience with every hub-center steered motorcycle I've ridden – absolute stability, at the expense of agility.

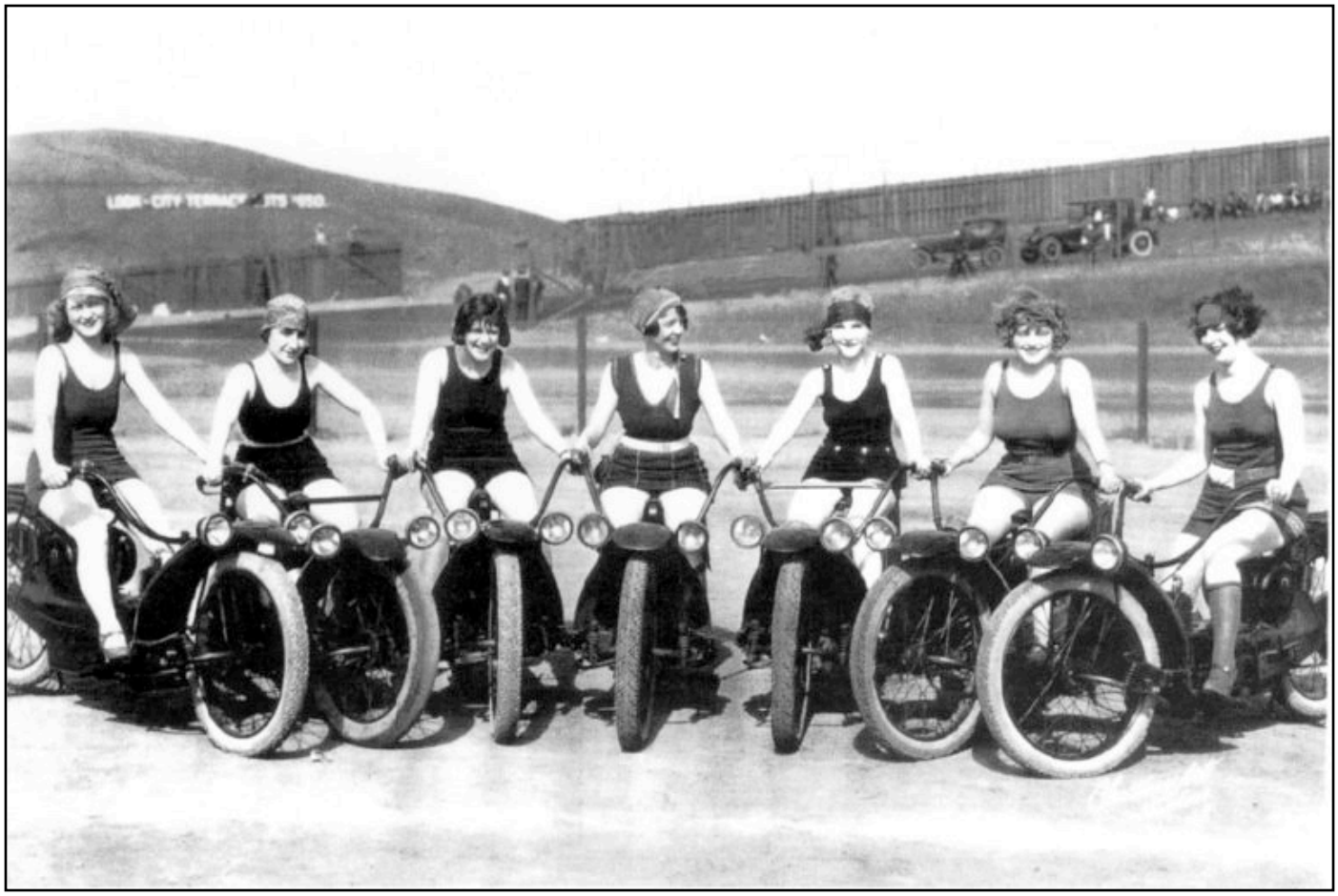
The Ner-A-Car, being light, relatively small, and underpowered, never felt sluggish in steering or stubbornly unwilling to change direction, but was easy-peasy to ride around the paddock and even turn in fairly tight circles.

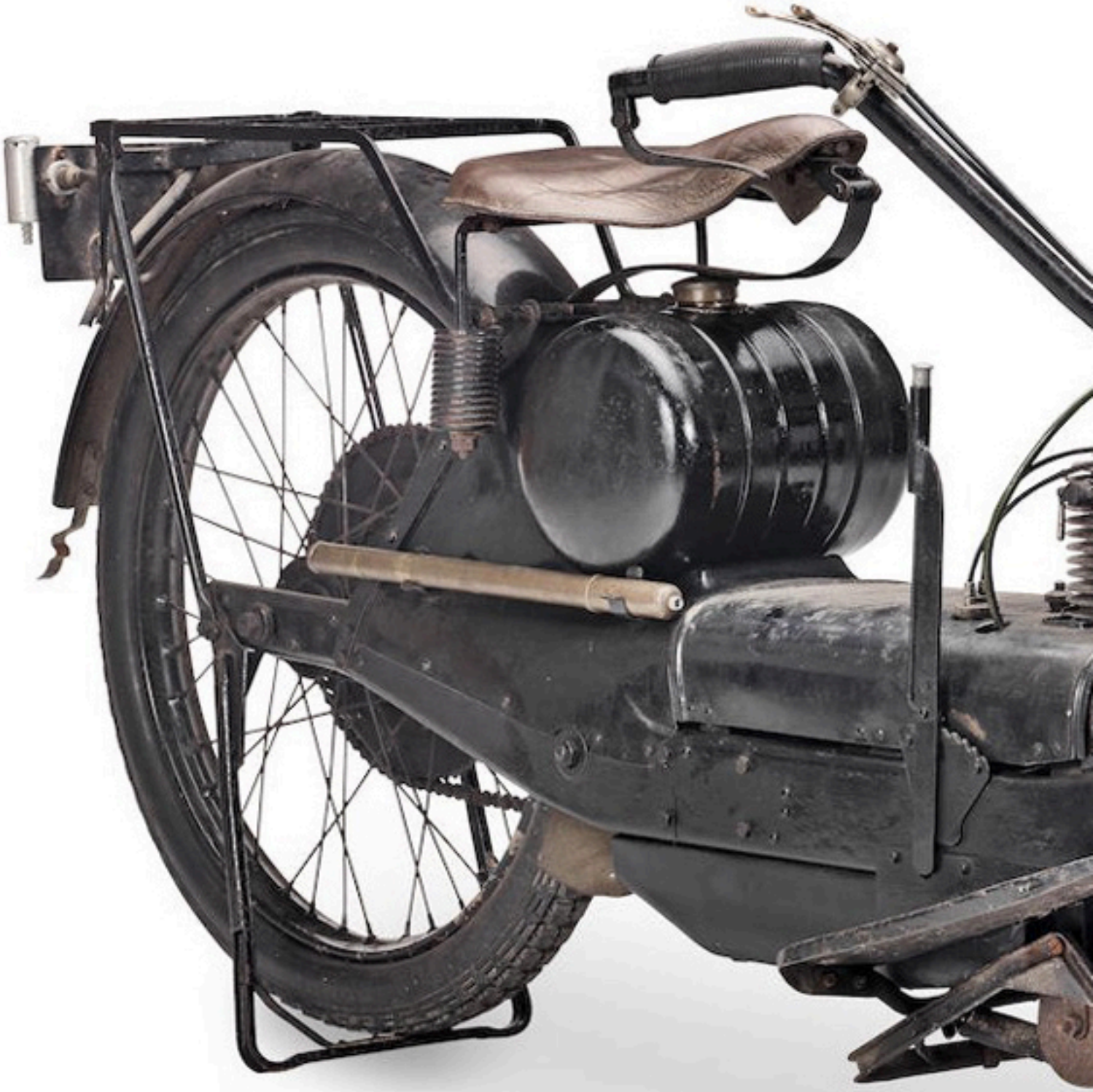
The Ner-A-Car is a bike to inspire confidence in any rider, especially novices, with its stability and ease of use. The Ner-A-Car was a noble attempt to provide a machine that fills the niche of the scooter, combining weather protection, ease of use, and a feet-forward riding position. It would take another 25 years before the scooter would be perfected by Piaggio and Innocenti, but for fans of unique engineering, the Ner-A-Car is an intriguing proposition.

The author on his first acquaintance with the test subject 1923 Ner-A-Car, at the 2013 Vintage Revival Montlhéry [Francois-Marie Dumas]

With the hands free from the burden of steering, photography could be indulged with ease [Francois-Marie Dumas]



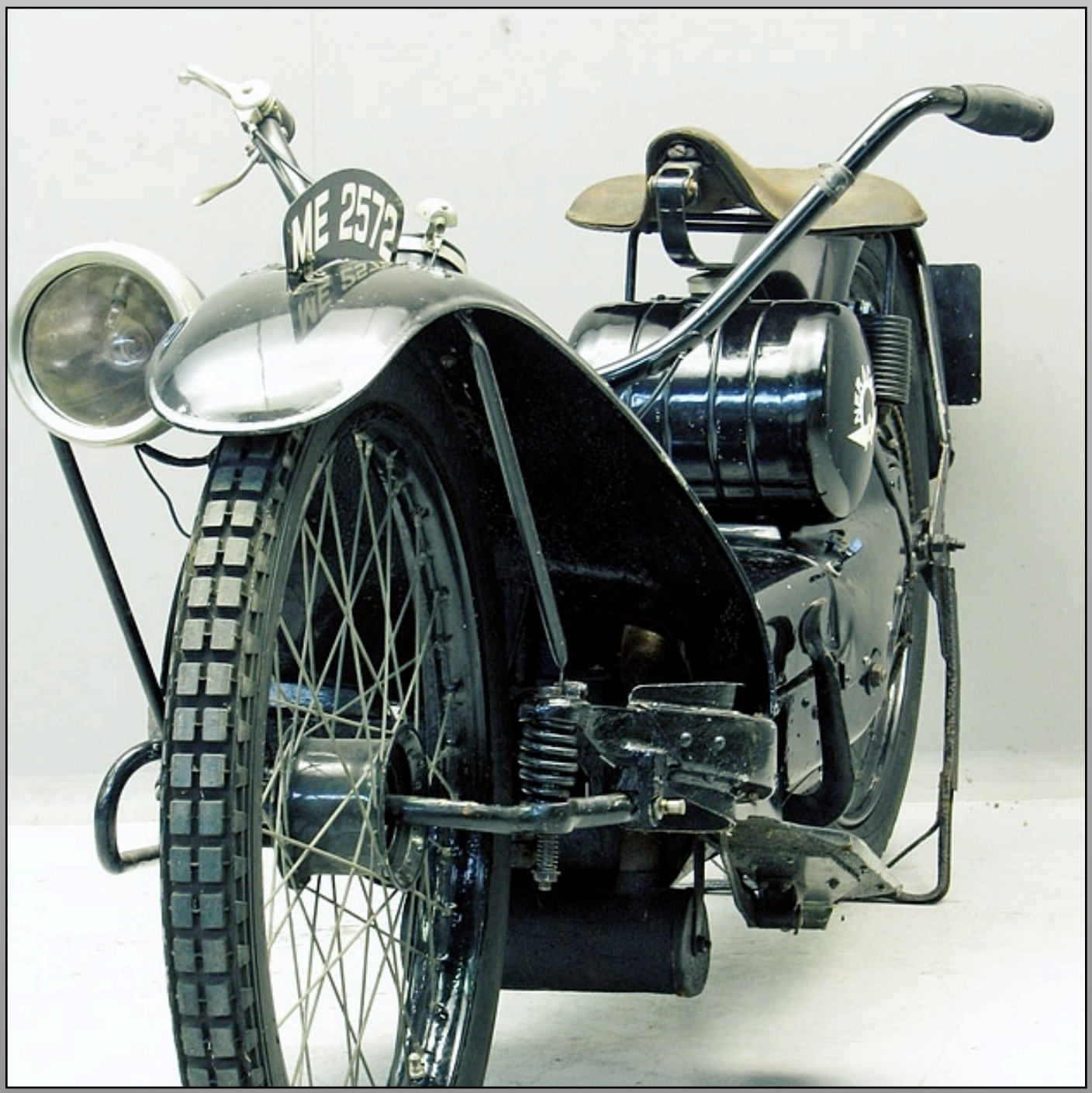




1922 Ner-A-Car


TA4643

The extraordinary 1921 Ner-A-Car Motorcycle

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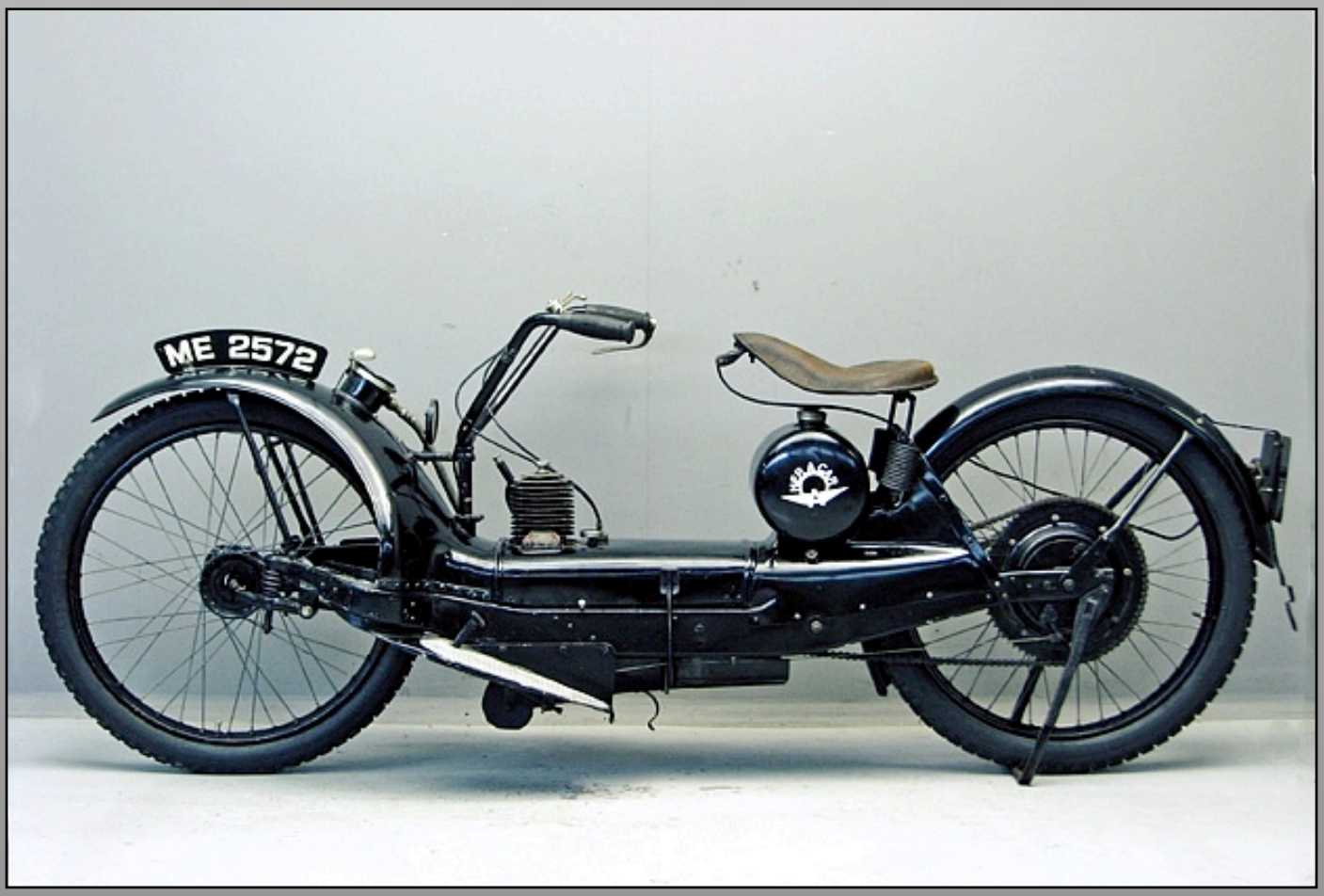
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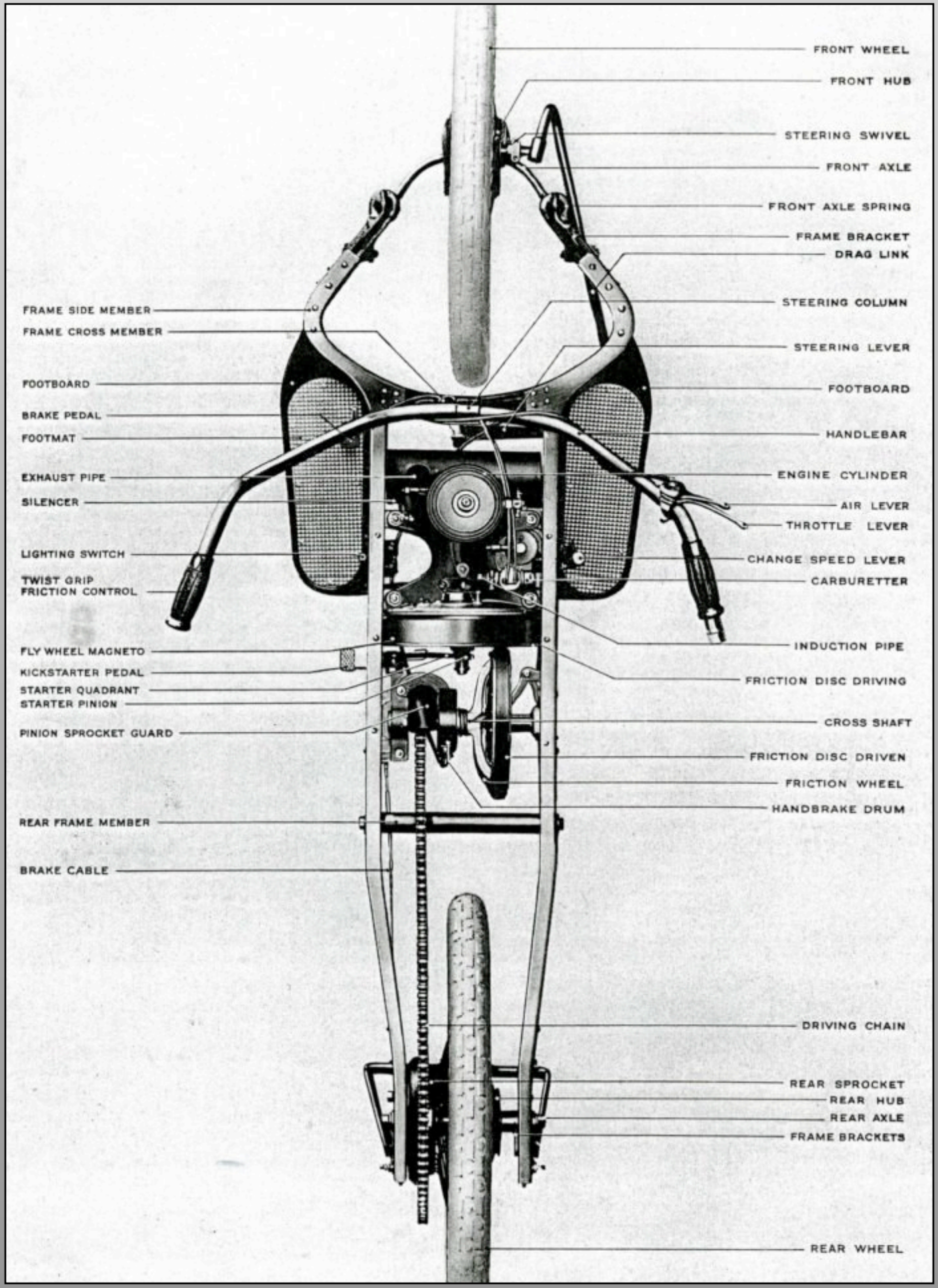
FRONT WHEEL
FRONT HUB
STEERING SWIVEL
FRONT AXLE
FRONT AXLE SPRING
FRAME BRACKET
DRAG LINK
STEERING COLUMN
STEERING LEVER
FOOTBOARD
HANDLEBAR
ENGINE CYLINDER
AIR LEVER
THROTTLE LEVER
CHANGE SPEED LEVER
CARBURETTER
INDUCTION PIPE
FRICTION DISC DRIVING
CROSS SHAFT
FRICTION DISC DRIVEN
FRICTION WHEEL
HANDBRAKE DRUM
DRIVING CHAIN
REAR SPROCKET
REAR HUB
REAR AXLE
FRAME BRACKETS
REAR WHEEL
FRAME SIDE MEMBER
FRAME CROSS MEMBER
FOOTBOARD
BRAKE PEDAL
FOOTMAT
EXHAUST PIPE
SILENCER
LIGHTING SWITCH
TWIST GRIP
FRICTION CONTROL
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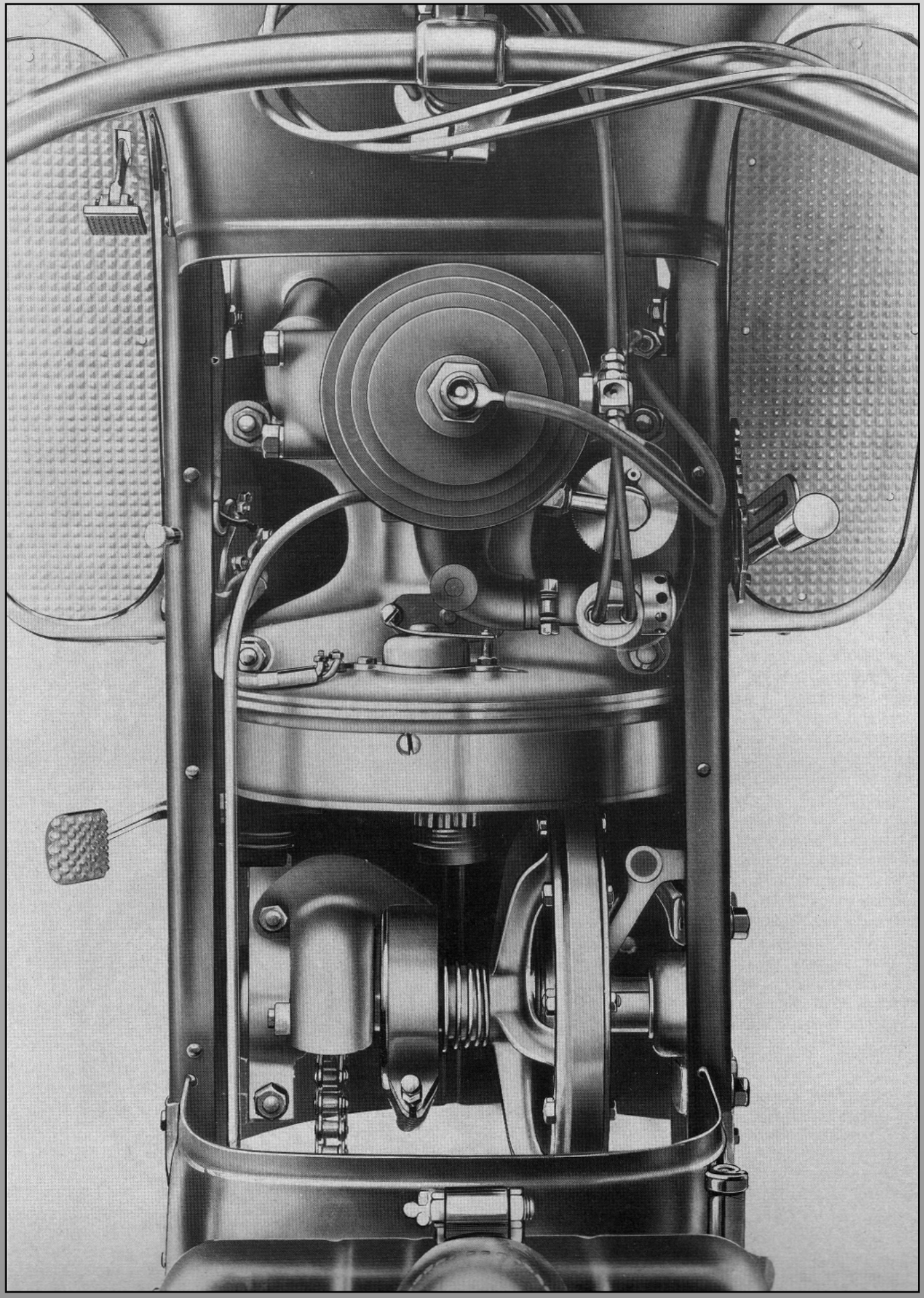
STARTER PINION
PINION SPROCKET GUARD
REAR FRAME MEMBER
BRAKE CABLE



The Story of My 1923 Ner-A-Car #1960 by Don Doody

The first time I saw a Ner-A-Car was back in the 1960's in a motorcycle book I borrowed from the library. What a strange looking machine.

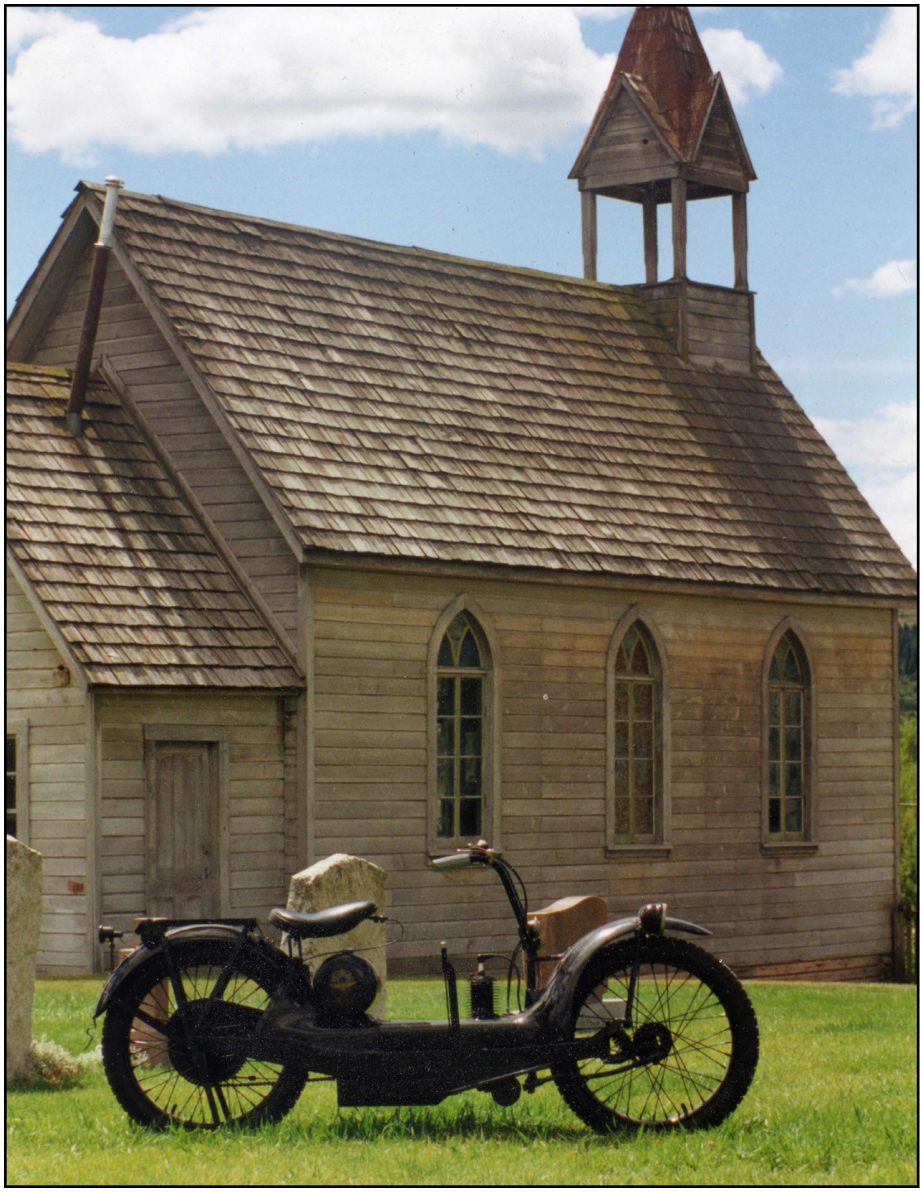
About 15 years later I actually saw one in person in Victoria, BC. Shortly later while visiting a friend in Seattle in the early 80's I got to ride one. Just up and down the street, but I was hooked – *"I have got to get one of these"* I said.

It took another 17 years but in 1997 one came available in Ontario, Simcoe to be exact.

Tom the owner was having some health problems and was thinning his collection. He mentioned *"he had bought it in the late 60's from a fellow in Buffalo, NY"*.

When I bought it from Tom, it came with a 1974 Ontario registration – the last time it been used.

When I got it, it needed some TLC since it hadn't run in 23 years. Some carb and mag work, cleaning out the fuel tank, etc. I mixed some oil and gas, since it is a two stroke, and gave it a push down on the lever and she fired up. Wow, wasn't expecting that.



Now to figure out how to ride one again. Just pushing around a Ner-A-Car is a strange feeling since the front wheel slaps back and forth with the hub center steering.

The throttle and advance/retard are controlled by levers on the handlebar. The left hand grip works as your clutch which turns a friction wheel in and out and engages a large flywheel which is mounted on the back of the motor. When the wheel hits the flywheel, off you go. To change gears there is a long lever on your right that moves the friction wheel back and forth across the flywheel, a really great idea – no clashing gears.

They say it is a five speed but it is variable since you can move the lever in between and create more speeds.

The handling is superb, on a rough road the front wheel finds its own path. Maximum speed is about 60k which is fine because of the lack of braking. No front brake and the cable operated small rear is pretty useless. I actually found out the hard way.

About twenty years ago I was on a vintage road ride sponsored by the Orca chapter of the AMCA that used back roads on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. I attempted to climb the steepest hill on Salt Spring Island and took a good run at it. About three quarters of the way up she ran out of power and started rolling backwards down this steep hill, the

steering went loose and applying the rear brake did nothing. I was very lucky no one was behind me because I was all over the road and barely missed a large ditch and rolled backwards into a meadow.

Going back down this steep hill was nearly as scary. So if you take a Ner-A-Car for a ride stay away from steep hills. Another interesting experience was the vintage motorcycle meet and racing at historic O'Keefe Ranch near Vernon in BC's Okanagan.

I took the Ner-A-Car to this event just to putt around on. I rode a back country gravel road and it handled amazingly well while others on much more modern machines were having trouble.

The vintage racing was great as usual, then someone said I should take the Ner-A-Car out on the track and give it a try. No way, it is way too slow. So a match race was suggested. Jim Green on his 1913 Ariel belt drive (which he actually had dug out of the ground in pieces) versus me and my 1923 Ner-A-Car.

The race was three laps on a small oval dirt track. I did well in the corners while Jim pulled away on the straights and eventually won on his older machine. The crowd went wild – how often do you ever get to see two old farts on ancient motorcycles race each other?

I haven't used my Ner-A-Car for a few years now but after writing this story she will be hitting the road again next summer.

Now for my *"It's a Small World"* Ner-A-Car story. Four years ago I was checking out Ebay one night looking at old motorcycle literature sales. One person had some "Indian News" magazines for sale (which I collect). Scanning down their list I saw a listing for Ner-A-Car which caught my attention.

Young Bill in the early 1940's on Eugene's bike which is my bike today

They had for sale an original New York registration for a 1923 Ner-A-Car. *"I better check this out"*. The frame # on the registration was 1960, this rang a bell. I went out to the garage and checked my serial #, *"Wow it was 1960! Unbelievable"*.

Here was an original registration for my bike. It was *"buy it now"* so I snapped it up. I phoned the seller and asked them where they had got it from but they couldn't remember since they buy tons of literature every year.

The registration was for a William Schemel in Amherst, NY. Time to google. No Schemel at that address. I checked the address through city records and the address still existed so I got the phone number of the current owner. I talked to an elderly lady that said she had lived at that address for 30 years but never heard of a Mr Schemel.

Various other New York searches came up with nothing. Then two years ago I was sorting out some paperwork which included this registration so I thought I would check again, but this time widen the search to include all over the USA.

I was lucky his name was Schemel not Smith or Jones. It turns out that Schemel is not that common of a name but there were still quite

a few. Another thing I had to think about was that Mr Schemel would be pretty old and would he still be with us.

Anyway, I started making calls. First all over the North East and down the coast. There were a few listed in Florida, hey lots of New Yorkers retire to Florida, I was feeling lucky, but it was for nil.

Near the bottom of my list was a Doctor in Arkansas. I phoned the number and a lady answered. I asked for William and I heard her call for Bill. He answered the phone and I told him who I was and what I was doing.

Lo and behold Bill had owned a Ner-a-Car. Unbelievable again! Over a long conversation I learned the life story of my bike.

It all starts in 1923 in Alden, NY, a town of 150 people back then, mostly farmers, when a fellow named Eugene McCarthy bought the Ner-A-Car brand new. He was a bachelor house painter and never owned a car.

Bill lived about a half mile from Eugene and saw him and the bike frequently. In the early 60's Bill bought the bike from an elderly Eugene for $15. During the 60's Bill was finishing school, then the military, got married and had kids.

In between he restored the Ner-A-Car in his basement. He displayed it at many shows all over the North East winning many awards. He hauled the bike in the back of his 1926 Dodge truck to these events. He also had finished his internship and now was a doctor.

In the late 60's Bill was offered a job down south which he took. He left the Ner-A-Car with a friend to sell and heard it had gone to a collector in Canada.

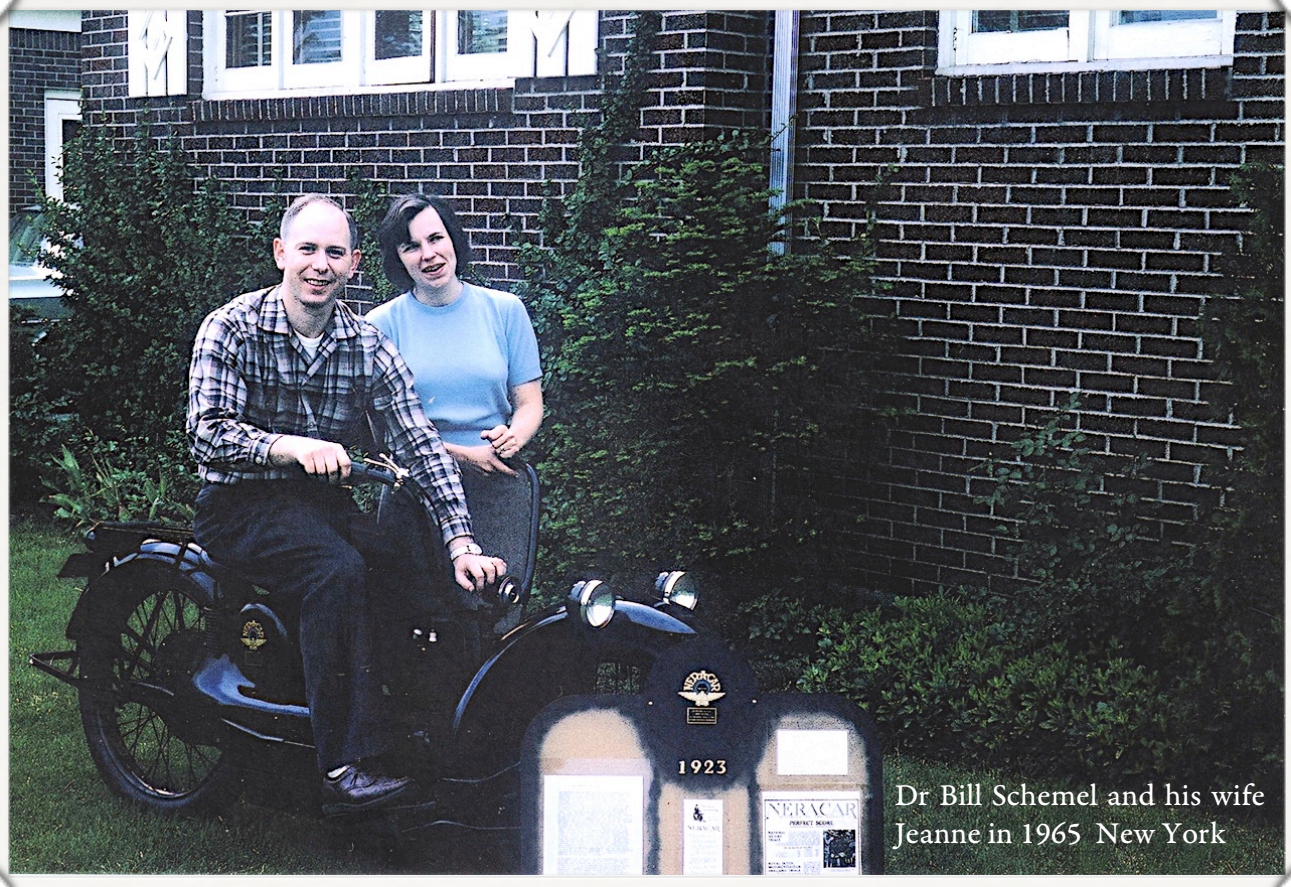
Now it was 50 years later, so he was just as surprised to be talking to me as I was to him. Shortly after our conversation I received a large box with a bunch of goodies. A bunch of pictures of the restoration of the bike and at shows all over.

There was a very large trophy from a motorcycle meet in 1964 in Pennsylvania for "Best Restored". Newspaper clippings, etc. *"Thank you very much Doctor Bill. You have made my Ner-A-Car much more special"*.

This story covers the nearly 100 year life span of my Ner-A-Car - I hope you enjoyed it.

Cheers, Don

P.S. I talked to Bill today and he is still going strong at 87 years old.



Dr Bill Schemel and his wife Jeanne in 1965 New York

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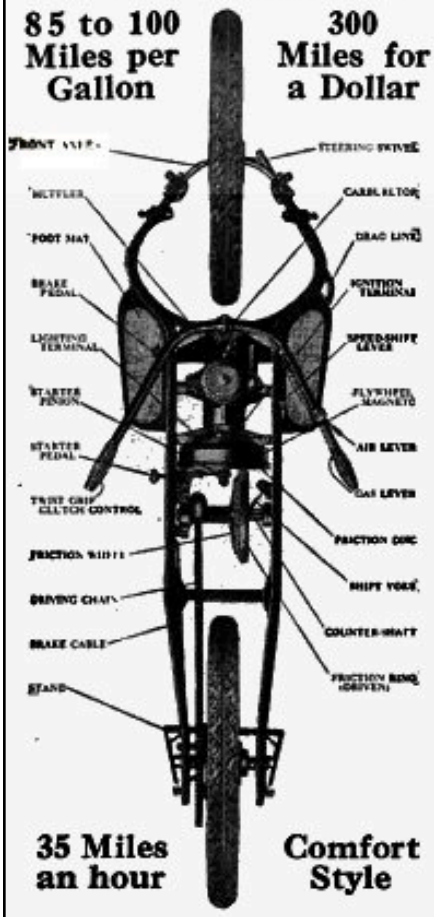

35 Miles an hour

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NEW—different. A two-wheeler on automobile lines—for women as well as men, for girls and boys.

Light—approximately 175 lbs., and this weight is centered lower than the hubs, giving a wonderful balance and stability.

Simple, easy to control. Anybody can learn the NERACAR in five minutes.

Clean—can be ridden in any clothes. Mud guard and deck 18 inches wide. The hood encases the machinery and oily parts.

Step in from the side—no bar to straddle—nothing to interfere with a woman's skirt.

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Low slung pressed steel frame of channel section, with motor and drive down between the side rails.

Only six running parts from motor piston to rear wheel—the simplest drive in the automotive world.

The motor is two-cycle—doubles the power strokes, and is therefore smaller and lighter. No valves, cams, rods, rockers or springs.

High tension magneto. Its rotor is part of the flywheel—hence no drive needed.

No transmission gears or clutch—just a 5-speed friction drive engaged or disengaged by a quarter turn of the left grip. A lever slides the driven friction wheel along the counter shaft, giving 5 drive ratios.

This drive is protected from dust, is capable of pulling many times its normal load and is proven by hundreds of thousands of miles of severe road testing.

A bear cat on any hill.

A car of smart style, a car of fascinating action. Everybody who tries it says there's nothing like it on wheels—it's more like an airplane.

Ride the NERACAR—pay for it with saved car-fare. Sleep later! Lose your grouch on your way to work—get home earlier—join the modern out-doors club and benefit from regular everyday recreation. Get the inspiration of flying on wheels. Have rosy cheeks—abounding health.

Write for descriptive circular.

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AT SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Including 2 Electric Head Lights, Tail Light, Luggage Rack and Tools

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190 South Geddes Street

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Men and Women
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Ride in any clothes
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Dealers write for our plan


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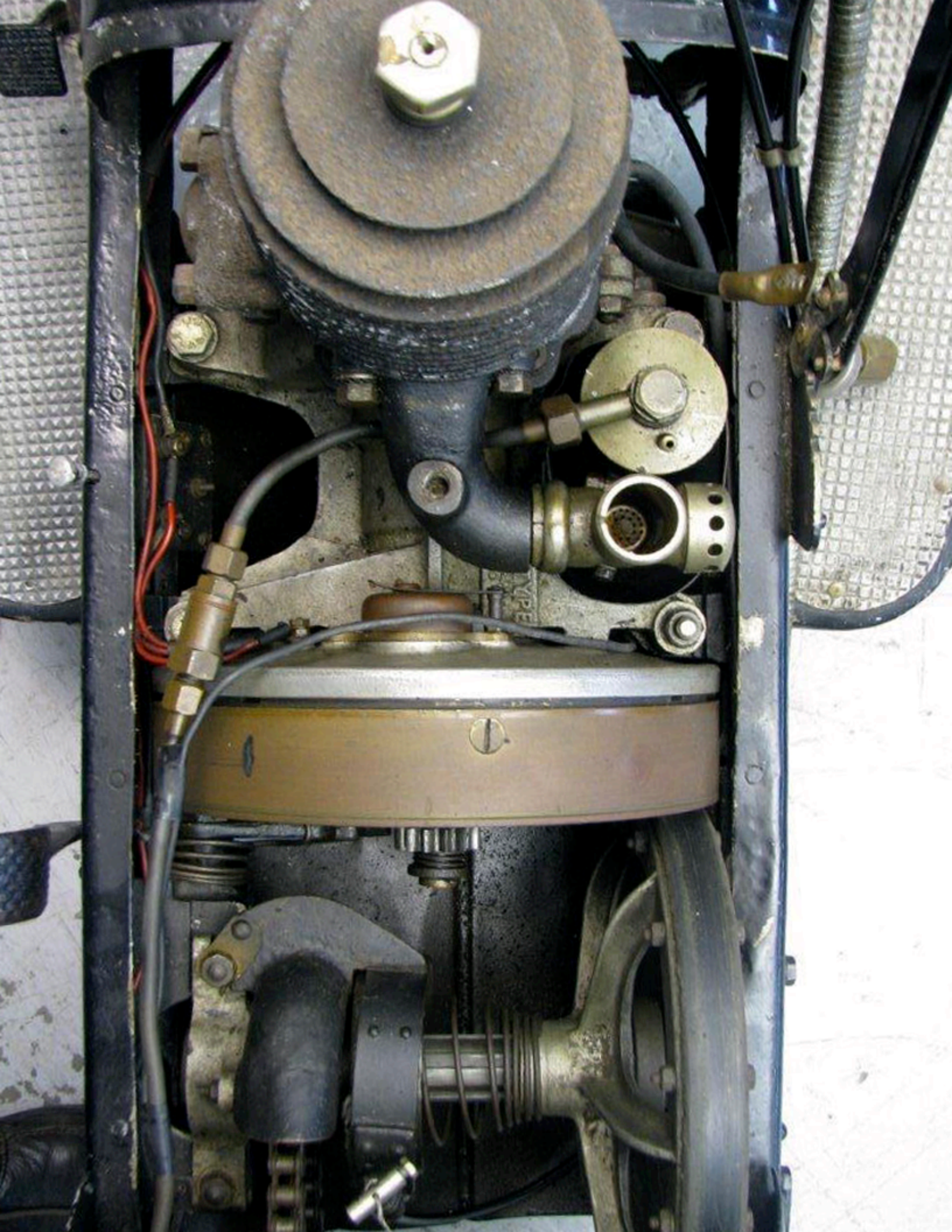


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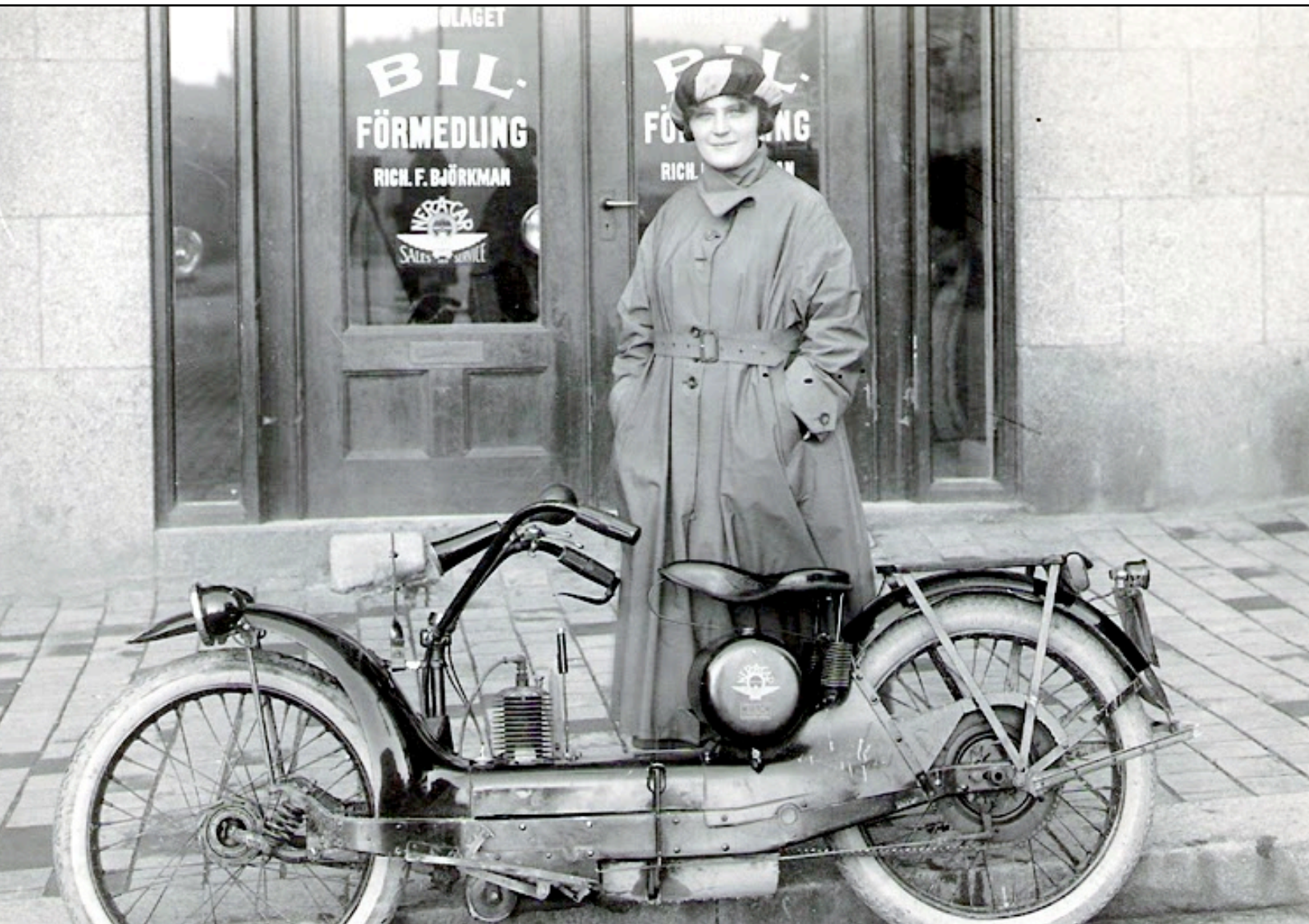
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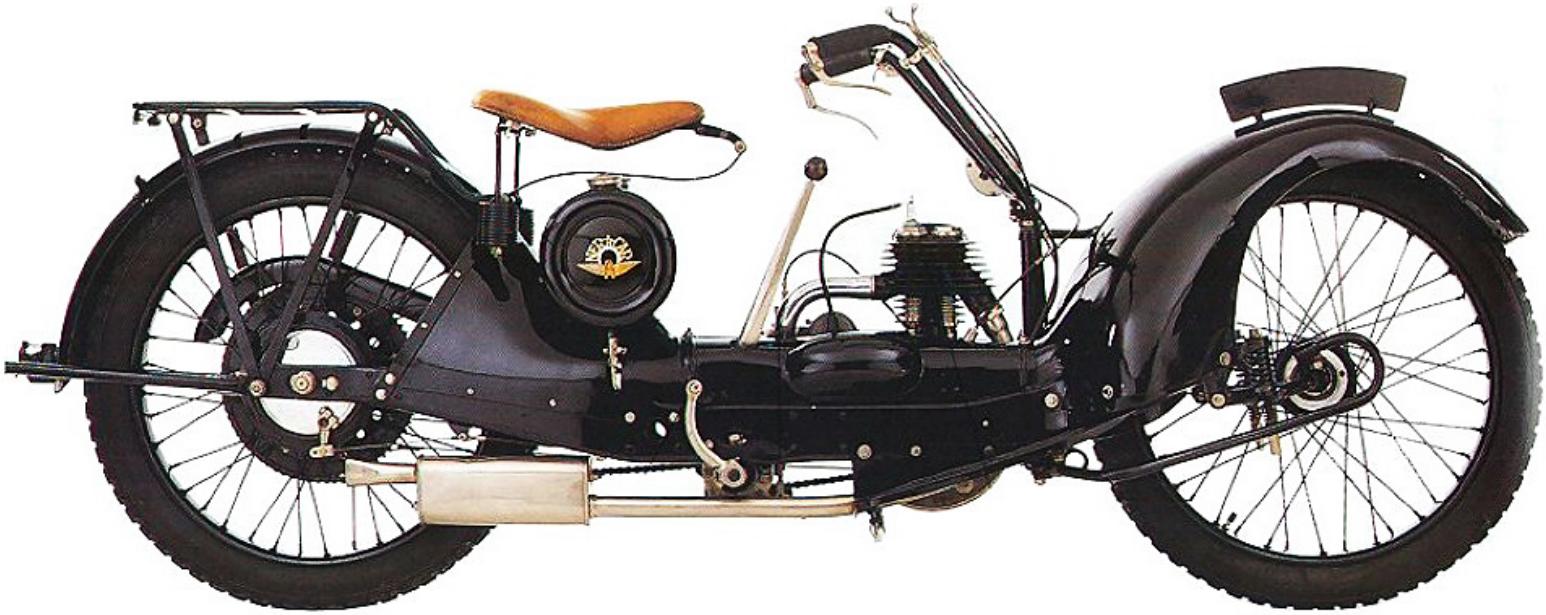
RICH. F. BJÖRKMAN



This bike lived its entire life in Ontario by Dave Laver

The first Ner-a-car I ever saw was pictured in a vintage motorcycle book. What an interesting machine I thought. A year or so later I actually saw a real one at a vintage motorcycle rally. I never imagined really seeing one and knew that it would be almost impossible to own one of these strange motorcycles. I did take some pictures though.

One day at a vintage motorcycle meetings, one of the members commented that he wanted to sell his Ner-a-car. Well to my surprise nobody but me seem interested. I manage to get enough money together a few months later and contacted the owner for a viewing. When I arrived he asked if I wanted to take it for a test ride. I was afraid to try until I was more familiar with the unique controls, so he took it down the road to show it off. We made the deal and I was the proud owner of a Ner-a-car.

The motorcycle is a 1922 American model with an early serial number of 223 on the frame and 236 on the motor. It came with a lot of info and history. The machine was purchase new in 1922 by a fellow in Ottawa, sold to another also of Ottawa in 1930. A person in Burlington bought it in 1973 then on to someone else in the area in 1997. I purchased it in 2012. It has lived its entire life in Ontario, Canada. I have all the receipts from the first owner to the second and so on. I also have many of the corresponding letters for parts. This Ner-a-car was last on the road in 1951 and was restored and painted back in the 60's.

When I had the Ner-a-car home I did learned to ride it after figuring out the controls. To operate the clutch you turn the grip on the left. The throttle and mixture are two levers on the right handle bar. There is only a brake on the rear wheel with a foot peddle on the left floor board. The transmission shifts with a long lever on the right, looking like a parking brake. It also has the unique center hub steering.

Once onto it, it is a very easy and comfortable ride. My test track is my dead end street with a turnaround area at the end. The neighbors are getting use to seeing me trying different motorcycles out. One day, with helmet on I was doing this run and passed a guy on a Harley

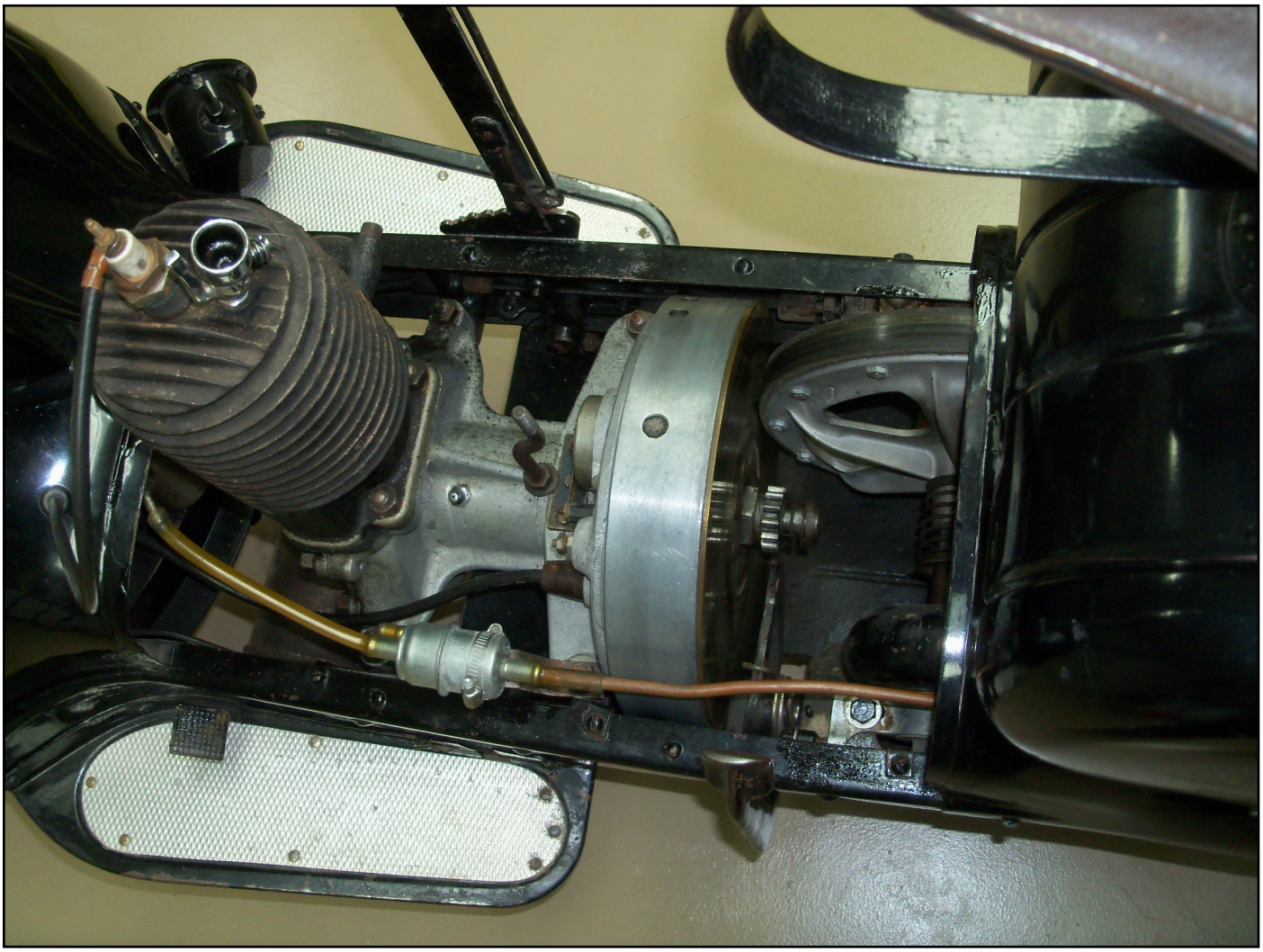
going the other way. I gave a wave and carried on to my driveway. I wonder what he thought to see this strange thing going down the road. Because this motorcycle only goes about 55 kph full out, I did not find it practical to license it for the road. I do however ride it at shows and rallies every chance I get.

I have restored a few motorcycles, so it was my intention to make it look like new. Upon checking out the riveted construction, I realized it was a real undertaking. Plan B was to enjoy it as it is.

Mechanically everything works as it should. The 220 cc two stroke motor puts out a whopping 3 horse power. It usually fires on the first kick. The starter peddle operates like an old BMW as the crankshaft lines up front to back. The clutch consists of a leather cover wheel coming in contact with the flywheel at the back of the motor. When changing gear ratios this wheel moves across the flywheel. Final drive is through a chain to a sprocket at the rear wheel. There is very little maintenance, as it has no battery and no oil reservoir. I drain the fuel each winter and display it in the house. I did marry the right women, as I currently have 17 vintage motorcycles in the basement.

I take the Ner-a-car to most of the shows and rallies I attend. I believe it is the most photographed motorcycle at the shows. Who needs a Vincent. I get a kick out of answering people's questions. What is it? What is that thing on the cylinder head, a compression release? No it doesn't have much compression. It's just for priming. Are you the original owner? Do I look that old?

One of the guys in our club stands by the Ner-a-car at shows and asks the good looking women if they want their picture taken on it. He tells them, it was after all made for women. Many take him up on it and get their friends to take the shot. At the Spring Motorcycle Show in Toronto our display was to have a theme, so we made up a background showing the Ner-a-car on a desert road with cutouts of the Roadrunner and Wyllie Coyote. We had more than one hundred people get there pictures on the machine and the kids loved it.



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196 SOUTH GEDDES STREET

SYRACUSE, N.Y.

Complete Stock
of
Replacement Parts
for All Models

Immediate Shipment

May 22, 1929.

Mr. Hugh M. Anderson,
#2 Craig Street,
Ottawa, CANADA.

Dear Sir:

Your letter and order of the 17th addressed to the Neracar Corporation, has come to us for attention as the writer, with his associates, took over in February 1928 the exclusive sales rights on Neracars, parts, service, etc., in connection with this motorcycle.

We sent to you yesterday by parcel post the front axle springs for your Neracar. I judge from your letter that these springs on your machine have never been replaced before. In that case you will require two springs, so we have sent two, and included new anchor washers for mounting them. This makes the amount of bill somewhat more than your remittance, which you may send when convenient. If the anchor washers are not needed, owing to your present springs being of the same design as those now sent, you may dedict this item. The extra spring you no doubt will wish in that case to retain against possible future use.

I am sorry if Byshe & Company are no longer giving service to Neracar owners in your city. We shall be glad to supply direct any parts that you may need from time to time to keep your car in shape. If you happen to know of any other owners in your city, and there should be several of them, would appreciate your telling them if you have the opportunity that we will supply parts direct. Since the cars were sold through dealer we do not know their addresses and cannot communicate with them. This is really most unfortunate, as the information went out generally through competitive salesmen that Neracar Corporation had discontinued manufacture, and many of these owners gave up the use of their cars without taking the trouble to write in to learn whether the parts service was being continued. You will therefore be doing a valuable service to other owners of these machines if you can inform them that parts are available.

We are maintaining full and complete stocks for all models, and shall be glad to hear from you whenever we can be of service. How is the cylinder and piston holding out on your early Model? To reduce stock we are closing out some complete sets for your size of motor at extremely low prices. These consist of cylinder, piston, piston rings and full set of gaskets. All at less than half price. If interested will be pleased to give full information.

Very truly yours,

F E Spicer

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SYRACUSE, N.Y.

Complete Stock
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Replacement Parts
for All Models

Immediate Shipment

NEW ADDRESS
1615 SOUTH AVE.

March 1st, 1932.

Mr. S. J. Wood,
333 Second Avenue,
Ottawa, Canada.

Dear Sir:

I have your letter of February 27th, and am pleased to inform you that we can furnish repair parts for the Neracar motorcycles. Prices are as follows on the items you mention:

*#401 cross shaft	(Regular catalog price $5.00)	$ 2.45
#413 friction wheel casting	(used wheels only)($3)	1.50
#403 pinion chain sprocket		1.00 ✓
*#305 rear sprocket	(regular price $3.50)	1.95 ✓
#422 drive chain		5.85
#206 hood lock nut		.05 ✓
#900-A4 ignition cable & nipple		.65
#633-A5 carburetor control cable	($1.20 each)	2.40 ✓
*#414 fibre friction ring		3.00
		$18.85 + 1.40

You will note item of cross shaft we are furnishing at less than half the regular price. If you wish to have new set of ball bearings for this, we will sell you the two new bearings for only $1.00 additional. These are priced in the catalog at $6.75 each. With the new rear sprocket we will send you a set of new screws without extra charge. The last item is not mentioned in your list. However, if you order another wheel you should have a new fibre ring, as it is impossible to remove the old fibre ring without destroying it. We regret we cannot furnish new friction wheel castings or (spider as you term it). Stock of these is entirely exhausted, and cost of remaking them in small quantities is out of proportion to their actual resale value. $19.25

Postage on this list of parts would be $1.40 if entire list of parts is ordered. This should be included in your remittance, and since we cannot send parcel post by C.O.D. mail to Canada, it is necessary to request that you kindly send money in advance to cover cost of parts selected and the necessary postage.

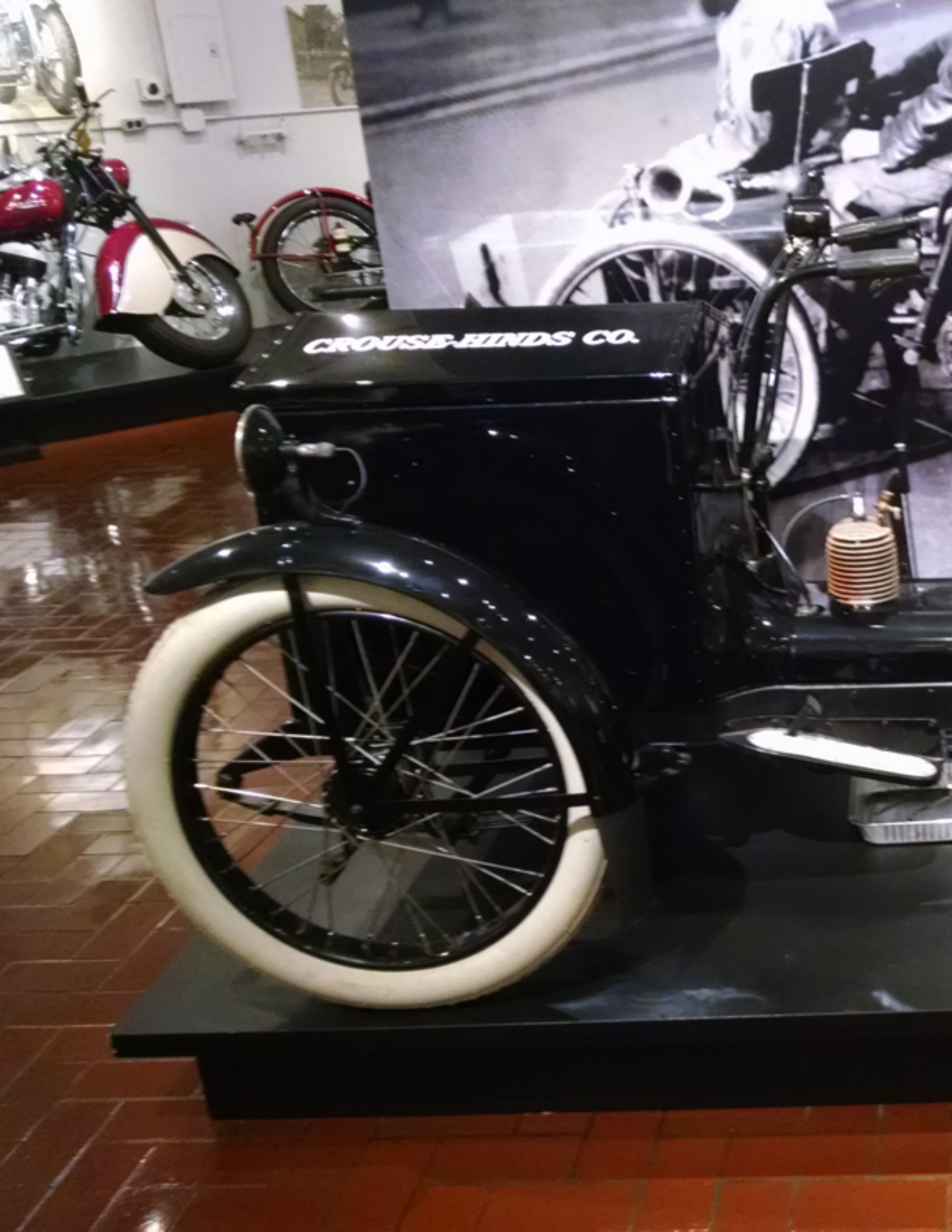
We are in position to make prompt shipment of these parts, and anticipate early receipt of your order.

Very truly yours,

Fred E. Spicer

FES*1.
Kindly note NEW address.

NERACAR PARTS SERVICE.


CROUSE-HINDS CO.

1925 Ner-A-Car Delivery

Photo sent by Jim Summers, Michigan USA

1921 Ner-A-Car trike

Another example of delivery mode with a 250cc 2 stroke motor.

Syracuse: A quaint excursion rewards wheels enthusiasts

By Sherryll Sobie Cooke (the Toronto Star)

SYRACUSE, N.Y.—Meet 62-year-old Frank Westfall, a self-professed protector of American two-wheel history.

"Some people collect coins, I collect rust," Westfall growls in a gravelly timbre that would rival that of his 1939 Harley Davidson U 74.

As with the other 17 vintage motorcycles and bicycles squeezed into his 2,000-sq. ft retail store here, Middle Earth Leatherworks, the Harley is not immediately visible amid a bewildering array of handmade leather vests, jackets, purses and satchels, random engines, tires, seats and springs, old army helmets and flyer goggles, Harley Davidson coffee and motor oil collector tins.

The antique bikes and motorcycles, in various states of repair, range from a 1903 Thomas to the 1939 Harley. Ner-a-Car, which Westfall describes as "the original low riders," were built from 1922 to 1929, first in Syracuse and later in Great Britain. They weighed 175 lbs and sold for $225.

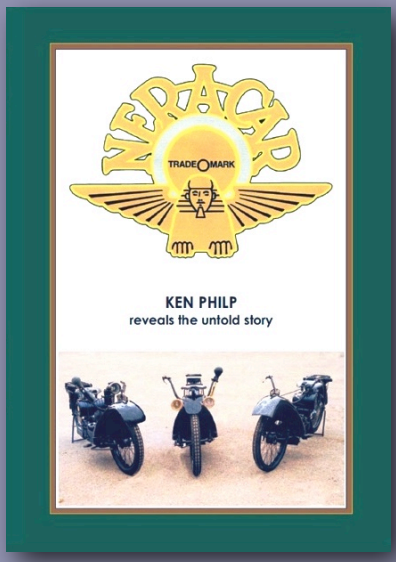
At the back of the store sits a 1917 Henderson draped in a tangle of leather belts. Westfall says it is the last of the Detroit-made Hendersons before the company was bought by Schwinn. *"I hold a world record for crossing the country on an antique Henderson motorcycle — done it five times."*

"It's an unofficial," he adds. *"There's no money involved; just beer and bragging rights."*

When not serving customers and crafting his handmade leather items, Westfall tinkers on his "two-wheel eye candy."

"When I'm asked, 'Which bike is your favourite?' I always answer the same: 'The next one.' "

The Ner-A-Car book



Life-long motorcyclist Ken Philp reveals the story of the Ner-a-Car in England. Reference is also made to the American story.
There are over 50 black-and-white illustrations, many from the 1920's. There are also over 50 colour photographs, depicting the machines during restoration, and both them and others being ridden in recent years.
The brief restoration accounts involve a 1925 Model C and a 1925 American model. Other references are made to the restoration of a 1921 Model A and getting a 1926 Model B ready for the road after many years in a Museum.

Amazon: $44.00
Apple e-book: $13.00

Ner-A-Car Museum

located in Syracuse NY, is owned by Frank Westfall who owns Middle Earth Leatherworks.

Visit by appointment only.
Tel: 315-472-7931.
Open Mon – Fri.
From 12pm to 5pm.

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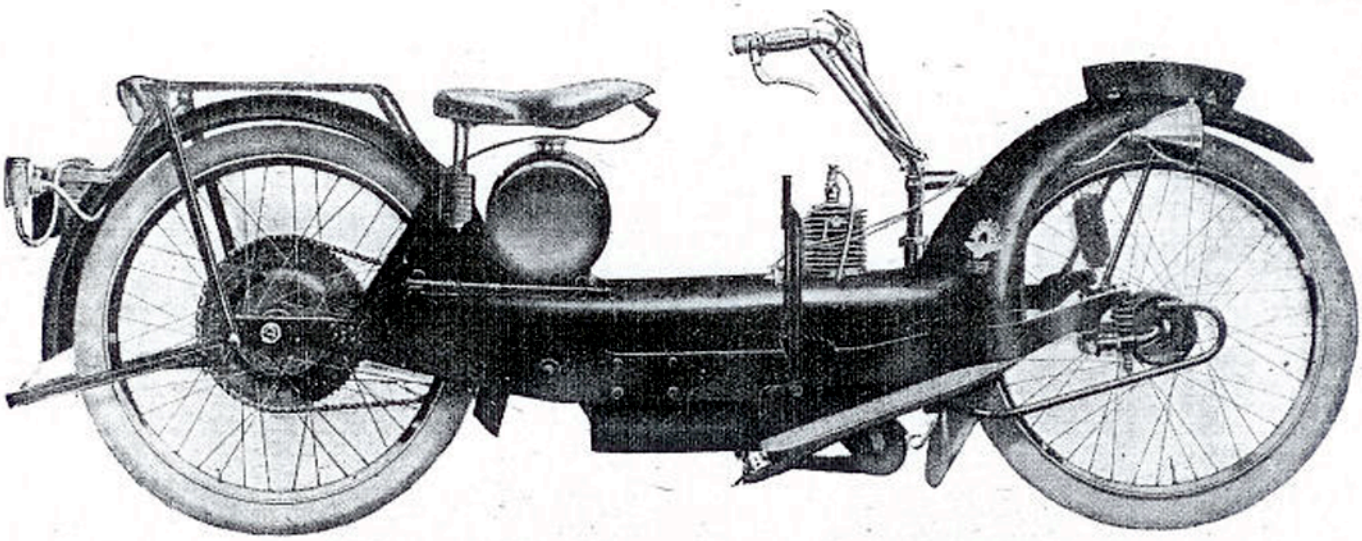
NEDACAR

1922 Ner-A-Car with tandem seat

Photo sent by Jim Summers, Michigan USA



The Ner-a-car represents a new departure in motorcycle design. It incorporates many features for which *Motor Cycling* has clamoured for many years, such as totally enclosed mechanism, simplicity, absence of "finnicky" fittings and useless plated parts.

A MOTORCYCLE ON CAR LINES.

Pressed Steel Frame and Enclosed Mechanism of the Ner-a-car.

AN extremely novel type of two-wheeler which is about to be placed on the market, and which may be said to bristle with ingenious details, is the Ner-a-car, the production of a very famous motorcar manufacturing concern (Sheffield-Simplex), and handled by the Inter-Continental Eng. Co., Ltd., of 20, Conduit Street, London, W. 1.

The Ner-a-car is intended to form a handy and convenient means of transport for riders of either sex, and an important claim made on behalf of it is that it is very stable, and will not skid. Certainly, the extremely low saddle position, and the fact that practically the entire weight of the machine is within a foot of the ground, amply bears out this claim, although we have not, at the time of writing, been able actually to test the machine on the road.

Absolutely Unorthodox.

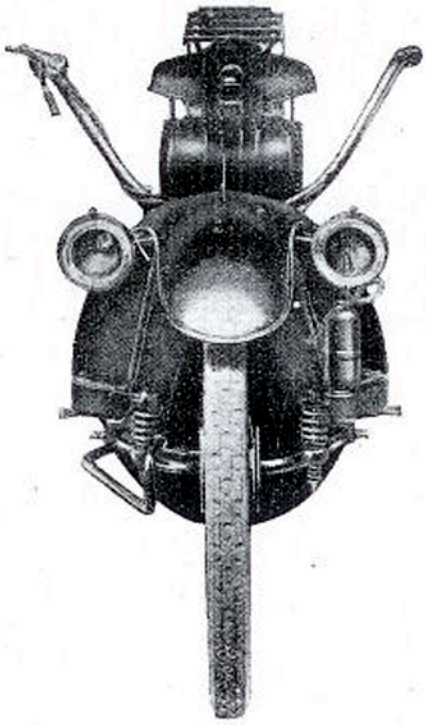
At the very first glance, one observes that the Ner-a-car differs considerably from the conventional type of motorbicycle, and, as one goes farther into details, one finds that the departure from the orthodox is even more radical than is apparent at the outset. Of the usual tubular frame there is no trace; the "chassis," as one is forced to call it, is made entirely from sheet steel pressings.

The principal members of the chassis run from front to rear of the machine, and are formed of deep channel section. They are braced together with substantial transverse members, and, where necessary, riveting is employed, as in motorcar chassis construction. There is no steering head in the generally accepted sense of the term, for the front wheel is supported on a front axle which is sprung from the main frame by short coil springs, and the motion of the handlebars is transmitted through a steering swivel and a drag link. The front wheel may be said to make its directional movement actually between what would normally be the forks.

The engine is a 2½ h.p. single-cylinder two-stroke, of the usual three-port type, with an integrally cast transfer port. It has a bore of 2½ ins. and a stroke of 2⅜ ins., its cubical capacity being 211 c.c. A light cast-iron piston is used, with two pegged rings, and with a gudgeon pin of the free-floating type. The big-end is provided with a cageless roller bearing, and the crankshaft runs on ball and roller bearings. A self-lubricating gland is fitted to the main bearings to ensure the compression tightness of the crankcase. The silencer is carried beneath and slightly in front of the engine.

Engine Easily Dismantled.

The power unit is set transversely across the frame, and can be removed bodily by taking off four nuts only and without disturbing the transmission. The magneto is contained in the flywheel, and has an external contact breaker which is readily accessible. An excellent feature is that there is no loose internal wiring in the magneto. In addition to providing the high-tension current for the ignition, the magneto supplies light for the head and tail lamps.



This front view shows the car-type of steering, the wide mudguarding and the front wheel springing.

Probably the most notable feature of the whole machine, however, is found in the first step of the transmission, for this is by friction—a system which has proved itself highly satisfactory on certain types of light cars. Naturally, its adoption would enable the provision of an unlimited number of gear ratios without the necessity for gearwheels or gearing of any sort: actually, the Ner-a-car has five separate speeds, which are controlled by a long vertical lever working in a five-notched quadrant, and placed on the right-hand side of the machine.

Simple Friction Drive.

The construction of the friction drive is simplicity itself. The driving disc is incorporated in the flywheel shell, whilst the other member consists of a renewable fibre friction ring mounted on an aluminium "spider." The latter forms the driven disc, and is carried on a cross shaft set transversely across the frame, so that driving and driven discs are at right angles one to the other. It is, of course, obvious that the nearer the driven disc is to the axis of the driving disc, the lower will be the gear ratio, and, conversely, as the driven disc is brought nearer to the periphery of the driving member, so the speed of the two discs more nearly approximates (according to their relative diameters), and thus the gear ratio is raised.

The method of altering the gear ratio on the Ner-a-car is perfectly simple: it is accomplished by providing the cross shaft on which the driven disc is mounted with longitudinal splines, with which serrations in the boss of the spider engage. Thus it will be evident that

A Motorcycle on Car Lines (contd.).

the driven member is capable of sliding sideways on the shaft, but cannot revolve without transmitting its motion to the shaft. The actual position of the driven disc in relation to the driving member is controlled, of course, by the gear change lever. A clutch is provided by withdrawing the friction discs from contact with each other, the operation in this case being by means of a twist grip on the handlebar.

Wear Easily Taken Up.

The cross shaft which carries the driven disc is of hardened steel, and it runs on self-aligning ball bearings, one at either end. These races are mounted in sliding housings supported by reinforcing members riveted to the main frame, and which also form bearers for the power unit. The object of the sliding housings is so that wear in the friction surfaces may be taken up when necessary. The chain sprocket for the transmission of power to the rear wheel is integral with the cross shaft.

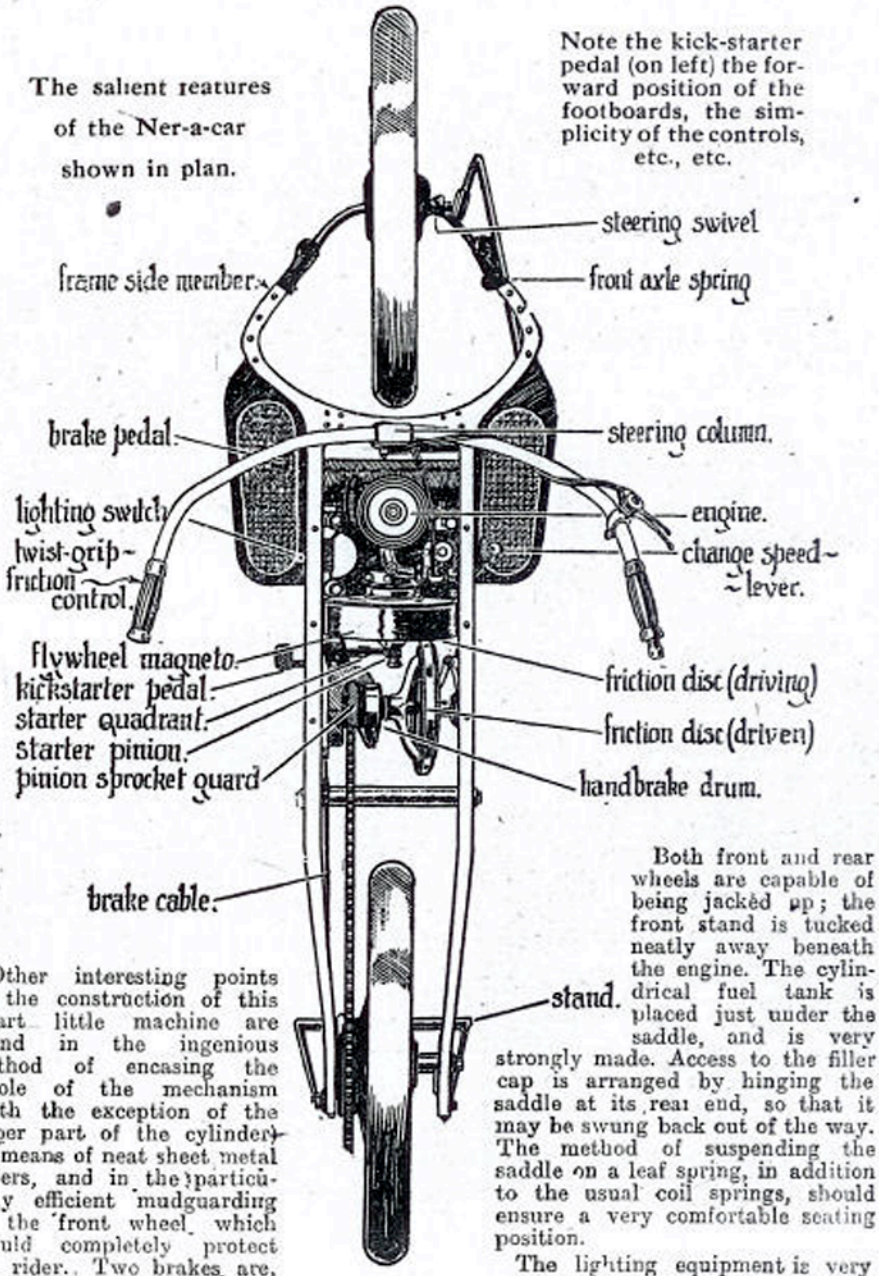
On the rear extremity of the engine shaft, just behind the flywheel, is mounted a small ratchet pinion which forms one portion of the kick-starter. It is rotated by a toothed quadrant pivoted on the near side of the frame and actuated by a neat pedal, which is conveniently situated near the rider's left foot. Getting under way with the Ner-a-car, therefore, resolves itself into declutching, kick-starting, placing the gear lever into bottom speed notch, and letting in the clutch. This last-named operation with a friction driven machine has to be done smartly and without hesitation, for any slipping of the clutch is apt to cause flats on the discs, and must therefore be avoided. With careful usage, however, no trouble need be anticipated on this score.

"Get-at-able" Rear Wheel.

The rear wheel is carried on an axle between the tail ends of the frame side members. Although not of the "quickly detachable" type, the wheel assembly is so arranged that a cover or tube may be replaced with the back wheel in situ, To effect this, it is only necessary to unscrew one nut and to remove a tubular distance piece, when a sufficient gap is made between the wheel and the frame side member to permit of the tyre being slipped through.

The salient features of the Ner-a-car shown in plan.

Note the kick-starter pedal (on left) the forward position of the footboards, the simplicity of the controls, etc., etc.

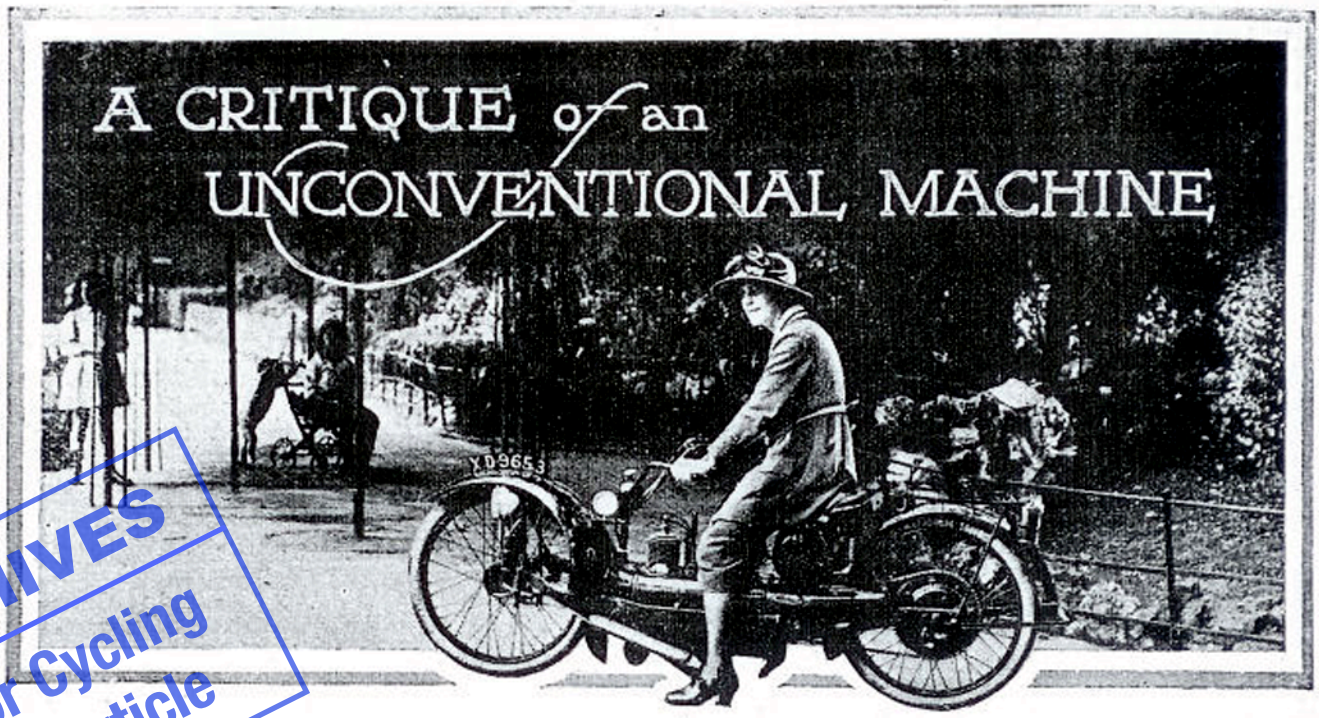


Other interesting points in the construction of this smart little machine are found in the ingenious method of encasing the whole of the mechanism (with the exception of the upper part of the cylinder) by means of neat sheet metal covers, and in the particularly efficient mudguarding of the front wheel which should completely protect the rider. Two brakes are, of course, provided; one of them is formed by an external band contracting on to a drum mounted on the friction drive cross shaft, whilst the other operates inside the rear wheel chain sprocket, and is controlled from a pedal on the near side footboard.

Both front and rear wheels are capable of being jacked up; the front stand is tucked neatly away beneath the engine. The cylindrical fuel tank is placed just under the saddle, and is very strongly made. Access to the filler cap is arranged by hinging the saddle at its rear end, so that it may be swung back out of the way. The method of suspending the saddle on a leaf spring, in addition to the usual coil springs, should ensure a very comfortable seating position.

The lighting equipment is very complete, for, besides the electric head and tail lamps already referred to, auxiliary acetylene lamps, with separate generators, are included We understand that the price of the Ner-a-car has been fixed at 65 guineas, and that it will be supplied only through agents.

A CRITIQUE of an UNCONVENTIONAL MACHINE



Further Impressions of the Ner-a-Car under Normal Conditions.

RECENTLY we have had an opportunity of putting the Ner-a-Car which is described by the makers as "an entirely new form of personal conveyance," to a fairly extensive test. The design of the vehicle being of a character which obviously prevents it from competing with the ordinary motorcycle, it is, perhaps, difficult to place oneself in the position of the type of purchaser likely to be attracted and describe the vehicle from this point of view, but it is safe to say that, of the several attempts which have been made to provide a single-track machine which will give the protection of a car and the simplicity of a motorcycle, the Ner-a-Car is the one which goes farthest towards the desired end.

What a Lady Novice Thought of It.

In order to obtain as far as possible the impressions of a rider who, although not attracted by the average motorcycle, is, nevertheless, at any rate interested in something which gives self-propulsion of the kind afforded by the Ner-a-Car, we placed the machine at the disposal of a lady who had not previously ridden a motorcycle.

She appeared to have little or no difficulty in grasping the fundamental principles of control and management, and kick-starting would, we think, be possible for a lady of average strength, this operation being simplified by the absence of a decompressor, which, curiously enough, did not seriously impede the spinning of the engine.

The comparatively light weight and low build of this machine, enabling the lady to wheel it quite easily, and the open frame, enabled her to sit astride and arrange her skirt in a manner which inspired confidence at the outset.

The comfort of the machine, she told us, was quite as much as she expected, but on the question of noise she expressed the opinion that it did not come up to the average motorcycle. Other points she commented on were the initial difficulty of balancing—although we noticed that a little practice soon overcame this—and the inconvenient position of the gear-change lever. The machine was quite as speedy as she desired, and the ability to ride up moderate hills without effort quite impressed her.

These opinions are valuable, as they come from a source which treats the question from a point of view impossible to the regular motorcyclist. Naturally enough, the outstanding advantages of supreme protection from the weather and the well-guarded transmission did not stand out in their true perspective, as no lady who has not previously ridden a motorcycle could appreciate the extraordinary advances made by the designers of the Ner-a-Car in these two directions.

Many Unusual Features.

When we came to ride the machine ourselves we found so much that was novel that it is difficult to crystallize one's impressions and present them in the form of praise or criticism. The "clutch" control, for instance, is quite unusual—this is effected by twisting the left grip, which brings the two friction discs into engagement. The particular machine we tried was evidently not adjusted quite as well as it should be in this respect, as a most pronounced effort was required to hold the friction discs together; it was impossible to relax one's efforts for an instant, as, if one did so, the discs partially freed themselves and slipped badly.

THE NER-A-CAR UNDER EVERY-DAY CONDITIONS.

The low centre of gravity makes the Ner-a-Car delightfully easy to control in traffic.

A Critique of an Unorthodox Design (contd.).

We are quite prepared to admit, however, that this form of control could be delightfully convenient, but, at the same time, it is rather curious that such a well-tried and satisfactory method of clutch operation as the Bowden lever should have been abandoned in favour of something which will be strange to whoever happens to use it.

The gear lever is placed well forward on the right-hand side, and, although it means a very long stretch before it can be reached, there is no particular drawback to this, as gear changing is simply a matter of pushing the lever into one of the five notches provided.

First Impressions.

The first dozen yards or so of one's initial trip on a Ner-a-Car produces a curious sensation of instability, which is accentuated, perhaps, by the fact that the front wheel is quite invisible from the rider's seat, and the mudguard remains stationary, but this feeling soon wears off, to be followed by a realization of the fact that the manufacturers' claims as to easy steering are remarkably well founded. Despite the unorthodox design of the front part of the machine, the steering, once one has become accustomed to it, is very similar to that of an ordinary motorcycle, and although the steering lock obtainable is rather limited, this peculiarity is only noticed when the machine is being wheeled. On the road the Ner-a-Car can be turned in a minimum of space.

The front springing is remarkably efficient—quite as good as the average motorcycle spring fork, in fact—and the large saddle fitted effectually insulates the rider on all ordinary roads. It is satisfactory to note that the manufacturers of the Ner-a-Car have not succumbed to the temptation to fit any of the fancy types of seats, which, although they look remarkably comfortable, in practice are not so efficient as the regulation motorcycle saddle.

The Power Unit.

The engine fitted is of the two-stroke three-port type of 211 c.c., with a nominal rating of 2¼ h.p. It is of quite advanced design, possessing, as it does, roller bearings to the big-end, a balanced crankshaft mounted on ball and roller bearings, and a floating gland for holding crankcase compression.

If we have a criticism to offer regarding the power unit, it is that it is not silenced as well as it might be or should be; we fancy that prospective purchasers will demand a far higher standard of noiselessness than is at present provided, but there is plenty of room for a larger expansion chamber and longer exhaust pipe; consequently, this is one of the details which could easily be improved upon.

We had no opportunity of testing the machine against the watch, but the manufacturers claim that on top gear a speed of 35 m.p.h. is obtained with the engine turning over at 2,500 r.p.m.

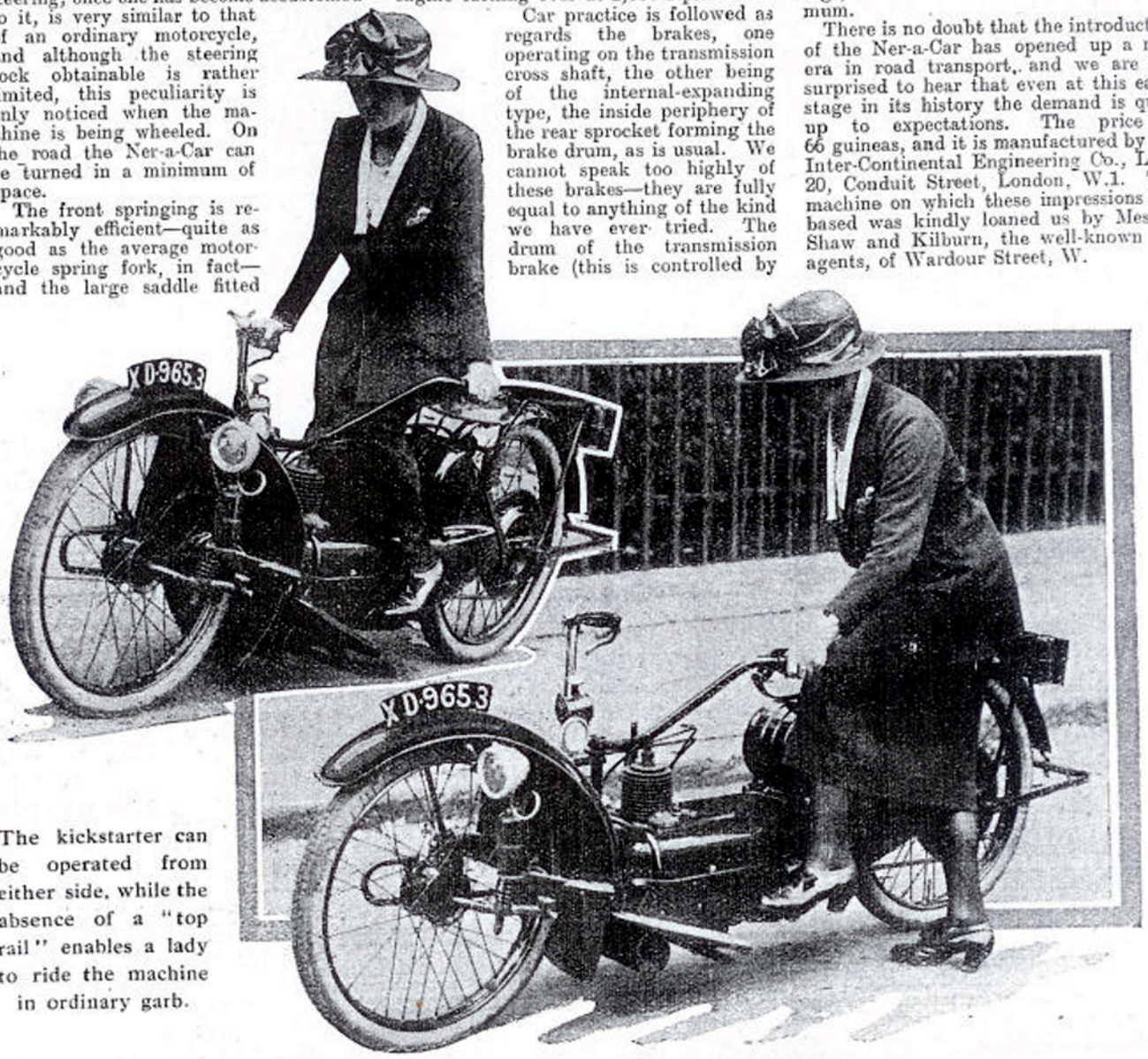
Car practice is followed as regards the brakes, one operating on the transmission cross shaft, the other being of the internal-expanding type, the inside periphery of the rear sprocket forming the brake drum, as is usual. We cannot speak too highly of these brakes—they are fully equal to anything of the kind we have ever tried. The drum of the transmission brake (this is controlled by the left handlebar lever) runs at approximately three times the speed of the back wheel; consequently, the retarding effect is enormous. The foot brake is similarly very powerful and sweet in action.

The pronounced spice of novelty which is found in nearly every component part of the Ner-a-Car extends to the magneto, which is of the flywheel type, providing, moreover, adequate current for lighting the electric head and tail lamps fitted to the machine. This ignition and lighting equipment functioned perfectly all the time the machine was in our possession, and there is no doubt that the self-contained nature of the machine as regards lamps is an enormous point of advantage. Acetylene head and tail lamps are fitted as a stand-by, to be used when the machine is left stationary at night, when the electric light would be out of action

Easy to Start.

The absence of a compression release valve, on which we have remarked before, is no hindrance to kick-starting, as the small size of the engine allows it to be turned over at a considerable speed against compression. Incidentally, the engine continues to spin after the throttle is closed for an amazing length of time; this is due to the heavy flywheel and to the generous use of ball and roller bearings, which reduces friction to a minimum.

There is no doubt that the introduction of the Ner-a-Car has opened up a new era in road transport, and we are not surprised to hear that even at this early stage in its history the demand is quite up to expectations. The price is 66 guineas, and it is manufactured by the Inter-Continental Engineering Co., Ltd., 20, Conduit Street, London, W.1. The machine on which these impressions are based was kindly loaned us by Messrs. Shaw and Kilburn, the well-known car agents, of Wardour Street, W.



The kickstarter can be operated from either side, while the absence of a "top rail" enables a lady to ride the machine in ordinary garb.

Through Feminine Goggles

The Ner-a-car on the Road.

By MAB. LOCKWOOD-TATHAM.

WHEN I first saw the Ner-a-car my remark was, "What is it—a car or a motor cycle?" The frame, drive, enclosed engine—in fact, almost everything—suggest a car; yet it has handle-bars, only two wheels, and footboards. Of course, the first thing I noticed was the extraordinarily long wheelbase, and the fact that the centre of gravity was below the axles. The only detrimental point which struck me with regard to this was the very small clearance, especially in cornering or taking the machine up or down a step. Of course one does not expect to take corners at a very great speed, but if, in a moment of recklessness, much of an angle were attained, the running board might touch the ground.

The Ner-a-car has a car type chassis of pressed steel, with a special feature in the shape of a large immovable mudguard carrying two head lights—one electric, one acetylene; the latter is, of course, a "standby." The magneto supplies the current for lighting. The engine is a 2½ h.p. two-stroke, and friction disc transmission gives five speeds.

With the exception of one foot brake and the gear lever, control is entirely from the handle-bars. The clutch is operated by a left twist grip.

Special Clothing Not Needed.

I should like to mention that when the little machine was taken over I was dressed in my usual motor cycle garb, which consists of soft leather and beaver helmet, brown suède belted coat, fawn Bedford cord riding breeches, and field boots. It was soon discovered, however, that it was quite unnecessary, so far as riding the machine was concerned. Riding would have been just as easy in skirts. Nevertheless, for a long run the costume just described has always been found to be more comfortable and very much warmer than feminine garments, which is an important point for winter riding.

I will try to describe my sensations on first mounting. I took the precaution of doing so in Hyde Park, at a spot where there was little traffic and few people except nursemaids and small boys to see me if I happened to fall off.

My engine started at the first kick, and I mounted, slowly twisted in the clutch, and wobbled away. I soon discovered, however, that it was very nearly impossible to keep on wobbling, because the machine practically balanced itself.

It was rather a weird feeling being so far away from the front wheel, and very strange not to see the front mudguard move when turning a corner, but otherwise it soon began to feel perfectly natural.

At this point I began to feel very courageous, and decided to adventure among the traffic. So, leaving the park at Hyde Park Corner, I drove by way of Grosvenor Street and Bond Street to Conduit Street, Regent Street, and Piccadilly Circus; thence out through Buckingham Gate towards the Portsmouth Road.

In the meantime, two other Ner-a-cars and a sporting 2¾ h.p. Douglas (complete with enormous copper exhaust pipe) had joined me, and we settled down to enjoy the good roads, glorious sunshine, and general holiday feeling of Saturday afternoon.

Steering was soon discovered to be quite easy without using the hands. Direction is perfectly controlled by slightly swaying the body, and the feeling of confidence while so doing was most unusual. However, my fellow travellers quite put me in the shade on that sort of thing, and it was really amusing to see the expressions on the faces of people passing by when one of our party came along at about 25 m.p.h. standing on the engine casing with hands in pockets, or lying flat on his back on the saddle, with his feet over the handle-bars. It caused my heart to leave its usual position once or twice, particularly on tramlines. However, these things appear to be actually easier than they look, owing to the unusual design of the whole thing.

Speed on the Level.

After leaving Hammersmith and Kingston, when we were out on the country roads, there were opportunities of testing the Ner-a-car's speed capabilities. As far as I could tell without a speedometer, it

Through Feminine Goggles.—

reached a maximum of about 35 m.p.h., and there did not appear to be any undue racing of the engine at this speed, nor was there any sign of overheating.

We kept right on, doing very good time, till we arrived at the Hut at Wisley, where we stopped for tea. While it was in process I heard an amusing story of an incident which happened in the Isle of Man during T.T. race week. Two Ner-a-cars were over there at the time, and the demonstrator in charge of one of them left his mount standing outside an hotel, where the racing men are known to foregather. While he was inside a certain well-known race entrant came up and, taking the strange little machine, rode off on it. Our friend came out, found ne'er a car (!), and went off the deep end about it. Just then the star rider returned, and after listening to a storm of words said, "But you evidently don't know who I am—my name is ———". The gentleman with the Ner-a-car retorted, "I don't care if you're Lloyd George—nobody but an *expert* is going to ride this machine!"

Homeward Bound.

We had only gone a few miles on our homeward journey when the light began to fail, and I really got the sensation of driving a car when I was able to bend down and switch on electric lights. When we got into the suburbs the traffic was much thicker than on our outward journey, and I was able to judge the capabilities of my machine under such conditions better than before.

In Traffic.

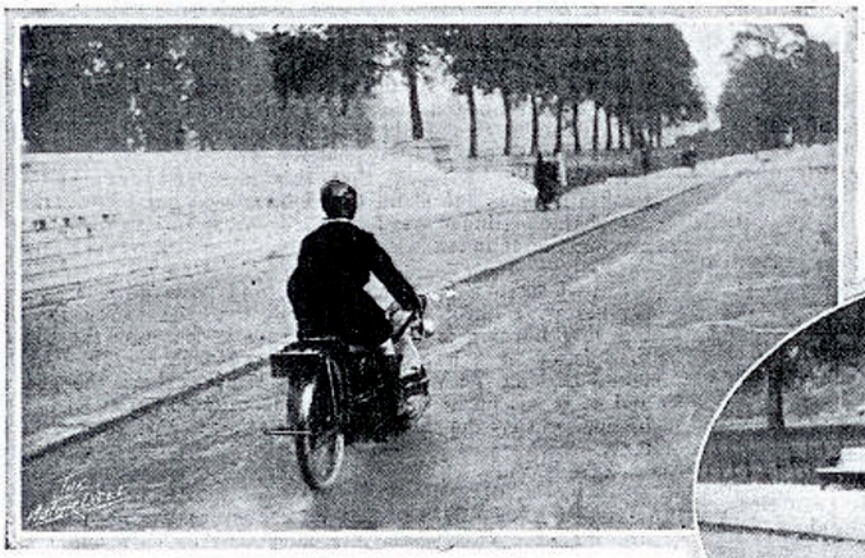
Thanks to the sliding scale of gears and throttling down capacity, it is possible to come almost to a standstill in a tight corner or at the wave of a policeman's hand.

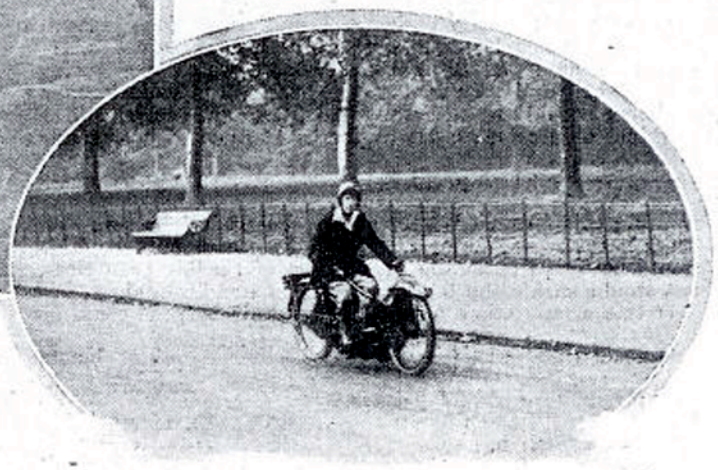
Should it be necessary to stop entirely, a slight twist of the clutch release is all that is required, and *vice versa* to move off again. This means, of course, that one need not worry about even the worst thoroughfares.

Before reaching my destination on the home run, I was reminded, by extreme fatigue and stiffness in my left arm, that the said twist grip clutch was not entirely an unmixed blessing. I have no doubt that after continued use this would not be the case, but anyone driving the machine for the first few times would be bound to feel it. The twisting muscles of the forearm are so seldom used in the ordinary way that, particularly in traffic, where much declutching is necessary, one must feel the strain to a certain extent.

Quite a good point, as far as using the machine for shopping is concerned, is the excellent springing. I do not suggest that it would be safe to carry the eggs home on it, but certainly vibration is practically *nil*, and only very bad roads cause any discomfort.

My impression of the Ner-a-car is that it is sensible, comfortable, and adaptable. It should prove popular, particularly with ladies who do not care for motor cycling from an entirely sporting point of view. The fact that a special costume is unnecessary will appeal to many, particularly those who are past their first youth.





Nearly all the weight of the Ner-a-car being carried below the level of the hubs, there is little tendency to skid. The riding position is comfortable, and, taken all round, the machine is very controllable.

A Car Owner on Two Wheels

Opinions on Motor Cycles and Some Experiences with the Ner-a-Car.

By OWEN JOHN, of "The Autocar."

NOT a motor cycle, not a scooter, not a car—but a "wheeler." This is how the firm responsible for the Ner-a-Car describes its new machine.

I write in fear and trembling of it in *The Motor Cycle*, for I have always had it instilled into me that this is a journal conducted, written and read entirely and solely by experts and that the least departure from strict accuracy is fraught with heavy and immediate penalty.

Confessions of a Non-Motor Cyclist.

But I will be brave and fear not. I am not a motor cyclist (cries of "Shame!"). I am too old at umpty-eight, too heavy at nearly fifteen stone, too valuable as a bread-winner, and quite happy as a car-owner and a self-appointed guide, philosopher and friend to several generations of four-wheel motorists. But I have succumbed to the charms and the speed and the safety of this new invention, and if I can only be assured that ordinary motor cycles are as easy, simple and safe to use, you may perchance find me in the Ardennes, in Ireland, in the Isle of Man, or wherever the next big motor cycle race may be, buzzing round the course clad all in leather and entirely cognisant of all the names of all the competitors and their mounts.

The average woman thinks that she could manage a car while she regards the motor cycle as something too complicated. There are men—especially elderly men—who share the same opinions.

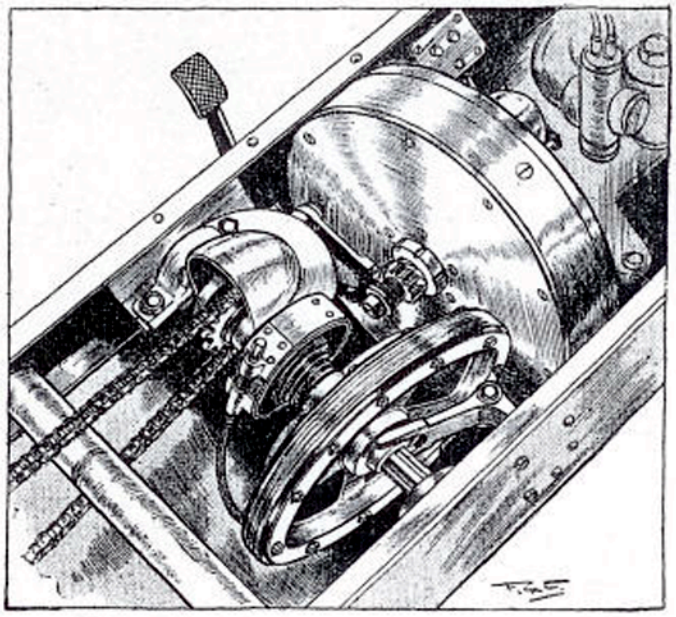
Why is this?

The explanation appears to be in the fact that the mechanism of a car is unobtrusive and silent. Owen John's contribution seems to confirm this.

Collective Experimenting

For a new era has opened to me—or, rather, it would have had not my family also appreciated the simplicity and hardiness of my new machine. I experiment vicariously, they do it almost all for me; only now and then do I take it out and amaze my friends and acquaintances with my apparent relapse into gay boyhood. It seems very simple, it seems very safe, I know it is very economical; when the sun gets warmer I am sure it is going to be very delightful indeed. For there seems so little in the Ner-a-Car that *can* go wrong, its accessibility is quite good, and its moving parts are nearly as few as those of a steam-engine, always my *beau ideal* of economy in machinery.

I have not had it long enough to be able to judge of its wearing qualities, a test for which only time and distance can tell, but it seems hardy and, considering that several people already have set their raw hands to it and promptly ridden off upon it, I think that it shows marvellously few signs of collision or of inexperience. Possibly the fact that one can ride on it as slowly as one can pedal a cycle may have something to do with the surprising confidence that beginners show upon it; a mount that goes off at twenty miles an hour with a roar often frightens away tyros by the mere thought that prodigies of skill are required to control the monster.



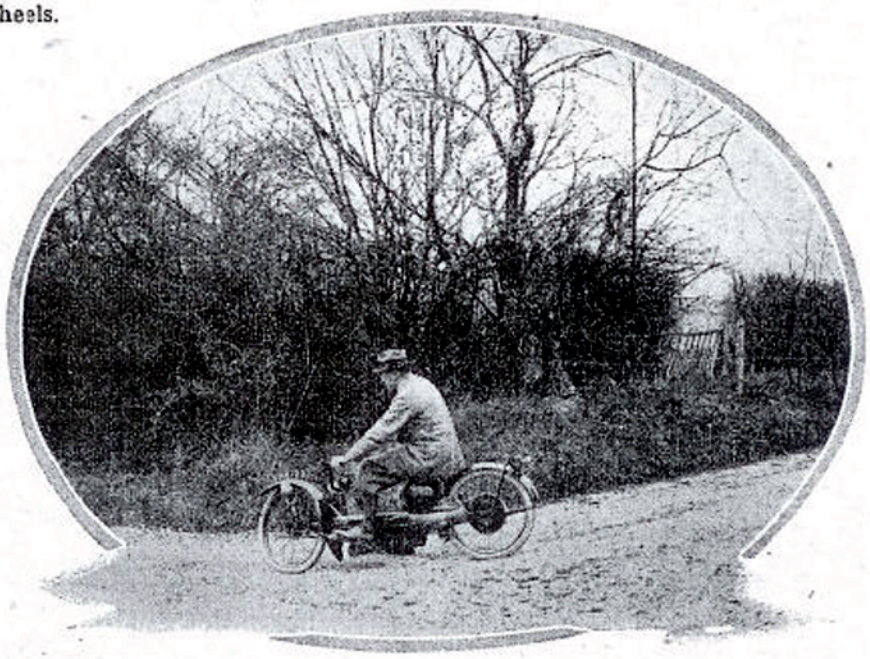
Variable friction-gear of the Ner-a-car, showing rack and pinion kick starter and countershaft brake.

For the Multitude.

A gentle and docile machine is a standing invitation for a new scale of humanity to take up motor cycles, for it cannot be denied that hitherto the movement, as we know it, has been more attractive to the young and hardy than to the man or woman who is more in search of comfort

and convenience than mere speed.

Thousands of potential buyers exist amongst the latter class; they want a mount that can do its 30 m.p.h. up and down ordinary hills, that can steer like a fish, make its own light, and can carry an extra passenger when necessary on the flapper-bracket. The Ner-a-Car does all these things, and yet all the time, owing to its centre of gravity being so low, the rider does not seem to be doing anything bolder than just sitting on a cushion. Perhaps the fact that it possesses a chassis, a clutch, a two-stroke engine, five speeds, a footbrake, and that it steers like a car may lend it an extra sense of security. I do not know; all that I am aware of is that through it I have learned to appreciate the value and the economy of the two-wheeler, and in future shall be able and happy to count myself among the number of its devotees.

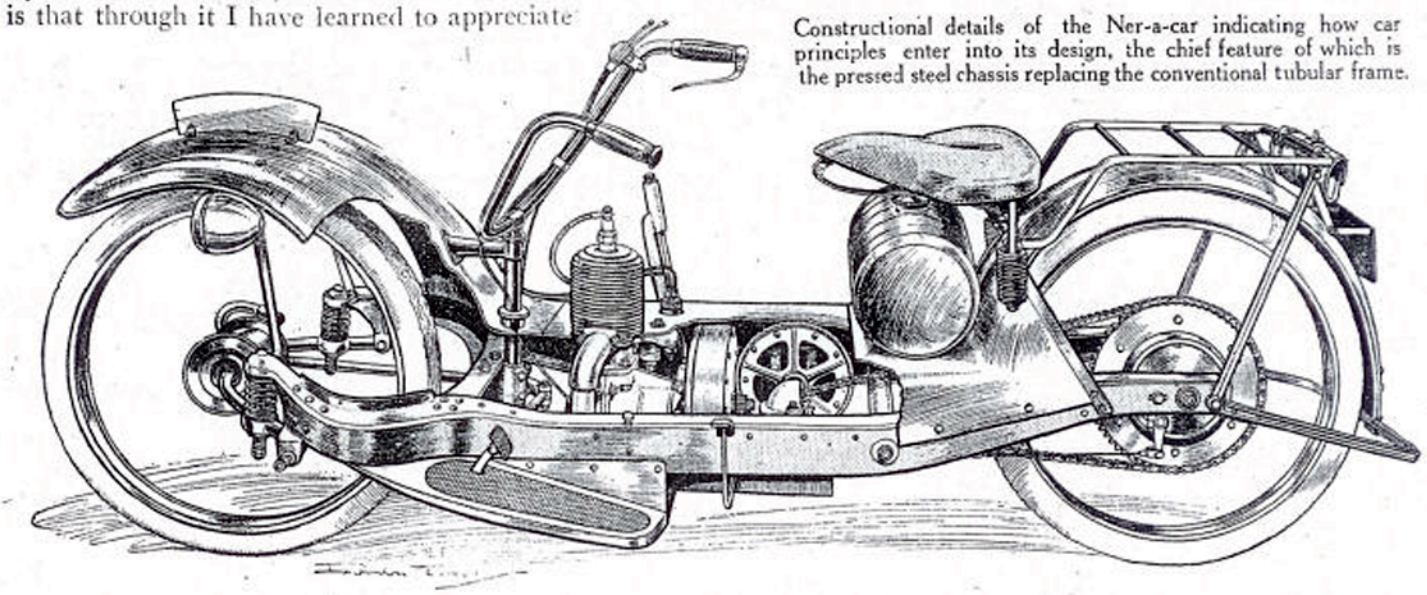


The extremely low riding position will be gathered from this illustration.

A curious thing was I found the pleasure derived from the handling of a motor cycle quite different from the pleasures of car driving; altogether apart from the motor cycle's handiness, its sporting appeal alone made it attractive.

A cheap, handy, well-made machine that, to parody the words of Mr. Jorrocks, can give "all the joys of the motor cycle with only twenty-five per cent. of its (imaginary) dangers" is something that an extraordinary number of people are looking for.

Constructional details of the Ner-a-car indicating how car principles enter into its design, the chief feature of which is the pressed steel chassis replacing the conventional tubular frame.



1923 Ner-A-Car

Restored by Manfred Schlottau, Germany


THREE DOZEN
FRESH EGGS

When you are riding one of the most iconic motorcycle like a Ner-a-car and you start having problems with parts, well if there is no parts to be found, you might as well rebuild the parts from scratch and it is exactly what Manfred did.

The muffler of his bike was in pitiful shape (like those on his friends's bikes). Like I said, no parts to be found anywhere.

Very carefully, he removed the muffler from the motorbike and from there started to recreate a blueprint of the original.

In order to see how the baffles inside the muffler were designed, he even bought a brand new endoscope to look inside the muffler. (note: do not look at the date of the endoscope photo, Manfred did not take the time to adjust it).

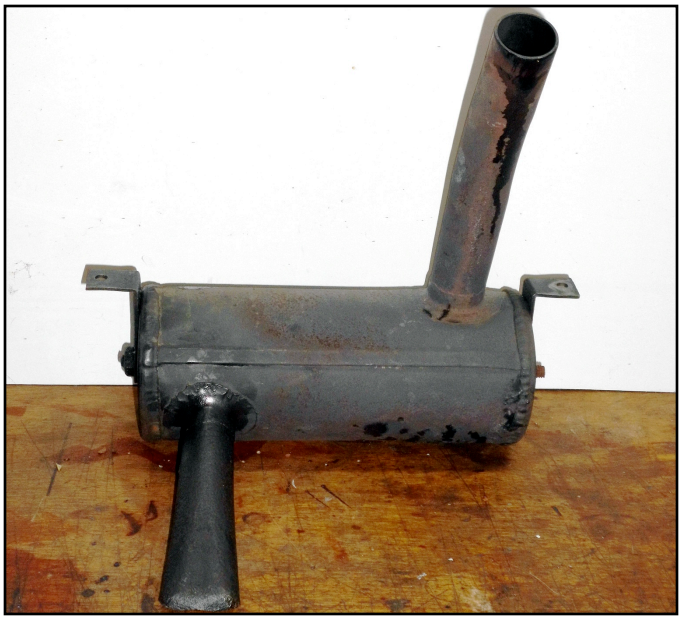
Manfred also said:
"Funny enough, I could not check the baffle plates inside the muffler properly so I had to buy an endoscope, maybe one could use it for other things as well...?

I found out the muffler carries 3 baffle plates. The one from the left is identical to the one from the right, and I guess, the one in the middle should be the same.

Would be nice to get some feedback on why so many holes as well as why just so close to each other? I'm aware of the necessary pressure between the muffler and the combustion chamber and hopefully some expert in that field could explain the reason behind such design.

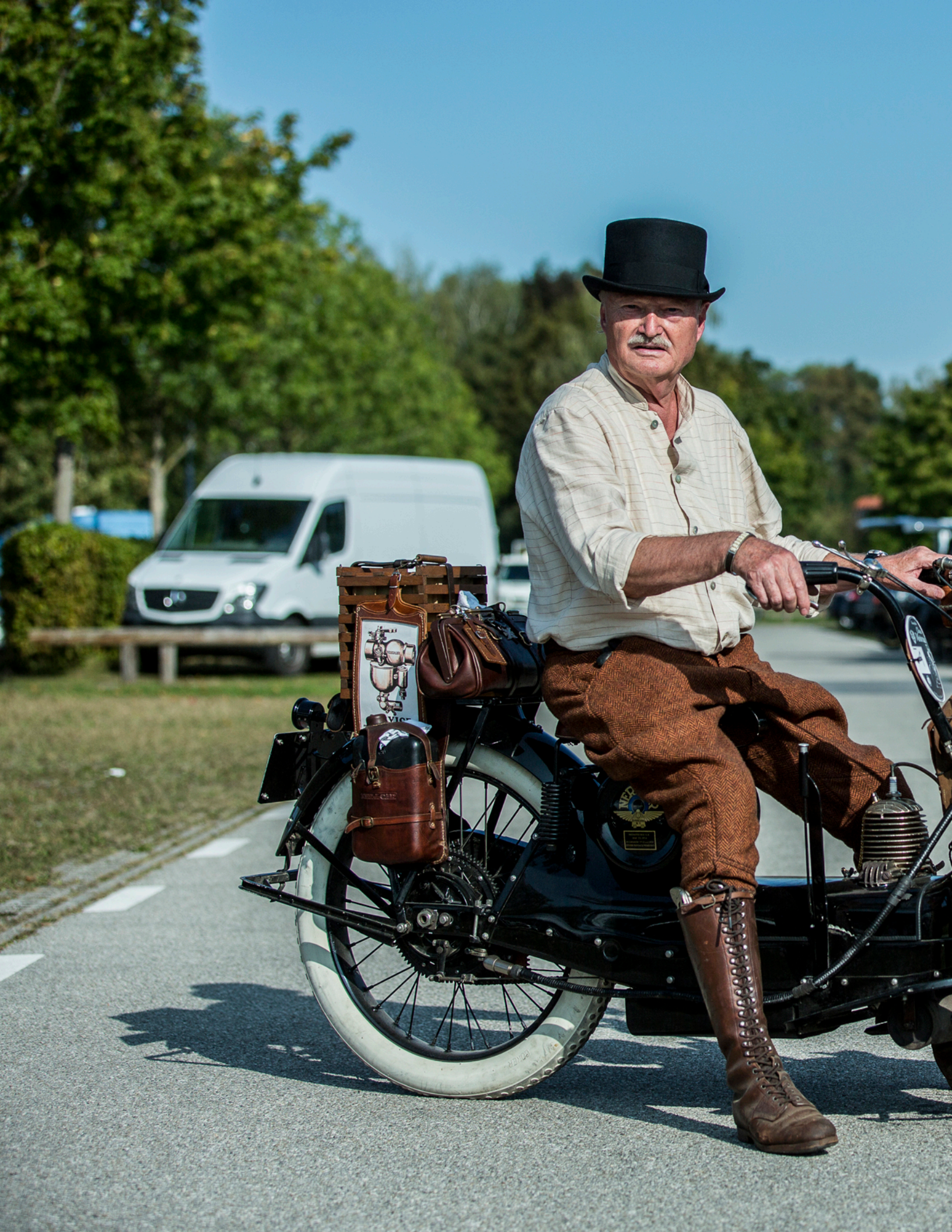
The baffles you see on one of the pics were made before I got the endoscope and my friends will use them for the first try outs.

I've put my original muffler back to the bike, using of course the sheetmetal cover over the muffler. These are pretty often damaged/rusted away."



Manfred's new Ner-A-Car muffler


Manfred Schlottau
on his 1923 Ner-A-Car




Manfred Schlottau
on his 1923 Ner-A-Car

Neracar Fever *by Alice Muirhead from the Search Living News*

A Neracar?!?!

What in the world is a Neracar?? Not many people around here in Searcy Arkansas know the answer to this question, but my husband, Buddy Muirhead does.

In fact, he has one. A 1924 motorcycle that he and his brother, Jerry had in 1943-44. His father bought this motorcycle from his brother-in-law in Vicksburg, MS for the sum of $12.00.

After some modifications the boys rode it around Greenville, MS until Jerry wrecked it and damaged the engine. To make a long story short, Jerry moved several times, finally winding up in Denver, CO in 1956 with the Neracar in pieces. It stayed in his garage until two years ago.

We were visiting Jerry and his wife, Barb when Buddy saw the frame hanging in the garage and asked Jerry to let him bring it home so he could restore it.

That was quite an undertaking, since they don't make them anymore. It's impossible to buy parts except from collectors, at swap-meets, etc. But where there's a will there's a way.

Buddy got on the internet and contacted a man from Loughborough, England named Ken Philp who had written a book about restoring Neracars.

Buddy bought the book and began to correspond with Ken by e-mail, which led to a friendship, though we have never met face-to-face.

Ken was quite helpful in finding parts. Since the engine had been lost after a few moves, Ken found one in Wales and talked the owner into selling it to Buddy.

It was shipped by air-freight to Little Rock. What an exciting day when it arrived.

Ken helped in getting other parts, and put him in touch with more people who could help him. After two years of contacting people, buying used parts, and having some made, Buddy now has a restored 1924 Neracar.

This endeavor led to many friendships and acquaintances all over the US and some abroad.

Recently we took the Neracar to Birmingham, AL to the Barber Motorsports Museum to participate in a show put on by the Confederate Chapter of Antique Motorcycle Club of America.

This was Buddy's first ever show, and he was competing against some very expensive rigs, some of which were professionally restored. We are proud to say that the Neracar won three awards - 1st in class, Most Unique Motorcycle, and the biggee - PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD.

Neracar: A Rarity From The 1920s *by Bud Wilkinson from RIDE-New England*

Do not ask David Perillo how much money he paid for his vintage motorcycle. He won't say because he thinks the question is rude. *"It's kind of a personal thing, like income,"* he said when asked a few years ago *"I would never ask someone that."*

Such a throwback attitude in today's tell-all world is refreshing and fitting because his more than 90-year-old Neracar motorcycle is a true example of a bygone riding era. It's a squat machine with bug-eye headlamps and a single cylinder that looks more an electrical component from Dr. Frankenstein's laboratory than an engine capable of propelling the motorcycle up to 35 miles per hour.

While the 1922 Neracar looks like it should come festooned with a sign that says "For Display Purposes Only," the 221cc, two-stroke motor kick starts easily and runs without a problem, although with center hub steering (as opposed to traditional forks) it does handle quite differently from most other motorcycles.

"The steering is very strange. It has a very, very odd feel to it. It doesn't turn as tight as a lot of motorcycles. It

has a wider radius than most motorcycles," said Perillo acquired it more than seven years ago from a collector in Nevada.

Perillo's fascination with Neracars dates back to 1994 when he first saw one at a defunct Indian museum in Springfield, Mass.

"I fell in love with the body style, the mystique, the uniqueness," he said. Thus began a search for a Neracar for his very own, a search that lasted 13 years. *"I found several that were either restored and over my head price-wise or basket cases that would be too difficult to find parts for and restore,"* he recalled.

Then, a year after posting a "Neracar wanted" message on an Internet motorcycle site (he doesn't remember which one), the collector in Nevada contacted him from out of the blue. *"He sent some pictures. I knew it was what I was looking for. I bought it sight unseen,"* said Perillo.

Having had the Neracar shipped to his home in Killingworth, Perillo then set about to getting it running. *"It hadn't run in seven or eight years. I took the motor and carburetor completely apart, looked it over and put it back together,"* he said. *"Taking it apart wasn't a major thing. I'm pretty good mechanically."*

Once reassembled, the Neracar started on the fifth kick. After acquiring it, Perillo has determined that his bike, which has a chassis number of 427, is the oldest, unrestored, original condition Neracar running in the world.

Most folks, though, have never heard of the Neracar, which was designed by Carl Neracher. Roughly 10,000 were produced in Syracuse, N.Y. in the 1920s, while another 6,500 were produced between 1921 and 1927 in Sheffield, England, where it was known as the "Ner-a-Car."

Perillo estimates that there are only 20 Neracars remaining in the U.S., while online sources suggest as few as 50 remain in England, making it a rarity on both sides of the Atlantic.

The 1922 model originally sold for $225. What a museum quality Neracar might be worth today is anyone's guess. *"That's another question I get a lot and I don't know,"* said Perillo.

Wherever Perillo takes his Neracar – RIDE-CT/RIDE-New England saw him at the recent Rhinebeck Grand National Meet in New York (below picture) but originally met him back in 2009 at a 40th anniversary bash at Doc's Motorcycle Parts in Waterbury, CT – he draws a crowd.

"I hear it looks like a praying mantis or something I built. A lot of people are surprised that the displacement is as big as it is," he said.

While displaying the bike at Doc's, Perillo frequently started the bike for onlookers but later had a change of heart about firing it up. *"I feel bad running the thing. I feel something's going to break. I've sworn off running it. It's so rare and so hard to get parts for,"* he explained.

Five years ago, Perillo said he's probably had it on the road for less than 20 miles, and only in his neighborhood. He did shoot a video of the "Last Neracar ride of the season" and posted it on YouTube. The clip is well worth checking out.

Don't look for Perillo to sell it – at any price. *"I'll probably keep it for a while. I have intention of selling it,"* he said.

Has the Manually Shifted CVT Made a Comeback?

By Berang

What you are looking at is the engine and gearless transmission of a 1923 Ner-A-Car motorcycle

In the pioneering years of the automobile, gearless "friction" transmissions were popular - and then they vanished.

The friction transmission was a very simple form of "gearbox" which did away with many of the early problems of sliding gear transmissions by simply omitting the gears and clutch altogether.

The photograph on the right should help make clear how the thing worked. On the back of the engine crankshaft a large aluminium disc was mounted. Behind this was an axle carrying a wheel at right angles to the aluminum disc. When the wheel was brought into contact with the disc, power was transmitted from the disc through the wheel, to the axle, and then by chain to the differential and drive axle.

The ingenious bit is that the friction wheel could slide back and forth on its axle and be brought into contact with the aluminum disc at various positions along its diameter - effectively giving various "gear" ratios.

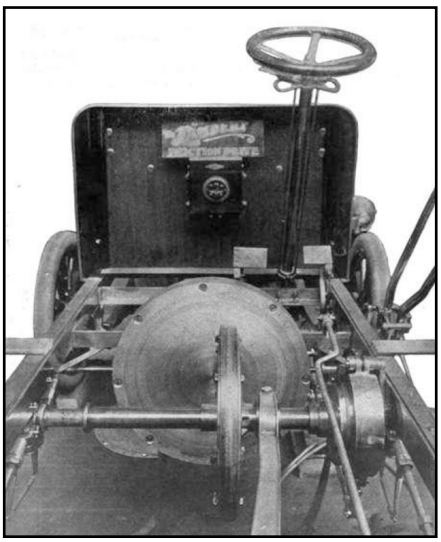
In theory this would allow for infinite adjustability of ratios, but in practice the ratios were limited to a selection of stops along the friction wheel's travel.

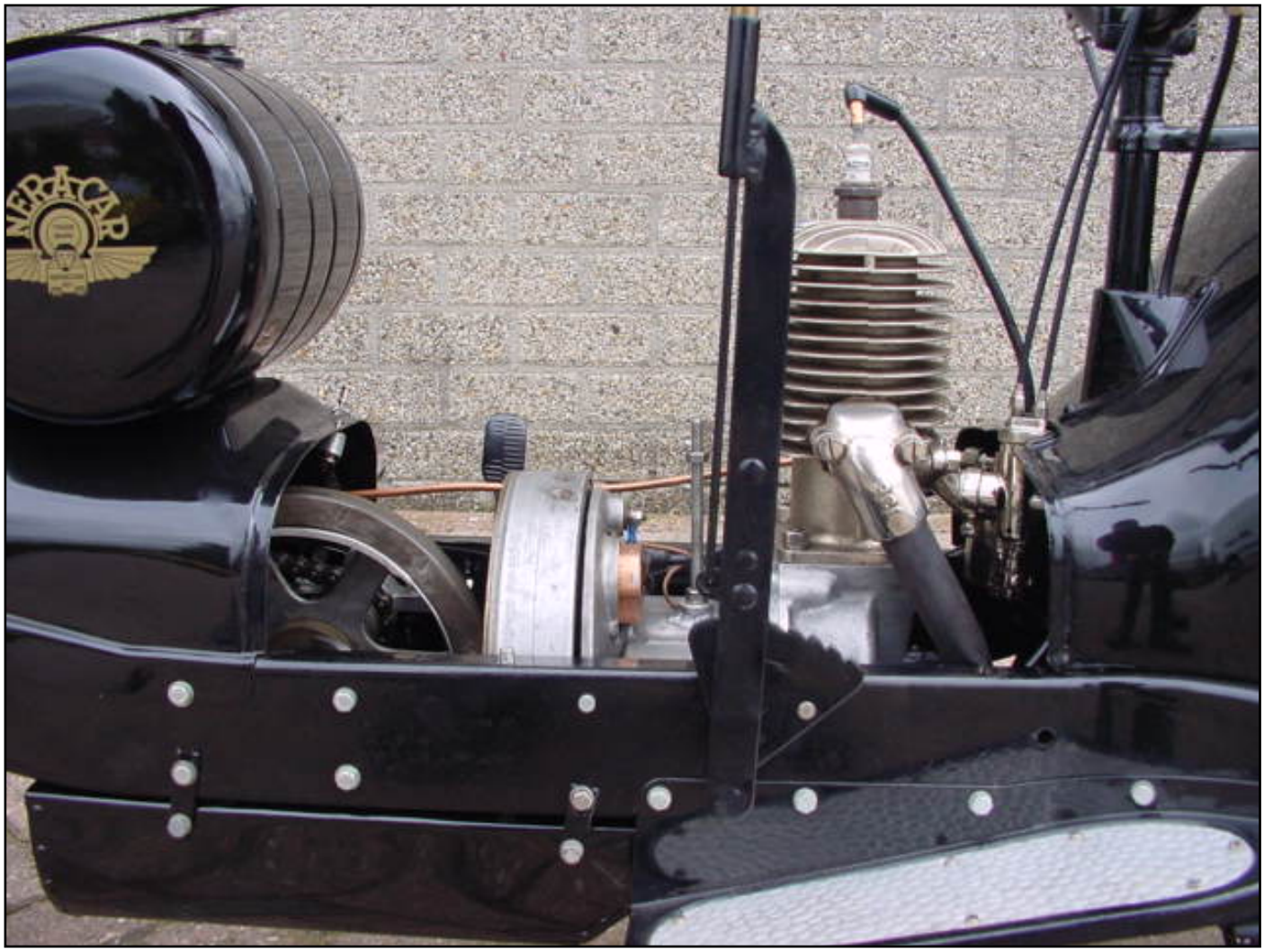
But having a five or eight speed transmission when most cars had two speeds, and doing away with gears in an era before synchromesh existed meant that in many ways friction transmissions outdid their geared competitors.

The Lambert automobile was the first make to successfully use this style of transmission, but the limitations of friction drive became apparent as cars got heavier and more powerful.

As well, clutch and gearbox technology progressed rapidly and the early advantages of the system were no longer so advantageous.

By the 1920s this type of transmission was well on its way





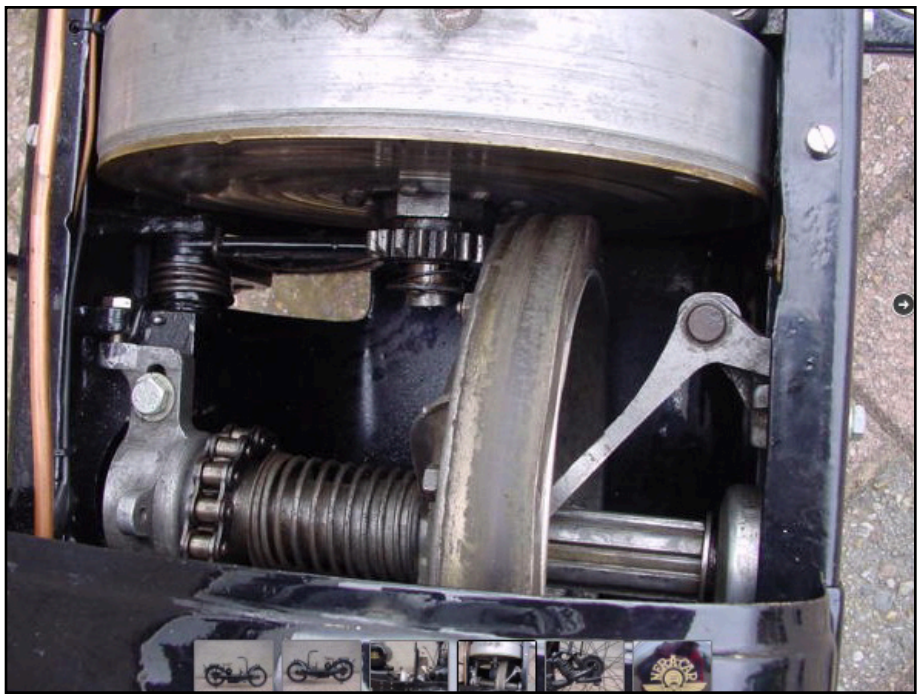
out, with the lightweight Metz cyclecar and the Ner-A-Car motorcycle being stubborn holdouts against geared transmissions.

2014 motorcycle Cannonball The Neracar and how it works
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfaskln4-B8

The title of this article is admittedly a bit of a trick. As there are now modern CVTs which allow one to choose from a selection of preset ratios mimicking a gearbox - but as has been demonstrated above the idea is not a new one. It's an old one that's come back with the help of newer, better technology.

The possibilities available haven't yet been fully explored (24 preset speeds like a bicycle? a floor mounted shift lever? a manual clutch pedal? who knows what the future might hold?).

Although personally I'd still rather have a Ner-A-Car than a Subaru Forester.



Mr Howes preparing for the Cannonball Race
on his 1923 Ner-A-Car

Cannonball Baker, 8 years after his record setting run with an Indian motorcycle in 1914, he went from New York to LA on a Ner-A-Car

Cannonball Baker rode a Neracar from Staten Island, New York, to Los Angeles, California, in the autumn of 1922. The journey of 3,364.4 miles took 174 hours and one minute to complete.

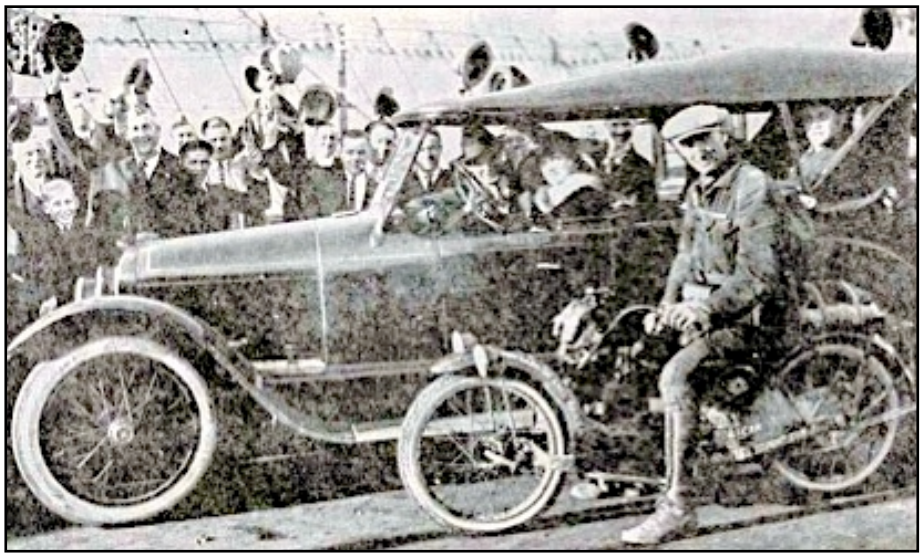
The advertizers publicized the Ner-A-Car's step-through design and its protection from road grime and engine fluids, both of which allowed riders to wear ordinary clothes, including skirts, cassocks, and kilts, while riding the cycle.

It was unique for its hub-center steering and widely acclaimed for its stability from it's low center of gravity.

In October of 1922, Erwin "Cannonball" Baker set out from Staten Island, NY, on a cross-country run to Los Angeles riding a stock 1923 Neracar motorbike. The only modification he made to it was the addition of a crossbar on the handlebars to stiffen them for what he knew would be "the rough stuff" that lay ahead on his journey to see for himself and prove to others just how reliable and economical this scooter-type motorcycle could be and appeal to the masses in the process. There were never any doubts on his part as to whether or not he'd reach Los Angeles. In fact, he was dead sure he would make it. What he wanted to know was just how cheaply it could be done... operating costs totalled $15.70 at the time. It took 48 gallons of gas.

In his own words: *"The machine I used was picked off the floor from stock, and nothing special was put on it except a cross-bar on the handlebars to stiffen them for the rough stuff that I knew I would be up against. The machine was fitted with a Corbin-Brown speedometer and was only run enough to make sure that everything was OK, When I started my speedometer registered just 29 miles."*

Cannonball Baker on his arrival in Los Angeles, CA.(below)



Baker's dealership in Los Angeles in 1923.(below)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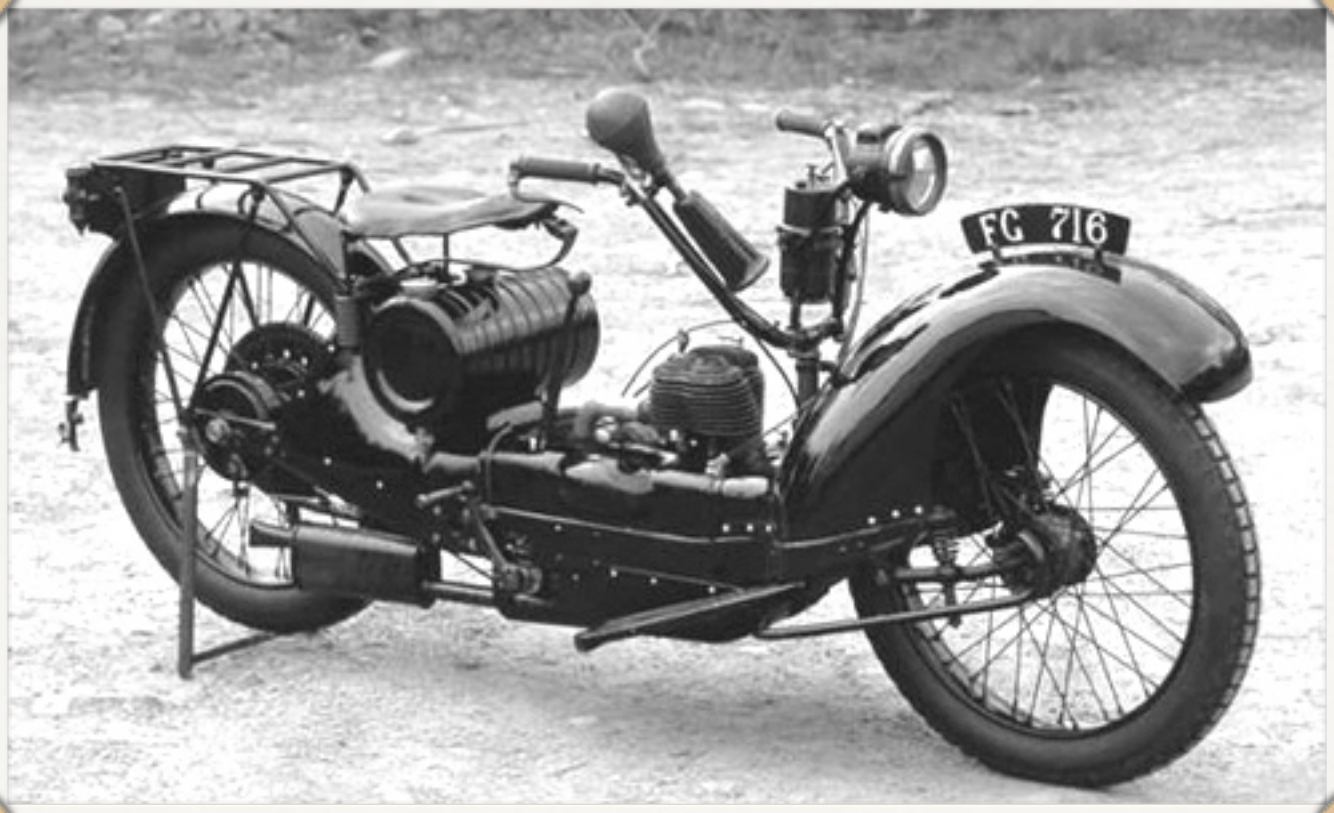
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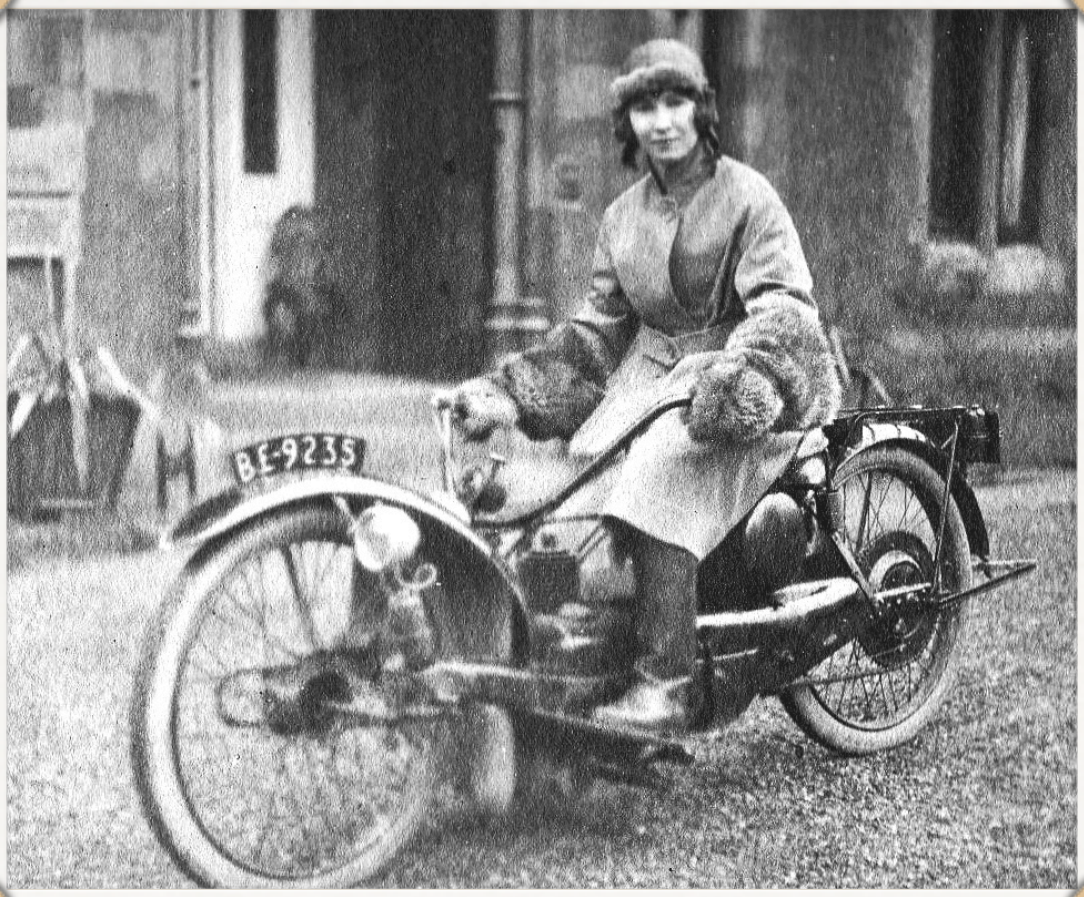
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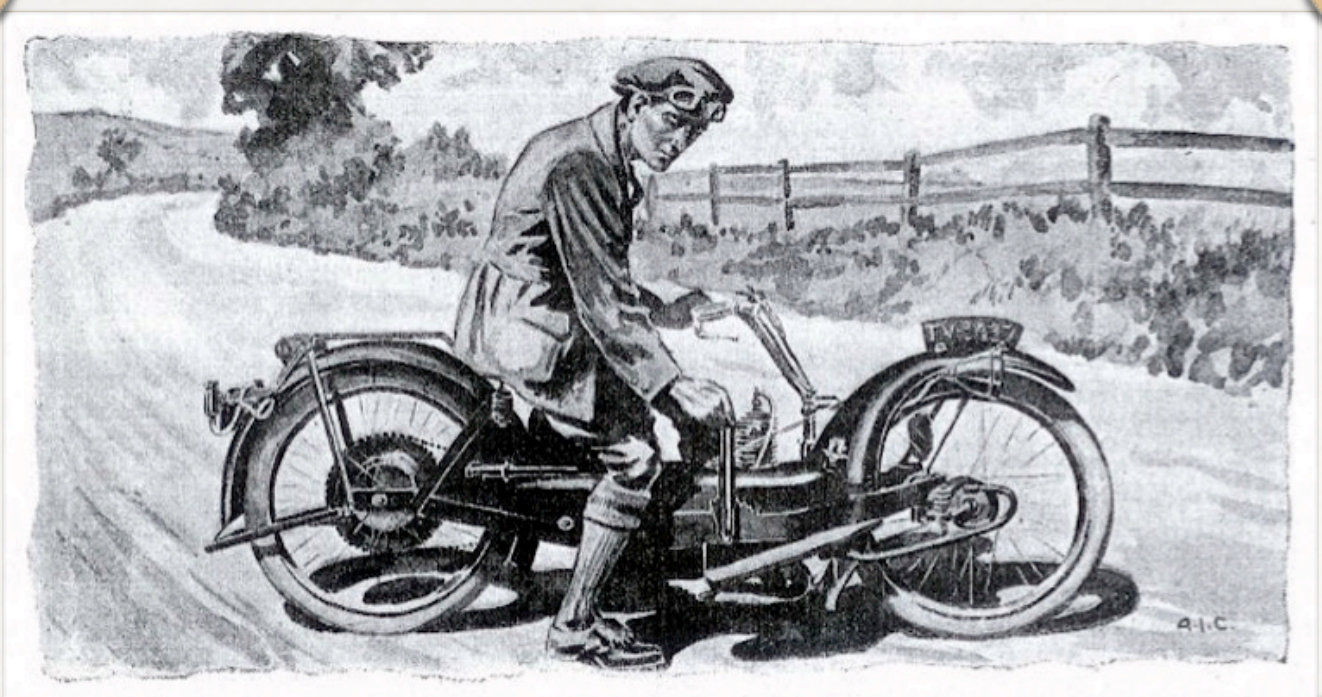
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1921 - A LADY IN A MAN'S GAME

YESTERDAY...RACER GWENDA HAWKES BROKE SPEED RECORDS

AS SOME WIVES BREAK DISHES

By Sherry Keen

There were only a handful of female drivers able to compete in terms of sheer speed with the racing motorists of the inter-war period - although this is no reflection of ability, but a result of little opportunity. One to break the mould, so to speak, was Gwenda Hawkes.

Hawkes father was Sir Frederick Manley Glubb CB, KCMG, DSO, who served with distinction during both the Boer War and World War 1, while her brother John was Glubb Pasha of the Arab Legion. Gwenda herself had a war record of some note, having driven ambulances on the Russian and Rumanian fronts between 1914 and 1918, and was awarded the Crosses of St George and St Stanislaus and mentioned in official war despatches.

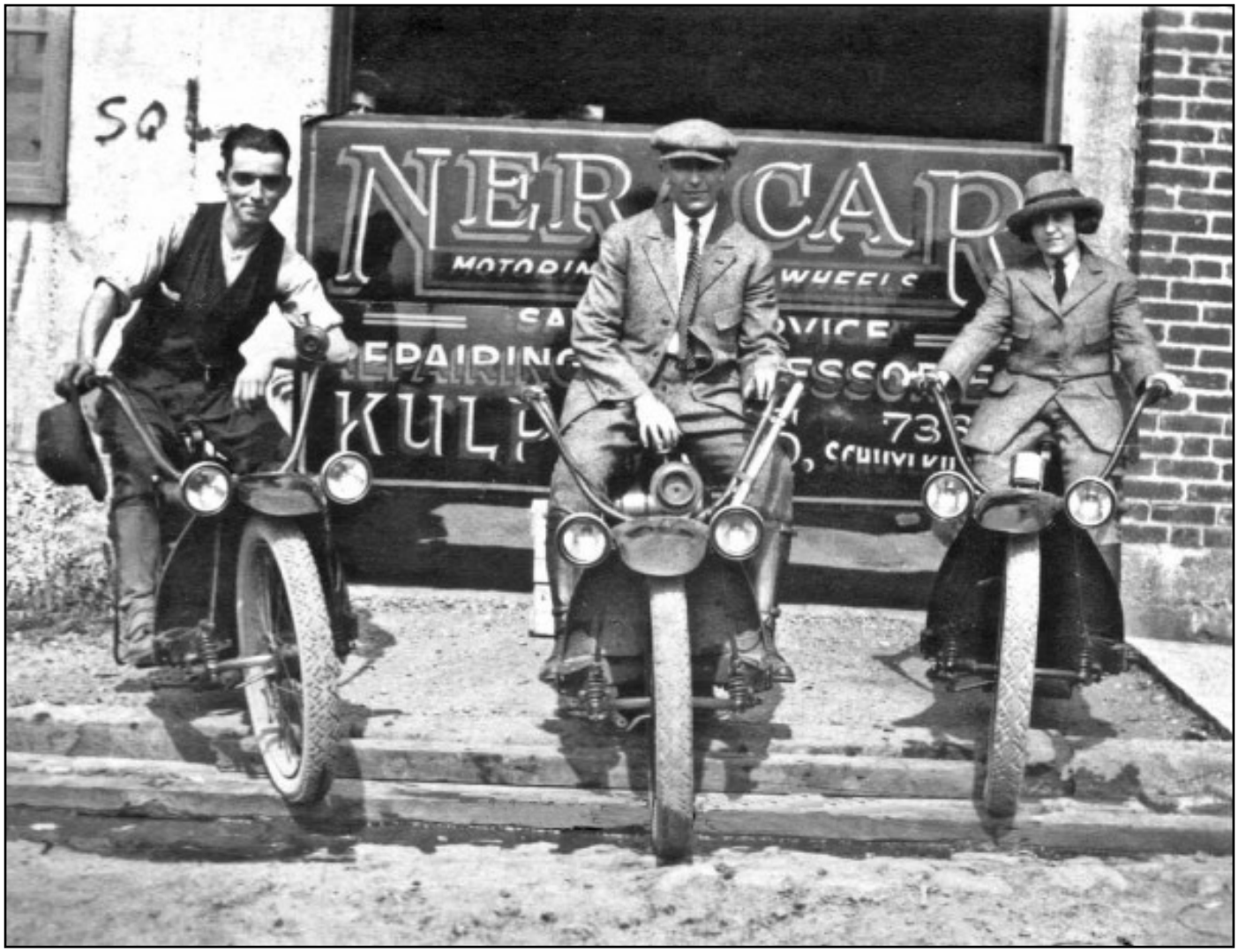
After the war Gwenda looked around for an activity which offered some of the excitement of her wartime career. She found it in motor cycling during the harsh European winter of 1921 she set up a 1000-miles record on a Ner-a-Car under official ACU scrutiny.

On a cold, rainy November morning in 1921 a small crowd gathered to watch Gwenda Hawkes, a slight, intense young Englishwoman, confidently straddle a curious two-wheeled American machine called a Ner-a-Car, which belied its pretensions to close relationship with the automobile by its appearance.

At best it was a mere motorized scooter. It ran on all of one cylinder and its only means of stopping was a single rear-wheel brake. Under official scrutiny in daily runs of 190 miles, Mrs. Hawkes miraculously survived 1,000 grueling miles on the fragile machine over icy roads without a spill or breakdown. And although the failure of the Ner-a-car to attract British customers was no fault of Mrs. Hawkes, there is no doubt that any asset it may have had was overshadowed by this amazing performance.

This was precisely the kind of challenge Mrs. Hawkes (whose name in those days was Stewart) liked best. It was unusual, a little mad, and it was equal to anything any man had ever performed on the same machine—an accomplishment that she found especially satisfying. Too, it was an endurance record of its kind; and a record in Mrs. Hawkes's lexicon was something that was either to be established or shattered—preferably by herself. Her ability to do both is now racing history.

In the early days of her racing career Mrs. Hawkes preferred, the motorcycle, a machine of great prestige at the time. A year after the Ner-a-car episode, she rode a 2-hp Trump-J.A.P. continuously around England's two-mile Brooklands track for 24 hours at an average speed of 44.65 mph.



1923 - The Kulp Brothers, their motorcycles and one of the "Grand View Girls" - *Courtesy of theoldmotor.com*

Solomon Kulp from the Reading, PA. area was a bit of an entrepreneur. Here he is in front of his Neracar dealership.

Soloman Kulp is seen in the middle (above) in front of his Neracar signage, which appears to be being held in the door-opening just behind him and possibly his brother William is on the left.

Seen (on the right), is Kulp shown in a different event.

In a 568 mile run, over two days he managed a perfect time and m.p.h. score on his Neracar, which attests to his riding skills and the reliability of his machine..

Photos courtesy of Paul Rigsby.

SOL H. KULP—PERFECT SCORE IN READING TO PITTSBURGH AND RETURN RUN


BF 7117

Andy's 1921 Ner-a-Car

Rebuild of a vintage bike from a box of rusty parts

1921 Ner-a-Car

http://bodgesoc.blogspot.com/search/label/Neracar01%20The%20Beginning

Not many Ner-a-Cars have survived and parts availability is non-existent, so Andy's work has also had the unusual effect of satisfying a significant portion of world demand for the parts-bin of an entire marque.

In this story there is so much to see and read, the rebuild is spread across twelve blog posts and took almost two years to make.

The story starts with Andy's first post in which he describes the project, sets to work on the chassis, and discovers the bent steering arm that probably caused the bike's dismantling.

He's listed the posts in the column on the right-hand side of the blog, so you can follow his progress through the entire build.

The work involved in remanufacturing the parts is to an extremely high standard, from machining press tools to reproduce 1920s footboard pressings through manufacturing authentic 1920s headlight switchgear and metal-spinning new aluminium headlight shells.

When I was a student there were four old vehicles belonging to the Student Union.

To a large extent my interest in old engineering stems from my involvement in them. The one I spent most time on, and still do, is the 1916 Dennis Fire engine "Jezebel". The other vehicles are a 1926 Morris Truck "Clem" with which I have a peripheral involvement and the 1902 James and Brown car "Boanerges".

Team Bo also have a 1926 Ner-a-Car which is called "Derrick" (Bo & Derrick, you see, if you are old enough).

I did once try to ride Derrick to Brighton following the Brighton Run, but he/she/it broke down half way and was loaded onto the back of Clem under a tarp.

Amusingly a chap by the name of Andy S (of which more anon) managed to do an engine rebuild under the tarp on the back of the moving truck, and then unloaded the Ner-a-car and continued the journey.

The IC Ner-a-Car was my first exposure to the marque. They are a most odd device, designed by an American by the name of Carl Neracher to answer a question that I suspect that no-one was really asking. They are basically a motorcycle built like a 1920's car, with a ladder-frame chassis and a fore-and-aft engine. I will not describe them in more detail here, the Wikipedia Page is a good start.

I had, since I met Derrick, had a vague urge to own one. But an urge so vague that I never actually bothered to look for one until about 20 years later when the Andy mentioned above, who had in the interim collected a number of boxes of Ner-a-Cars equivalent to about 7 complete machines, but not actually including any complete machines decided that one of them, a 1921 Series A, was too far gone for him, and that I should buy it.

What this picture doesn't really show is the nasty state of the rear-ends of the chassis rails, the dreadful state of the rear chassis stiffeners (aluminium) and the rust on the curved front sections of the chassis

After paying an undisclosed sum, I was soon the recipient of a large number of parts, adding up to almost a complete bike, missing only several important parts, and with duplicates of others.

Time passes.... In fact quite a lot of time. I took delivery of the parts collection in August 2008. Numerous other projects came and went. In March 2014 an email out of the blue arrived asking if I had spares of certain parts (someone who had been in contact with Andy S). Suddenly I remembered the unfinished project, and looking though the parts decided that it wasn't as far gone as I had remembered.

That is not to say that it wasn't fairly far-gone. Andy, when persuading me that I wanted it, did mention that I was the only person he could think of who would be prepared to de-rivet the chassis to fix the corrosion problems. It turns out that he was right. It took a couple of hours of drilling, grinding and cold-chisel work (mainly cold

chisel work) to extract the 100+ rivets, and then I was left with a sort of rusty Airfix kit.

So, here are some close-ups:

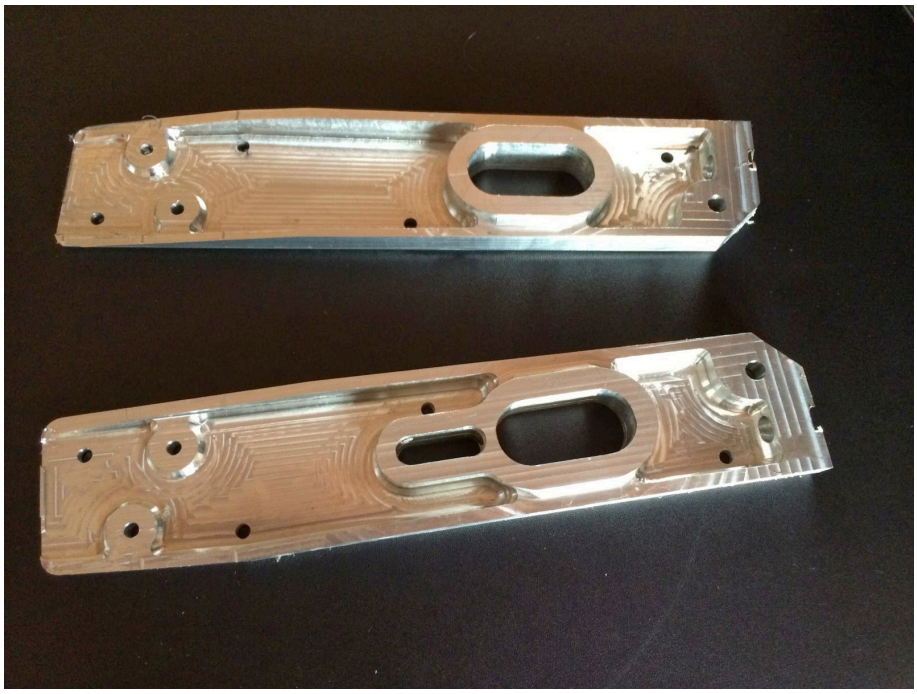
The stiffener is bad to the point of absence.

I was faced with quite a large de-rusting project, and being rather lazy I searched the internet for an easy way to do it.

The most appealing of the methods suggested was soaking the parts for several weeks in Molasses. I have no idea how this is meant to work, and I was half-expecting that I was the victim of an elaborate internet joke. However it seemed worth a try, as at least treacle is easier to dispose of than phosphoric acid.

I build an MDF coffin for the parts, and lined it with polythene. The tank was then loaded with parts and topped up with a 10:1 solution of Lyles Black Treacle. I was quite glad for the Self-Checkout lane in the supermarket when I was buying 12 tins of treacle and nothing else;

A couple of weeks later I pulled it all out, and it had worked, to an extent.

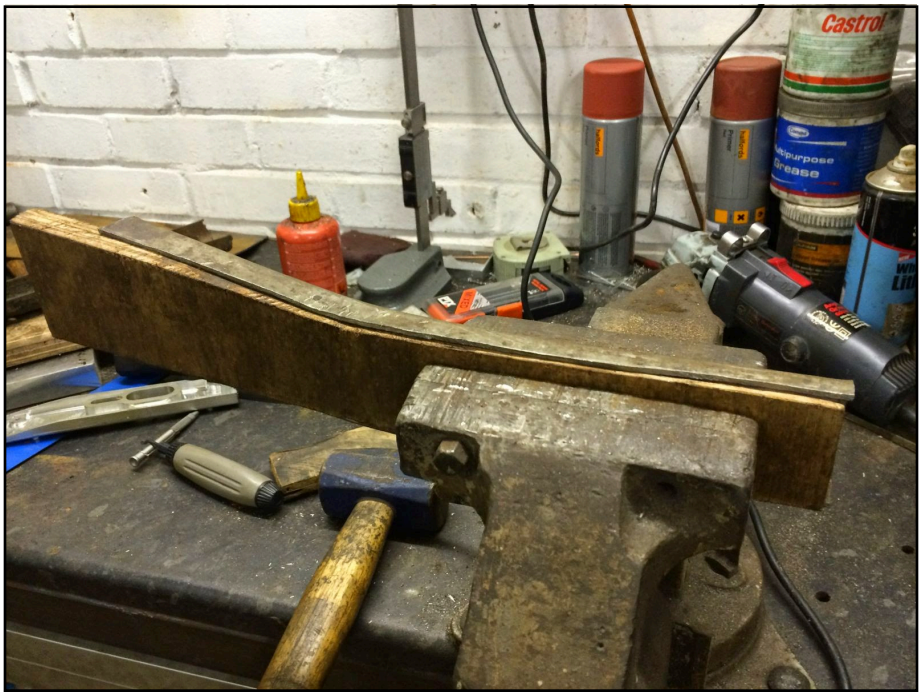


In fact there was shiny silver metal in some places, and the rust that there was seemed reduced and firmer. I wanted to get on with the chassis parts, so those were removed. The solution was decanted into a big plastic drum, and I lobbed the other parts in for a further few weeks of soaking.

I decided to start on the chassis reinforcement first. Originally these were aluminium castings, and I did consider having castings made, but as a pattern is very nearly as much effort as the part, I decided to CNC machine parts to the same design as the originals.

I have to say I am pretty happy with how they came out. Once painted black with the rest of the chassis they should look right.

The chassis was made of 12 gauge steel. Which is rather hard to get hold of nowadays. (2.5mm and



3mm are what you now get). Luckily my dad had some, so I was able to use an authentic thickness.

Not that very much of the chassis is the thickness it was made at any more.

I made a wooden former for the new chassis ends (handily it can be flipped to make the mirror part).

Much bashing later I had a new chassis tail-end. The CNC mill made short work of adding the right slots, and I TIG welded it in place.

To ensure alignment I used a couple of extant mounting holes as references. By bolting down the rail to a piece of wood and drilling holes in the new part to match the stiffener I was able to jig things quite well for welding.

This is rather satisfying before-and-after:

At the front I did much the same process, cut out the rusty parts and made a non-rusty copy and weld it in.

The other side, for some reason, was in rather better condition, and that just needed some of the bigger corrosion pits filling up with TIG weld and grinding flat.

This picture probably needs a bit of explanation. The part on the extreme right was rusty, but not pitted. That is basically silver metal all over. Further to the left is the steering column tube, dried and rubbed with Scotchbrite, which has largely smeared brand-new rust on the surface. Note how the remaining original paint is untouched. Then we have a few still-wet parts after a scrub. These are shiny on the high spots and dark in the pits. If you had seen how they went in, this is a real result.

The second part from the left shows what happens to parts as they dry in the sun, you get an instant superficial rust. Have some primer ready if you try this.

.... Time passes. (actually, only a few days)

Further up the blog I mentioned throwing some parts back in the molasses. I don't know if the solution matures or something, but when I went magnet-fishing for the parts still in there the results were a lot more impressive. (I think they got an extra 2 weeks).

The next problem was that one of the engine mounts was broken. Luckily whatever random 1920s alloy they chose is weldable.

But my new toy, a electric file (or very narrow belt sander) hides a multitude of sins.

Another new toy, a variable-density automatic welding mask with a big window has also proven to be a huge help, I can see so much better with more light. Try searching eBay for IQ1700. I am rather pleased with it.

My repairs to the rusty sections had removed several important rivet holes, so I started to test-assemble the chassis with screws and nuts. As might be expected, the majority of the missing holes were on the outside meaning that the trivial solution of drilling through a mating hole into the missing hole was not an option. I solved this problem by using a world-changing technology called "paper".

By inserting a piece of paper in the gap and rubbing through the holes, or in some cases simply cutting a piece of paper to approximate shape and pushing screws through the paper and several reference

holes, plus the holes that needed to mate to missing holes the hole-de-removal took rather less time and effort than I expected. I trial-assembled the entire chassis with screws:

I ran out of red primer, but had some forgotten grey in a corner....

Some of the rivets are not accessible with the chassis assembled, so it will need to come apart again, but this looks like progress to me :-)

I am still trying to decide how to do the rivetting. In many cases the normal manual way won't work, there is no access at the back for a rivet-pop.

I experimented with a pneumatic hammer, but that can't actually do the job with rivets of this size in steel. (This was a £12 pneumatic Screwfix hammer, quite a good tool, and I thrashed one making mullion windows out of sandstone

in a previous project, and it lasted years). I have a 12-tonne hand-held cable crimping press on the way. If that won't squeeze the rivets then I probably need to make a set of round-the-corner rivet-pops, which will be tedious.

Nobody ever dismantles a working motorcycle

This is a truism echoed by anyone who has ever restored an old vehicle from parts. At some point during your restoration you will find out why your barn-find was parked in the barn in the first place.

I am not saying that I have found the only thing wrong with this Ner-a-Car, but I found one of them. The front swinging arm was bent. By really quite a lot. I guess that the wheel would have sat at a 20 degree angle: Ideal for right-turns, less so for left turns.

They may have tried to fix it, and given up. Attempts to operate the the pin-spanner holes in the front hub with a hammer and pointed stick had not only damaged the holes but had also peined the threads into the hub, making them really hard to undo.

I made a special tool and then used some extreme measures to hold the hub and keep the drive pins from camming out.....

Sources: Intro by Hackaday.com, Story and Photos by Andy.

Like said at the beginning of this article, this blog had twelve chapters running during a period of two years.

Enjoy the rest of your reading by visiting Andy's well detailled blog on the rebuild of this 1921 Ner-a-Car.

Ed.

I predict the NER-A-CAR will become relatively as popular as the Gillette Safety Razor----*King C. Gillette*

King C. Gillette, of Los Angeles, inventor and manufacturer of the Gillette Safety Razor, is one of the directors and a large stockholder in Ner-A-Car. Mr. Gillette has proved himself one of the most farsighted American manufacturers in forecasting popular demand. His judgment of the future of Ner-A-Car is well worth considering.

Why the public will buy

NERACAR

"MOTORING ON TWO WHEELS"

Cheap—The price is $185. Upkeep extremely low. 85 to 100 miles to gallon of gas. No garage expense.

Simple—As easy to ride and control as a bicycle. Anybody can learn to ride Ner-A-Car in five minutes.

Clean—Broad fenders protect the rider from mud, dust and grease. Ride in any clothing without injury.

Safe—Speed from a crawl up to 35 miles per hour. Low center of gravity. Climbs hills easily. Practically skid-proof. Low saddle position. Feet on ground at start and stop.

Light—Easily controlled in operation by women, girls or boys and is parked or garaged with slight effort. Weight—180 lbs.

Convenient—Parks in small space. Provides transportation to work, to school, to the club without waiting for taxi or street car. There when its wanted.

Different—Beautiful in appearance. Looks unlike any other motor vehicle. No bar to straddle. Nothing to interfere with women's skirts. Step in as into an automobile.

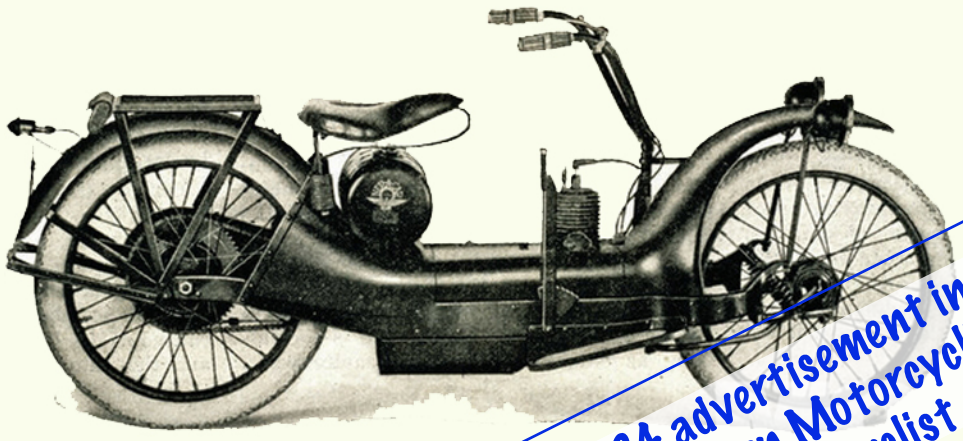
Popular—For women, girls, boys, men, bankers, mechanics—everybody. It looks classy; it is classy; and, it **is as good as it looks.**

85 to 100 Miles to the Gallon
35 Miles Per Hour

$185 Electrically Equipped at Syracuse

NER-A-CAR CORPORATION, Syracuse, N. Y.

Dealers—Western territory is now being allotted. Write today if there is no Ner-A-Car dealer in your town.



1924 advertisement in the Western Motorcyclist and Bicyclist

Ner-A-Car Technical Specs

English Model A's and Early US models

These have the same dimensions:
Bore 2.5". Stroke 2.75". Capacity 13.5 cu.in. = 221cc.
Compression ratio (simple) 3.8:1 (actual) 2.88:1

English Model B's

Bore 70mm. Stroke 74mm. Capacity 285cc.
Compression ratio (simple) 5:1 (actual) 4.05:1

These are identified by the removable cover on the transfer port on the right hand side of the cylinder, with an entwined "S S" on it.

US models from late 1924

Bore 2.625". Stroke 2.875". Capacity 15.5 cu.in. = 255cc.

These can be easily identified as they have vertical fins on the top of the cylinder. Earlier ones have horizontal fins.

US models have the inlet port at the FRONT, with the exhaust port on the right hand side. English models have the inlet port at the REAR, with the exhaust port on the left hand side.

Ignition and Electric systems

English models have a brass flywheel with flywheel ignition up to chassis number 3928. From that number on, they have a steel flywheel, with a chain-driven magneto situated on a platform which replaced the older flywheel backplate. I know of 7 bikes with this, and 4 of them have Bosch FB1b magnetos, suggesting that this was the usual magneto fitted.

Model A's have both 4-volt AC electric and gas lighting, with the electric lamp mounted on the right mudguard stay and the gas on the left. The rear lamp is electric and gas in the same housing.

Early Model B's have electric lighting with a dry battery for parking lights, and later ones gas lighting.

US models have Eisemann flywheel magnetos and electric lighting. The later models have 10-pole generators. Early models seem to have had twin lights, later ones a single light mounted on the front mudguard/fender.

Chassis

Wheelbase - English models 59", US models 55.5".
Seat height 27".
Weight approx 190lbs.
Tires - English 26" x 2.5", US 26" x 3.00"

English Model C's

These have the Blackburne 350cc 4-stroke engines fitted, with a Sturmey Archer 3-speed gearbox, and conventional clutch. Dimensions are the same as Model A and B, except for the weight, and the tires, which are 26" x 3.00”.

Ner-A-Car Suppliers

English model ignition systems can be rewound by:

Dave Fisher
Moathouse Magnetos
52A High Street
LANGTON MATRAVERS
Swanage
Dorset
BH19 3HB
01929 421255
07740 984213
davemagneto@btinternet.com

NO LONGER IN BUSINESS

VMCC member Gary Parkin from Banbury has taken over Supreme Motorcycles brake service. He did an excellent job of relining my Model A rear brake and carefully skimming the drum. Very reasonably priced too.
http://www.gprelining.co.uk/

An English owner has located a firm that can supply made-to-order replacement piston rings at a very reasonable price, and in a relatively quick time.
http://www.bradfordpistonrings.co.uk/

For owners of English models, excellent transfers/decals can be obtained from: Classic Transfers, PO Box 17, Wotton-Under-Edge, Glos. GL12 8UA U.K.
http://www.classictransfers.co.uk/

English owners can obtain replica celluloid handlebar grips from
Dial Patterns, Ashford, Kent.
www.dialpatterns.co.uk

One of our US colleagues, Gary Frankel, is prepared to supply replica handlebar grips for the US models. He has already produced very good replicas. If you're interested, then contact him on fgary@adelphia.net for details.

For owners of U.S. models, excellent transfers/decals can be obtained from these.

Phoenix Restorations, 2410 Wilkes Ave.
Davenport, Ia 52804
Ph 563-326-5144
Email phoenixresto@revealed.net

NO LONGER IN BUSINESS

DECALS, 735 39th St, Bettendorf, Iowa 52722.
(No website.)

Links

Here's a list of other motorcycling sites that may be of interest.

http://groups.google.com/group/neracar?lnk=srg - a Google Group to help Neracar owners and enthusiasts worldwide swap information, parts, and news

Ben Geutskens Ner-a-car site - detailing the restoration of his Model A, including a pictorial list of all parts, well worth a look -
http://www.geutskens.eu/neracar/index.htm

Andy Pugh has rebuilt a Model A from a very sorry and incomplete state, here's how he did it:
http://bodgesoc.blogspot.co.uk/

File shared by FM Dumas from the archives of Moto-collection.org

Living up to its name

Few inventors could have been blessed with a more perfect inspiration for their invention than Carl A. Neracher, an engineer with the Overland car company. He lived up to his name by producing a motorcycle that truly was "near a car," with some of the backing provided by a man whose name was also that of his product magnate King C. Gillette.

The cannonball Run

Neracher's "motor wheeler for everybody" had a pressed-steel chassis and hub-center steering; the mechanics were shielded from view by a neat pressed-steel cowling. The friction drive gave five gear ratios between 12:1 and 5:1. The Ner-A-Car cost just $225 from the factory located in Syracuse, NY. Its practicality was proven in 1922, when the legendary Erwin "Cannonball" Baker rode a Ner-A-Car from New York to Los Angeles at an average of 20 mph.

The British Version

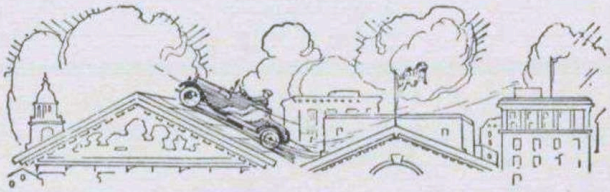
Though US production of the Ner-A-Car ended in 1924, this ingenious two-wheeler found an extended life in Britain. A license was taken out by the Sheffield-Simplex car company, whose patron was Earl Fitzwilliam, owner of the largest private house in England. They fitted a 285cc engine of their own make, and the Ner-A-Car found many buyers among the nobility and clergy, as well as women riders. Successful as it was, the Ner-A-Car was pulled down by financial failure in 1926 but not before they had built a fully sprung Ner-A-Car with windshield, car-type seating and the Blackburne 350 engine and Sturmey-Archer gearbox introduced on the 1925 models.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine: 211cc (64x70mm) air-cooled single-cylinder
Valves: two-stroke
Fuel System: Brown & Barlow carburetor
Transmission: 5-speed friction drive, chain final drive
Suspension: leading links with coil springs and hub-center steering (front); rigid (rear)
Brakes: drum (rear)
Wheels: 26x3.00 inch wire (front & rear)
Weight: 165 lb
Maximum Speed: 40 mph

ADVENTURES OF TELAMITE TEDDY

No. 4.



Touring the Roofs

Telamite Teddy, the motoring crack,
Was asked to meet and have a snack
At the Ritz with the Board of Frill and Pleat
(Rue de la Paix and Oxford Street),
Who said to Ted, as they reached dessert,
"We want your help with a new advert."

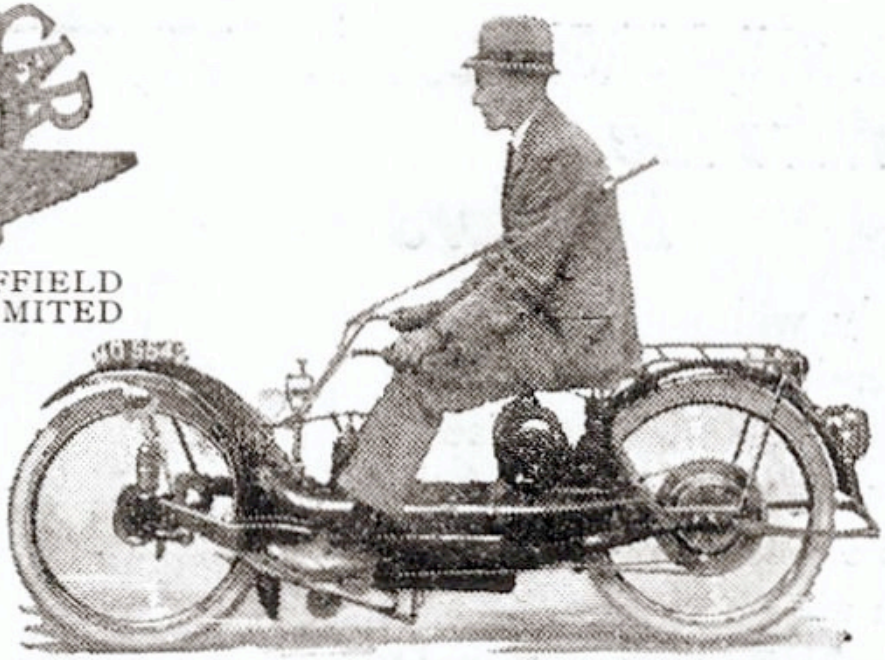
"The roof of our store has the sort of slope
To bring tears to the eyes of the antelope.
If you'll drive your car there up and down
It'll make our place the talk of Town."

Teddy agreed, and an early date
Saw a breathless throng watch him tour the slate,
While the cables flashed the latest scoop
"The Law of Gravity's in the soup!"

* * * *

The Motoring World was all amaze!
But Teddy said "I want no praise!
I did what any schoolgirl might;
My brakes were lined with Telamite!"

Made by SHEFFIELD
SIMPLEX LIMITED



THE NER-A-CAR

THE MOTOR WHEELER FOR EVERYONE

66
GUINEAS
(Ex Works)
Tax only
30/- yearly.

THE INTER-CONTINENTAL ENG. Co. Ld.
Information Dept.
20 Conduit Street,
London, W. 1

Do not compare the Ner-a-Car with a motor-cycle—just because it runs on two wheels. It is a *Wheeler;* infinitely safer than any motor-cycle; starts like a car; steers like a car; as comfortable as a car; actually safer than a car, because

THE NER-A-CAR CAN NOT SKID!

For all occasions when it is inadvisable to take out the big car—use the Ner-a-Car.

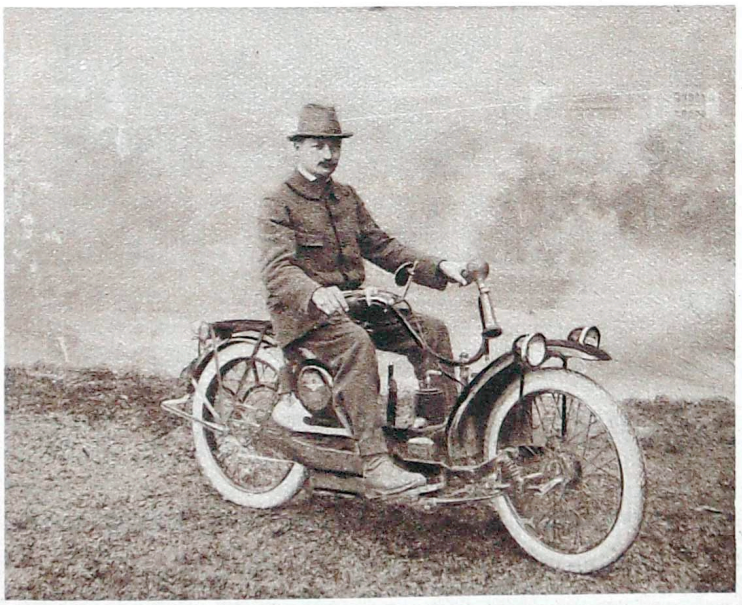
List of Ner-a-Car Distributors for Great Britain and Ireland:

London, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Middlesex, Herts and Essex—Shaw & Kilburn, Ltd., 114 Wardour Street, London, W.1. **Wales, Shropshire, Hereford and part Cheshire (South)**—Tom Norton, Ltd., The Automobile Palace, Llandrindod Wells, Wales. **Leicestershire, Northants, Bucks, Beds, Oxfordshire and Berks**—G. Salmons & Sons, Newport Pagnell, Bucks, *London Address*—6-9 Upper St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2. **Warwickshire. Worcestershire and Staffs**—George Heath, Ltd., John Bright Street, Birmingham. **Lancashire, Liverpool, Manchester, Bolton and 25 miles round, part Cheshire (North) The Wirrall**—W. Watson & Co., Renshar St., Liverpool. **Devon, Cornwall, and Somersetshire**—H. Andrew & Co., The Garage, Athenæum Place, Plymouth. **Westmorland Cumberland, Northumberland, Durham and South Scotland**—George & Jobling, Ltd., South Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. **Hampshire and Dorsetshire**—Munn & Underwood, 165 Above Bar Street, Southampton. **Yorkshire**—Rowland Winn, County Garage, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds. **Lincolnshire**—R. M. Wright & Co., Ltd., Water Lane, Lincoln. **Nottinghamshire**—A. R. Atkey, Ltd., Lower Parliament St., Nottingham. **Derbyshire**—A. R. Atkey, Ltd., Beckett Street, Derby. **Province of Ulster**—Spence & Johnstone, 32 Linenhall St., Belfast. **Munster, Leinster and Connaught**—The Lincoln Motor Company, 4-7 Lincoln Place, Dublin.

Qualitäts-Ware für Autos und Motos.

Starke Hupe	Fr. 18.50	Solider Spiegel	Fr. 12.75
Ölkanne m. Pressluft	Fr. 6.–	Zehn Liter =	
Fettspritze	Fr. 3.90	Benzinkanne, flach	Fr. 4.80
Ölkännchen	Fr. 2.75	Messingtrichter	Fr. 2.20

Einfüllkanne mit Sieb und beweglichem Auslaufrohr, sehr praktisch Fr. 15.50



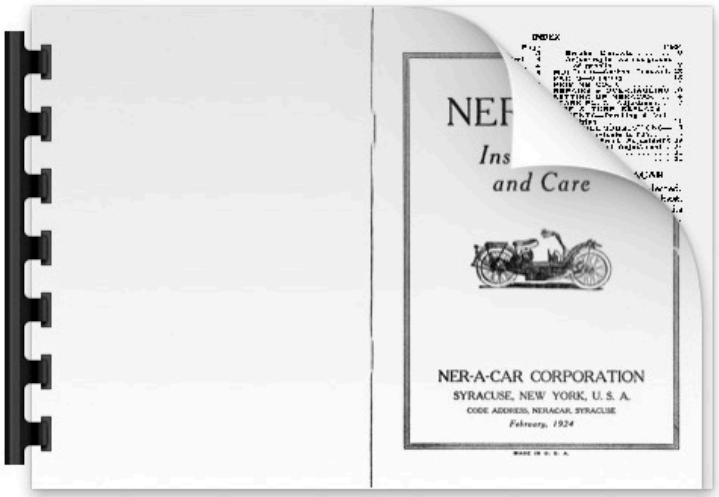
NERACAR

das neue Motorrad, sofort lieferbar. Preis Fr. 1980.–

inklusive Beleuchtung.

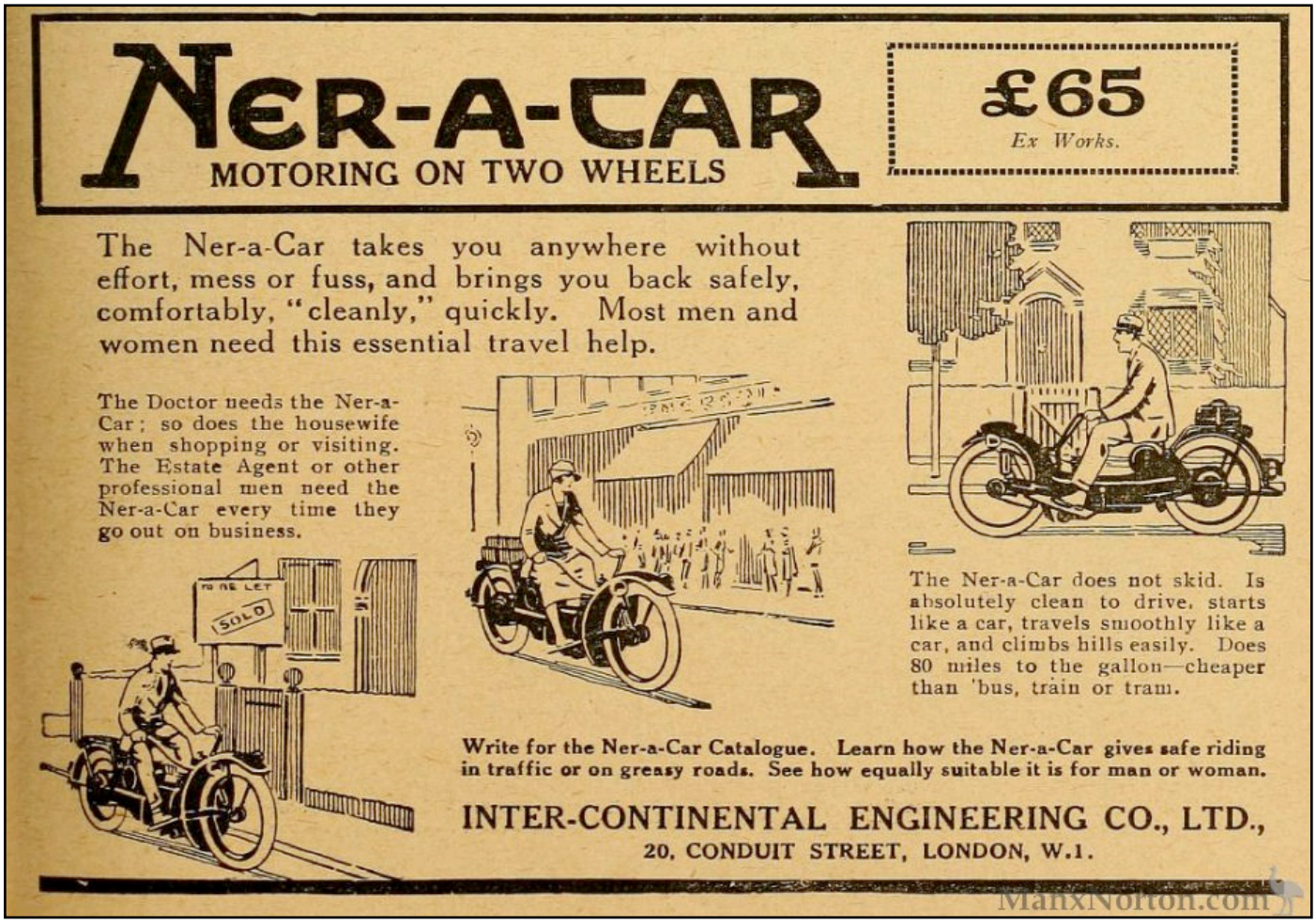
NERACAR-Vertretung für die Schweiz: 1952

Otto Ernst, 5 Freienhofgasse, Thun



Let us know if you would like to get these manuals,

and we will send them to you.



Model C after restoration

Ben Geutskens's 1922 Model A

It looks like a Ner-A-Car but is it one?

Whilst searching the Internet, I discovered this old photo taken in front of the Eiffel Tower on the Champs de Mars.
Can you help me identify this motorcycle?
Send any information related to this motorbike to:

VMN.Editor@rogers.com

Here is what we know

This bike is called

the **Jumella**

and is powered by a

1922 Train motor of 350cc.

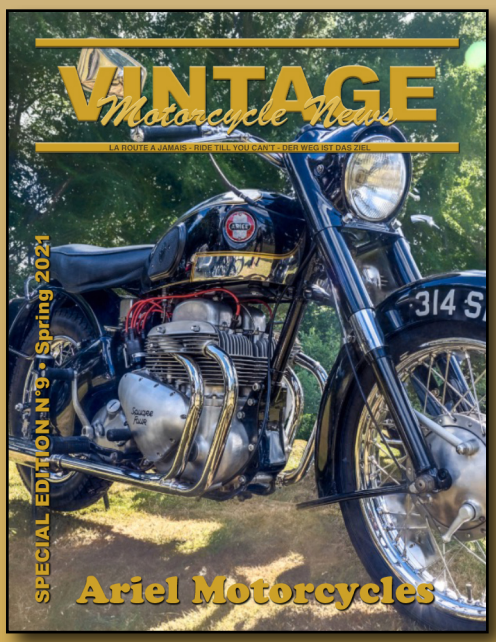
Write an article for this newsletter

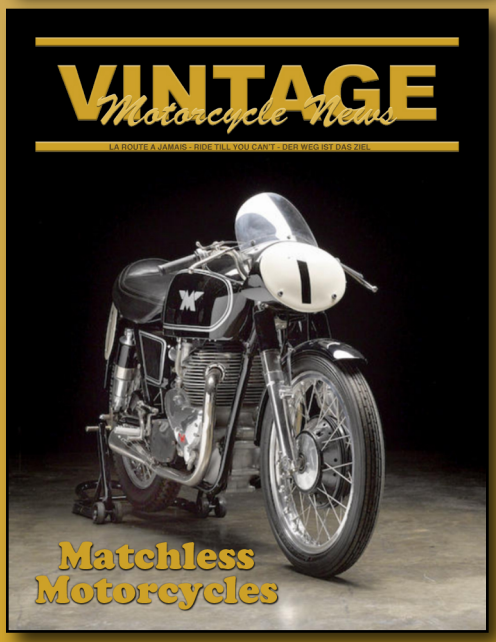
VMN.Editor@rogers.com

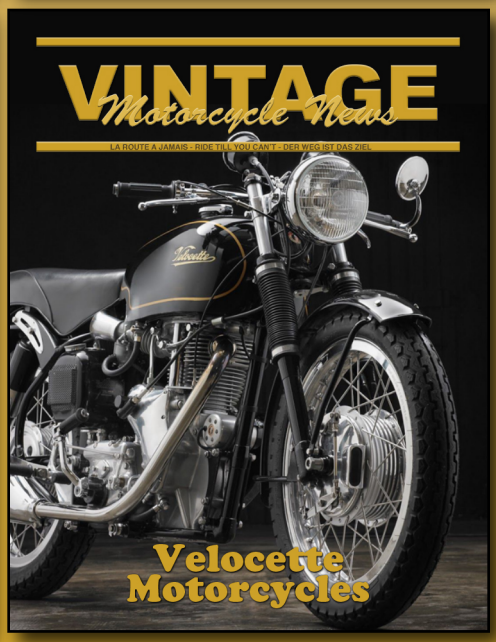
We need your stories, your anecdotes, your photos and your input. Put your bike on the cover page...

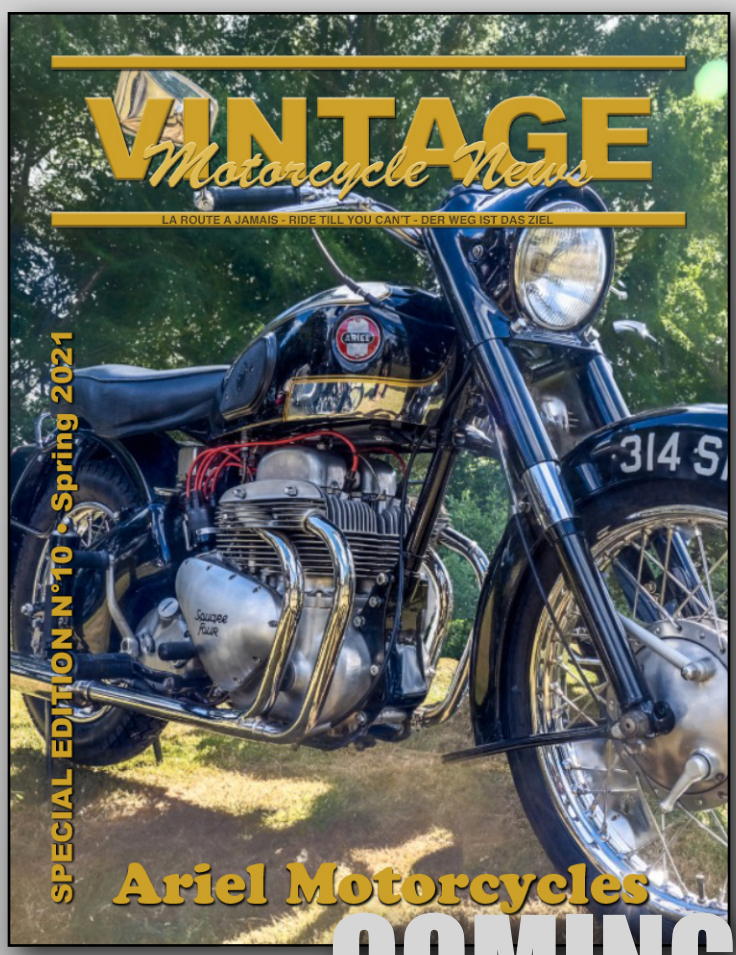
We need articles for future editions on the following topics:

Ariel, BSA, Douglas, Harley-Davidson, Indian, Matchless, Norton, Triumph, Velocette and more...

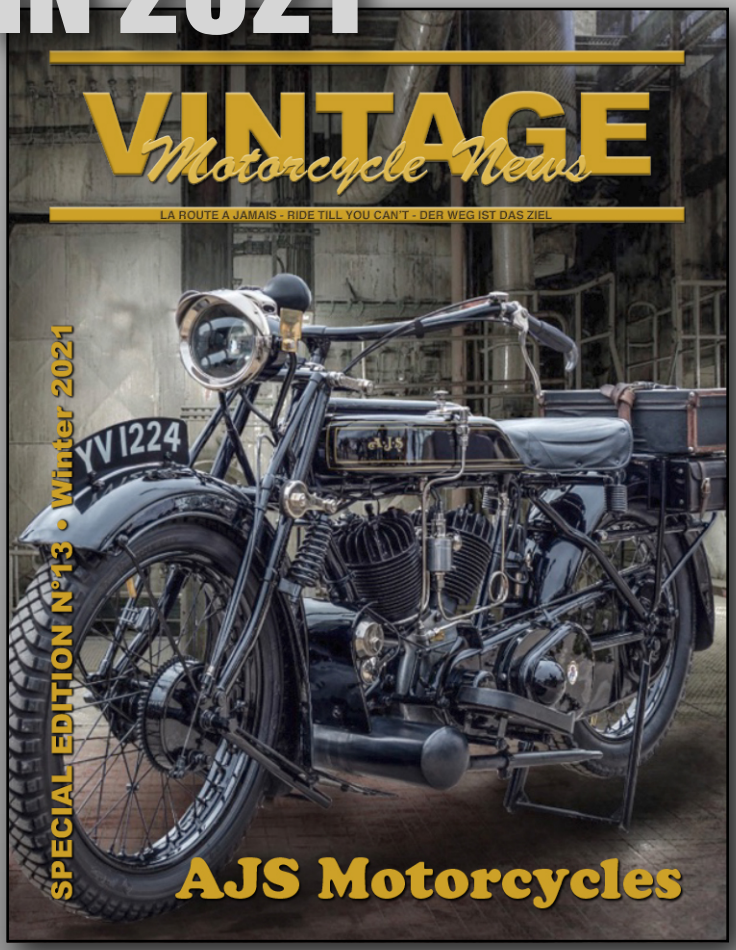








COMING IN 2021




Hey Guys! How about having the next CVMG Paris Rally in winter?
Why not! Camping is great in Winter...
And it never rains...
CANADIAN VINTAGE
CVMG
MOTORCYCLE GROUP
JOE BAR TEAM

Ner-A-Cars in the Pacific North West by Don Doody

A couple of years ago I heard about a vintage motorcycle show and shine that was going to be held in the small town of Coombs on Vancouver Island.

Coombs is better known for their "goats on the roof" farmers market. Sounds like fun.

Which bike to take since I have a few. Since it was a show why not take the Ner-A-Car, since most people have never seen one. So I loaded her up, caught the ferry from my little island to Victoria. I passed Bev's house who also has a Ner-A-Car and headed north up the island highway.

On the way I stopped at my buddy Martins place to see if he was going. He had other plans. I mentioned I had the Ner-A-Car with me which he had not yet seen. While he was checking it out he told me a story from 50 years ago.

He and a friend went up to Campbell River to check out a 1914 Indian that was sale. When they got there the seller opened up the garage and beside the Indian was a Ner-A-Car. His friend bought the Indian and they were off.

The only thing Martin remembers was the fellow was the local fire chief. Interesting story, but that was 50 years ago. By the way, Bev, the fellow that owns the Victoria Ner-A-Car also now owns that same 1914 Indian.

If you want to check out Bev and his Ner-A-Car we have a westcoast motorcycle TV show called "Farkle Garage" which you can also view on "You Tube". At 8:42 of Episode 9 is the start of an very interesting tale.

Now back to my trip. Off I go and I arrive in Coombs just in time. Huge turn out of vintage bikes from all over the island.

The Vancouver Vincent Club also had a ride that weekend in that area. And Peter Gagan had visitors from around the world for his one week tour.

Wow, busy weekend. At the end of the day I took home the "peoples choice" award. I guess people just love "Goofy" motorcycles. The "Nerd-A-Car" does it again. The Vintage Auto Club of Nanaimo had invited us to their car show the next day.

After their great pan cake breakfast I noticed a bunch of younger people checking out my bike. I heard one of them say *"that's just like your bike Don"* so I thought he was talking to me. But no, he was talking to another fellow.

Lo and behold his name was also Don and he owned a Ner-A-Car! I asked where he lived and he replied Campbell River. What? Could this be the same bike Martin had mentioned the day before?

I told him about my conversation with Martin and mentioned *"fire chief"*. He laughed, he called over to an older gentleman that was polishing a beautiful Peerless auto. He came over to us and Don said *"meet my father, the "fire chief"*.

Wow, another 50 year old story with a conclusion. While talking with Don he told me about parts of another Ner-A-Car in the Comox area which is close to his home. How did all these Ner-A-Cars get here?

Many years ago the legendary Reg Shanks, who probably knew more about old bikes and their history than anyone on the planet told me a very interesting story.

Reg grew up in a motorcycle family in Victoria, BC. His father Pop Shanks ran **Brooklands Motorcycles** selling Harleys and many other brands while brother Bob ran the Indian dealership next door.

Reg took over Brooklands when his father retired and operated it till the late 90's when he passed away.

It seems one day in 1923, Robert, a local motorcycle enthusiast who also owned Silver Springs Brewery came into the shop with one of the latest motorcycle magazines.

There was a full page ad for a new bike called a Ner-A-Car. Robert liked what he saw and read, and was very interested in getting one and asked Pop if he could get one for him. Pop checked and let Robert know it would be no trouble.

Robert then said, get me three of them. When they arrived, they checked them out, took them for rides, and basically had fun. They were impressed. Then they let Robert know the bikes were in town.

Robert owned a very large cabin up at Shawnigan Lake and asked the Shanks if they could ride the bikes up to his cabin and his caretaker would drive them all back to town in his truck.

Now, the roads up to the lake back in 1923 were pretty bad. All dirt, gravel, mud, potholes, etc. Reg and

Bob had ridden their own bikes out to the lake a few times, and Reg said they dropped their bikes two or three times each way.

It was tough going. Anyway, the next morning Reg, brother Bob and father Pop headed off to the lake.

They all arrived with no problems. No spills or break downs. Reg said *"it was the best handling motorcycle he had ever ridden"*.

Now, what happened to these three bikes? Are they still part of these others on the island? Looks like I have some more Sherlock work to do.

So there are three Ner-a-cars and bits of another here on the islands and one in North Vancouver. The first one I rode was in Seattle, which is still there, along with another also in Seattle.

At the Cannonball Run I met another owner that lived in Tacoma just outside Seattle. So it looks like there are at least 7 and bits here in the Pacific North West.

Talking about the Cannonball Run. This was the 2014 version that went from Daytona to Tacoma. Some of my friends were on this ride so a group of us decided to head south and meet up with them at the finish.

I was also looking forward to meeting Bob Addis of Cohoes, NY who was riding a bright orange Ner-A-Car across the country on the Run. Brave man, he even did the Mt. Ranier pass.

Great conversion on all his trials and tribulations. We had never met before but somehow he had heard I had raced mine at O'Keefe Ranch.

If you go to "You Tube" and punch in Ner-A-Car you will find a bunch of videos of Bob and many other videos of Ner-A-Car owners all over the world.

One last item. **The Cannonball Run** is named after the great Cannonball Baker who rode and drove across the USA dozens of times setting many records on all types of bikes and cars. Old "Bake" even did it on a Ner-A-Car and was so impressed he started up his own Ner-A-Car dealership in California. (See photo)

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

NERACAR

"MOTORING ON TWO WHEELS"

For the Entire Family

85 to 100 miles to the gallon

Neracar is Cheap—Clean—Convenient—Safe—two wheel transportation for the entire family—father, mother, brother and sister.

Cheap The first cost is $225. The upkeep is extremely low. One gallon of gasoline for 85 to 100 miles. No garage or parking difficulties.

Convenient Use the Neracar to the store or office. For work or play, to school or country club. You are independent and operate on your own schedule.

Clean The broad fenders protect the rider from mud, dust and grease. Can be ridden by either sex in whatever clothes befit the occasion.

Safe Maximum speed 35 miles per hour. The low center of gravity (below the hubs) makes for easy handling and balance, and practically prevents skidding. The low saddle position permits the rider's feet to rest on the ground at start or stop.

300 miles for a dollar

SPECIFICATIONS

CHASSIS: Automobile type construction with pressed steel frame.
MOTOR: Two-cycle 2½ H. P.
CRANK CASE: Aluminum. Shaft mounted on roller bearing front; ball bearing rear.
CARBURETOR: Single jet automatic float feed with flexible wire control to right-hand grip.
DRIVE: Friction, five speed. Countershaft mounted on self-aligning ball bearings.
IGNITION: High tension magneto.
ELECTRIC LIGHTS: Two head and one tail. Magneto generator.
STARTER: Kick starter direct to engine shaft.
MUFFLER: Pressed steel with baffle plates.
TIRES: 26 x 3" nonskid.
WIRE WHEELS: Mounted on ball bearings.
WEIGHT: Approximately 175 lbs.
SPEED: 35 miles per hour.

NER-A-CAR CORPORATION, *Syracuse, N. Y.*

DIRECTORS

F. P. Assmann, Vice Pres. The Continental Can Company, Syracuse, N. Y.
D. R. Bullen, General Electric Company, Schenectady, N. Y.
Alexander H. Cowie, President Rochester & Syracuse Railway Co., Syracuse, N. Y.
Huntington B. Crouse, President Crouse-Hinds Company, Syracuse, N. Y.
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Chauncey L. Lane, Treasurer Ner-A-Car Corporation, Syracuse, N. Y.
C. A. Neracher, Syracuse, N. Y.
J. Allan Smith, President Ner-A-Car Corporation, Syracuse, N. Y.

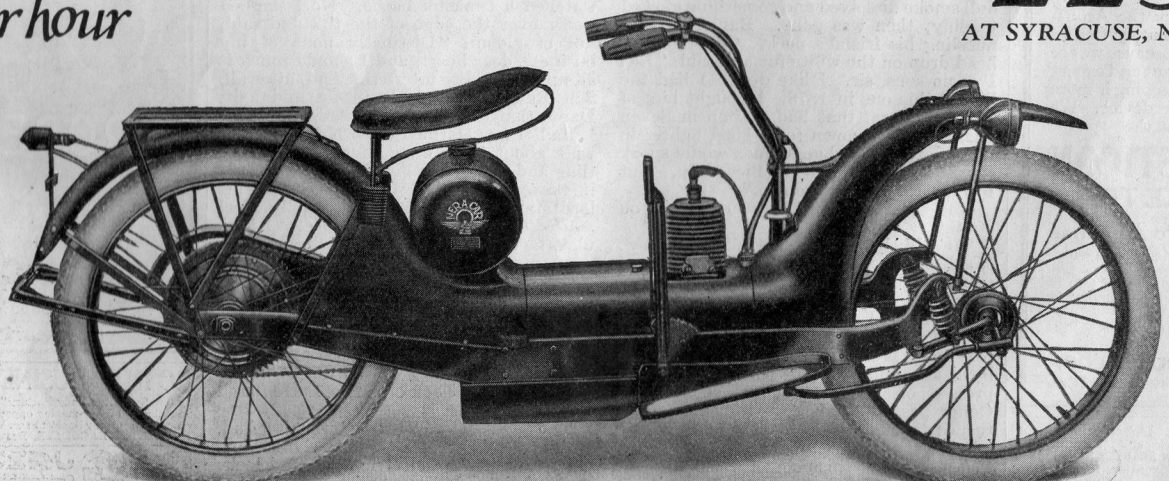
Business or Pleasure

35 miles per hour

FULLY EQUIPPED—NO EXTRAS!

$225 AT SYRACUSE, N. Y.

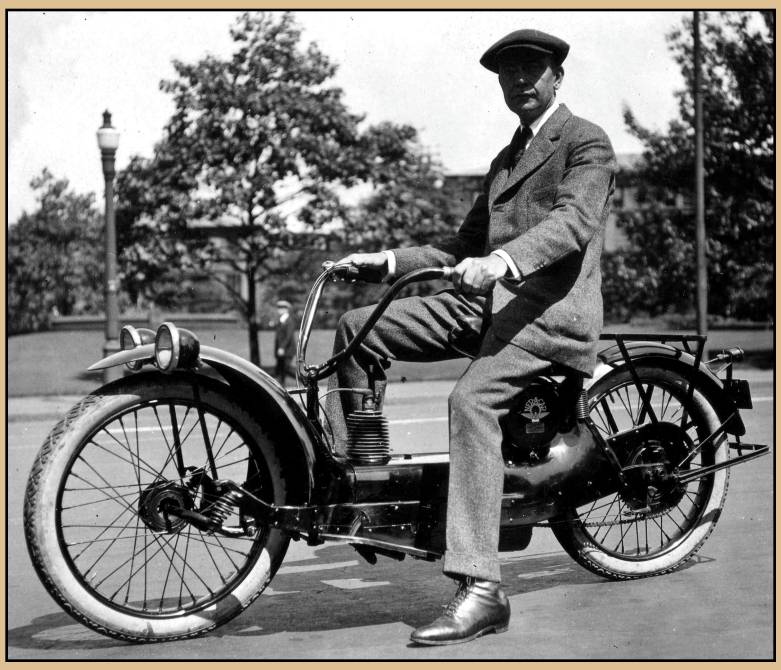
Price includes 2 Electric Head Lights, Tail Light, Luggage Rack and Tools



Dealers!

If none in your City, write for our plan.

Send for descriptive folder



Photos from

Don Doody's collection

Christmas Shopping!

Perfect in Every Part by Francis Simpson

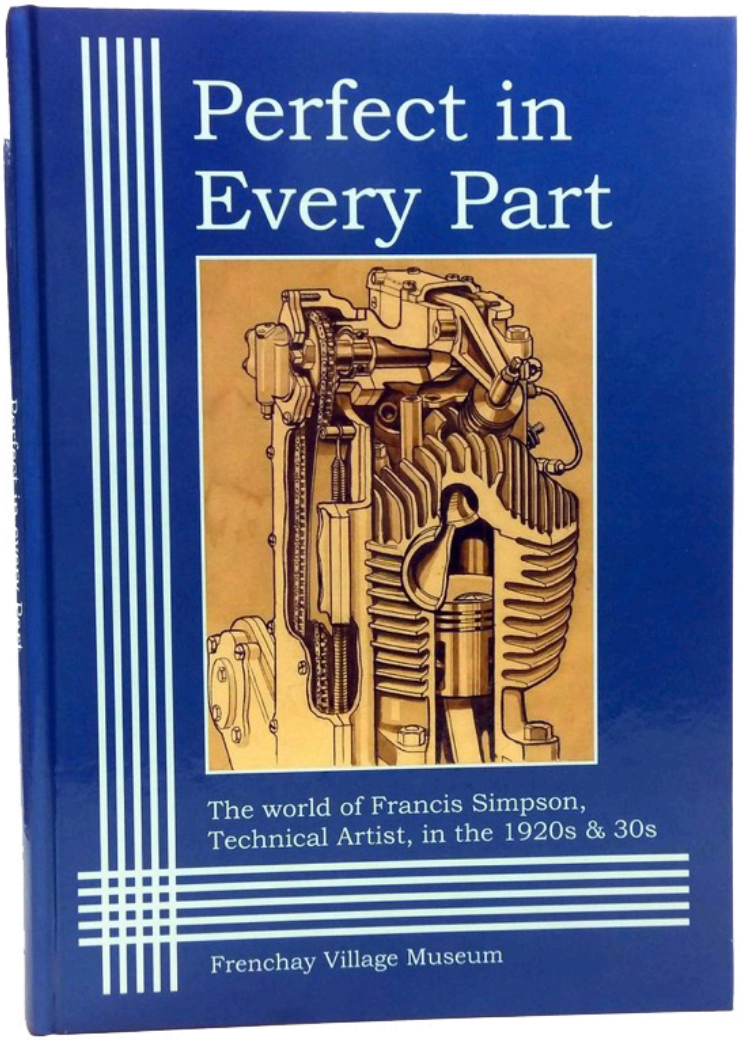
We take a look at a new book about this brilliant artist, well known for his motorbike images. These wonderful drawings and photos, once belonged to a technical artist called Francis Simpson. You may have never have heard of him but a new book put together by Frenchay Museum gives us a valuable insight into this remarkably gifted man.

In the early years of last century, whilst living in Redland, Simpson worked in an architect's office before joining Bristol Corporation and then the Inland Revenue. A keen cyclist, by 1914 he had obtained a driver's licence and turned his attention to motorbikes.

He was obviously bitten by the bug because two years later, when he was 30, Simpson left the Inland Revenue to join the Coventry magazine publishers Illife and Sons as a staff journalist and artist. Their two flagship titles at the time were "The Motor Cycle" and "The Autocar". At about the same time he bought his third motorbike, a Royal Enfield, for the princely sum of £42.00.

After the end of World War I, in 1919, Simpson came back to the West Country to work for Douglas motorbikes of Kingswood in their advertising department. One sketch he did for the company was of a Scotsman riding a Douglas - a well known image used by the company for many years in different poses.

A few years later Simpson, now married to a Bristol girl, went back to London to work for lliffe. But he kept up his Bristol connections, including membership of the Bristol Motor Cycle and Light Car Club. He would later become its press officer and Vice President.



One of the best, and surely most exciting, job he was given was the coverage of the prestigious Isle of Man TT races for which he did reporting, sketches and drawings.

After being made redundant in the early 1930s Simpson used his contacts to work as a freelance for Matchless cycles and motorbikes. He also used his considerable skills to produce a full colour brochure for Imperial Airways. Using his trademark sectioned views it even showed how the interiors of the aircraft were laid out. Another job was producing part lists and advertising for the Bristol Aeroplane Company.

Work for many other companies, such as those involved in radios and boat building, followed. Simpson would appear to have given up working as a technical artist in the late 1930s.

He died in 1975, age 90. His notebooks, booklets, scrapbooks, press cuttings, badges, medals and drawings have now been deposited with the Bristol Record Office and saved for posterity.

Perfect in Every Part - the World of Francis Simpson, Technical Artist in the 1920s and 30s, is published by Frenchay Village Museum, Begbrook Park, Bristol BS16 ILP

The book costs £9.99 + shipping

Treat Yourself with this Fantastic Christmas Gift

HALCYON MARK 49 MOTORCYCLE GOGGLES

HALCYON MARK 49 MOTORCYCLE GOGGLES

MADE IN BRITAIN FROM CHROMED BRASS AND LEATHER

The classically-designed Halcyon Mark 49 motorcycle goggles are made in Britain from chromed brass and leather – the company prides itself on not using a single piece of plastic anywhere in their products, they still utilize the same materials and methodology they've used since the mid-20th century.

Each set of goggles starts life in the Hertfordshire factory as a single sheet of brass which is cut to shape and formed into a pair of distinctive motorcycle/aviator goggles just like the pilots of WW2 wore 70 years ago.

The brass is chromed for longevity and corrosion resistance, and a richly upholstered leather face mask is attached to the back for all-day comfort.

The Mark 49 goggles have an adjustment screw above the nose that allows the wearer to adjust how far apart the lenses are to tailor the goggles to their face perfectly. The lenses are made of tough, shatterproof polycarbonate that meets or exceeds the Safety Institution Standards (BSI – BS4110), they also offer 99.9% UV protection.

The wide elastic headband had silicone strips on the inside to keep it firmly in place when the goggles are worn with a helmet, they fit inside the eye port of most 3/4 face helmets and of some full face helmets with larger front openings like the Bell Moto 3.

It's increasingly difficult to find good quality, traditional goggles that aren't made of tacky chrome-colored plastic, there are fewer still that are still made in Britain. The MK49 goggles come in a variety of color options and one size fits all due to the adjustable bridge.

A-Grade Quality Leather

All Halcyon leather goggle apparel is hand-made using soft lamb nappa.

Only the finest A-grade quality skins from reputable brands is used for our craft. Brands such as GHLeathers and Pittards specialize in elegantly soft, natural leathers. Each leather face-mask is then hand-stitched to solid brass frames.

Each Halcyon goggle is carefully created with great care at our factory in Hertfordshire, England.

These goggles are available from Amazon.com

SRP about $99.00

When it comes to vintage apparel or garment, you need to be as close as possible to the past or the era of your motorcycle but it is not always the case. Often you will be caught riding with modern gears not matching the era of your ride. Some products are still available for the rider in search of perfection and this is why we would like to remind you of these internet finds...

HELMETS

Retaining all the original design features of the 1950's low dome racing helmet. It is an authentic example of the first helmets especially manufactured for motorcycle racing. Neat & compact in design, it is a hand built product of exceptional quality.

MADE IN ENGLAND BY DAVIDA

TRADITIONAL INTERIOR: Made faithfully using traditional materials & manufacturing techniques the cork shock absorption liner is fixed to the interior of the shell.The adjustable internal cotton webbed harness & adjustable leather lining are lock-stitched to the full circumference of the shell.

LEATHER NECK CURTAIN: Finest grade leather is used to create a classic quilted leather neck curtain which is finely tailored to follow the contours of the nape. The whole neck curtain interior is lined with brushed cotton for warmth & comfort & then neatly edged with bias binding.

Cost: £275.00
Available from
https://davida-helmets.com

BARBOUR® THORNPROOF DRESSING

BARBOUR OF ENGLAND

Since 1894, J. Barbour & Sons have produced clothes perfectly suited to enjoyment of life beyond the city.

It is this commitment to quality and durability that has seen the name Barbour become synonymous with the best of country living.

Barbour jacket accessories
keep your outerwear in great shape.

Keep your waxed gear waterproof and strong with this Barbour jacket accessory.

Thornproof dressing is the exact formula used by Barbour to waterproof jackets in its factories.

Easy to apply, simply use it on areas that are getting the most wear, or re-dress an entire jacket.
Full details and instructions are printed on the can. One 200ml. tin is enough to completely treat one full-length coat or two jackets.

Cost: £20.00
Available from
https://www.orvis.com

TRIALMASTER JACKET
In Black 6 oz. Waxed Cotton

Comes also in:
Dark Navy, Faded Olive,
Light Brown and Dusk Grey

Our definitive jacket since 1948, the Trialmaster was originally designed to cope with the grueling conditions of the Scottish Six Days Trial. Built to last from our 6 oz. waxed cotton, it features a legacy slanted map pocket and adjustable belt so you can perfect the fit. Re-wax to keep it water and wind repellent.

- Breathable material and underarm ventilation
- Four front pockets and one internal pocket
- Snap and two-way zip fastenings
- Signature Belstaff check cotton twill lining
- High collar with adjustable throat latch
- Reinforced shoulder and elbow panels
- Corduroy linings at the collar, cuffs and hem
- Purchase the Waistcoat and snap it in for extra warmth

Cost: £450.00
Available from
https://www.belstaff.co.uk

Lace-up Motorcycle Boots Black Vintage

- Mens Backpacking Boots Autumn Punk Martin Boots Men Fashion Pu Leather Lace-up Motorcycle Boots Black Vintage High Top Buckle Shoes Man Xmx516

Cost: $70.00
Available from
www.amazon.ca

THE MERLIN CHAPLOW TOOL ROLL

A TRADITIONAL WAXED COTTON & LEATHER TOOL ROLL

The Merlin Chaplow Tool Roll has a main chassis of hard-wearing Halley Stevensons 12oz Scottish waxed cotton with adjustable premium leather straps to keep it rolled up tight. Waxed cotton is highly water resistant while maintaining excellent breathability, this is why it was used extensively for motorcycle clothing and inclement weather gear before the advent of lightweight modern materials.

The tool roll is designed to last decades not just years, so it has all brass hardware and it's over-engineered to ensure strength and longevity. Merlin is a British company that's 100% employee owned, they've made a name for themselves in recent years for producing solid motorcycle gear at affordable prices, and they've quickly won themselves new fans both in Europe and further afield.

Inside the Chaplow Tool Roll you'll find plenty of space for wrenches, screwdrivers, and pliers as well as a zippered pouch for holding things like fuses, electric tape, zip ties, etc. Due to the adjustable straps the tool roll can be expanded or contracted depending on how many tools you need to carry, longer road trips will typically require more gear than commuting around town of course.

Having some basic tools on hand that allow to to address many common issues with internal combustion engines is essential, and it becomes more essential the older a vehicle gets. Many owners of vintage cars or motorcycles will refuse to drive or ride anywhere without a carefully selected collection of tools, tape, fuses, and wire.

Available from : The Urban Rider - The world's finest motorcycle gear - www.urbanrider.co.uk

Price : £80.00

MERLIN ASHBY WAXED COTTON RUCKSACK

A CLASSICALLY-DESIGNED MOTORCYCLE BACKPACK

This is the Merlin Ashby waxed cotton rucksack, it's designed specifically for use by motorcyclists, and it has a main chassis made of water-repellent Halley Stevensons 12 oz Scottish waxed cotton with ballistic nylon reinforced back and base panels for added toughness.

Merlin is a British motorcycle gear and apparel company that's 100% employee owned. The staff at Merlin have experience working with top notch Moto GP, WSB, and BSB riders and they bring this experience to bear developing gear for regular riders.

The Merlin Ashby has a capacity of 30 litres making it ideal for daily use and for the occasional weekend away. The backpack has a removable waist strap that also has a discreet pocket, it also has a removable chest strap, padded shoulder straps, and a diamond stitched padded back.

There are three webbed handles for attaching additional gear, three outer cargo storage pockets with snap studs, brass buckles, a cushioned base, and a drawcord main fastening. Inside you'll find a laptop sleeve, slip pocket, mesh pockets, and Marton Mills tartan lining panels.

The team at Merlin designed the Ashby to serve two distinct purposes, it can be used during the week as a work bag while commuting – with plenty of space for a laptop, document folders, and other gear. Then on Saturday it can be filled with a couple of changes of clothes and some other supplies and used for your weekend road trip.

The primary access flap at the top is made from waxed cotton and it's designed to shed water, helping to keep the contents of the bag dry if you happen to get caught in the rain while riding. The bag measures in at 50cm H x 30cm W x 20cm D (19.7″ H x 11.8″ W x 7.9″ D) and it comes in three colors: black, olive, and tan.

Available from : RevZilla - www.revzilla.com

Price : US$229.00

Treat Yourself with this Fantastic Christmas Gift

A caricature of yourself and your bike

Why not think outside of the box by getting something daring like a caricature?
Well that's an idea... Not all caricaturists are talented but we do have one located in Alberta that fits the profile.
Get in touch with him and be the talk of the evening or the party.
Just remember that Dean can recreate all kind of events in his caricatures such as birthdays, wedding, trips, retirement, etc... So here is the Best Canadian Caricaturist. Ed.

DEAN FOSTER.

- illustrations
- cartoons
- caricatures
- portraits

Contact me for a quote at
DeanFoster444@gmail.com
Tel: (403) 466-9602

ABOUT ME

My Background

Born and raised in South Africa, I had a passion for both motorcycles and art from an early age. I attended art school in Natal and soon found myself contracting to some of the top marketing firms in the world. Some 25 years later and a half a world away, I've since relocated to Central Alberta and am creating unique illustrations and caricatures for individuals and companies.

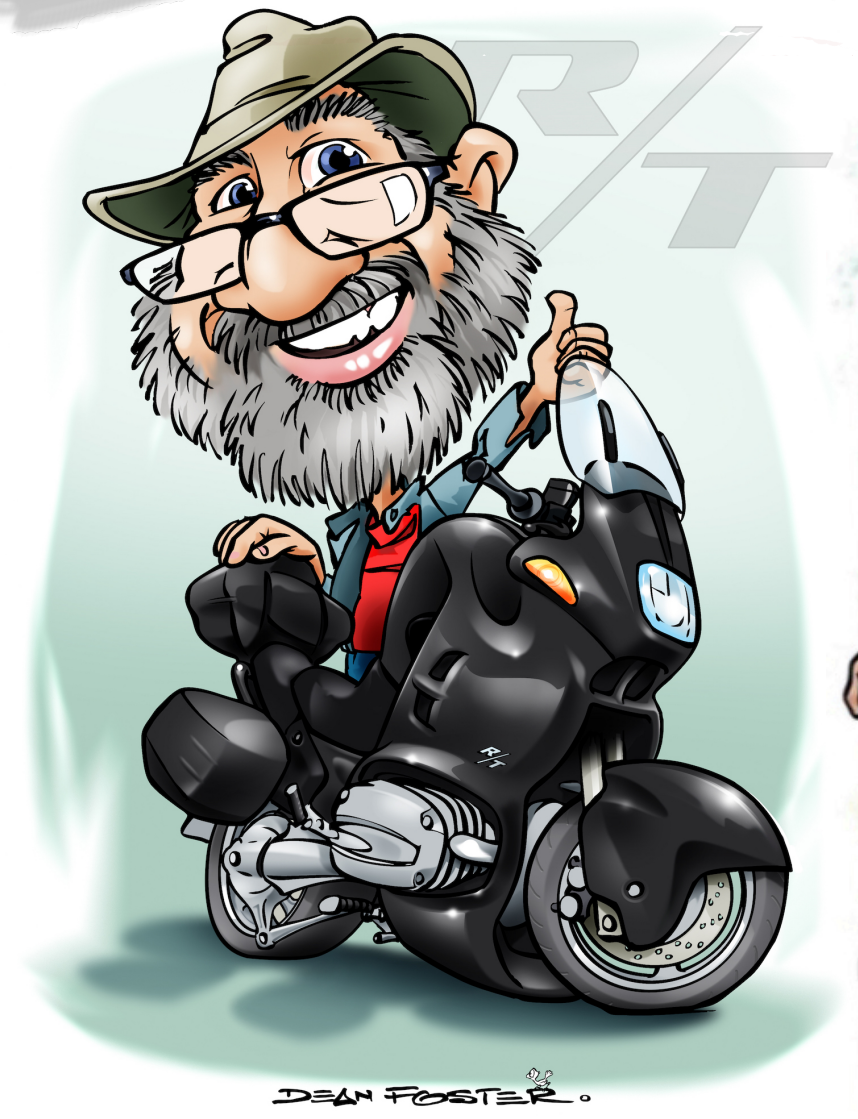
My Medium

I use pencil for my caricatures when I'm at an event - typically head and shoulders. For special occasions such as anniversaries and birthdays or corporate gifts, I'll use ink and if requested, I'll apply colour digitally. When I find the time, I like to dabble in pastels and acrylics.

My Inspiration

Life and my surroundings inspire me and the fact that I can make a good honest living doing something that I enjoy. Seeing the surprise on someone's face that just received one of my drawings is the greatest reward.

WWW.DEANFOSTER.CA



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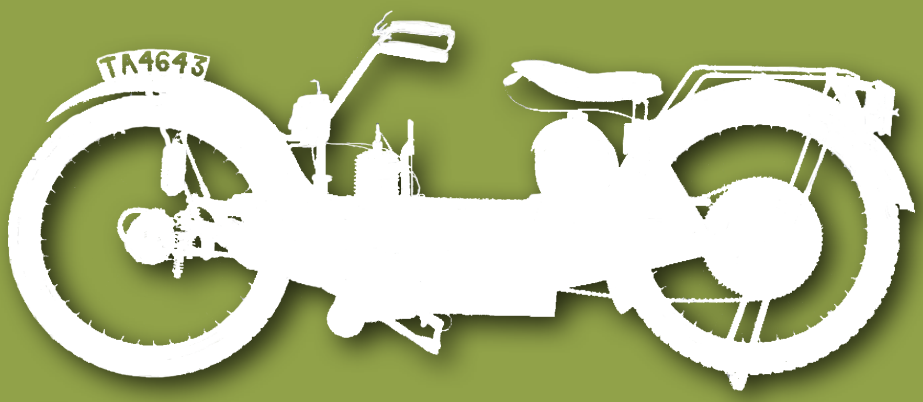

The Ner-A-Car

"The smallest, funiest, most reliable and cheapest motorcycle apart from a car."

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