
VINTAGE

Motorcycle News

LA ROUTE A JAMAIS - RIDE TILL YOU CAN'T - DER WEG IST DAS ZIEL

SPECIAL EDITION N°15 • Spring 2022

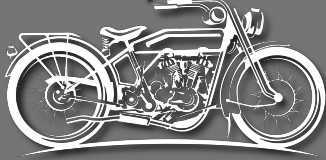
AD 700



**Douglas
Motorbikes**

VINTAGE

Motorcycle News



**A motorcycle publication
for the motorcyclist enthusiast.**



EDITOR

Pat Castel

Vintage.Motorcycle.News@gmail.com

COVER PAGE

Douglas EW, 350cc

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Pretty sure, many of you have been disappointed!

The Indian motorcycle was supposed to be the first issue of this year and suddenly, out of nowhere it was switch with the Douglas of year end.

To be honest with you, I had no choice, when I enlisted the help of Don Doody (Vintage Indian motorcycle authority in the matter), he mentioned important corrections to be brought to the draft and therefore delays in the publication.

The Special Edition on Indian was the most important of the year and I wanted it right. Don took the time to review it and brought to my attention what was wrong with it. Back to the draft mode, this edition is getting a major rebuild and will be released for the end of the year.

I have always been very fond of the Douglas motorbikes. Well, it is not a secret I am a BMW rider and this brand and the first BMW engine have a lot in common.

A lot has been said about this brand but for some reasons unknown to me, it is quite impossible to get the full picture of the story. Fortunately, there is good clubs around the world to keep this fantastic motorcycle alive and share their knowledge on this iconic motorbike.

This newsletter is far from being a reference to the Douglas name but it will bring you back in time and put a smile on your face.

Till next time... Ed.

NEXT EDITION

Matchless was one of the oldest marques of British motorcycles, manufactured in Plumstead, London, between 1899 and 1966. Due to a lack of vision and bad management, it just went bust...

VINTAGE

Motorcycle News

LA ROUTE & JAMAÏQUE - VOUS NE VOUS EN SÉRIEZ PAS DOUTER

SPECIAL EDITION N°16 • Summer 2022



Matchless Motorbikes

Douglas Motorcycle Forum



For Douglas Motorcycle Enthusiasts Worldwide

CONTACT: www.douglasmotorcycles.net



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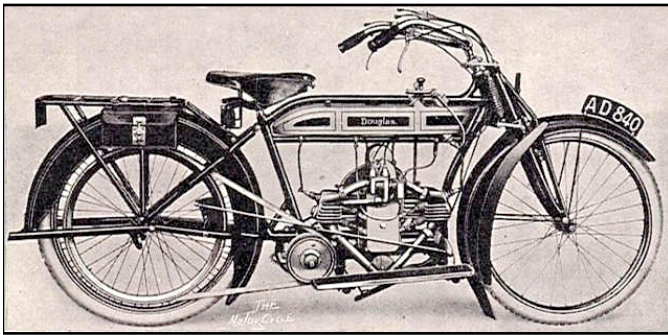
Reg Holmes, 48 Standish Avenue, Stoke Lodge, Patchway, Bristol, BS34 6AG

The Douglas History (the short version)

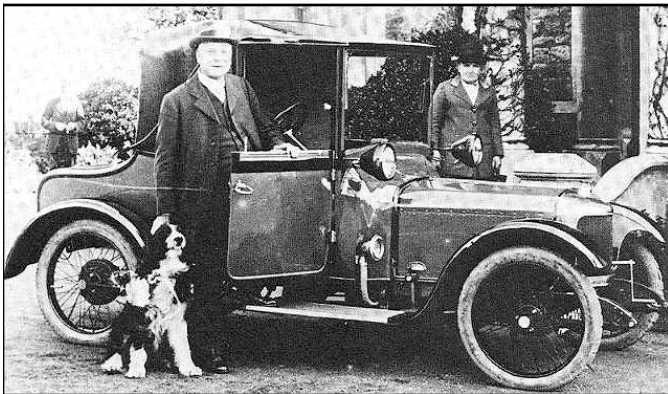
The brothers William and Edward Douglas founded the Douglas Engineering Company in Bristol in 1882.

Initially doing blacksmith work, they progressed to foundry work and then acquired the flat twin design of W. J. Barter by taking over his company when it failed.

Barter had founded Light Motors Ltd and produced his first single-cylinder motorcycle between 1902 and 1904; he had then produced a 200 cc horizontal twin called the Fee, but he was unsuccessful; he sold his business to Douglas brothers and he started to work for them. From 1907 a 350 cc Douglas version was on sale.



During WWI, Douglas was a major motorcycle supplier, making around 70,000 motorcycles for military use (above). The company also built a range of cars between 1913 and 1922 (below).



In the 1920s Douglas built the first disc brakes, and had a Royal Warrant for the supply of motorcycles to the Princes, Albert and Henry.

Douglas motorcycles also became popular in dirt track racing. The 1923 RA model with disc brakes was favoured initially and this prompted Douglas to build specific dirt track models. These motorcycle designs were gradually increased in size and power with 500 cc and 600 cc engines fitted to the DT5 and DT6 Dirt Track models in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The

engines had hemispherical heads and a short rigid forged crankshaft. They dominated dirt track racing for about three years. In 1929, the most successful dirt racing year, 1,200 Dirt Track motorcycles were sold.

Douglas was also successful in other races, including Isle of Man TT. The Endeavour, a 494 cc shaft drive model came out in 1934. Like other companies of the time, they were struggling, and attempting to diversify into other modes of transport.

In 1935 they were taken over by BAC, British Aircraft Company. Motorcycle production continued into WWII and was extended to generators.

In 1948, not long after the war, Douglas was in difficulty again and reduced its output to the 350 cc flat twin models (see Douglas MK4). The 1955, 350 cc Douglas Dragonfly was the last model produced.

The Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company Ltd bought Douglas out and production of Douglas Motorcycles ended in 1957.

Douglas continued to import Vespa scooters into the UK and later imported and assembled Gilera motorcycles.

Douglas gained significant attention in 1932–1933 when Robert Edison Fulton, Jr. became the first known man to circumnavigate the globe on a 6hp Douglas twin fitted with automobile tyres. Fulton went on to write a book on his adventure titled "One Man Caravan" (see page 18).

Douglas at the races.

Photos from www.douglasmcc.co.uk





JOSEPH BARTER AND HIS FÉE MOTORCYCLE

Many thanks to Doug Frost who kindly sent in this interesting article about Joseph Barter and his Fée motorcycle. The photo is of a replica Doug has completed in 2009.

Source: douglasmotorcycles.net

Towards the end of the Victorian era, the diamond frame bicycle had been established as the latest novelty in getting from A to B. At about the same time, along came the internal combustion engine and it did not take long for many inventive engineers to realise that a small engine fitted to the bicycle might save some pedaling.

One such inquisitive creator was a Bristolian called Joseph John Barter. Joseph Barter's main obstacle was finance as his first working single cylinder engine designed to be attached to a bicycle had to be produced by a company and was short lived.

He obviously had ability and some creative knowledge of the internal combustion engine. His second effort again he mounted in a bicycle but had to rely on others and where he worked for machinery.

1905 is the year under the spotlight when Joseph Barter had built his first twin cylinder prototype horizontally opposed engine and called it the "Fée" which is French for "fairy".

My findings lead me to the guess that the bicycle chosen to house his engine was French with its Latin named saddle, "Siderum" and the name perhaps due to the small size of the engine.

Joe possibly intended the 16" long engine to be sold to fit in existing bicycle frames, but at the running stage probably had to admit that the building of motor cycles proper had over taken his intentions.

We know that the engine worked alright after some adjustments to the distributor as the machine began with both plugs firing at TDC, and the use of a round leather drive belt was not the right choice.

The prototype engine was a 200cc four stroke with cam operated exhaust valve, automatic inlet valve, bore and stroke 2 3/16", cast iron barrels, total loss oil lubrication from a hand pump, 18mm plugs, twin ended trembler coil, wipe contact breaker, battery recharged off the machine, single speed, surface carburetion and a Bristol registration AE 692.

It is not known why surface fume carburation was used as this crude method was considered inefficient and obsolete by 1904.

Including BSA there were many companies even at this early stage who were making components such as coils, accumulators, handle bar controls, plugs and spray carburetors.

Joseph had been apprenticed in the steam locomotive industry and by 1905 at the age of 46, would know where to get parts like the engine to wheel clutch pulley, which may have been from an industrial source. The bike was black as were any new additions such as fume and oil tanks, with the bought in coil attached by nickel plated straps.

Top speed was claimed by the builder to be 20 mph although there was no speedometer.

Joseph Barter learned a lot from this single prototype and by 1906 was producing by his company called Light Motors, the next step, a 240cc motorcycle called the 'Fairy.'

There are a few Fairy engines in existence and one complete original machine on display at the Solihull National Motorcycle Museum.

The engine from the prototype probably went into the first Fairy, so there is nothing left except one near side photograph which is sharp enough to reveal details, and what cannot be seen can be accurately deduced.

By 1907 Joseph had to close down and was invited to join the Douglas Brothers foundry in Bristol to design and get the ball rolling on the first Douglas motor cycles, which were virtually Fairy machines with a Douglas transfer.

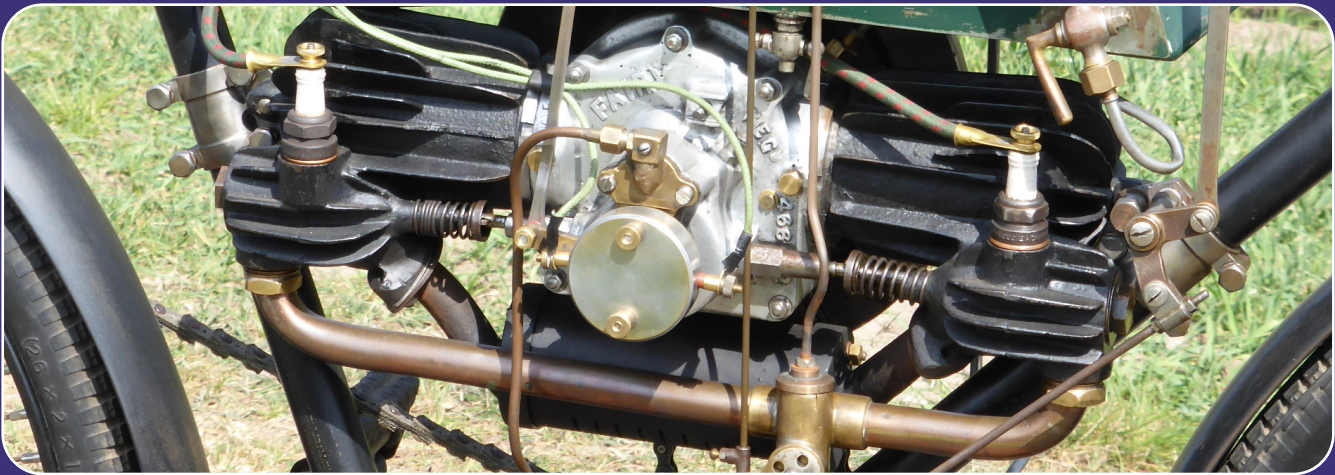
A replica of the prototype has just been completed using a 28" wheeled bicycle and will be displayed at London Douglas Club events. Maybe six months to make in the beginning, but a two year period for me to make a copy of a prototype machine, where an imaginative engineer learned as he went along knowing what not to do, for the time when he could make his efforts count - to produce the grandfather of the Douglas motorcycle.

It is quite daunting to have the grandson (a 1957 Dragonfly) in the garage with a copy of his 1905 grandfather which covers the fifty year period of Douglas production. But then the Dragonfly works and the replica is a full size model with a wooden engine.

Doug Frost LDMCC



1906 DOUGLAS FAIRY



This is the forerunner of the Douglas. In 1907 Douglas built their first motorcycles, developed from the Fairy. The Fairy has 290 cc and automatic inlet valves. Only 5 complete Fairy's known worldwide. This is the only one with the optional clutch.

Information shared by Bert Pol

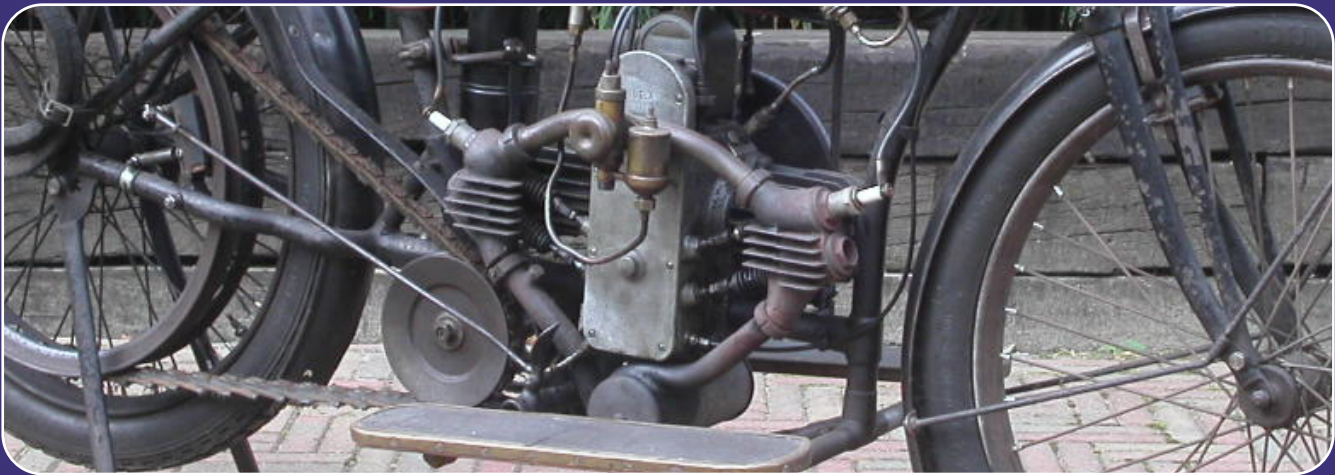
1910 DOUGLAS 2³/₄HP, MODEL C



From this model on sales figures grew. It was called the 2 ³/₄ HP. This model name was used until 1926. It is 340 cc, and still has automatic inlet valves. Most other makers had mechanically operated inlet valves by then... No gears, no clutch, Direct drive, pedal start.

Information shared by Bert Pol

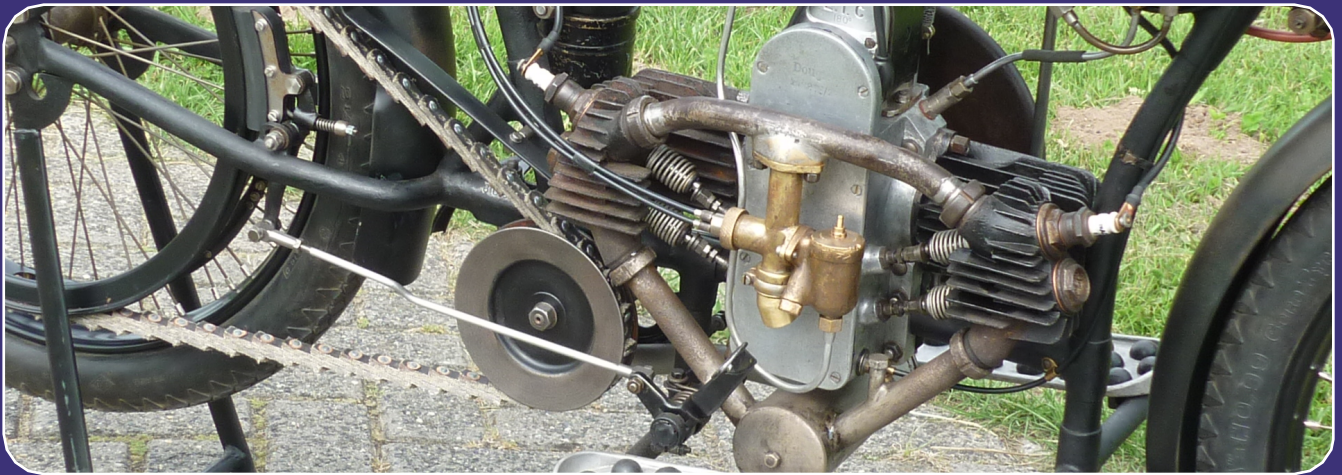
1916 DOUGLAS 2³/₄HP WD-MODEL



This motorcycle in original factory finish, was used by the British Army in World War 1. Fully equipped with acetylene lamps with WD markings and it even has a basket for a carrier pigeon. This motorcycle was used for bringing messages between HQ and the frontline. The pigeon was a "back-up system" in case of emergency or breakdown. It is 348 cc, it has two speeds, no clutch, no kickstart. That means push-start. Chain-drive from the crankshaft to the gearbox, belt drive from the gearbox to the rear wheel.

Information shared by Bert Pol

1924 DOUGLAS 2³/₄HP MODEL TS



This motorcycle is mostly in original factory finish. Basically it's the same configuration as the 1916, but for the 1920 models most parts were updated.

New design for frame and fork, new shape of petrol tank. The engine now has more cooling fins and a carburettor of Douglas-design. For the rest it is mostly the same as the models from before 1920.

Information shared by Bert Pol

Douglas

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- The currently fitted carburettor is not the original, it's fitted for reason of reliability.
- The original Douglas carburettor is present and comes with the bike.
- The file with it's known history also comes with the bike.
- A Ladies Douglas is rarely offered for sale. Unique chance.

CONTACT: Bert Pol => b.m.pol@planet.nl

SPEEDWAY AND DIRT TRACK RACING DOWN UNDER

Formerly a blacksmith's shop in Bristol U.K., the Douglas Engineering Company owned by brothers William and Edward Douglas began producing motorcycles in 1907.

Based on a horizontally opposed twin cylinder design, their engines gradually increased in size and power through to 500cc and 600cc models fitted to the DT5 and DT6 Dirt Track models of the late 1920's and early 1930's.

During the 1920's, speedway and dirt track racing had begun to grow in popularity.

Australian riders, promoters and engineers featured prominently in this growth and the success of the Douglas dirt track machines. Some of these Australians were Billy Conoulty, Charlie Datson, Vic

Huxley, Paddy Dean, Stewie St. George, Buzz Hibberd, Billy Galloway, Keith McKay, Les Bailey and A J Hunting.

Initially, most riders rode a standard model production Douglas, the 1923 RA model. It was called the RA model due to the "Research Association" brakes - an early form of disc brake. They would often ride it to the meeting fitted as a road bike, then strip it for the race.

With its low centre of gravity, good power output, ease of steering and sliding, the Douglas was an outstanding machine for this kind of racing.

Later, a special dirt-track machine was built with a frame built from the front section of the RA machine and the back section of another model called the "OC". This frame was very successful and continued to be the basis of the dirt track models into the 1930's.

A unique design feature of this frame was the "swan neck" which lowered the center of gravity, yet allowed

quite large 28" diameter wheels to be fitted. Described as "looking fast even when it was standing still", the Douglas was possibly the first machine built specifically for dirt track racing.

The engine was a 499cc long stroke (62.25 x 82mm) design with overhead valves operated by tubular steel pushrods from the single ball race mounted cam. The small, yet very rigid crankshaft was a particularly unique

design and a Douglas trademark. Forged in one piece, it ran on ball races and featured detachable balance weights allowing the con rods to be fitted over the ends.



The cylinder heads were hemispherical with large diameter valves and highly polished ports. The twin 15/16in racing Amac carburetors drew air through a

screened air box on the offside of the machine. The wheelbase was kept as short as possible by mounting the engine longitudinally in the frame.

For almost three years, the Dirt Track Douglas was the supreme dirt track machine selling around 1200 in 1929 alone.

It was at about this time that Alex Kynoch discovered the joy of riding and racing Douglas motorcycles. He began racing them in scrambles and other dirt track events around Melbourne, Australia in 1930.

Racing successfully for 10 years, he built up a stable of Douglas machines rebuilding and tuning them in his garage in St Kilda, Melbourne.

Before leaving the racing world to join the Royal Australian Air Force, he disassembled and packed away all his Douglas machines. Now, sixty years later, this valuable collection of Douglas motorcycle parts is available for sale.

Douglas

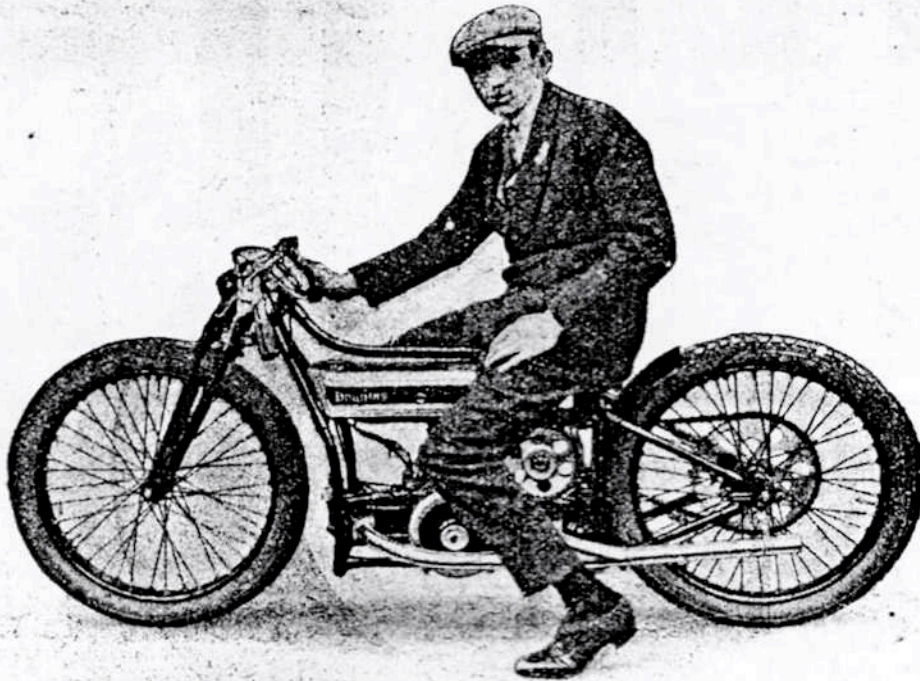
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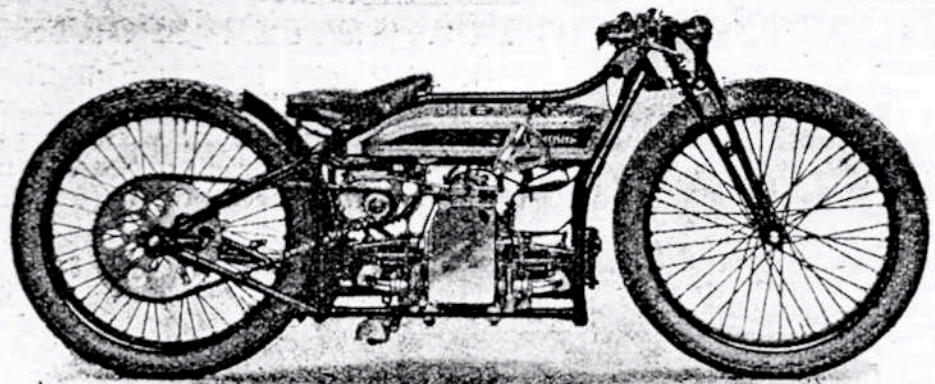


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"Sprouts" Elder taking delivery of his 350 c.c. machine.

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Please send me a copy of the Douglas Catalogue.

M.C.



A website dedicated to the construction of an accurate 1/2 scale replica of a 1937 Aero Douglas Motorcycle: <https://sites.google.com/site/halfsizedouglasmotorcycle/home>

Building a working Half Scale Douglas Motorcycle

Why? - Half Size Douglas Motorcycle - Why? Why Not?

By Robert Manley

The motorcycle project was a strange one because it wasn't planned. It started when I was given a large lump of aluminium alloy. My vintage motorcycle had its gearbox out for maintenance and just by luck I held the aluminium block near the crankcase and pondered. Half scale seemed perfect, small enough to be made on the Myford lathe, but large enough to hopefully ride, or at least for someone to ride.

The biggest drawback I have found with this hobby is that drawings are very expensive and there will be errors on them somewhere which you won't spot until the very last moment or even when it's too late! The motorcycle I'm basing my model on has been around for at over 70 years, it was built in large numbers and tested by many independent riders.

The manufacturing methods used in the 1930's are in easy reach of most model engineers with our machinery matching or bettering their equipment in accuracy and most importantly cost! We now have the added bonus of CNC tools just to make life more interesting. So when your in workshop are doing something that a like-minded man would've done 70 years ago, just on a smaller scale.

The benefits of making a model of something that's already complete is that you can pick a part up, turn it

over, have a closer look at it from what ever angle you want and even make slight improvements to the design even before you've cut metal.



I have found this method of modelling to be much more satisfying than when working from a drawing. It has given me total freedom to copy what I want and leave off what I don't.

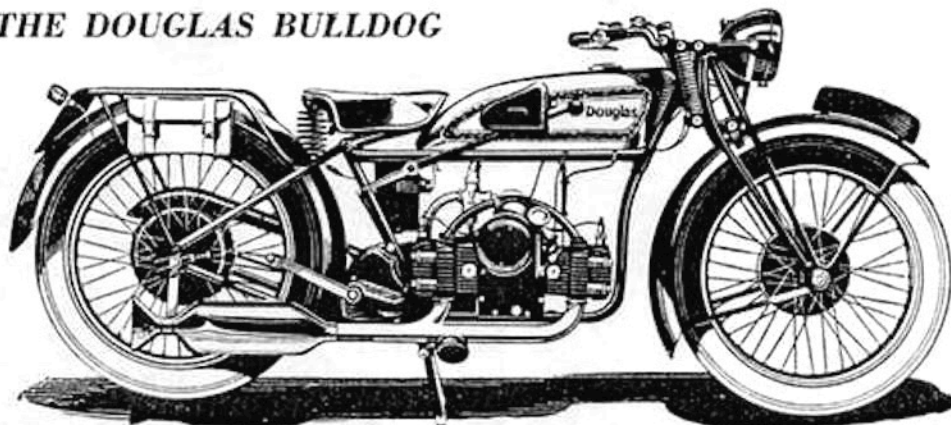
Full size manufacture has given

me hints and clues on how to produce things and also total respect for the pattern makers of that era, those cylinder castings are giving me nightmares! Half scale is just about large enough to easily copy all the details you could ever want and small enough to machine in the myford lathe, which is my main machine.

The finished engine will be 62cc and powerful enough to get someone, if not me, to a respectable speed for basically a 'monkey bike'. I have managed to find some road legal tyres and will try to get it as road legal as possible.

I would love to see more half size vintage or even modern motorcycles being built along the same lines - maybe even having their own club! A half scale Rudge, Vincent Black Shadow or Norton Commando would be rather special don't you think?

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Miniature Douglas Motorcycle

There is some doubt exactly who the people in the photograph are but it was definitely taken outside The Woodlands, Court Rd Kingswood the home of William Douglas head of Douglas Motorcycles now the car park for a care home.

According to info from a Douglas family member posted several years ago on the Douglas Motorcycle Forum the man is Edwin Douglas joint owner of Douglas, with his great nephew John. There were said to be four miniature bikes made for grandchildren of William Douglas. The first problem is that Edwin died 1905 several years before John was born. The second problem is that Douglas had hardly started motorbike production in 1905 and the design of the bike has been dated by Douglas experts as after 1912 and could be as late as 1920s.

The same photo is said to have appeared in a 1960s Douglas club journal where the man submitting the photo said the man was EW (Walt) White a foreman responsible for the building of this bike and later

became works manager. The clothes worn by the man do seem more what a foreman would wear rather than the company owner. This version says the motorbike was for an Indian client.



The image of the miniature Douglas motorbike was named "Edwin Douglas & Nephew John" because that is who I understood the people were. However I knew Edwin Douglas died 1905 and began to doubt it could be him in the photo because Douglas didn't start production until about 1907 and to me looked like from around 1914. I posted a query on the Douglas Motorcycle Forum and various experts recognized various features and knew when they were first used. One suggested "After 1912" another

and two others suggested dates during WWI.

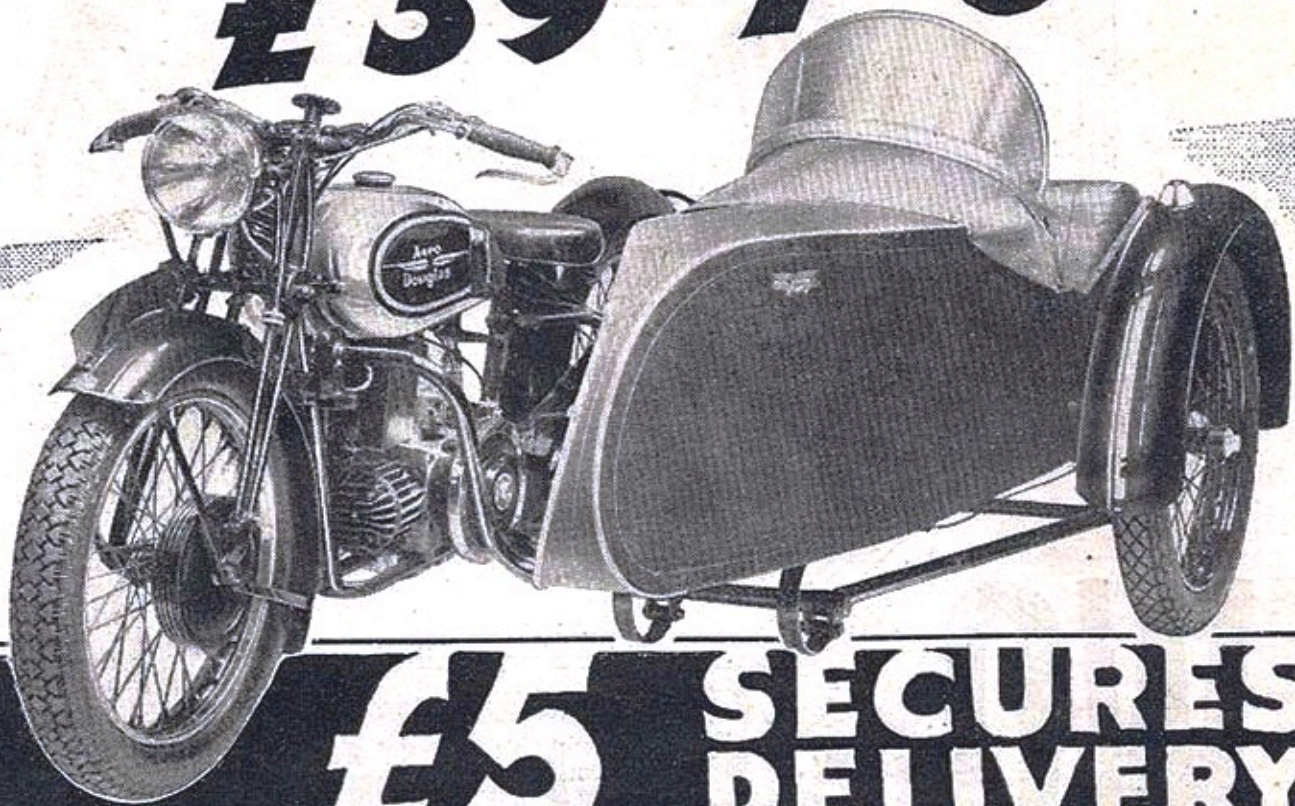
So the man in the photo is definitely NOT Edwin Douglas but could be E.W. White the Foreman responsible for the production of the bike.

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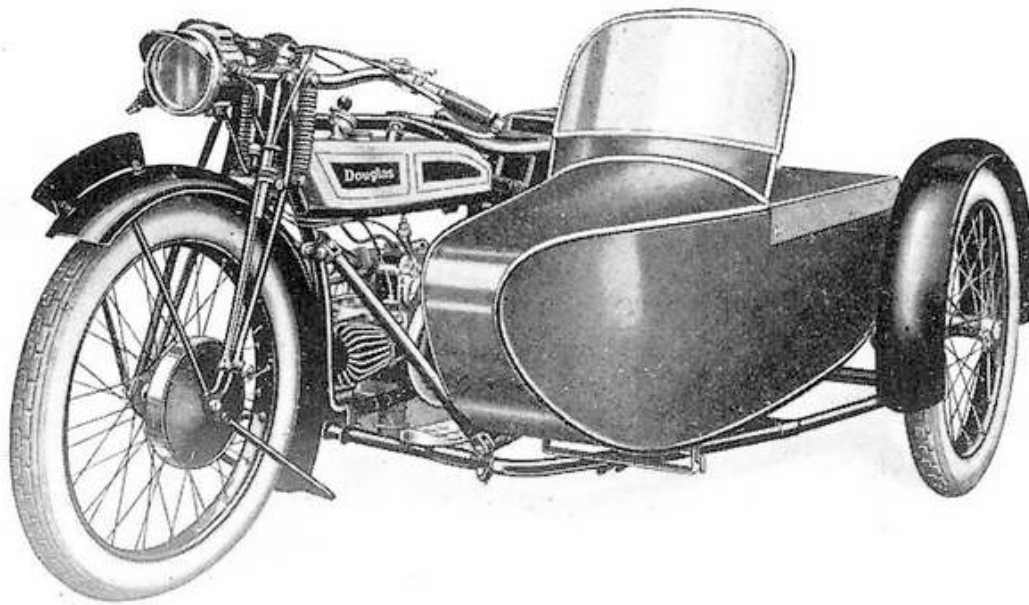
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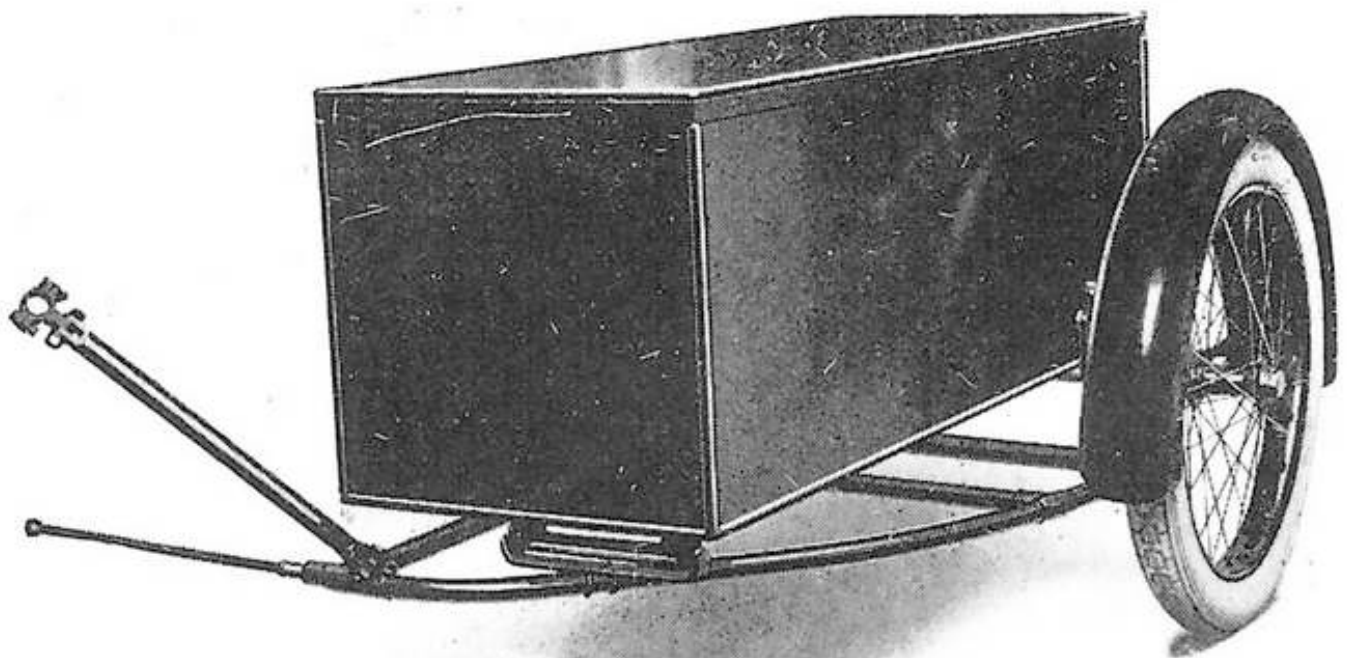
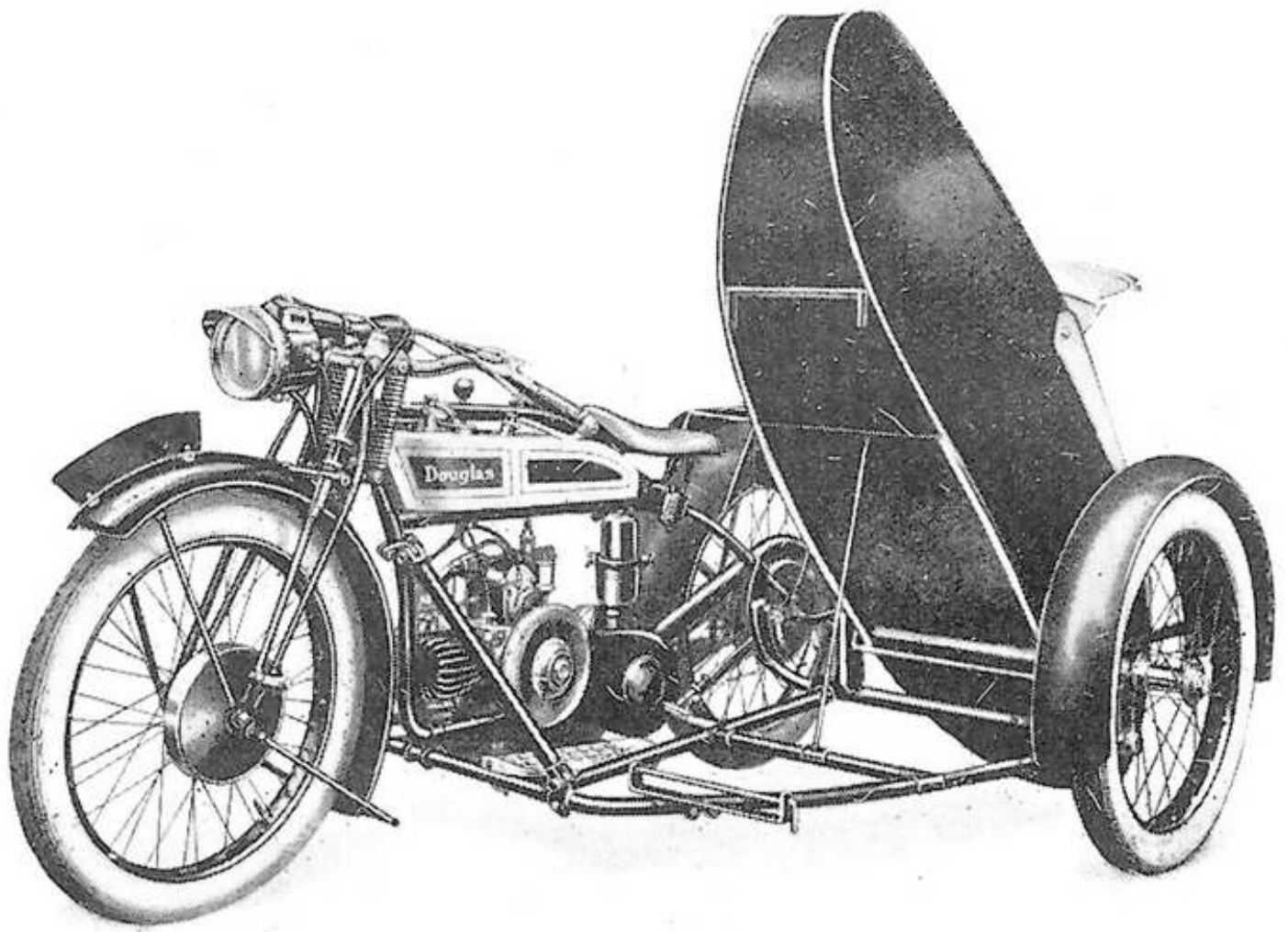
An entirely new type of Sidecar chassis has been produced for use with the Model "E.W. DOUGLAS." All the attachment lugs necessary are already included in the design of the Motor cycle. As the chassis is rigidly secured to the main lugs of the machine, it is not necessary to use the usual drop stay or support from the saddle.

The body is rigidly bolted to the back spring dumb iron and to a demountable hinged fitting at the front. By removal of the quickly-detachable hinged pin, the whole of the body can be raised and supported from the frame by means of a convenient stay fitted underneath the body, which affords easy access to the left-hand side of the Motor cycle.

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Hood, £2 - 15 - 0	Stand, £1 - 0 - 0
Sidecar Lamp, 5/-	

The above Model can be fitted with Door, £1 - 0 - 0.



1955 Douglas Dragonfly

Years produced: 1955-1957

Total production:

1,500 (approx.)

Claimed power:

17hp @ 5,500rpm

Top speed:

70mph (approx.)

Engine type:

348cc overhead valve, air cooled opposed twin

Weight:

(dry) 165.6kg (365lb)

MPG:

55mpg (est.)

Price then: NA

1955 Douglas Dragonfly

Source: motorcycleclassics.com

Photos and text by Roland Brown

Cruising along with the speedo in its big nacelle reading about 50mph, the elderly 1955 Douglas Dragonfly felt so smooth and stable I couldn't help being impressed. For a bike built just more than half a century ago, the 350cc flat twin seemed like a sophisticated and efficient machine that must surely have been an excellent all-rounder back in the mid-Fifties.

The Dragonfly was comfortable, too, thanks to a roomy riding position and reasonably good suspension. And I'm sure I can't be the only one who finds its look curiously attractive, especially the distinctive way the nacelle leads into the large, rounded gas tank.

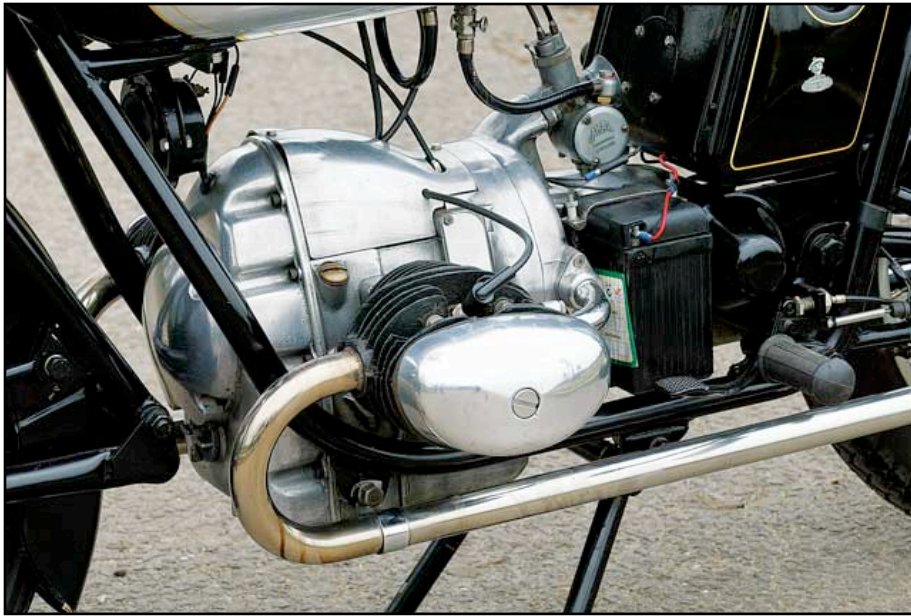
But while my impression of the Douglas Dragonfly was positive, that wasn't how most motorcyclists regarded the bike back in 1955. Instead of being a big success, the Dragonfly sold so slowly following its introduction that Douglas — which had built its first motorcycle back in 1907 and had won the Junior TT as long ago as 1912 — was taken over in 1956, and ceased bike production altogether a year later.

Good, but not great

Such a hasty demise doesn't reflect well on the Douglas Dragonfly, and perhaps the bike's weakness was exposed when, shortly after my ride, I sat down to make some notes — and had trouble remembering very much about the experience. Smoothness and efficiency are all very well in a motorcycle, after all, but plenty of rival bikes provided a lot more performance and excitement than the Douglas Dragonfly.

It would be wrong to blame the Dragonfly for causing the end of Douglas motorcycles, because the Bristol firm had been struggling for years. Its high point had arguably come in 1923, with victories in both the Senior and Sidecar TTs, the latter with an innovative leaning outfit piloted by Freddie





Dixon. But Douglas later suffered a string of financial collapses, notably in 1937 following the deaths of founding members William Douglas and his son, John.

Despite that setback, Douglas was reasonably successful during World War II, gaining work with trucks, aircraft parts and generators. The firm had always been versatile, having built cars and tractors, among other things, in its early days. After World War II, Douglas recommenced bike production with a new model called the Douglas T35, whose 348cc

flat-twin engine was based on the generator — not the most promising heritage! The twin-downtube frame was developed from that of the Endeavour, which had been Douglas' first flat twin with BMW-style transverse cylinders when launched in 1934.

The T35 stood out when launched in 1947, because most rival British bikes were simple rigid-framed singles. By comparison, designer George Halliday's machine seemed relatively sophisticated, despite its engine's humble origins. As well as

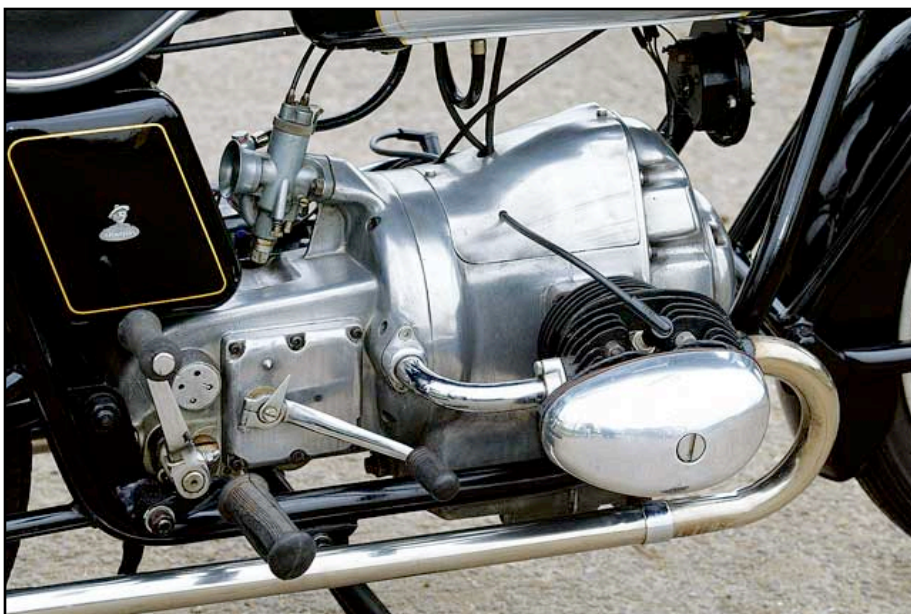
its twin-cylinder engine, Douglas motorcycles featured a patented torsion bar (twisting metal rods instead of coil springs) suspension system at both ends. But the T35 suffered with a number of problems. Various minor design flaws, poor quality control and use of sub-standard materials combined to give Douglas motorcycles a reputation for poor reliability.

The T35 was improved over the years, being produced in a series of updated versions, beginning with the MkII and ending with the MkV. But Douglas was in a worse financial position than ever by the time the MkIII model was launched in 1948, and the firm went into receivership later that year. Although production continued, expenditure was severely restricted and there was little chance of a full recovery.

Soldiering on

Some racing and development work continued, under the control of former race ace Freddie Dixon. In 1950, the firm introduced two sporty versions of the T35, the 80 Plus and 90 Plus, named after their claimed top speeds of 80mph and 90mph, respectively. Engine changes for both included new cylinder heads, extra cooling fins and a strengthened crankshaft. In addition, the 90 Plus had a higher compression ratio, and each engine was dyno-tested to confirm it produced at least 25hp. The 90 Plus just about lived up to its name, which meant it performed pretty well, but Douglas motorcycles continued to struggle in the early 1950s.

Hopes were boosted in 1954 with the unveiling of the Dragonfly, which combined a new chassis with a modified version of the 348cc





engine. When launched at the Earl's Court motorcycle show in London, the model made quite an impact, largely due to its striking styling. The sheet steel nacelle held the 80mph speedo, a smaller ammeter and the ignition switch, as well as the headlamp.

The new engine retained the traditional T35 capacity of 348cc from near-square dimensions of 60.8mm by 60mm bore and stroke, but was influenced both by the 90 Plus and a 500cc prototype that had been developed and then abandoned a few years earlier. The Dragonfly's cylinder heads were based on those of the 500, while the bottom end was strengthened in 90 Plus style with stronger crankcase webs and an upgraded lubrication system.

Like the T35, the Douglas Dragonfly used chain final drive rather than a BMW-style shaft. Because the crankshaft was in line with the bike, this required a bevel-gear system between the four-speed gearbox and the front sprocket, to turn the drive through 90 degrees. The rectifier and coil were located under the large gas tank; other electrical components



lived on top of the engine, under an aluminum plate that helped give the engine a notably smooth look.

Chassis specialist Reynolds built the twin-downtube frame and the front suspension, which employed the pivoted, twin-shock system designed by Ernie Earles, who also styled the Dragonfly's nacelle. At the rear, twin shocks replaced Douglas' previous torsion bar suspension system, and were considered a sophisticated feature at the time. At 365lb dry the Dragonfly was slightly heavier than

the T35 MkV, but was respectably light given its sturdy chassis.

On the road

This bike, a very clean and nicely restored 1955 model, felt reasonably light once I'd managed to haul it off its rather stubborn center-stand. The way the nacelle remained in position when I turned the bars seemed strange at first, but in most respects the Douglas was normal and well behaved. Its engine started easily enough, given a fairly light kick of the starter lever, and didn't seem particularly noisy



despite the model's reputation for rattling.

That was an indication that this recently rebuilt engine was in good condition, and the Douglas ran well throughout my test. There was a fair bit of noise when I got under way, though it was a not-particularly-pleasant whining sound from the engine, which largely drowned out the restrained note from the Dragonfly's dual mufflers. At least the flat twin was impressively smooth.

Given that the Dragonfly produces only 17hp, I shouldn't have been surprised that its performance was less than dramatic. Acceleration away from a standstill was labored, even when the engine was revved reasonably hard (there was no tachometer to check). And although its single Amal carb gave reasonably crisp low-rev response that made slow-speed maneuvering easy, the bike didn't have much low-rev punch. At least it cruised comfortably at 50mph or slightly more, aided by the roomy, big-bike feel provided by the riding position.

Perhaps it was unfair to have expected much more, because this was after all only a 350cc twin. It seems strange, however, that the new flagship should be notably slower than its T35 predecessor. In its defense, the bike cruises smoothly and pleasantly between 50 and 60mph on a flat road, feeling as though it would happily do so until its big 24ltr (6.5gal) tank ran dry. Its four-speed

gearbox worked well, too, and was apparently a big improvement on the previous transmission. Top speed was just over 70mph, but given this bike's age and fairly recent rebuild, I didn't try to reach that.

There wasn't much wrong with the Dragonfly's chassis, at least by the standards of 1955. At a time when most bikes had crude telescopic forks and plunger rear suspension, the Douglas' layout of Earles fork front and twin shock rear end was advanced for any bike, let alone a middleweight. The ride is reasonably firm and well controlled, and the Douglas steers with a nicely neutral feel and is very stable, even over bumps.

The Dragonfly's brakes were heavily criticized in a 1955 Motor Cycling road test, but this bike's stoppers were no worse than I'd expected of the typical period use of single-leading-shoe drums at each end. The front drum needed a firm squeeze of the lever, but didn't give any drama. And there was no

faulting the grip from the Dragonfly's Avon Roadrunners, better rubber than would have been available when the bike was new.

Unfortunately for Douglas, the Dragonfly tended to spend far too long on the showroom floor after the model belatedly reached the dealers in 1955, nine months after its Earl's Court introduction. That lukewarm first magazine road test, plus the bike's modest performance, relatively high price and Douglas's reputation for mixed reliability and quality control, ensured that the model wasn't the success the Bristol firm so badly needed.

In 1956, Douglas was taken over by a firm called the Westinghouse Brake & Signal Company. Motorcycle production was abandoned in the following spring, after about 1,500 units had been built. The final batch was sold at cut-rate prices by south London dealer Pride & Clarke. Another of the British motorcycle industry's best-known marques was gone.



A Rare 1956 Douglas Dragonfly



is back on the Road

Story by Greg Williams
Photos by Ameer Reehal
Source: Tractionlife.com

A Douglas Dragonfly is distinctive, but it certainly isn't the most widely recognized British motorcycle. The 350cc flat twin touring machine was built in an era – the mid 1950s — when many British manufacturers were trying to design clean, economical and reliable transportation.

Produced by Douglas Motorcycles, this 1956 Dragonfly was restored by its owner, John Whitby of Calgary. He readily admits he enjoys breathing life back into some of the lesser known British bikes – no Triumph Bonneville or Norton Commandos for him. Whitby, 45, has been involved in the motorcycle scene for many years, and quite literally has British motorcycles in his blood. His parents moved from England to Canada in 1957, and

back home their transportation had been a Norton ES2. And Whitby's granddad used an Ariel Square Four with a Watsonian double-adult sidecar as daily transport.

Whitby hasn't been without a motorcycle since 1971, and his passion for quality restoration started when he took apart and refinished a 1966 Honda CS65. "It turned into a sickness from there," Whitby says of his restoration hobby. "The Japanese bikes were easy to find in the early 1980s." Then along came a Triton, a mix of a pre-unit Triumph T110 engine mounted in a Norton International frame. That introduction to British iron sealed the deal, and Whitby has since restored some of the more esoteric English bikes including a

Velocette LE and a Francis Barnett Merlin. "They have to be odd and different. They have to be interesting restoration projects."

Enter the 1956 Douglas Dragonfly. Calgary BMW enthusiast Dave Larmour bought the Douglas in the late 1970s when he was living in Toronto. Apparently, the bike had been imported into Canada from England in 1976. There is interesting documentation still with the bike that indicates it came across in a Bombardier/Can-Am shipping container with several other British motorcycles. Little more than that is known about how the bike wound up on this side of the pond. Not that Douglas machines hadn't previously been imported to Canada for retail. A two-page catalogue distributed in

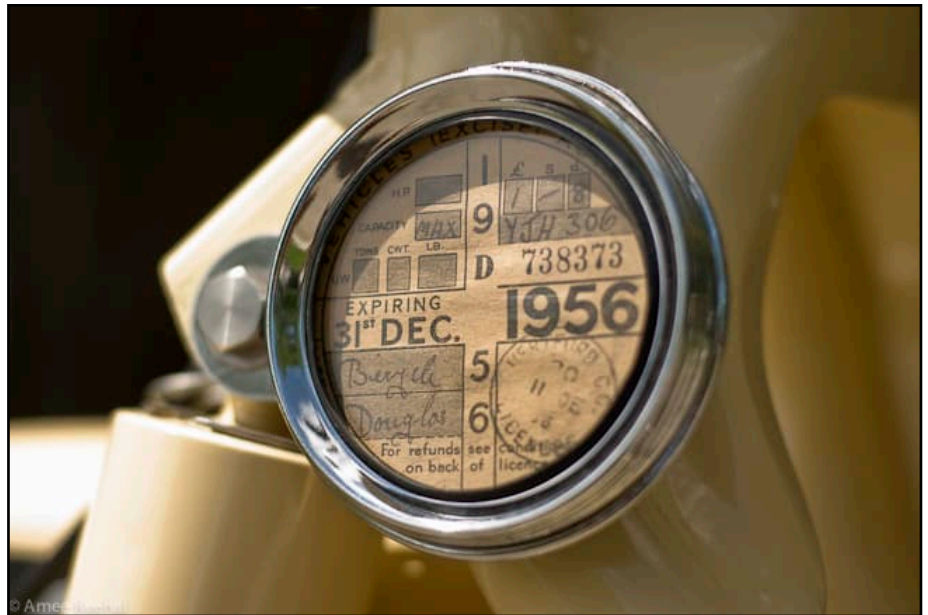
1935 by Nicholson Bros. Motorcycles of Saskatoon, Sask. lists several models of Douglas machines the prairie dealer offered for sale.

According to the serial number, and as authenticated by the London Douglas Motorcycle Club, this particular bike was the second-last to leave the Bristol-based production line. Approximately 1,600 Dragonflies were built.

When Larmour bought the Douglas it was together and running but he disassembled the Dragonfly for restoration and never followed through. He stripped all of the metal parts and had even gone so far as to have the tinwork repaired. The engine, however, was given to a Toronto-area mechanic who paid it little attention for the six or seven years it was under his care. Larmour got the parts back, put everything into boxes, and moved to Calgary.

Whitby met Larmour in the mid-1980s, thanks to a common interest in BMW motorcycles. *"(Dave) had the Douglas because the flat twin engine reminded him of the BMW,"* Whitby says. *"I first heard about Dave's Douglas in 1987. And I begged him to sell it to me for years."*

When the project finally changed hands in late 2005 Whitby joined the London Douglas Motorcycle Club, which has become the only source for parts for the flat twin machines. Using the parts books that came with the project Whitby inventoried the pieces he had. All that was really missing were the cam followers, and a few odds and ends that the club had in stock, and he ordered them up. The crank and rods were fine, the cylinders had



been resleeved and new pistons and rings were in the box.

"The speedo was only showing 17,620 miles, and I'm not sure if that's original, but most of the engine internals were in really good shape," Whitby confirms. He polished the aluminum, cleaned and painted the cylinders, and put together the engine. The only real issue he had with the engine is that replacement points are not available for the Miller distributor – Whitby modified a set of Lucas points originally intended for a Triumph twin.

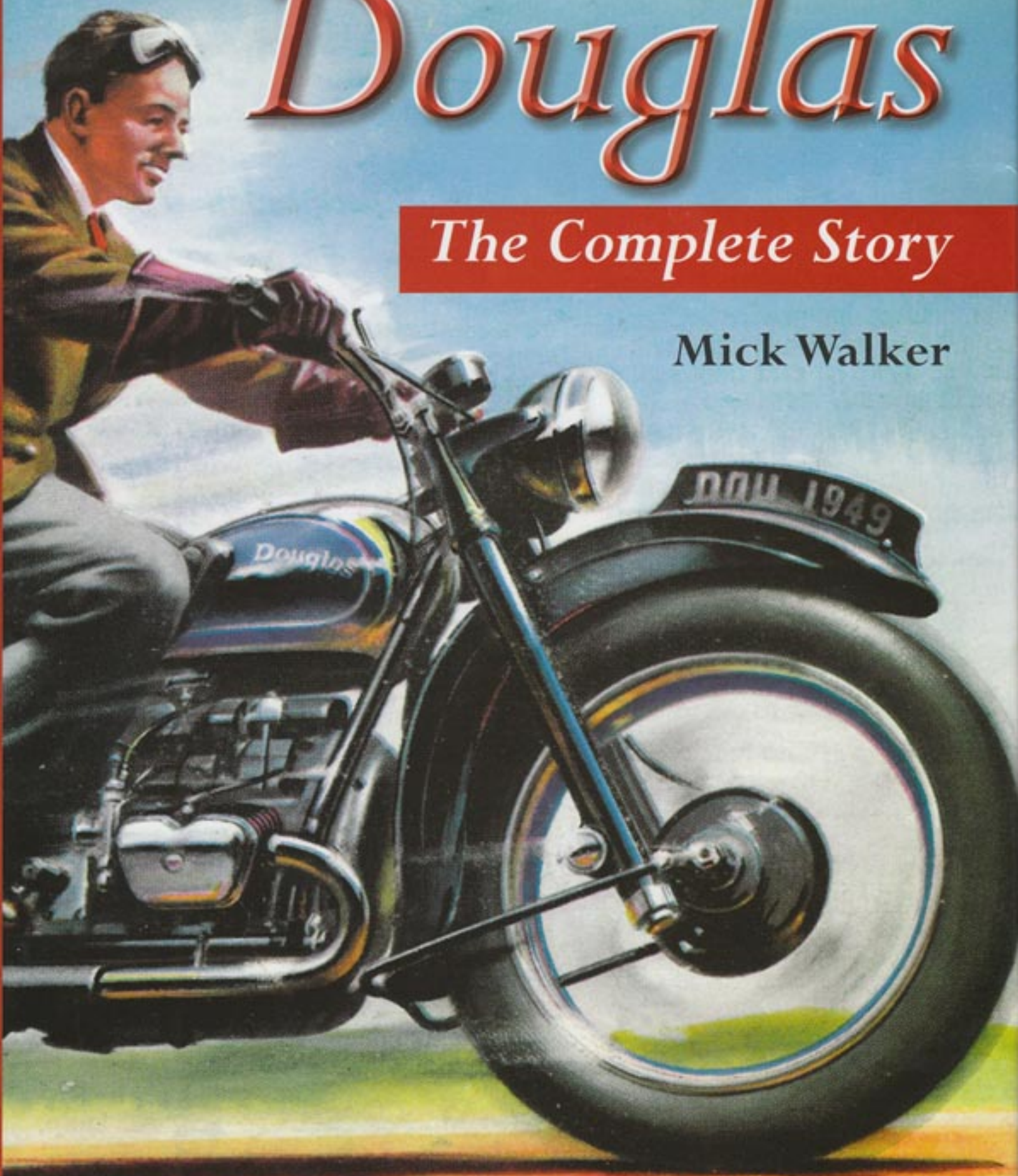
Whitby's Douglas left the factory finished in black. But, as stone (a beige/cream colour) and green was an option in 1956, Whitby sprayed all of the parts himself in the flashier colour scheme. Whitby spoked and trued his own wheels, and says assembly of the Dragonfly was really very straightforward – he was even able to use the original cloth-covered control cables that came with the bike. Once all together (he had it finished in just three months), the little machine started first kick, and as Whitby says, *"It sounds just like a Singer sewing machine."*



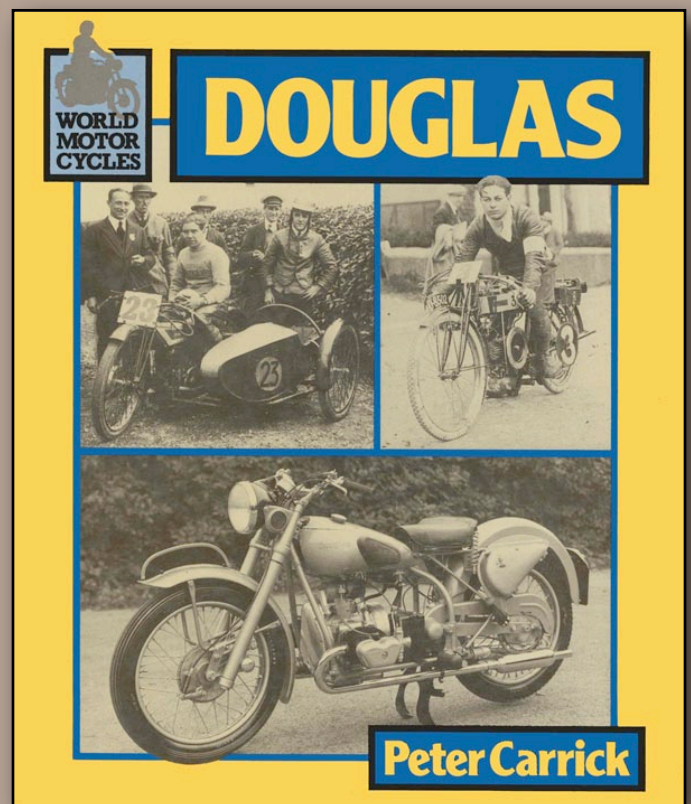
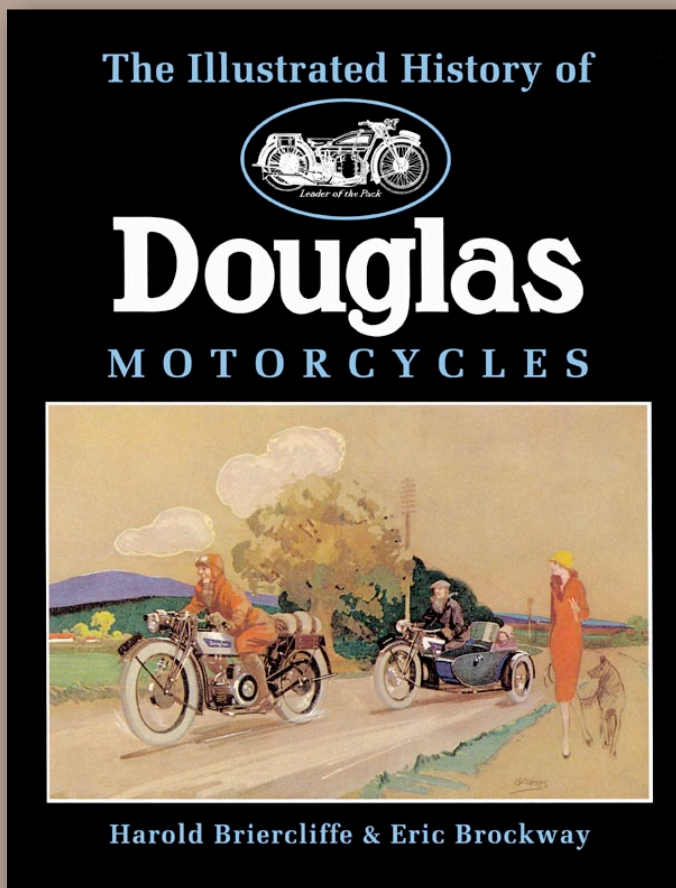
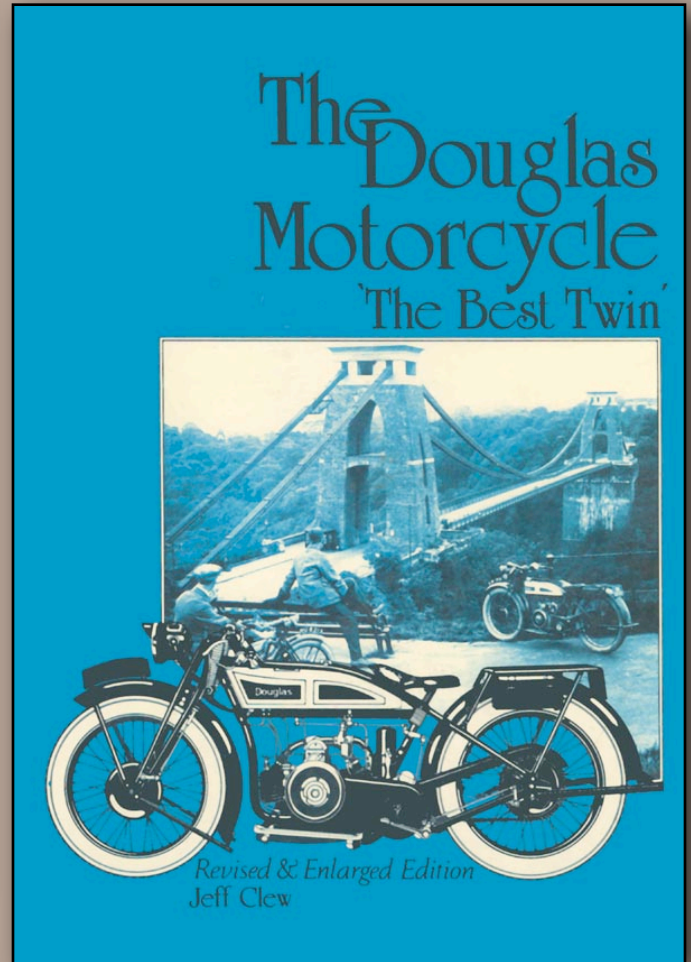
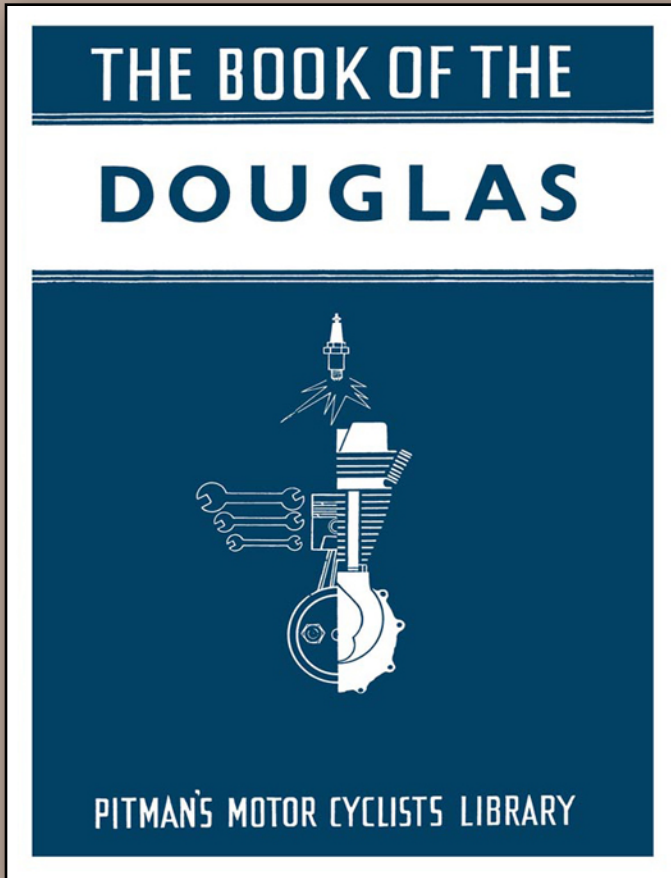
Douglas

The Complete Story

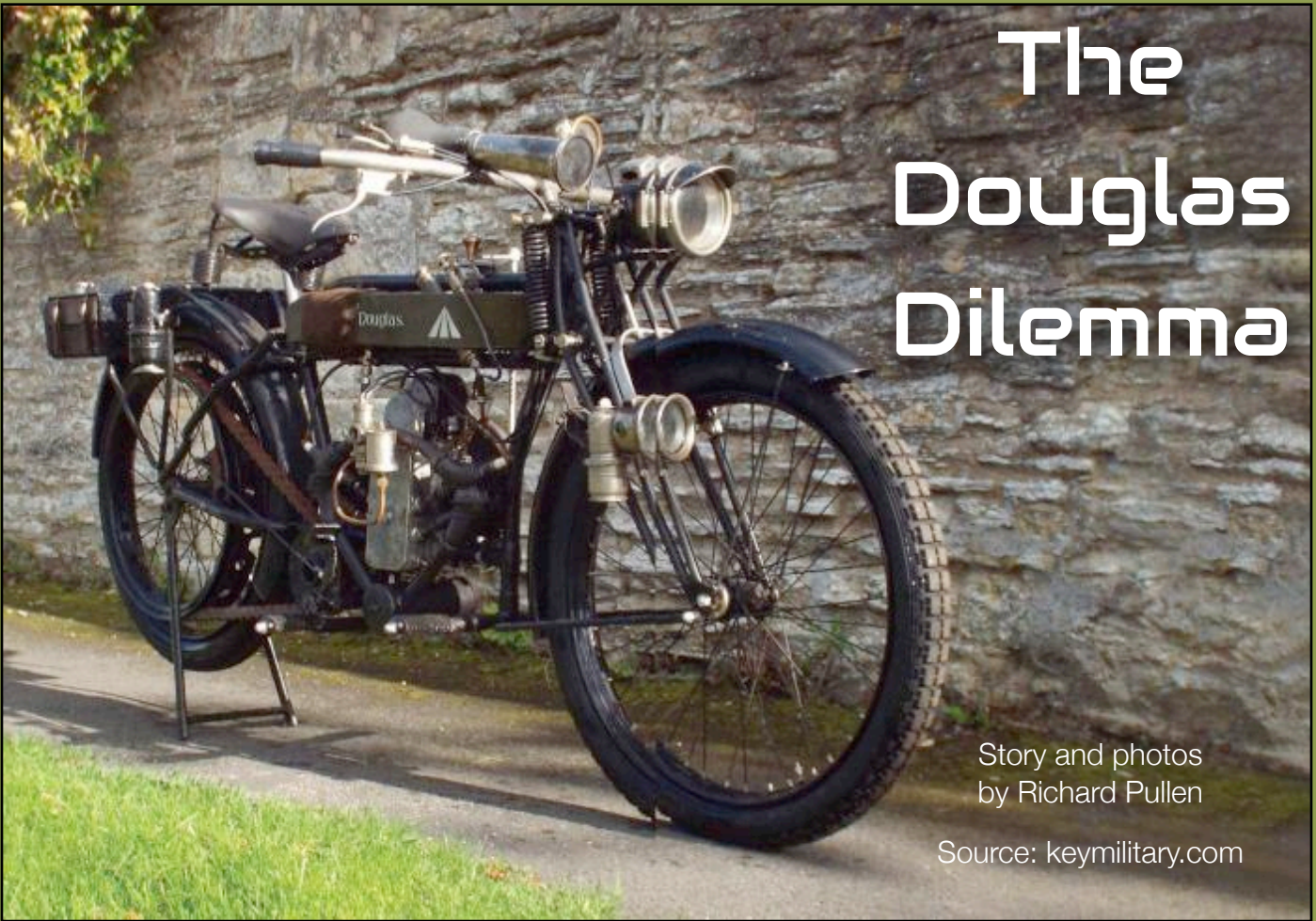
Mick Walker



BOOKS ON DOUGLAS MOTORBIKES



The Douglas Dilemma



Story and photos
by Richard Pullen

Source: keymilitary.com

The remarkable story of how a World War One veteran was saved from the scrap heap

‘The Douglas is a bit different to a modern motorcycle as it has no clutch, no kick starter, and no twist grip’

The motorcycle’s role in World War One is sometimes overlooked and many people do not realise just how vital and dangerous the work of a dispatch rider often was.

They could be riding through shot and shell over the most awful terrain as the enemy did their best to try and stop messages getting through. The dispatch rider needed a motorcycle that could be relied on and by 1914, motorcyclists serving with the British Army had a huge number of machines and makers to choose from. These included brands such as Clyno, Norton, Triumph,

Zenith, P&M, Matchless and Sunbeam, to name just a few. However, there was one maker which will always be synonymous with the Great War dispatch riders – Douglas motorcycles.

In 1906, the Douglas Engineering Company of Kingswood, Bristol bought the rights for an engine designed by W Barter. Barter had tried to produce the engine himself, but his company had not been a great success, so now Douglas hoped it could do better. Until then, Douglas had been producing castings for drain covers, lamp posts and so on, but in 1907 the company’s motorcycle entered the market and soon became a sought-after machine.

The Douglas 2 3/4hp was an excellent creation and was renowned for being ‘vibration-less’

due to the horizontal, ‘fore and aft’ twin arrangement. With the outbreak of war in 1914, the British Army needed thousands of motorcycles and Douglas became one of the main suppliers to the War Office; eventually supplying around 70,000 2 3/4hp and 4hp motorcycles. The 350cc Douglas 2 3/4hp leant itself perfectly to motorcycle duties such as dispatch and convoy work in every theatre of the war, from France and Belgium to Salonika and East Africa.

This pedigree and heritage are what first drew me to the Douglas and so I started to search for a project. For a long time, the prices of veteran bikes like the Douglas had remained steady, but not long before I started the search, prices started to rise and I soon found myself priced out of the market. Or so I thought. One lunchtime, while

scouring the small ads, I found one for an old Douglas that had been chopped up. I found out that the bike had been bought as war surplus by a farmer in 1918 and ridden almost to destruction. It was then chopped up and nailed to a table to make a wood saw, with the circular saw where the back wheel would have been. The old machine was too good to carry on being a saw; it needed to be turned back into a motorcycle again.

When I got the bike, there was very little left of the frame and the forks were in a terrible state. The wheels, seat, mudguards, luggage rack and lights had been lost and I started to regret buying the box full of old Douglas bits and decided I would be best to use them as spares for a better bike if I could find one. Just a few weeks later I came across a 1918 Douglas 2 3/4 hp frame and front forks on an internet auction site. The only downside was that it was 9,000 miles away in Western Australia and had been at the back of a barn with a tractor parked on top of it for the last 30 years.

Despite this, I put in a bid for just £120 which turned out to be successful. When it arrived in the UK, I had to collect it from customs at the airport, but not before it had been sprayed with insecticide to kill any spiders or scorpions that may have hitched a lift from the outback.

Even though it had been sprayed, I was a bit worried about black widows and left the frame out in the snow for a week before I went near it. Once I was happy that the spiders were all dead, I straightened the frame.

‘Once I was happy that the spiders were all dead, I straightened the frame’





However, it was worse than I thought, so I ended up un-brazing all the joints and putting new tube in where it was needed. This was not too bad as it gave me a chance to use the parts of the original frame that had come with the bike, including the all-important casting with the frame number stamped into it.

The frame reconstruction was a bit of a pain but I've ended with a good one now that has all the original parts and what didn't originally come from this bike is from a genuine 102-year-old Douglas. I started work on the rest of the bike, which looked easy compared to rebuilding the frame. The petrol tank was found in good order and was even army green under the silver paint.

After the war, Douglas, and other manufacturers, bought many of their old worn out and battle-weary War Department machines back from the army. The old motorcycles

were reconditioned, repainted, and sold on to civilian buyers. There is quite some controversy about the colour of World War One vehicles, especially small ones like motor-



cycles. Looking at period photographs and in what few records still survive, I decided that the petrol tank would be green, and the rest would be black.

Quite a lot of dispatch bikes were left in their civvy colour scheme, but as the war went on, they seem to have started to make them more military. Some were mid-brown, and some were green, either seems to be correct, depending on the year of the bike.

The engine of the Douglas is quite simple, but also very attractive with its exposed valves, external flywheel, and symmetrical design. Inside the engine, I found that the plate holding all the timing gear in place was homemade and certainly would not have passed inspection at the Douglas factory. I decided to leave it as is. It works perfectly well and adds to the history of the bike – it may have been made in the field as an emergency repair, who knows?

Other insurmountable problems like the missing mudguards and wheels were soon solved as the mudguards are being reproduced, the wheel hubs are available from the Douglas Club and the complicated rear-drive ring for the belt drive was being remade by an excellent engineer in the Netherlands. Other parts like the seat, handlebars, lights and acetylene generator just took a bit of patience and scouring of every stall at quite a few autojumbles.

‘It is back on the road again for everyone to see and I love taking it to shows’

I was particularly pleased with the front headlight. I found it at a car boot sale in Northern France and it even has WD stamped into the side and on one of the brackets. The acetylene lights are not great; they



do glow nicely, but I try not to use the bike at night.

The Douglas has no clutch, no kickstarter, and no twist grip. The first time I rode it, I thought I would never get the hang of it, but it is amazing how quickly you pick it up. You must set all the levers up and prime the petrol and the oil, then run it off and get your leg over quick before it goes off without you.

If starting was not too much of a handful, stopping seems even more difficult. The stirrup brakes are there just for show, you would not want to have to rely on them, so you must be ready and just potter along. Also, there are only two gears, high and low and no clutch or a proper neutral, so a moving stop/start at the traffic lights has to be timed correctly or you have to start all over again.

‘There was one maker which will always be synonymous with the Great War Dispatch Riders’

I am not sure what my Douglas is worth, but I would not sell it for a million pounds as I put too much work into it. I do not feel like this was a restoration, instead, I feel like I have nursed a friend back to health and we have been through too much together to think about selling.

Some people may say that the old Douglas was too far gone and should have just been used for spares, but I like to think I have saved an old World War One veteran. It is back on the road again for everyone to see and I love taking it to shows, or to the local school for the kids to look at. It makes all the late nights, welding, searching for parts and worrying about spiders worthwhile.





Douglas.

Bert Pol's

**1914 Douglas, model X
Ladies Model**





Douglas.

B-2901

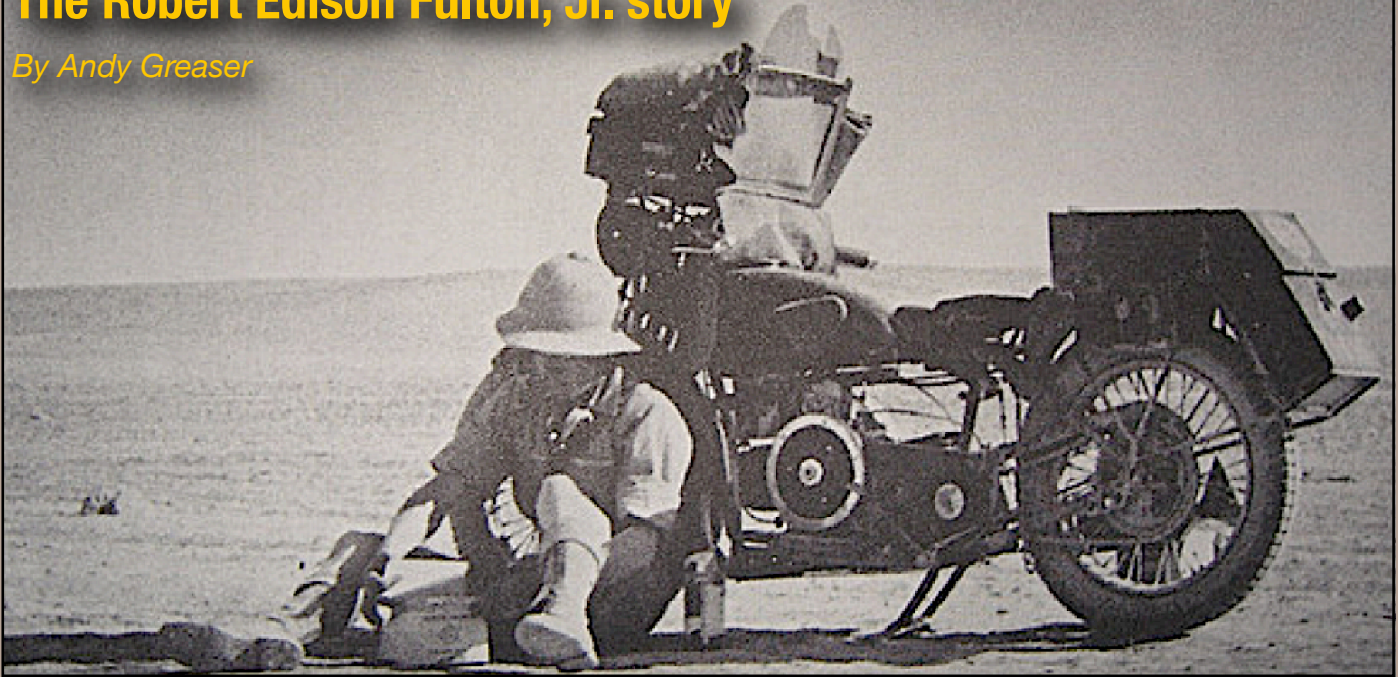




**The two Royal Princes
Prince Albert (foreground) and Prince Henry
at Cambridge University
13th February 1920**

Solo around the world in 1932: The Robert Edison Fulton, Jr. story

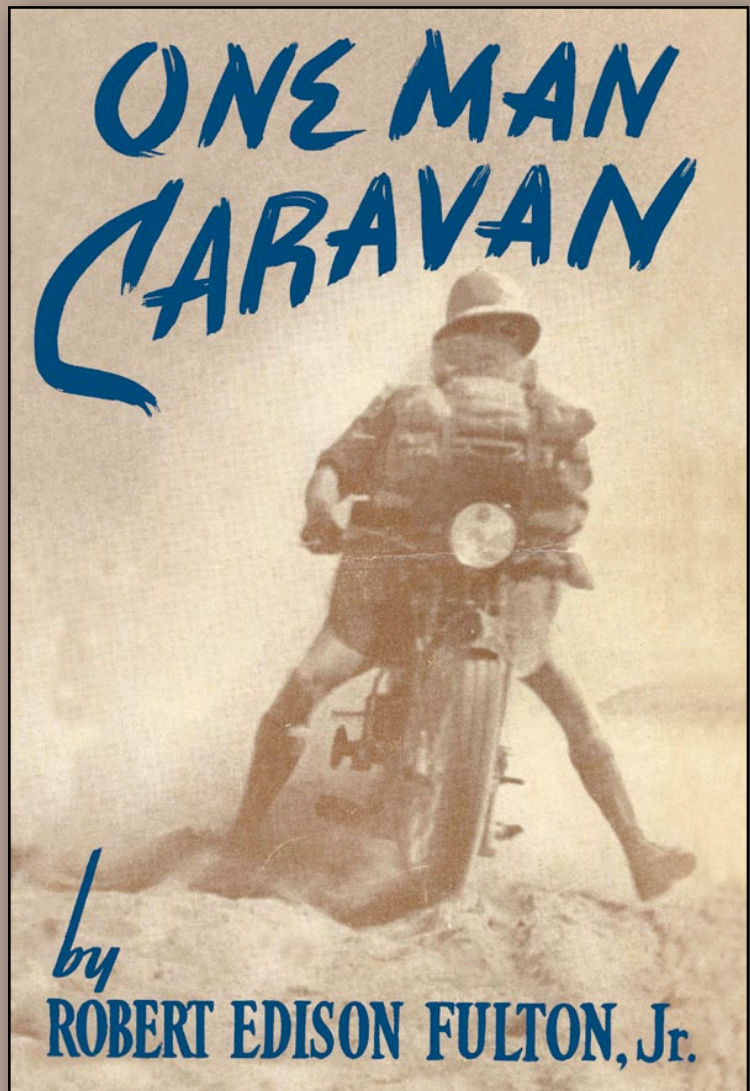
By Andy Greaser



On this day in 1909, one of motorcycling's greatest adventurers, Robert Edison Fulton, Jr., was born. That's why today's article is a look at his life, journey and legacy.

One of motorcycling's greatest adventurers, huh? If a 1930s solo circumnavigation by motorcycle doesn't put a rider in that pantheon, I'm not sure what does. Fulton's 18-month journey (1932-33) on a modified Douglas twin (six horsepower!) brought worldwide public exposure to motorcycles and what they could do. His trip also recorded the world as it was in those days, when much of Asia was still under colonial rule, maps didn't exist for some of his route, and many people had never even seen a motorcycle.

Fulton believed that with a name like his, he was bound for an interesting life. Named for both inventor Robert Fulton and his father's friend, Thomas Edison, his childhood was spent traveling and learning about machines, buildings and the sciences. His parents' wealth allowed him to experience the world as few others did, including a trip to the opening of Tuthankamun's tomb in 1923. After graduating from Harvard with a degree in architecture, Fulton's future was open and full of possibility. But, as he begins the book, "The unheeding tongue may lead to torturous trails!"



The trip that would change his life started with an offhand comment at a dinner party, probably to impress the girl asking if he'd be sailing home after his graduate work in Vienna. "Oh no," Fulton responded. "I'm going around the world on a motorcycle!" Who was the more startled, the seven persons around me or myself, I really can't say. I recall only that the moment I let that statement slip, I knew I'd done something inexplicably peculiar."

Fulton didn't know he was sitting across from Kenton Redgrave, owner of Douglas Motorcycles. Redgrave loved the idea and offered a free machine, plus any modifications necessary for the journey. Unable to back down from his bluff, especially now that a free motorcycle was at stake, Fulton bought some maps and got to work. Modifications to the Douglas included a second fuel tank, more storage, a windshield, and car tires in a common size for easy repairs and replacements. With the extra fuel, the Douglas could go 350 miles between fill-ups, averaging an impressive 50 miles per gallon. With the bike ready and "adventure...crooking her finger and beckoning," motorcycle and rider set off into the unknown.

Fulton ditched some of his heavier gear in the early days of the trip, but a few essentials stayed. Maps and charts were essential for navigation, and a special toolkit kept him rolling (Fulton had just six flats, all rear, on his journey! The factory techs were the only ones to touch the front tire.) Thousands of feet of 35 mm nitrate film stayed in a dark compartment, and the movie camera rode up front in a case. Last, Fulton hid a revolver wrapped in oily rags between his skidplate and the engine, though he mostly used the .32 as a hammer by the end of the trip. No border guards ever found the stowaway. Fulton's odyssey took him across Europe, to the Middle East via Turkey, then through

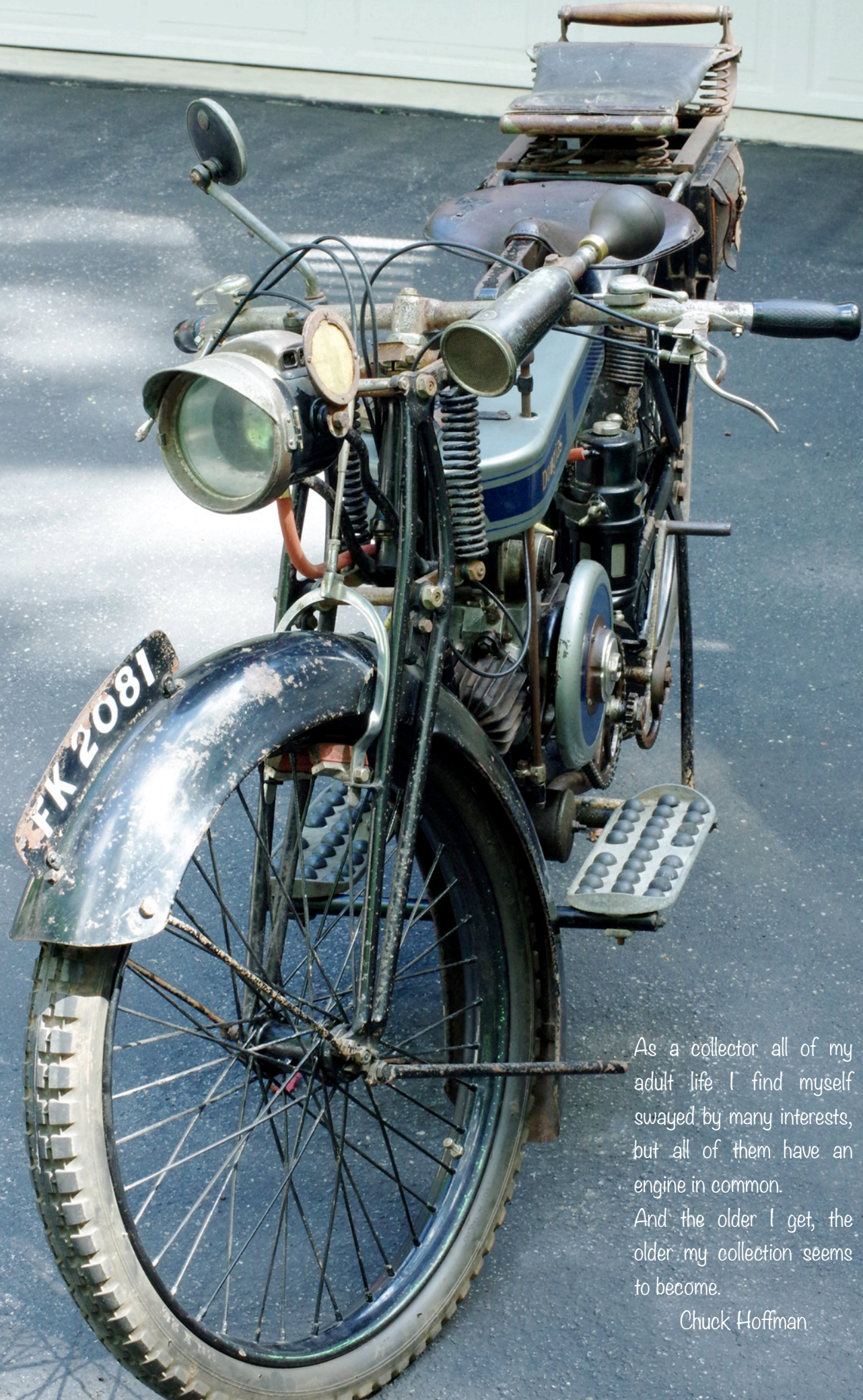
what's now Indonesia to China, Japan, and the United States. Though he'd intended to study the architecture of the world along his trip, the people came to dominate his observations and recording, as well as his reasons for adventuring. Sure, he was shot at, harassed, and frequently in great personal danger, but people largely welcomed him, from nomads to rajahs. He later put all his journals together in a book, *One Man Caravan* (1937).

One adventure is enough for most people, but Fulton never stopped dreaming and exploring. Right up to World War II, he worked as a videographer for Pan-Am, documenting their air-over-ocean flights using the new "Clipper" flying boat. During the war, he designed and built tailgunner simulators for training Air Force recruits. Other highlights from his decades-long, 70-patent career include the Airphibian flying car and the Pentagon's Skyhook, seen famously in the fourth James Bond film.

Fulton is remembered as an explorer, an innovator, a writer, and a motorcyclist of rare caliber. His passing in 2004 saw the conclusion of a life well lived. *If you'd like to learn more about his journey, get a copy of "One Man Caravan" (available on the Amazon web site). You'll be glad you did. Fulton's storytelling is insightful, humorous, and never boastful. If you'd like riding to shape your life, just read what it did for him.*



CHUCK HOFFMAN'S 1924 DOUGLAS 2.75HP



As a collector all of my adult life I find myself swayed by many interests, but all of them have an engine in common. And the older I get, the older my collection seems to become.

Chuck Hoffman



In the summer of 2013 I had just started a restoration on a 1931 Buick and finished a restoration of a 1972 Datsun 240Z. Mecum auctions was having their first auction in Harrisburg Pennsylvania and as I wandered the buildings I was drawn to the motorcycles, and there in the midst of old Harleys, Triumphs, and assorted Japanese makes, was a 1924 Douglas that looked like it had just rolled out of a shed in England, still in good enough shape to jump on and ride. I was intrigued by the exposed flywheel, hand pump oiler and belt drive and decided I would try to buy it.

Luckily I was the winner of that auction, and as I finalized the transaction with the auction company they handed me an envelope with the original warranty card, tax book and other original documents from the mid 1920's.

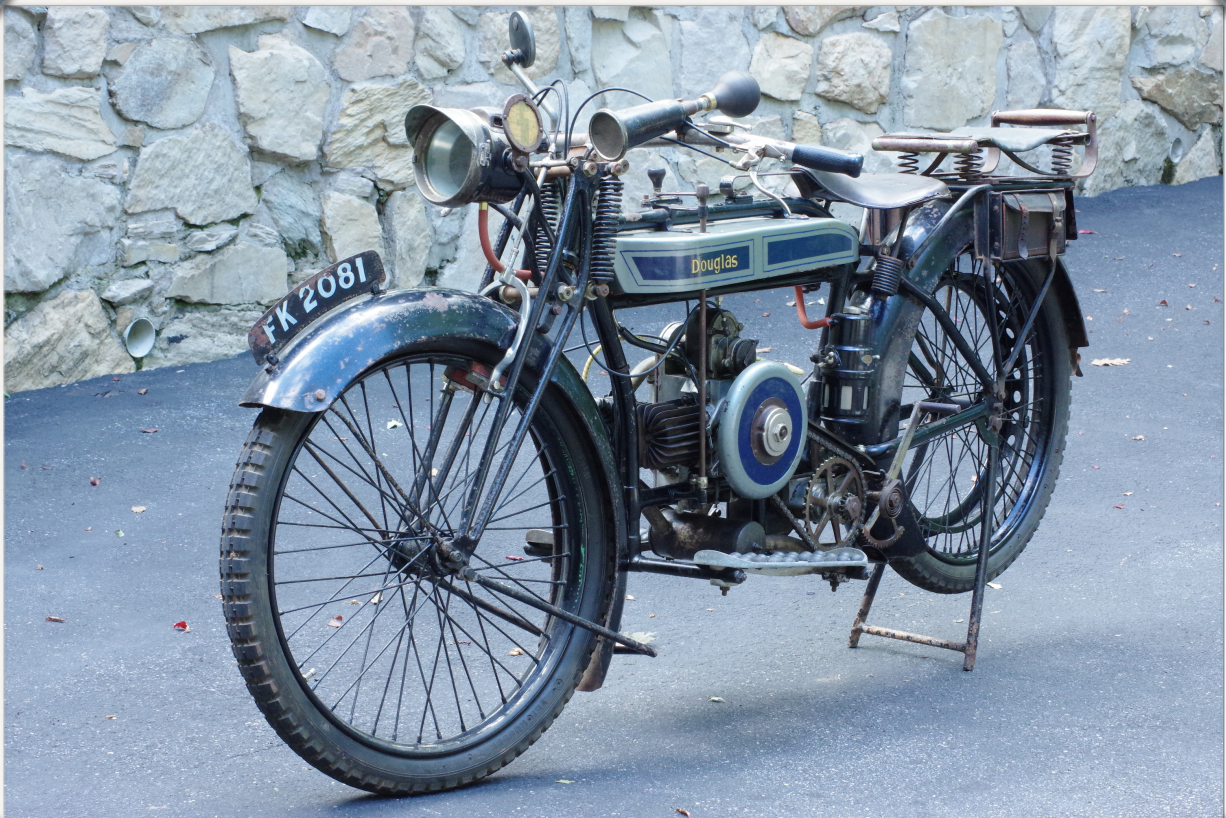
This bike is a 1924 Douglas SW with a 2 3/4HP flat twin engine, 2 speed transmission, kick start, and a clutch. Believe it or not, other models of the Douglas were still available without a clutch in those days. The oiling system is total loss and requires hand pumping. This was one of the last culminations of the Douglas 2

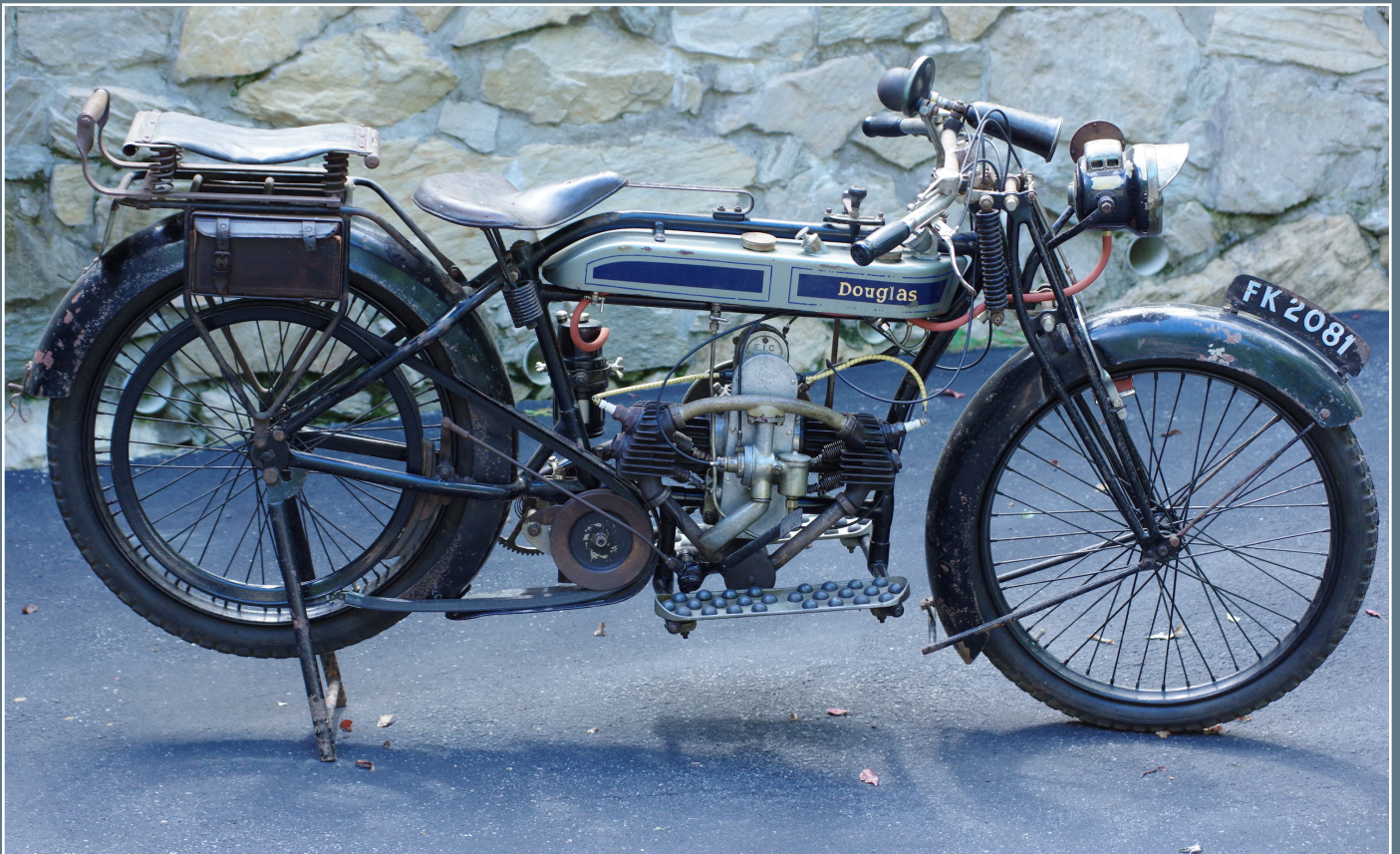
3/4 motorcycles famously used by the British army as dispatch bikes in WWI.

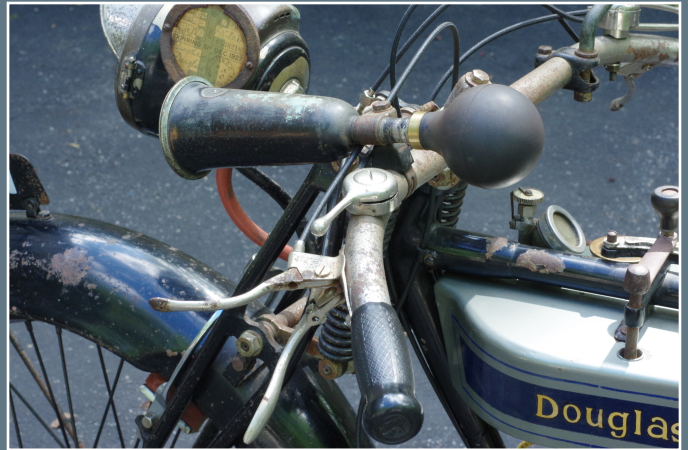
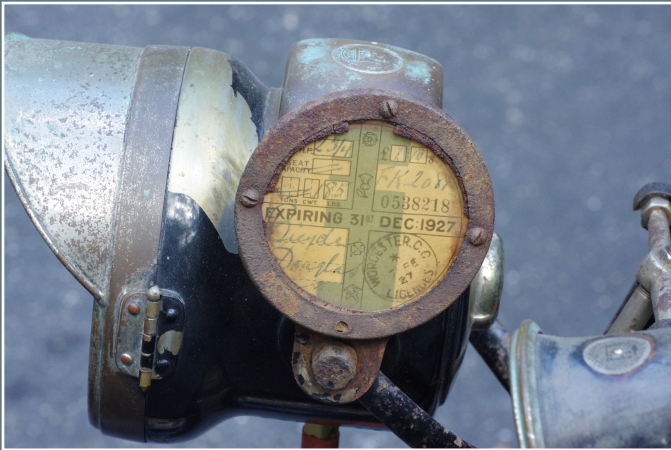
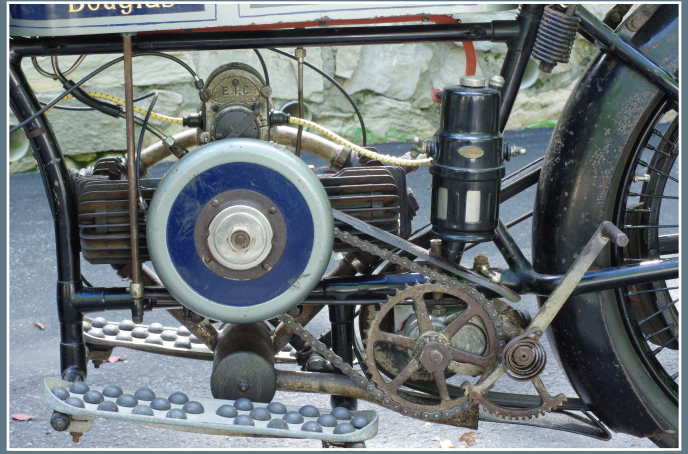
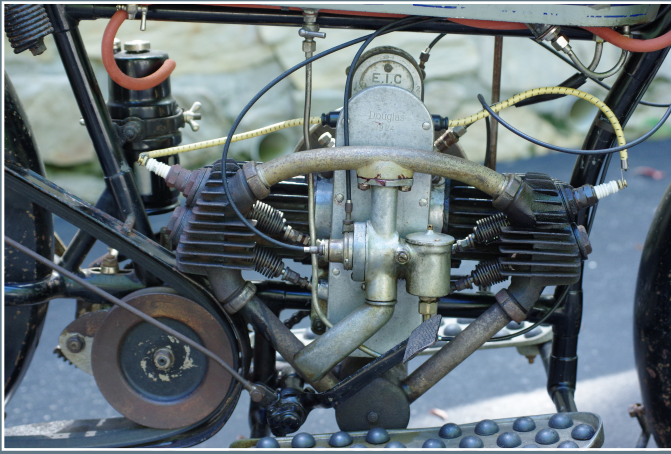
First registered in England in 1924 with the last road use tax on the tax disk as well as the tax book showing as 1927 the bike does not seem to have had much use. My research showed that it was sold at a Cheffin auction in England in October of 2011. That buyer was an American farm machine dealer who had it shipped to the USA with a shipment of farm machinery. The Douglas was then sold to another farm implement dealer in the USA before purchased by me at the Mecum auction.

The Cheffin auction information stated that the motorcycle had stayed in the same Worcestershire village its entire 87 year life, up to that point, having only undergone required maintenance to keep it running. The 1920's vintage documents show that the bike still retains its original frame, engine, and transmission. The only work I did to make the Douglas roadworthy was a carburetor cleaning, clutch rebuild and replacement of the valves and valve guides.

This well documented Douglas remains a time capsule of the early flat twins pioneered by the Douglas Motorcycle Company.









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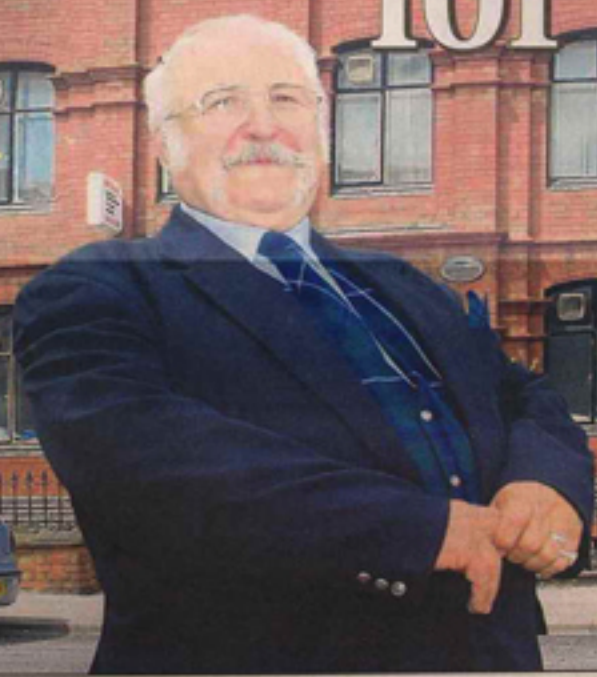
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BRISTOL TIMES

KEEPING YOUR MEMORIES ALIVE

New future for past life



It has recently been revealed that developers want to demolish Kingswood's historic Douglas motorcycle factory and build hundreds of homes there instead. **Gerry Brooke** talks to **Bill Douglas**, whose great-grandfather started the business, to find out more



Classic: A Douglas bike from the Twenties



FOR 100 years, Kingswood has been known as the home of the much loved "Duggles" – motorbikes which could, on the race track anyway, knock spots off any other British machine produced at the time. But intense competition from abroad meant that production came to an end in 1967 and the 12 acres of buildings where thousands of local people were once employed are today used by a number of small businesses. Now Douglas Homes (South West) Ltd – who, I'm told, have no connection with the present Douglas Motor Cycle Club

enthusiasts – say that they have plans to bulldoze the site to make way for up to 350 new homes, a mix of houses, apartments and flats. The phasing of the development, they say, would be timed to fit in with the relocation of businesses currently occupying the site and may not be for some years. Douglas House – a red brick building once used as offices by the motorcycle firm – would be retained and refurbished.



But Bill Douglas, of Downend, whose great-grandfather started the company, told *Bristol Times*: "Despite what people might think, there is no preservation order on the historic office site in Hanham Road. "We tried, through the Douglas motorcycle group, to get the 1902 brick building listed as of historical importance, which would have meant it was safe from demolition. "Of course, in those days the

Douglas brothers were just running an iron foundry – motorbike production came some years later. "The people responsible for 'listing' say that as there is no real indication, for instance a Douglas company sign or the like, on it to signify its importance, they have said no. "It's a great pity because, apart from Cossham Hospital and the old Tower Works, there isn't much heritage left in the area. "And Douglas was a big name which employed thousands and put Kingswood on the map. "Last year, in celebration of the centenary of the founding of

Continued on page 26

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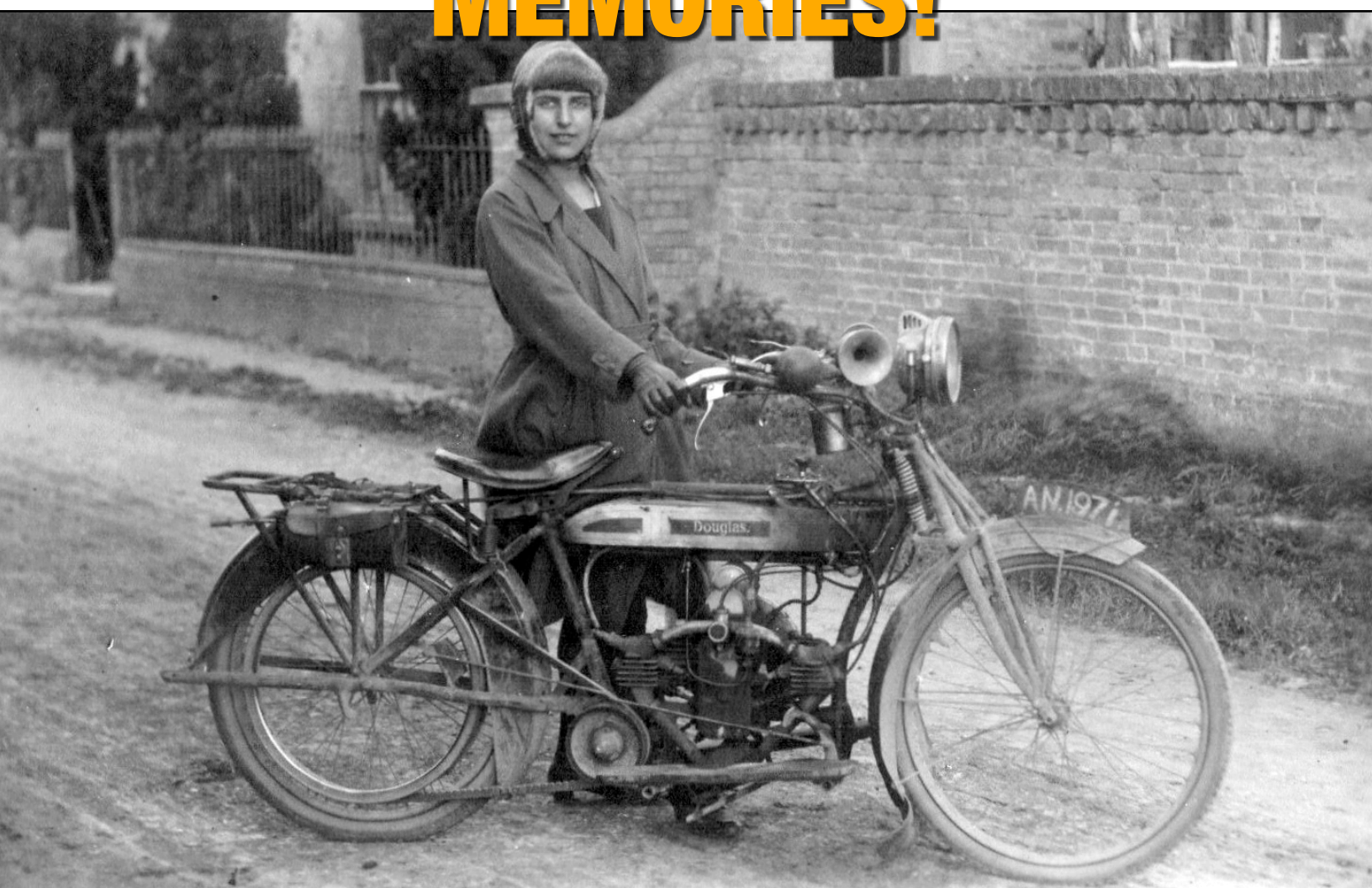
Stones rock 'em



Glimpse back at



MEMORIES!



The fastest pensioner in the West (And anywhere else for that matter...)



Speed star: Henry Body with just a few of the trophies from his long career, main picture, in action in his glory days, top left, and still biking to this day, left

Article by Ian Mat (wdnews@bepp.co.uk)

On the edge of mid-Somerset lies a road. And next to this 300-mile carriageway there lives a pensioner. This man enjoys living in the fast lane. But the cars that thunder along the A38 are like statues compared to the speeds he enjoys.

His name is Henry Body and he's the South West's fastest pensioner.

The name is well-respected among the serious motorcycle fraternity, known to Cheddar Valley residents for his family

connection in Biddisham, and perhaps a new one to you.

He wears a simple cream jumper with the word DOUGLAS emblazoned across it in black and blue and holds enough trophies from his 60-year racing career to burden a dozen mantelpieces. Not bad for a 76 year-old who still tops 100mph on his 1929 bike and won 30 races last year.

Henry says: "I'm on a pacemaker. I've had a hip joint done and now this ear business. I

had septicaemia, I've broken bones and everything. When I was 10 I had a thorn in my eye and lost the eye. But motorcycle sprinting is like a disease. You can't get it out of your blood. I've done 110mph on a quarter-mile straight. You only live once and if you don't do what you can when you can, it won't happen. You won't get a second chance."

The love affair with the two-wheeler began when Henry was 12 and given his first bike by his father, George, a founder and president of the Mendip Vale Motorcycle Club.

The family owned the sawmill - now an industrial estate - on the A38, but when Henry's mother died, George had to raise his eight youngsters himself. So the family would help, steward and enjoy the motorcycle races their father took them to.

Unsurprisingly, most of them went on to pursue motorcycle interests. Henry and two brothers were credited with being the first family to win a time trial at a national award. He featured in a documentary on the motorbike-making Douglas family, whose factory in Bristol crafted the trusty 81-year-old bike that's won him the most trophies. If Henry is at a race his friend Bill Douglas, grandson of the motorbike founder, is not far away.

"This particular bike I've been riding about 18 years," says Henry in his garage. "that's the fastest Douglas in the world." The 1929 600cc Douglas was originally a dirt bike built for speedway and has definitely seen use, but remains smart and well maintained. Not like one of these bikes you see at shows where the inside of the exhaust is spotless, Henry remarks. But the bike has been in

260 events - winning 254 and coming second in five. One race was a non-finisher.

Henry and the Douglas are big names in sprinting. That's where you sit on the start line, pray for a favourable back wind and go like an assassin for the throat.

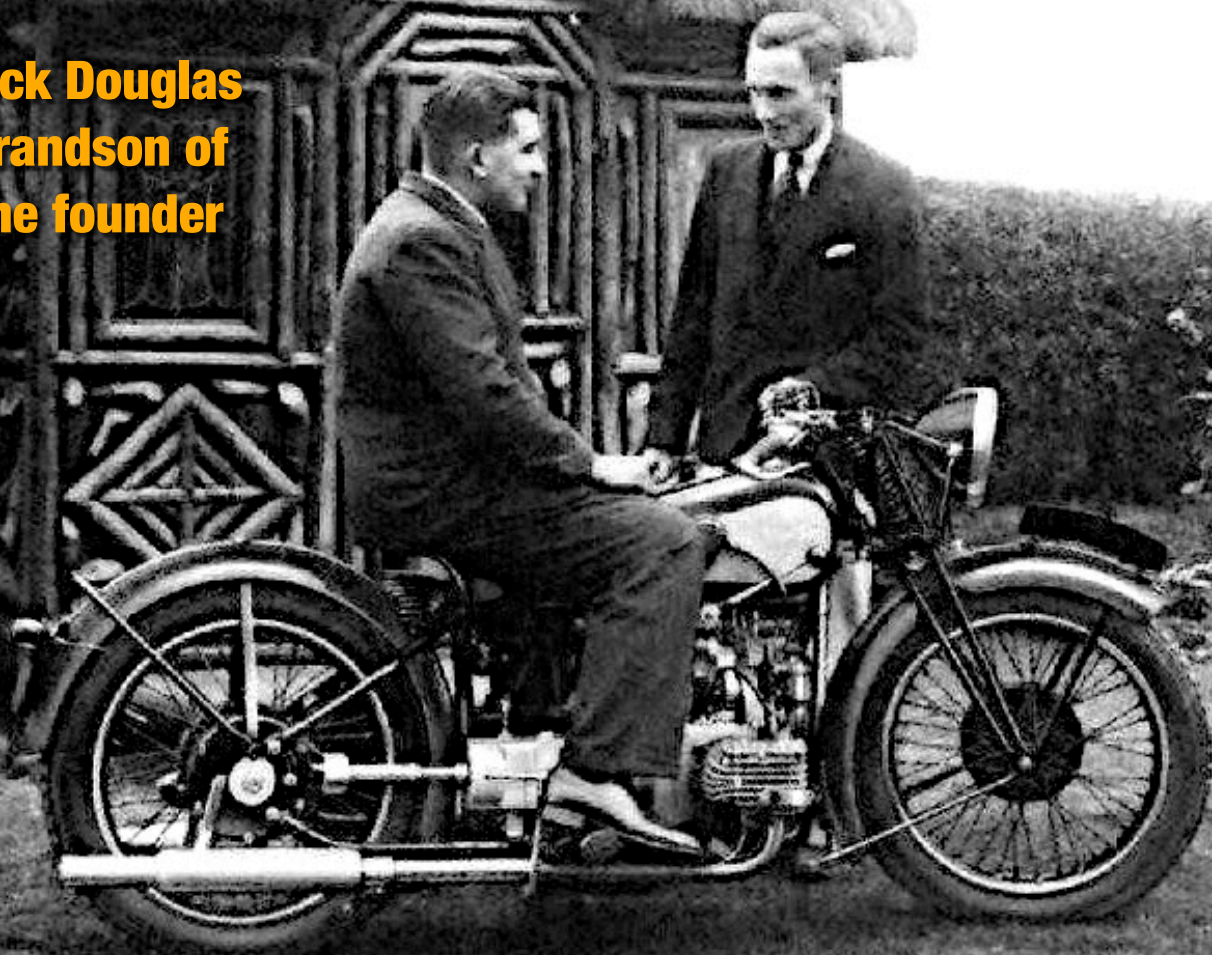
"Sprinting is the last thing you can do when you are not fit to do any other races," says Henry. "I used to like grass track racing. But as it went on it became like motocross. But in sprinting everyone enjoys themselves. If your bike breaks down, someone lends you a part. Sprinting still has the same feel it did before the war."

Henry has two daughters with his wife of 44 years, Norma, to whom he is very grateful for her support in his racing. He's now looking forward to manning the Douglas stand at this weekend's bike show at the Bath & West showground in Shepton Mallet.

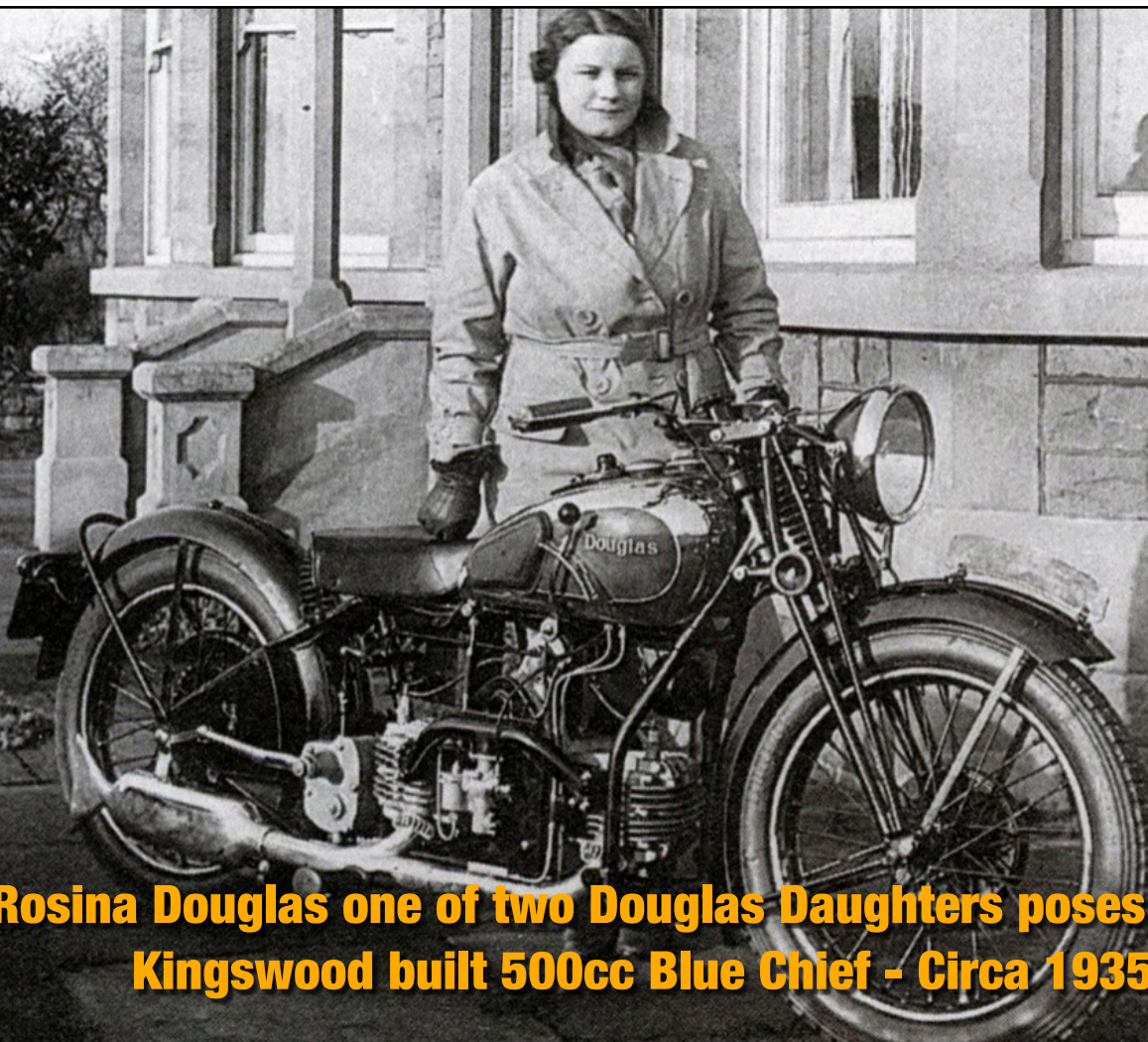
Chances are Henry may have that cream Douglas jumper on. You only get one if you've done 100mph or more on one of the bikes and Henry is the last man alive with one. But he has no intention of putting the brakes on his racing. You can't stop when you're in the fast lane and there's nobody who enjoys it more than Henry Body.



**Jack Douglas
grandson of
the founder**



**Rosina Douglas one of two Douglas Daughters poses with a
Kingswood built 500cc Blue Chief - Circa 1935**

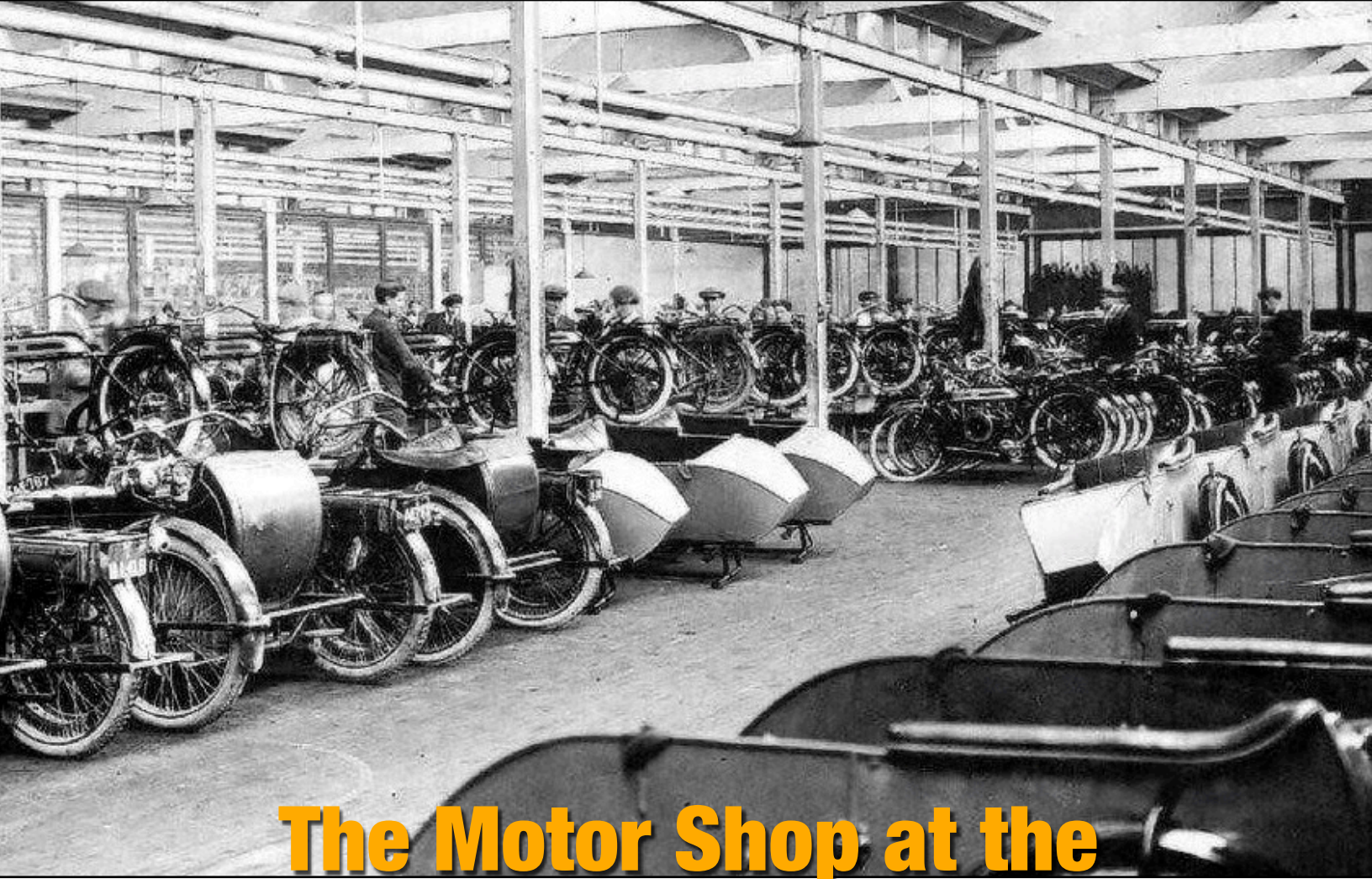




1930 Douglas Bristol Showroom on the city centre



**Combinations lined up
at the Kingswood factory
in Douglas Road - circa 1914**

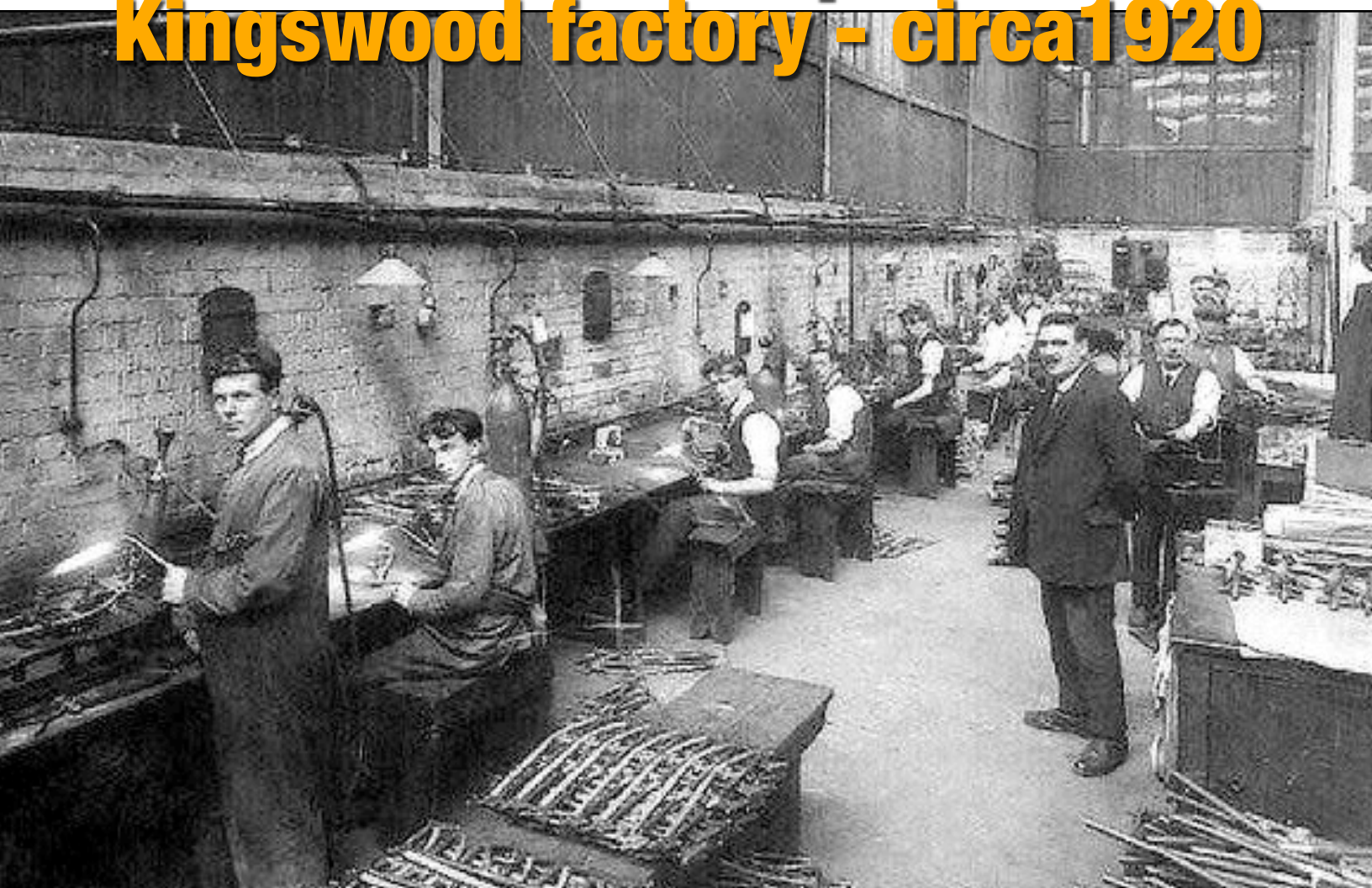


**The Motor Shop at the
Kingswood factory - circa 1920**





**The Motor Shop at the
Kingswood factory - circa 1920**



DRUGLESS MOTORCYCLE PARTS

by Doug Kephart

This is a story of how to acquire parts the hard way.

I had purchased my 1936 Aero Douglas, and at a motorcycle meet in June (1993) had once again run into the former owner. He had the headlamp for it, which I collected, and we were standing around chatting a bit. An acquaintance of his from Canada was standing near, and hearing talk of Douglasses, mentioned he knew a fellow up his way that he thought had some Douglas stuff. I gave him one of our shop cards and asked him to pass it on to his friend when he got back home, just to see what it might be. Shortly after (3 seconds) I forgot all about it.

Six months later I receive a letter from Canada. Now mind you, I don't know anyone in Canada. Open it up and there is a note from a fellow who cannot remember where he met me, but he has my card with "Douglas Parts" written on the back. Eventually (with some help) I remembered talking to this fellow, who now had sent a name and a phone number of a person that had some Douglas parts. An engine, mudguard, and a wheel it seemed.

So I called the number, yes, it was a Douglas engine, S6 model (1930-ish) by the description, front wheel with brake, and front forks with mudguard. I had some photos sent down and sure enough it was a S6 engine, mostly there, sort of rusty. Front mudguard in good nick, and it so happens, of that peculiar bell shaped cross section that I just happened to need for my 1928 F-28 model Douglas. With

the front stays, brackets and wheel stand no less. Absolute bliss. The girder blades looked identical to the F-28 as well, or but later found to be slightly different.

So back on the phone and strike a deal for the whole lot. I did not really need the S6 engine, not having an S6 (well not yet anyway) but the price was reasonable so it was sort of "thrown in cheap". Or so I justified it to myself. How to collect? Well this fellow had no means to ship, but he knew the fellow that contacted me frequently attended American motorcycle meets down my way to buy parts, and would probably haul the stuff down.

O.K., so I write this fellow a letter; could he, would he? Couple months go by and no reply. Well I figure, he wants no further involvement, what now? Well there was nothing else but to drive to Canada and collect it personally; visit Niagara Falls as well, and make a real vacation of it.

So the next three day weekend, Easter Holiday, we set off. My brother was riding shotgun, which meant leaving Friday evening as he did not have the day off. Still, we made it into New York state (from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) before stopping at an EconoLodge (hotel chain). Which despite it's name was not cheap, and much in need of repairs. Credit my brother for picking this winner, too bad he did not pay for it. Mind you, it certainly looked as if it should have been inexpensive, the place was

downright seedy. But it's late, road weary you hit the sack. The bed is too soft.

At 2:00 am, one hundred car freight train rumbles through town for ten minutes straight, sounds like it is on the other side of the wall. Sleep in half hour bits.

Dawn, rain. Back hurts like hell from bed (chronic back problems.) Get up and wander outside looking for lounge which is supposed to offer breakfast. Find it down the end, abandoned, but lights are on and places set, though side door locked. Wander around front to main entrance, out in the pouring rain now. Front door is locked, notice mega-freight rail yard directly across the street; try second door. This is locked as well. Wander back around to front desk and discover secret entrance to the grub at side of reception desk. Plenty of food, cheap and edible, four big pancakes griddled in 10-40W SAE multi-weight. Hit the road.

Noon, Buffalo NY and then Canada! Border check point, usual questions about booze, guns and drugs. Then more and more detailed questions; where you going, why, to see who, what's his name, address, how long, reason for, when are you're leaving, are you employed, then "pull over to that canopy." Pull over, guy comes over, tells you to get out of the car and stand back (not towards them, they get alarmed!).

More questions while the car is searched including reciting our

address and other detailed information about employment and wanting to inspect how much cash we have. So nervous now I get brain lock when asked what town we stayed in the night before (Binghamton, NY). Questions seem to indicate suspicion we are illegally seeking employment, search seems to indicate suspicion we are smuggling drugs.

Sent on our way with a "have a nice day!" By now we feel criminal and guilty of something. I thought we were good neighbors with this country. I spy a McDonald's, pull in for lunch and yes they do take U.S. currency. Do not have a small bill so exchange a large one, exchange is below market value and I get a bunch of surplus Canadian money back. Great, a whole pocket full of

souvenirs. Not only is the exchange rate hedged, but prices seem steep too, even allowing for the weaker Canadian dollar. Should have enjoyed it, it was that last meal of the day, have a BIG soft drink.

Find correct road and address but fellow seems surprised to see us, forgot about our driving up despite calling earlier that week and setting an appointment. Lucky he was in. Collect parts and settle up. Tour barn to look at other motorcycle parts, pick out a Velocette Venom transmission shell I need, look through various frames in loft and manage to disturb resident raccoon. Very strange chittering noise of warning from mother raccoon back under the eaves, very dark back there too.

Take leave and head up to Niagara Falls to see the sites, no free parking near falls so park further down in town and walk back up part way (to save money.) Plenty of water going over falls, near flood stage in fact, but somehow expected it to be slightly bigger in real life, like twice as big. It is late afternoon and we decide to move on.

Cross back into United States, at Niagara, expect to breeze through like the people with Ontario license plates going into Canada at Buffalo, New York. After all, we are native United States citizens! Stopped at the check point, questioned by dumb, fat, and extremely suspicious American. Similar questions as earlier, same stupid feelings of guilt. Asks how long we were in Canada, "six hours", slight pause, then

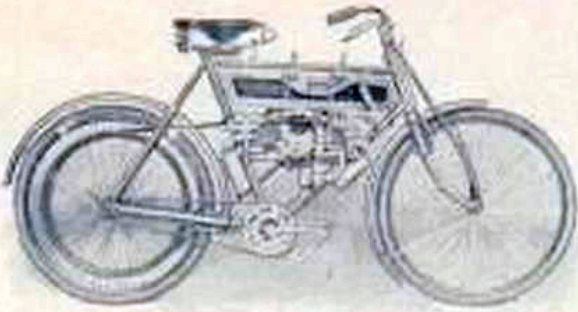
50 ADVERTISEMENTS. THE MOTOR CYCLE.—(SUPPLEMENT XVIII.) NOVEMBER 20TH, 1907.

The Douglas Motors

STAND 71

STAND 71

Simm's Bosch H.T. Magneto.



VIBRATIONLESS.
NOISELESS.
GOOD HILL CLIMBER.

OUR NEW FOUR CYLINDER 6 H.P. WITH TWO-SPEED GEAR WILL BE ON VIEW.

The "DOUGLAS" 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ H.P. Twin MOTOR CYCLE.

DOUGLAS BROS., Engineers and Ironfounders, Kingswood, Bristol.

confiscates both our drivers licenses. Have to pull under canopy and go in to retrieve our licenses. People inside want to know why we came in! Explain, and declare motor cycle parts and present prepared receipt. Much waiting.

Car is searched, trained dog brought out. Dog climbs all through interior of car then into the back where Douglas parts are. Dog zero's in on the S6 engine. Drug Dog is very much interested in engine. The Dog Handler calls for the dog, but it takes three tries to get the dog to let go of the engine, which it appears to have in a half-Nelson hold. Fortunately the Handler does not at all seem interested in the engine, my brother lamely suggests the dog smells the raccoon scent on it. Oh yeah, I bet they know all about that one, rub raccoon all over to cover up the smell of the dope, smuggler's tip #43, throws the dog every time. However we do not have to dismantle the engine, our licenses are returned and best of all they do not charge duty on the motorcycle parts!

On we roll, my brother at the wheel now. I think back to Niagara Falls, and then that big soft drink I had so long ago... I suggest to my brother that if he saw a good place to pull over, to do so at the first opportunity. My lower back is screaming, or was it my kidney's? Two hours later my brother decides it is time to stop, it is now late at night. My brother picks another hotel, this time a brand new one. The restaurants in town have closed and there was none at the hotel, supper was a canned drink from a vending machine. It was more expensive than the last place but a lot nicer, the bed was firm, and there was a nice view of the

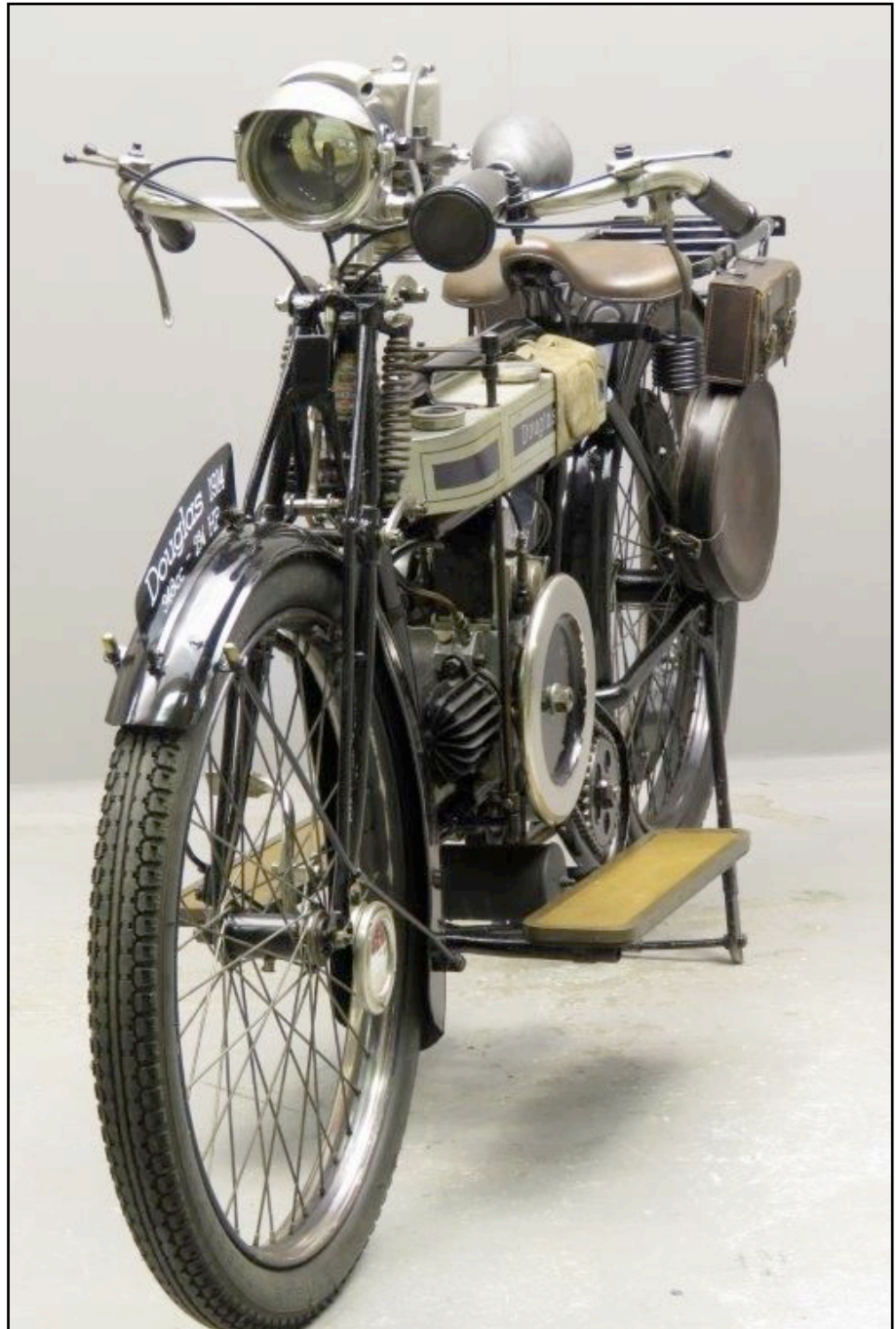
propane tank, oh and there was no hot water but other than that... Guess who paid again.

A new day dawned, complementary breakfast turned out to be a cup of juice and a dry Danish. Breakfast took about five minutes, and that included several minutes glaring at each other. On the road again. Two miles on there were half a dozen inexpensive motels, I bet they all had hot water. Finally that afternoon saw us back at home,

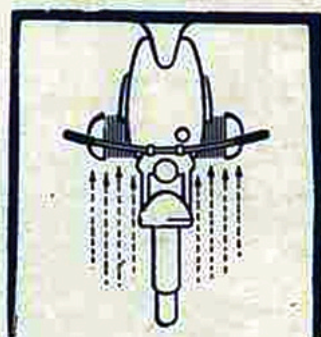
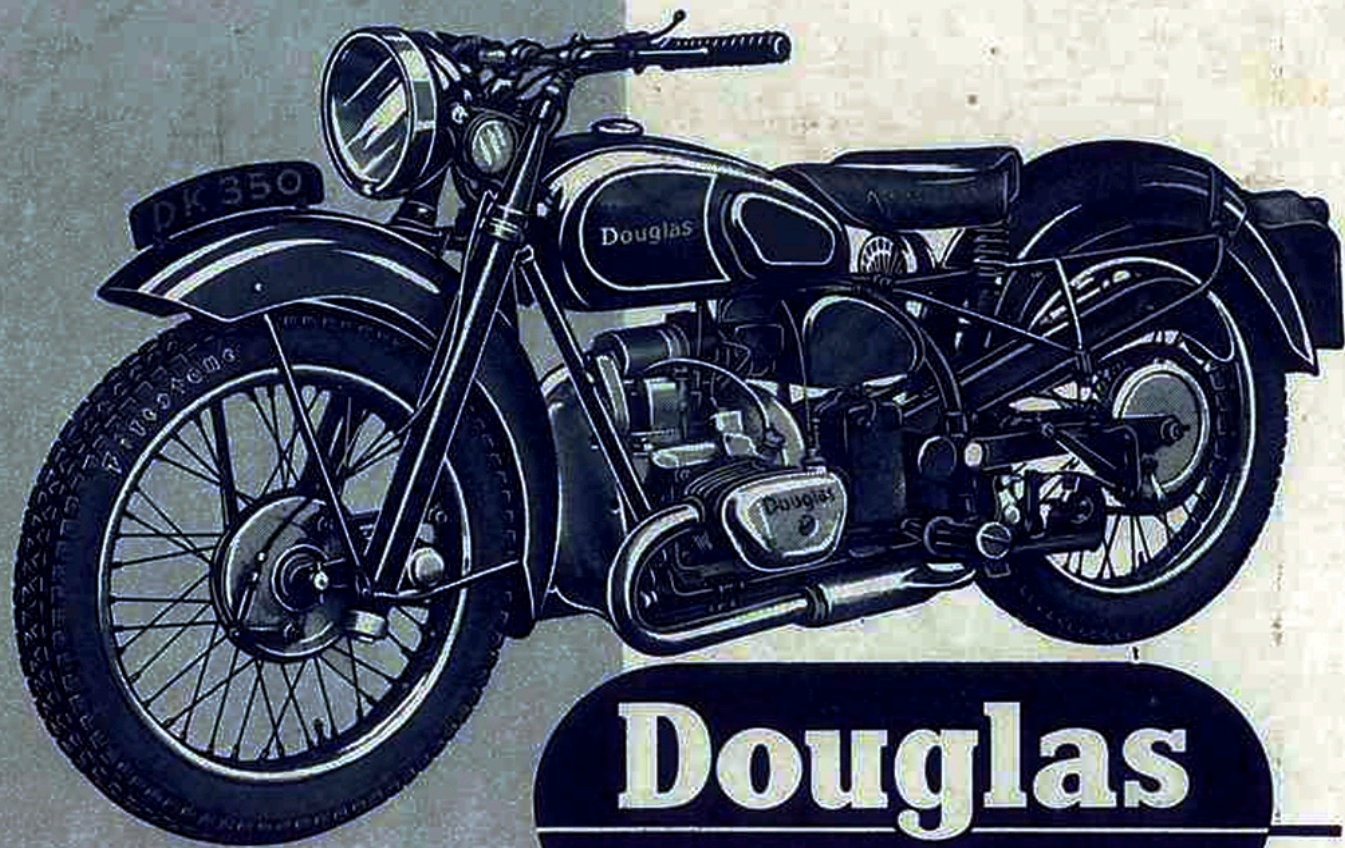
after logging 935 miles and twenty three hours on the road. Was it worth it?... I plead insanity!

The very next night I got a call from the fellow whom sent me the letter, he would be going to the up coming bike meet in Oley, Pa., just 45 miles away, and he would be happy to bring the Douglas parts down, no charge, as it was on his way...

Don't you just love this hobby?



Details
that make the
Douglas
different...



TRANSVERSE ENGINE MOUNTING

WE didn't decide on transverse engine mounting just to be different. There are two very good reasons for our choice:

1. Engine weight is carried low in the frame to give a lower centre of gravity for superb road-holding under all conditions.
2. The cylinders are arranged to catch every breath of air—both are evenly and equally cooled.

Of course there are other reasons why you'll be wise to make your next choice a Douglas. Leaflet M.137 will give you all the 'gen.'

Douglas

350 C.C. TRANSVERSE FLAT TWIN

Made by DOUGLAS (KINGSWOOD) LTD., BRISTOL

10723 A

In answering this advertisement it is desirable to mention "The Motor Cycle."

1929 DOUGLAS 350 EFW

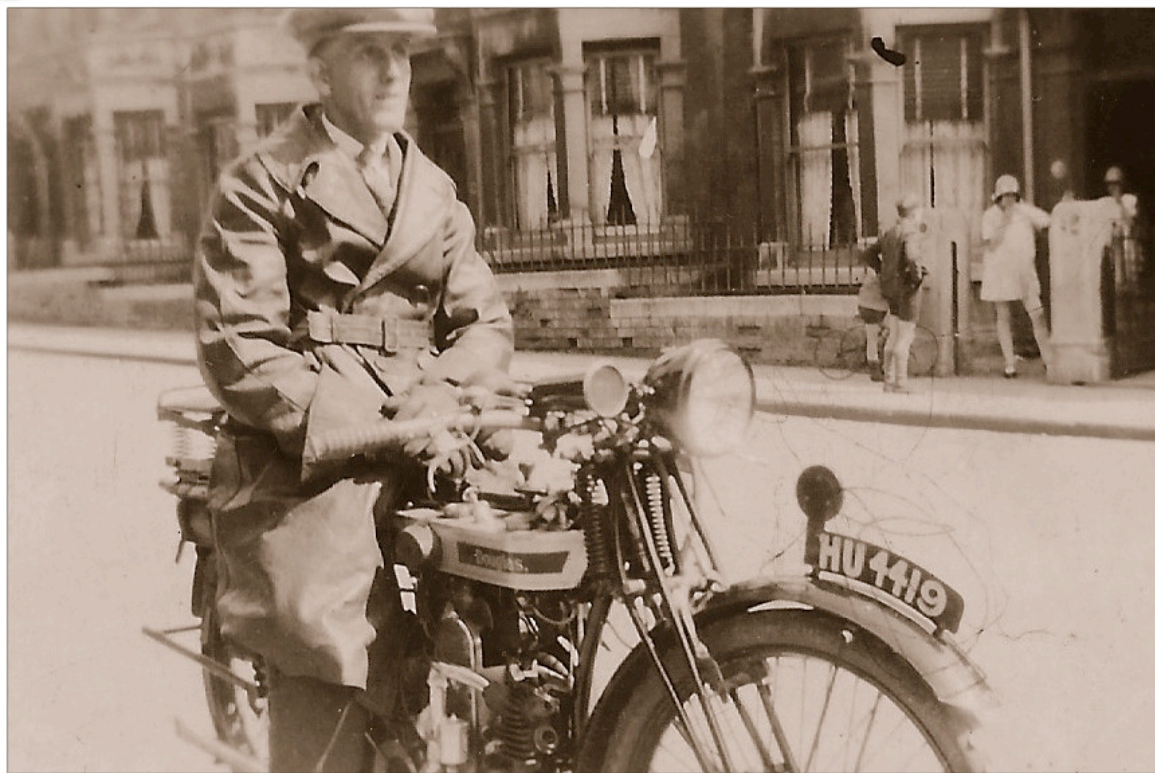
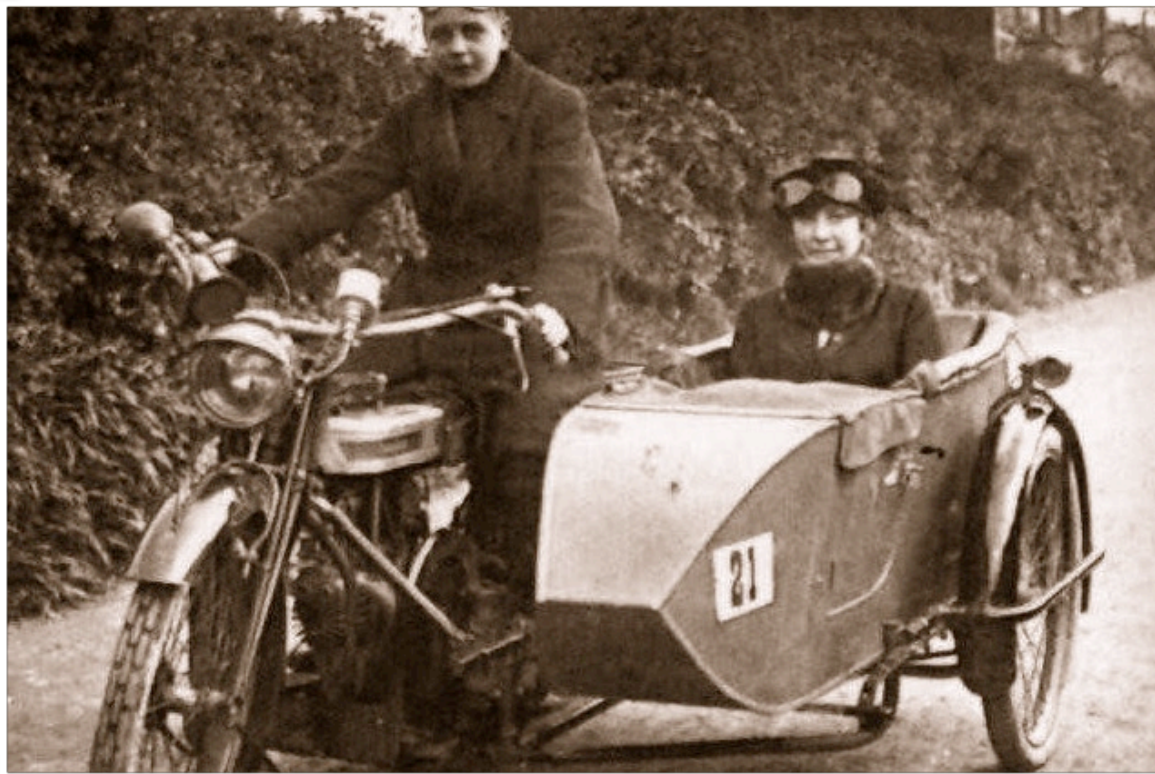


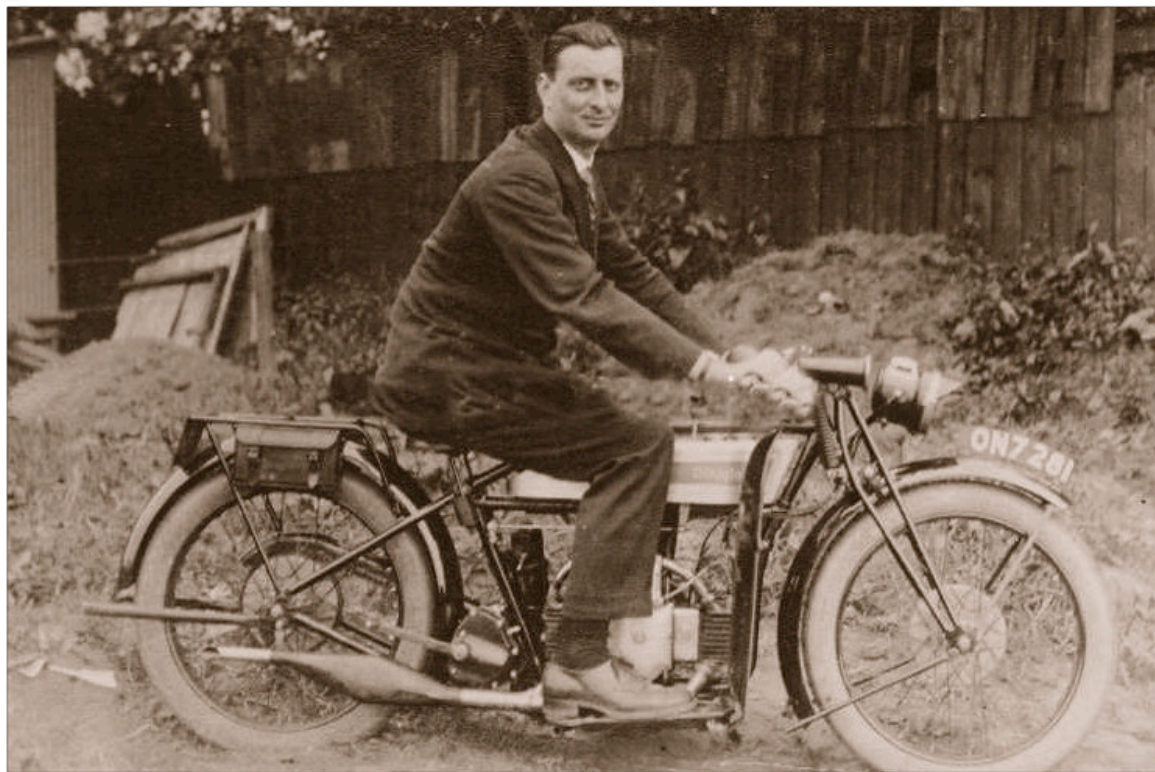


The Douglas 348cc EW was originally shown to the public at the 1925 Olympia Show, it was specifically designed to benefit from tax concessions available to lightweight motorcycles and so it weighed in (dry) at under 200lbs. The engine is a rather interesting “fore and aft” flat twin with a 348cc capacity, a fixed-head sidevalve, an outside flywheel, hand and mechanical oil pumps, and a BTH magneto ignition.









1917 DOUGLAS 4

IN USE BY THE RNAS (ROYAL NAVAL AIR SERVICE)



4HP WITH SIDECAR

(NAVY AIR SERVICES) DURING WW1



1925 DOUGLAS 2³/₄ HP



This 1925 Douglas 2³/₄ HP is the sort of vintage motorcycle you buy both for fun and as a bit of an investment.

Its estimated actual value of £6,000 to £8,000 doesn't make it a cheap acquisition, but it certainly isn't prohibitively expensive and so long as you take care of it, it'll appreciate handsomely whilst you spend a few summers taking it up twisty B-roads.

I don't know about you, but that sounds far better than trusting some of my savings to a mutual fund run by a team of sociopathic narcissists in pinstriped suits with bleached teeth and slicked back hair.



1926 DOUGLAS



In the 1920s Douglas built the first disc brakes, and had a Royal Warrant for the supply of motorcycles to the Princes, Albert and Henry.

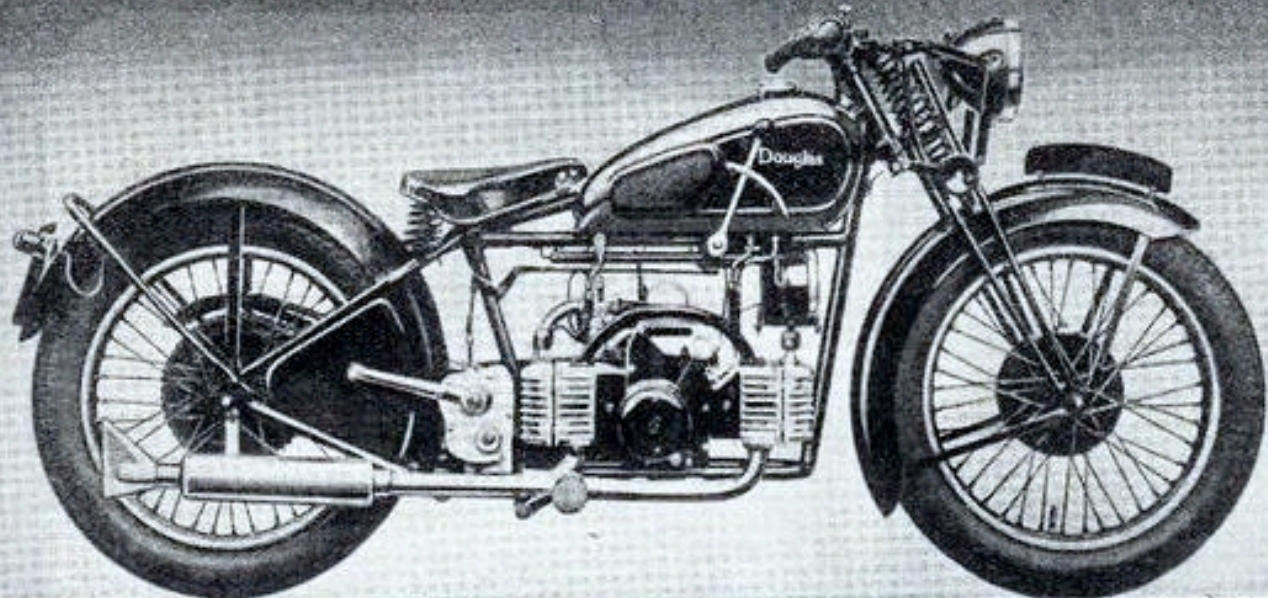
1923 DOUGLAS WITH DIXON BANKING SIDECAR

This unit is notable for the banking sidecar chassis, designed and built by Freddie Dixon. The complete outfit could be banked to either side for optimal cornering speeds. The sidecar wheel is mounted on a seven-inch crank, raised or lowered by the passenger with the long lever in front of the wheel. Using a similar 600cc Douglas motorcycle in combination with this unique banking chassis, Dixon won the first Isle of Man TT race for sidecar outfits in 1923, at an average speed of 53.15mph/85.54kph.



Douglas

The World's Finest Twin Value



1937 600 c.c de-luxe twin £42-10-0

50/- SECURES DELIVERY

THIS OFFER MAKES MOTOR CYCLING HISTORY.

Once again Pride & Clarke have staggered the world—this time by offering a high-performance 1937 600 c.c. twin for only 50/- deposit! These Douglas models with the famous horizontally opposed engine, dynamo lighting, magneto ignition, car type fly-wheel clutch, electric horn and very full equipment, represent the most remarkable value for money ever offered. This offer is definitely unrepeatable, so call immediately or rush the coupon to the post NOW. The unprecedented terms are so easy that you will hardly notice the payments.



1937 600 c.c. DE LUXE TWIN COMPLETE AERO SIDECAR £49. 17. 6

£5 SECURES DELIVERY.

Obtainable only from sole distributors

A handsome brand new combination for only £5 down. Terms never before obtainable. This magnificent 1937 600 c.c. DOUGLAS fitted with a brand new 1937 Aero Sidecar at the unprecedented price of £49. 17s. 6d.

This famous twin is a wonderful Sidecar machine, 8-70 m.p.h. in top gear and acceleration which must be experienced to be appreciated. Don't hesitate—post the coupon immediately.

WRITE NOW FOR HIGHEST EXCHANGE ALLOWANCE & 1937 DOUGLAS CATALOGUE

I own a c.c. 19 (Make) Gas/Dyno O.H.V., S.V. For which I must have £

NAME

ADDRESS

I am interested in the 1937 DOUGLAS!

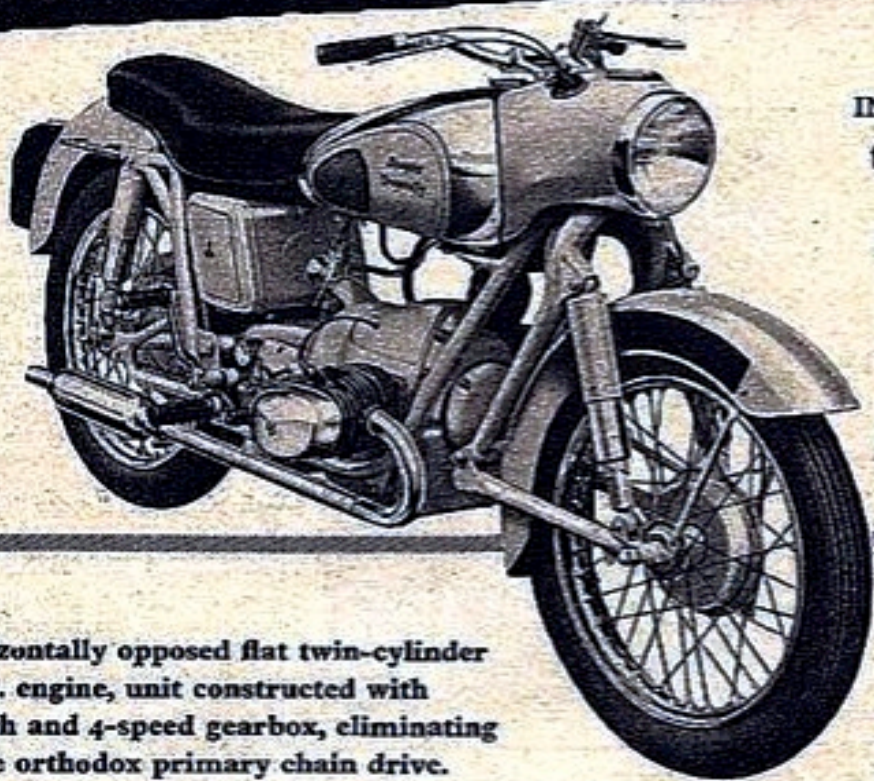
PRIDE & CLARKE LTD
158 · STOCKWELL ROAD, BRIXTON, LONDON

Phone BRIXTON 6251
Grams PRICLARKE LONDON

The dashing
Douglas Dragonfly

350 c.c.

NOW £30 OFF THE PRICE



Horizontally opposed flat twin-cylinder o.h.v. engine, unit constructed with clutch and 4-speed gearbox, eliminating more orthodox primary chain drive.

If you like dash with dependability, plenty of power at your fingertips plus perfect control, the Douglas Dragonfly is the motorcycle for you. This stylish 350 c.c. "twin" is a machine created specially for the enthusiast. It combines outstanding performance with ultra-modern design. You'll appreciate its lightning acceleration and effortless high-speed cruising, the easy riding position and the rock-steady steering. With its price now slashed by £30, the Douglas Dragonfly becomes a more attractive proposition than ever!

DOUGLAS (SALES & SERVICE) LTD
 KINGSWOOD (75) • BRISTOL

£195

INC. PURCHASE TAX

formerly £225.1.2

previous deposit

~~£112.10.7~~

**DEPOSIT
 NOW £39**

SPECIAL FEATURES

Low centre of gravity gives greater stability. Handlebars, controls, and front and rear dampers are all adjustable to suit the individual rider. Reynolds-Earles front fork ensures first-class steering.

**SEE THE
 DOUGLAS
 DRAGONFLY**

at your local dealer's, or
 write for literature to
 DOUGLAS (SALES & SERVICE) LTD.



The Black Douglas Motorcycle Company

BY JON C. BRANCH FROM THE REVIVALER

Despite their name The Black Douglas Motorcycle Company are not Scottish, nor even English, they are in fact Italian and based in the heart of Italian fashion, Milan.

Recognizing that there are many motorcycle enthusiasts who would much prefer to ride a vintage style motorcycle but neither want the problems associated with keeping a genuine vintage motorcycle running (such as parts being unobtainable) nor the sometimes exorbitant purchase price. Vintage motorcycle enthusiasts who want to be able to enjoy riding their bike and not just have it gathering dust in a climate controlled environment. Vintage motorcycle enthusiasts who may also like to park their bike in their living room

as an automotive art piece without having it drip oil on the polished floorboards.

The Black Douglas Sterling “Claret Classic” complete with wickerwork picnic basket for your classic luncheon and perhaps a nice Shiraz? (Picture courtesy The Black Douglas Motorcycle Company).

Fabio Cardoni is the head of The Black Douglas Motorcycle Company and we can sum up his feelings on the motorcycles he creates by his saying *“Steel is more beautiful than plastic, and simplicity is more appealing than complexity.”*

The Sterling motorcycle achieves this through a subtle blending of 1920’s technology with a bit of strategically used twenty-first century technology.

The bike’s frame is pure steel, but the girder forks are made of milled solid anti-corrosion 7075 “Ergal” aluminum alloy that has been pressure-formed into high tensile strength cylinders. The engine is a single cylinder from Honda in either 125cc producing 12.75hp or 230cc capacity sending 14.3hp to the rear wheel.

Front and back wheels are 21” diameter. The Black Douglas does not chrome plate anything on the Sterling bikes but instead uses period correct nickel plating which produces a distinctive warm nickel effect.

The saddle and grips are of Italian leather. There is no plastic used on these bikes except for the very small amounts needed in the wiring

circuits for insulation. The wiring is cotton wrapped to keep the look twenties authentic.

The frame and forks of the Sterling are powder coated for excellent corrosion protection and durability, and so they look wonderful. The fuel tank is made of aluminum and magnesium plates and has a capacity of 2¼ US gallons (8.5 liters) giving the bike a range of about

150miles (250km). Inside the fuel tank are two compartments, one for the fuel and the other for the electrical system components.

Plans are afoot to create a 350cc premium engine for the motorcycles but the current 230cc single can propel the bike up to 115km/hr which is enough to keep up with the traffic most anywhere you are likely to ride. The exhaust system is stainless steel. The headlight is a “herring can” style but is a modern unit that meets modern regulations and provides a good safe light for night riding.

The effect of Fabio Cardoni’s skillful blending of traditional materials with twenty first century technology produces a classic effect in which the modernity is hidden, yet its benefits are all there.

The Sterling motorcycle tips the scales at around 220lb (100kg) which makes it a lightweight machine and suitable for both inexperienced as well as experienced riders.

Back in the twenties



people were still getting used to these “new fangled” machines and so they were built so that they were easy for novices to ride. The Sterling is faithful to that and has been kept lightweight, lively, and fun to ride even for a beginner. The Sterling has been made available in both kit form and as a fully complete motorcycle. Last time we checked the price of the kit was around five thousand or so US dollars with the complete bike being about double that.

Fabio Cardoni has plans that extend beyond the Sterling however. Vintage motorcycle enthusiasts will love the Sterling,

but many of us harbor in our hearts the desire for a Brough Superior. We are not alone as Fabio Cardoni has exactly that aspiration as well. So he has plans to bring into existence a bike that Lawrence of Arabia would love, it is to be called the “Solace” and it looks like a forties V twin cross between a Brough and a Harley.

The Black Douglas “Solace” looks like a bike that would be easy to fall in love with. (Picture courtesy classicdriver.com).

The Black Douglas “Solace” is to be powered by a Harley-Davidson “Sportster” engine.





BLACK DOUGLAS' STERLING: VINTAGE OR MODERN ROADSTER?

SOURCE: CLASSIC/VINTAGE MOTORCYCLES

To the layperson, the Black Douglas Sterling is a vintage motorcycle from the early part of the last century. It conjures up images of an age when women and men were ladies and gentleman – or at the very least appeared to be.

BLACK DOUGLAS STERLING COUNTRYMAN DELUXE AUTOCYCLE

From a societal perspective, the early part of the century was a period during which younger men and women began to shake off the social shackles of the Victorian era.

Performing the scandalous Charleston and Foxtrot dances was one such way. Yet away from the dance halls and parties, these young men and women still displayed the facade, of what previous generations considered to be lady-like and gentlemanly conduct.

BLACK DOUGLAS STERLING – NOT QUITE WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE

Much in the same way as those young ladies and gentlemen of the twenties, The Black Douglas Motorcycle Co.'s first production bike, the Sterling, is not quite what it appears to be. Yet, it certainly looks as though it's been built for gentlefolk. Nevertheless, it's not a restored vintage motorcycle – in fact, the Sterling is a thoroughly modern motorcycle, with the appearance of an autocycle from the early 20th century.

INSPIRATION – BLACK DOUGLAS, STERLING COUNTRYMAN

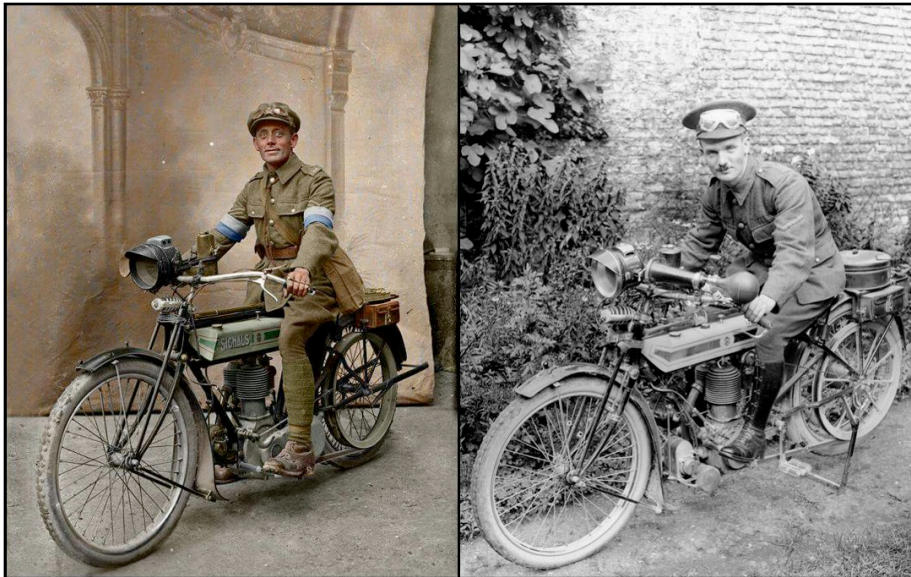
The Sterling is the realisation of a dream of Italian entrepreneur and custom and classic motorcycle fanatic, Fabio Cardoni. Cardoni, commissioned Englishman, Benny

Thomas of Boneshaker Choppers and Mutt Motorcycles, to design a low-speed motorcycle, with vintage looks, that offered a purer riding experience. The Sterling Countryman Deluxe was selected from one of three prototypes and is the first autocycle to be produced by the marque.

One might think that The Black Douglas Motorcycle Co. gets its name from the Douglas marque. Rather, it's a medieval Scottish knight, James Douglas (close friend and ally of Robert De Bruce) – a personal hero of Cardoni, that inspired the name.

A GLOBAL PRODUCTION EFFORT

The frame is constructed in Italy and the engine, based on Zongshen's interpretation of the Honda's CG230 is assembled in Taiwan.



With its flat tank, the Sterling is reminiscent of the Douglas 4HP model made by Bristol-based Douglas – and also of the Ariels and AJS motorcycles ridden by dispatch and scout riders of WW1.

The full assembly of the machine takes place in Birmingham, England.

Get all that? Good. The Black Douglas Sterling, much like other

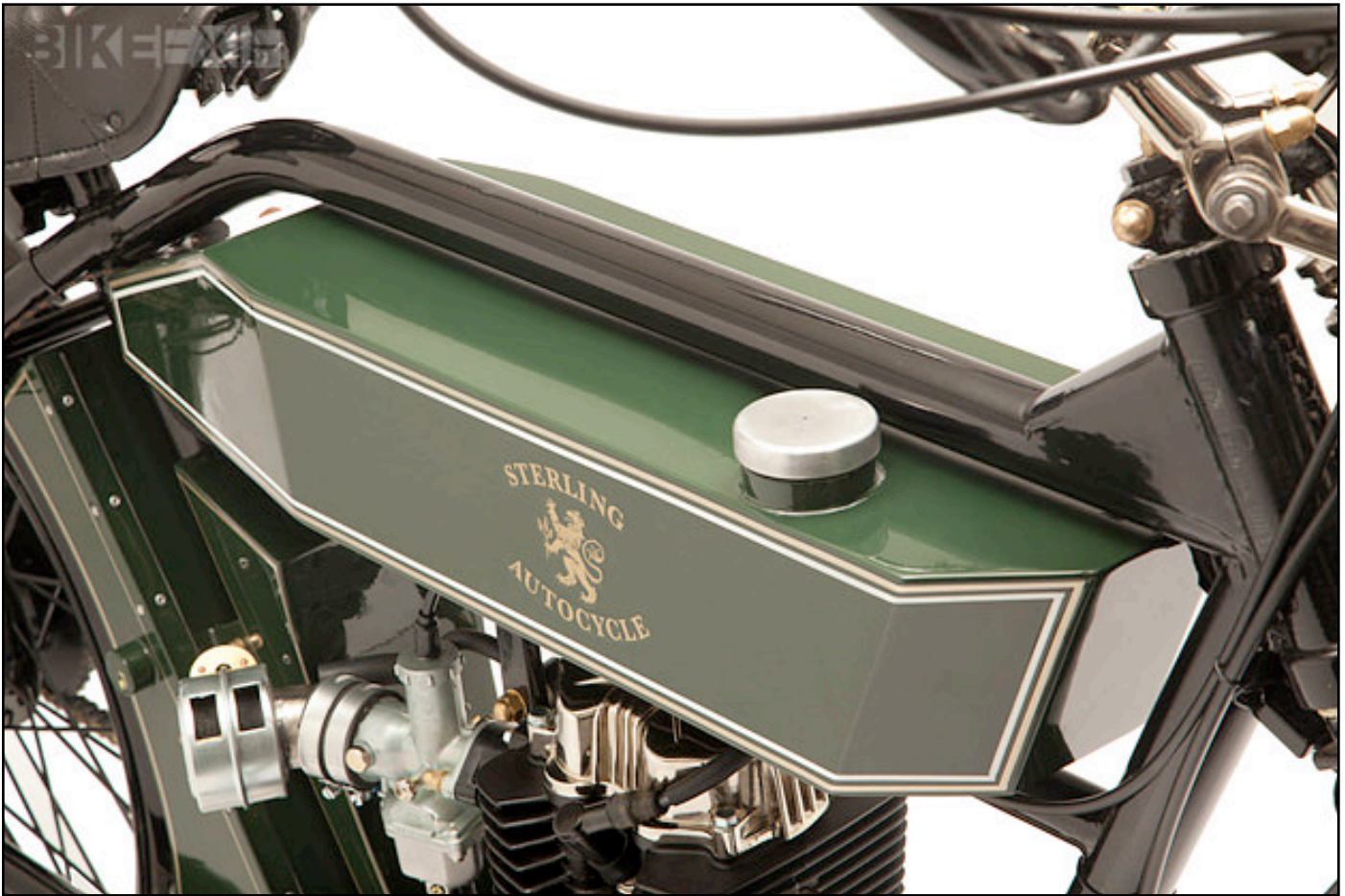
contemporary motorcycles requires a global production effort.

PURER RIDING EXPERIENCE

Hardtail suspension, a single-spring girder fork, a flat tank and a sprung saddle is combined with wide drawn-back bars and protruding bullet headlight (a Herring can headlight on the Original Drayton and Claret Classic). That combination makes it difficult to associate the Sterling with any period other than the 1910s to late 1920s.

The Sterling is a beautifully crafted piece of machinery; not too dissimilar from a 1915 Triumph Model H or 1913 FN Four (Fabrique Nationale de Herstal) or





even more aptly its namesake of sorts, the Douglas 2¾ HP.

Without ABS brakes or computer-controlled transmission, within the Sterling, you're likely to find a purer riding experience.

In The Black Douglas Motorcycle Co. words:

“Riding a Sterling is about being present in the moment, being connected, fully experiencing the ride and your surroundings.”

This finely-finished, vintage-style roadster comes with an almost bewildering array of custom options and period-correct accessories which are sure to draw

the approving gaze of other motorists.

Though, with the reliability of modern technology inbuilt into the Sterling, you'll likely miss out on any roadside conversations that come with the less-reliable nature of a true vintage bike. And that's not a bad thing.





Black Douglas 125cc specifications at a glance:

- Make and type: TBD Motors – The Black Douglas Sterling Autocycle
- Body type: Flat tank motorcycle
- Engine type: OHC 2 valves, air cooling, electronic CDI, assembled and completed in Italy
- Engine configuration: 1 cylinder, 4 Stroke
- Fuel system and type: carburettor, petrol
- Cubic capacity: 124,9 cm³; bore & stroke: 57 x 49 mm
- Battery and electrics: Gel type, 3,3 Ah; three-phase alternator 90 W; LED
- turn indicators; daylight dimmed by PWM controller
- Max speed: over 100 km/h

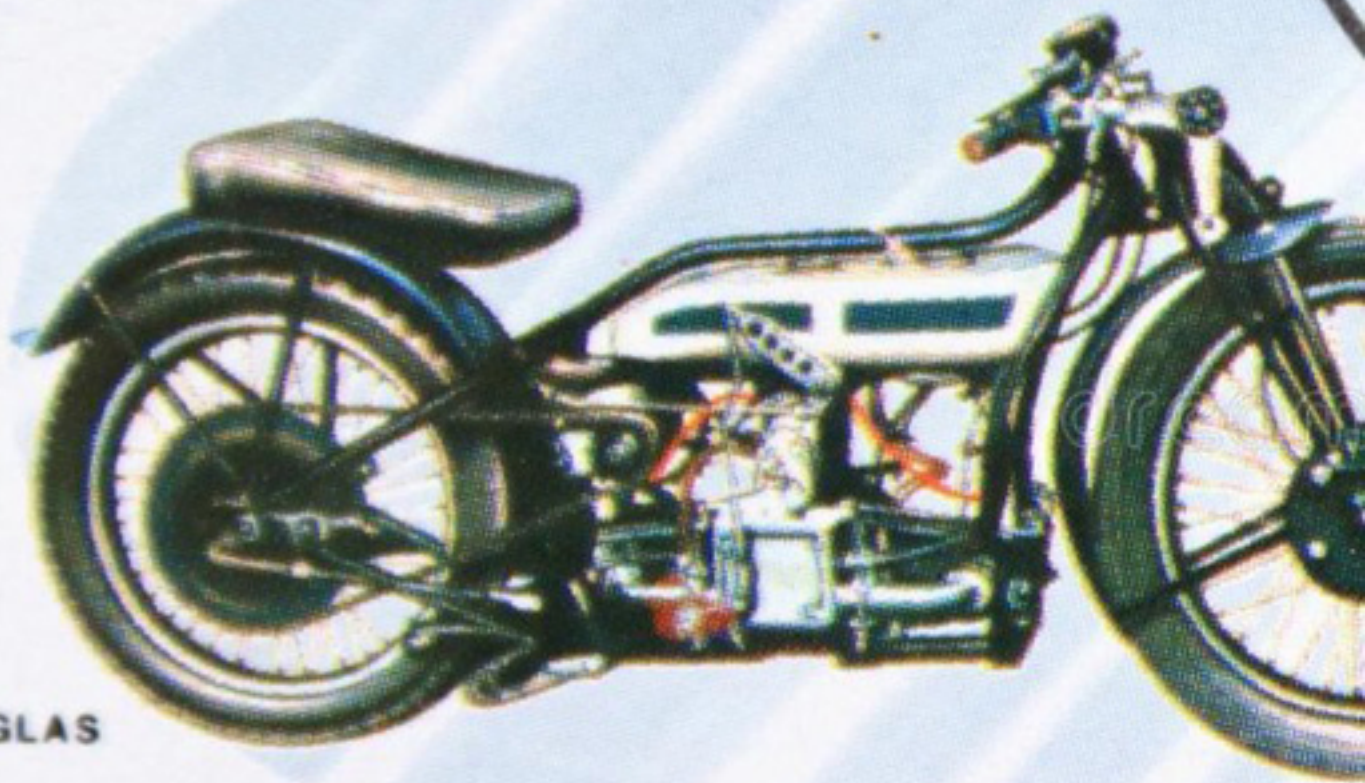
- Noise level: less than 85 dB in ruled testing condition
- Max power: 12,75 HP (9,5 kW) @ 7500 RPM
- Maximum torque: 15,0 Nm @ 5500 RPM
- Fuel consumption: average 35 km/l
- Fuel capacity: 9 litres
- Range: over 300 km

Black Douglas 230cc specifications at a glance:

- Make and type: TBD Motors – The Black Douglas Sterling Autocycle
- Body type: Flat tank motorcycle
- Engine type: OHV pushrod, 2 valves, air cooling, electronic CDI, assembled and completed in Italy

- Engine configuration: 1 cylinder, 4 Stroke
- Fuel system and type: carburettor, petrol
- Cubic capacity: 229,5 cm³; bore & stroke: 67 x 65 mm
- Battery and electrics: Gel type, 4,0 Ah; three-phase alternator 75 W; LED
- turn indicators; daylight dimmed by PWM controller
- Max speed: over 100 km/h
- Noise level: less than 85 dB in ruled testing condition
- Max power: 14,10 HP (10,5 kW) @ 6000 RPM
- Maximum torque: 18,3 Nm @ 4500 rpm
- Fuel consumption: average 32 km/l
- Fuel capacity: 9 litres
- Range: over 270 km

Nicaragua



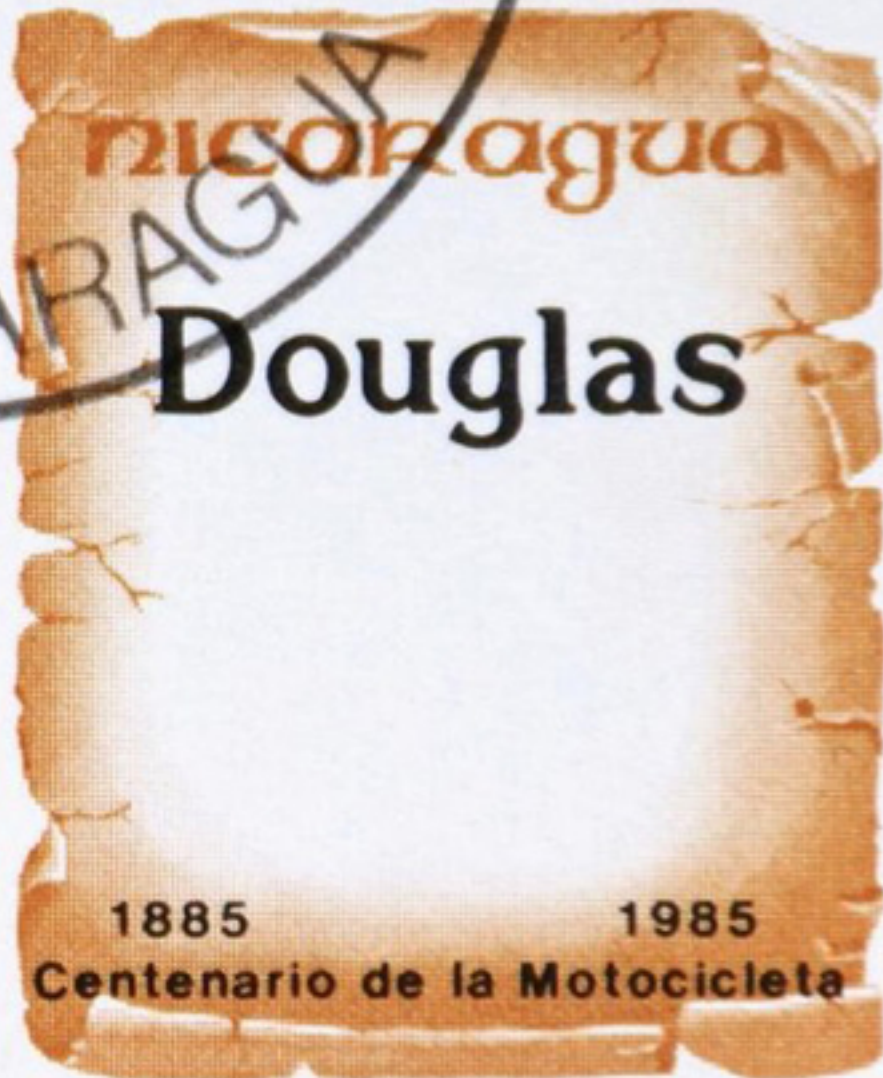
DOUGLAS

CENTENARIO DE LA MOTOCICLETA

¢ 0.50
correo
1985

NICARAGUA

NICARAGUA



nicaragua

Douglas



1928

1885

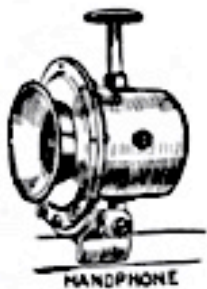
1985

Centenario de la Motocicleta

About a Score of Ways of Letting Folks Know You're Coming



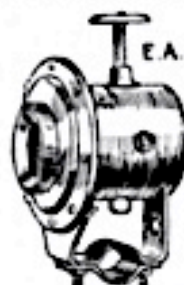
FITZGERALD



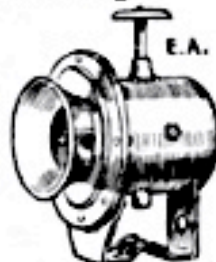
HANDPHONE



MOTORPHONE



E.A.



E.A.



ANGSTEN-KOCH



NONPAREIL



LONG HORN



ANGSTEN-KOCH



STEWART



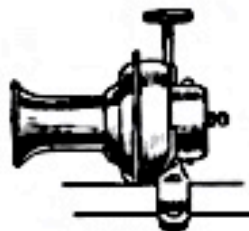
SCHWARZE



ADAMS BIGHALL



BEVIN

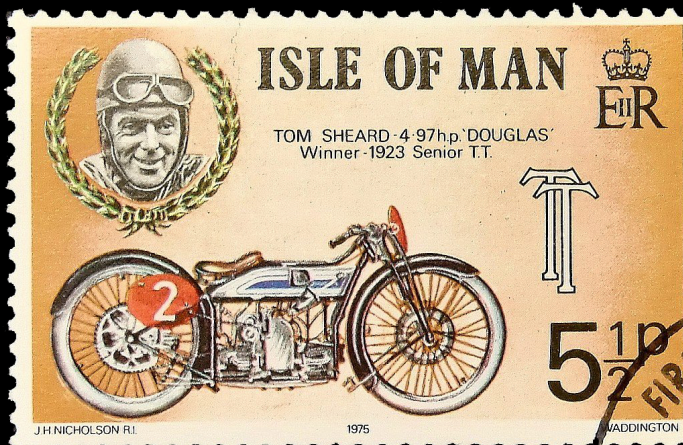


BEVIN



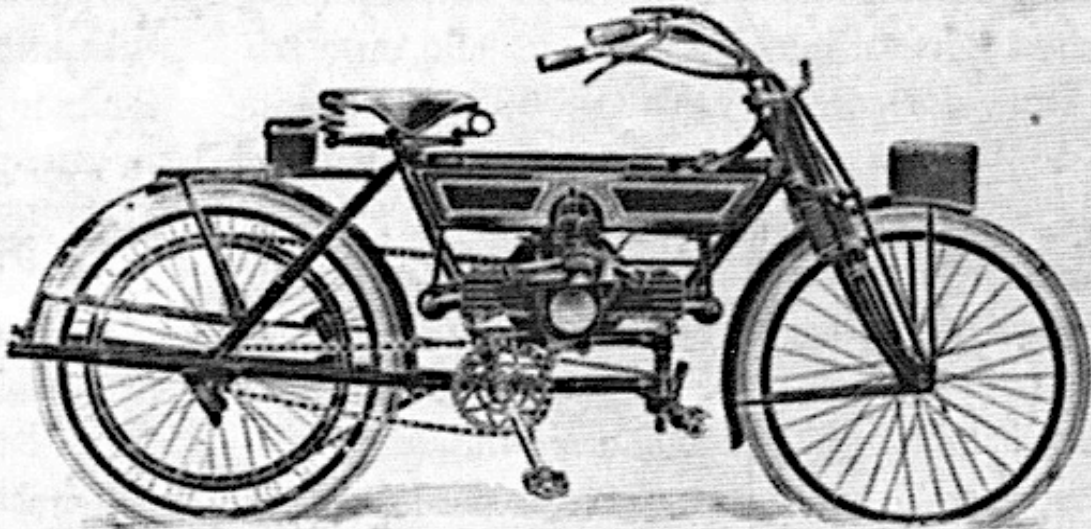
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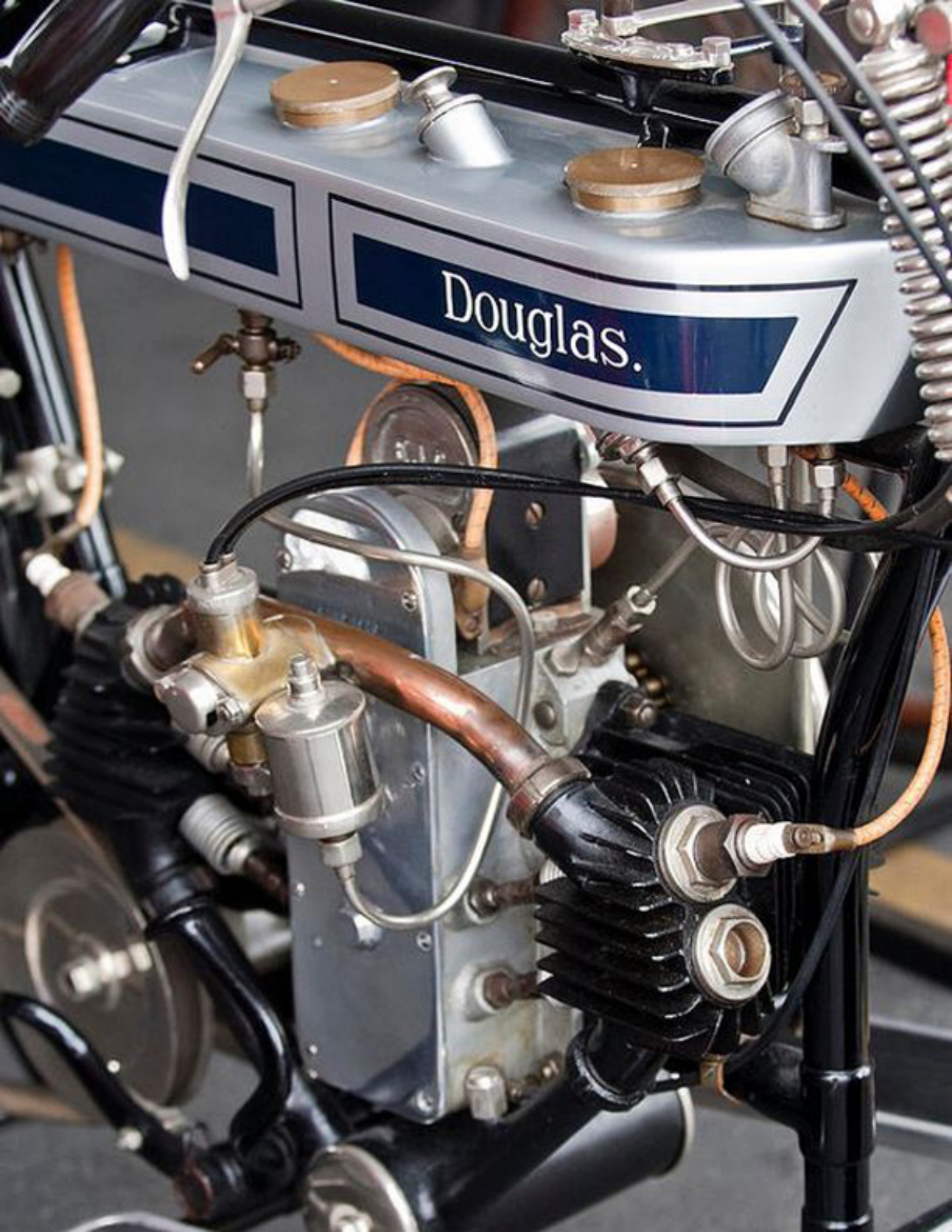
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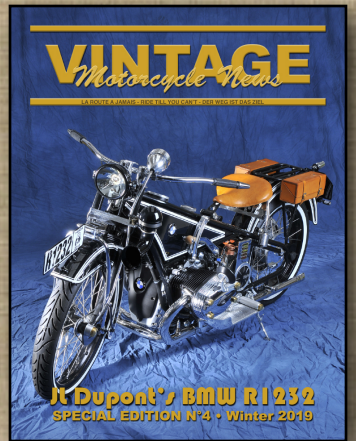
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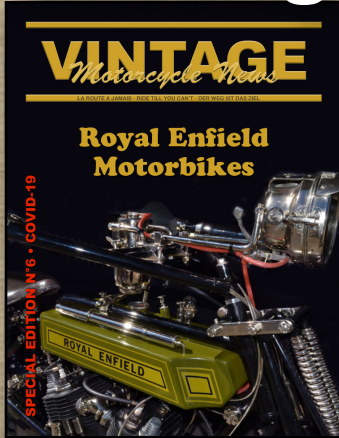




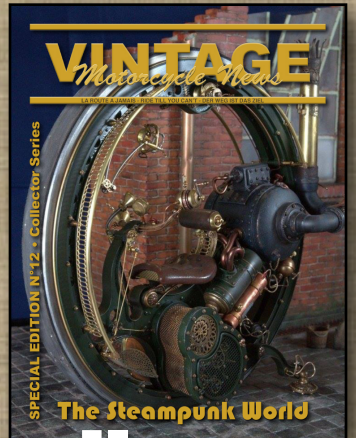
Douglas.



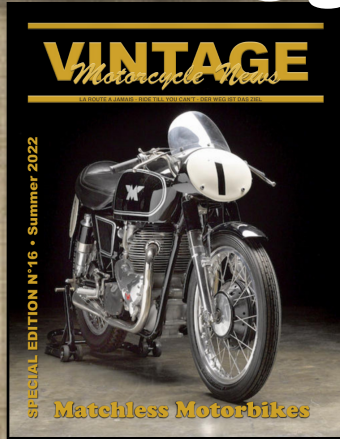
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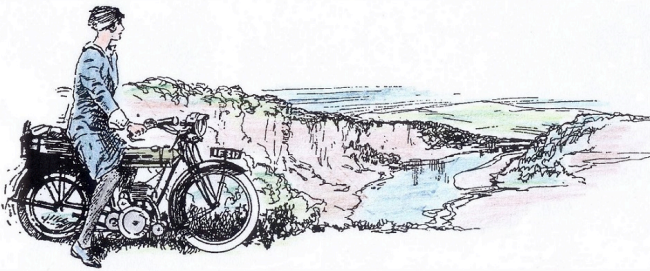
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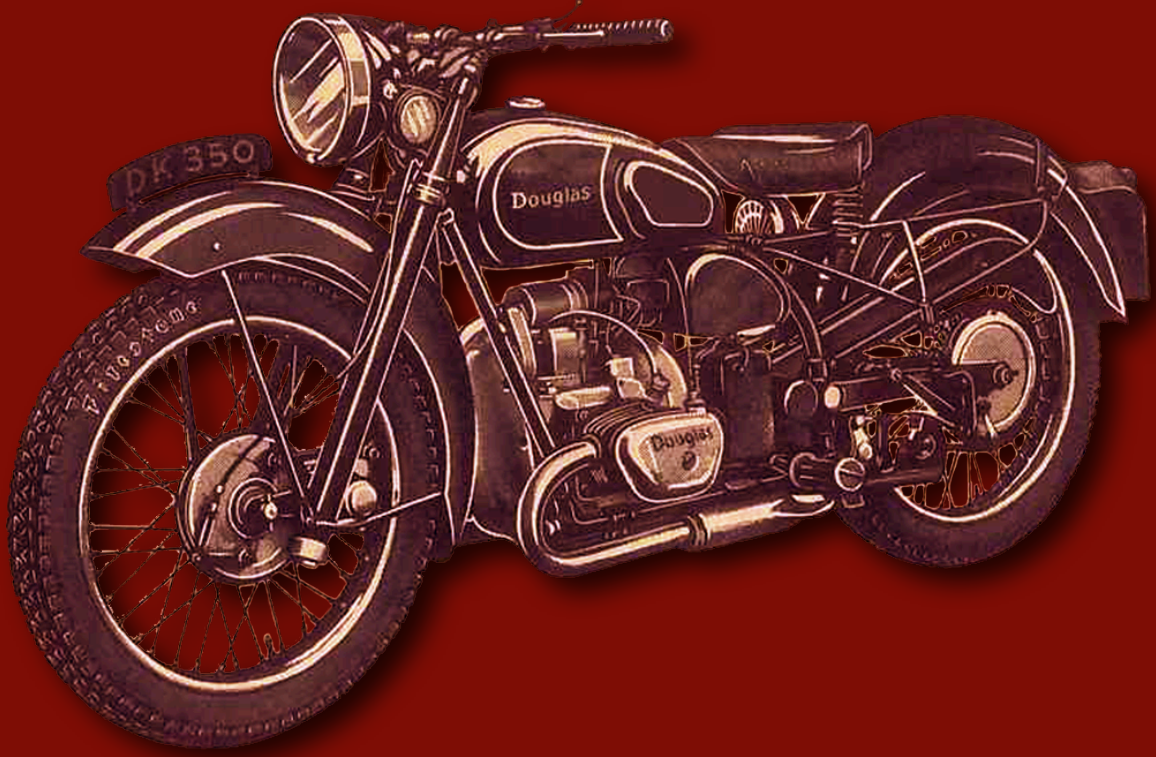
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