

BEDS VMCC NEWS

STILL KEEPING YOU INFORMED

New Year, New Knight



Made in Bedford – see article inside

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first issue of a new year, a year in which I'm sure we all wish will see things get back to the way they used to be. January and February don't generally offer many opportunities for riding old bikes although I have risked the road-salt a few times on the old faithful 1969 Tiger 100. A 130-mile day taking part in the Chilly Willy charity run for the Air Ambulance – over 600 bikes took part but almost entirely modern machines. Lots of money raised. And a 270-mile weekend trip to the Forest of Dean for the Ariel Owners Club "Crazy Horse" rally, again on the Tiger 100. This was made all the more tolerable by the discovery that the alternator is powerful enough to power my heated gloves – luxury!

We have been lucky with the weather so far this year – largely dry and no snow; hopefully that's not tempting fate. When I should probably have been in the shed, fettling the bikes ready for spring, I've been taking advantage and cramming the miles on the modern Honda, accidentally providing fodder for this newsletter. In this issue you'll read of some bikes in museums in Bristol, the Cotswolds and Solihull (the National). If you're out and about, why not take a few pictures and add a few words to help fill these pages and entertain fellow members.

Some of you, like me, will be disappointed that there will be no Relay Rally this year – and possibly lost for ever. The Waypoint Rally seems to be happening again in 2022 but, whilst an excellent excuse for a ride-out, it doesn't match bombing around for a long day's ride cramming in as many sections as possible. Oh well, there's always the ACU National Rally.

Many thanks to Will for his continuing stirring efforts in making sure you have something interesting to read in each issue. And I hope you had a chance to enjoy his "virtual club night" presentation on keeping warm and dry on the bike – see report below.

Bryan

Beds Section News *Upcoming Events*

BREAKFAST MEET – SUN, 30TH JAN, from 10am

The January breakfast meet returns to the popular Jordans Mill, Holme Mills, Southill Road, Broom, SG18 9JX. Outdoor and indoor seating available, so no excuses. Don't worry about bringing an old bike – great if you can but it's a social meet so anything goes.

INFORMAL MIDWEEK RUN – THURS, 3RD FEB

Please let me know (bryan.marsh@btinternet.com or 07309 731191) if you would like to attend and, I'll let you know the starting point. This time of year, the weather on the day will dictate the format – may just be a run to somewhere serving hot drinks and a decent bacon sandwich, or it may even get postponed again.

FEBRUARY CLUB NIGHT – THURS, 10TH FEB

Don Mckeand entertains with the story of travelling through ten countries in five days. Shefford Memorial Hall, 10 Hitchin Road, Shefford SG17 5JA. 7.30pm for 8.00pm start.

MIDWEEK LUNCH – THURS, 17TH JAN, noon

The Tavistock Pub and Carvery - 119 Tavistock St., Bedford MK40 2SB from noon. Please don't get confused and go to Bedford St. in Tavistock, nice town though it is.

Event reports

DECEMBER BREAKFAST MEET (IN JANUARY)

As the last Sunday in December rather inconsiderately fell on Boxing Day, the breakfast meet was shifted to the first Sunday in January. Not sure the message got through though. Either that, or everyone had had their fill of bacon and eggs over the festive period. I waited in the car park for about half-an-hour before conceding that it was a case of "Billy no mates". But, what the heck – I went in and had a very nice breakfast, thank you very much. The company was a bit dull though.



A lonely looking bike waiting for company (which never came) at the breakfast meet

INFORMAL MIDWEEK RUN

Echoing the enthusiasm for the breakfast meet, no-one much really fancied a run in the first week in January. Coupled with the forecast of a very cold morning, the decision was made to call it off and stay at home watching "Homes under the Hammer" instead. As the chap in the Asylum said, "I may be mad, but I'm not silly!"

CLUB NIGHT – VIRTUAL & NOGGIN AND NATTER

Anticipating a reduced audience, Will's presentation "Commuting on a Vincent" was postponed until better times. Undeterred, a dozen or so turned out at the Memorial Hall for a noggin and, as can be seen from the picture below, a good natter.



"Did I ever tell you about the time that I..."

Will very kindly provided a virtual club night presentation on keeping warm and dry, or failing to, as was often the case in the past. At the time of going to press, this can still be found on http://wcurry.co.uk/vmccbeds/net_night_jan_2022/w_001.html

MIDWEEK LUNCH

An excellent turnout, a dozen or more, at the Musgrove Arms in Shillington to enjoy some Italian cuisine, and good chat.

The page 3 girl



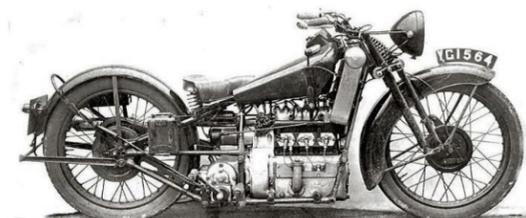
Great Scott! - three-cylinders!

WILL CURRY

Newsletter 44 contained a number of photos Bryan took on a visit to Sammy Miller's Museum. I couldn't resist adding a bit more in the way of detail to some of them. This time it's the Scott 3-cylinder.

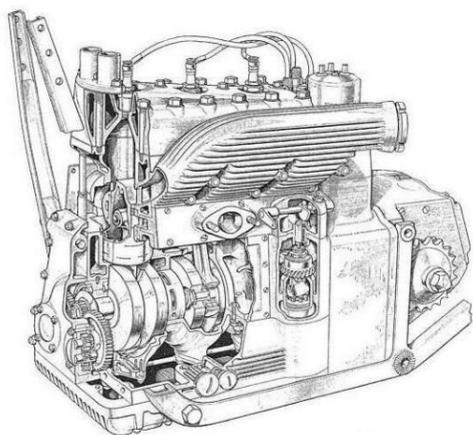


The bike in Sammy Miller's collection is undoubtedly large, monstrous even. It's not clear how many were made, either eight or nine with one being the personal transport of the designer, Bill Cull. He joined Scott in 1931 and seems to have been behind the creation of a number of engines for non-motorcycle use. The one which went on to become the engine for the 3S was designed for an application for the Royal Navy but was not taken up. The prototype 3S was made in 1934 and was subjected to a road test by one of the weeklies. By the time production started in 1935 the engine had grown from 750cc to a nominal 1000cc and the cycle parts had acquired a distinctly portly appearance.

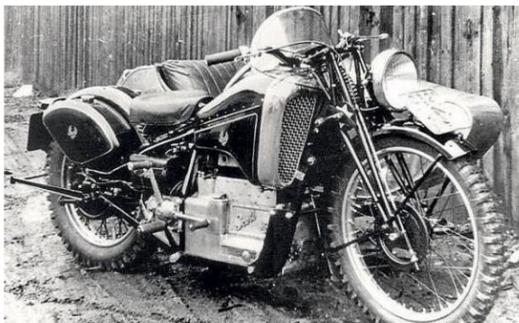


The prototype of 1934. I personally prefer the look of the prototype to that of the production models.

A Scott twin is to me a simple thing. Not simple and crude but simple and sophisticated. The thermo-syphon water cooling with the radiator leaning forward is one example. The tilt encourages hot air to rise up through the honeycomb even when the bike is at rest so no need for a fan. Another example is lubrication. Scotts are not naturally petrol engines. An organised oil leak presided over by a Pilgrim pump and assisted by crankcase depression delivers oil to the bores and to the mains and big-ends via spring-loaded rotating crankshaft seals thoughtfully marked 'LH' and 'RH'. Transposing them on reassembly will add a whole new dimension of woes to Scott ownership.



The triple is in contrast very complicated both in its construction and in its operation. Details are scarce and the only nearly contemporary account I have found comes from 1941 in a road test of a car fitted with the engine. The car connection continued: DKW, IFA and Wartburg all developed 3-cylinder engines based on the Scott and I wonder if the SAAB engineers borrowed anything from them. The engine was also used postwar as the basis for an outboard motor. The description of the engine's construction in the road test don't entirely correspond with the cut-away illustration but I rather suspect that the engines changed and evolved in the three years they were in production. As a Scott it is, naturally, both two-stroke and water-cooled. It also had coil ignition and wasn't a petrol engine. The lubrication system is complex. There are three oil pumps, two of which pump oil from the sump, one to lubricate parts of the crankshaft and the other to feed a third pump which is throttle controlled and supplies oil to the fuel mixture. This then lubricate the big ends and bores. Any oil remaining in the mixture is centrifuged out by the shape of the transfer port, finding its way back to the sump via drillings in the crankcase. This centrifuging of the mixture is intended to reduce the amount of oil in the combustion chamber and thus the amount of smoke, carbon and plug fouling. Of the clutch and gearbox there is no description at all except that the gearbox had four speeds. Scott made their own gearboxes so presumably this was theirs too. Quite how the clutch and the right-angle drive work is a mystery.



A later 3S with the pannier tanks and fitted with 'Sports' tyres. Given the position of the front numberplate it probably didn't get much use after dark.

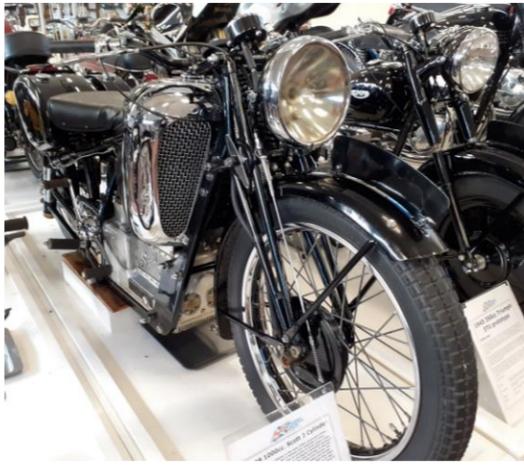
Apart from one feature of the later bikes the cycle parts look entirely conventional. Later bikes didn't have a petrol tank in the usual place. Instead, two pannier tanks were employed, mounted alongside the back wheel.

So how does the Scott compare with the offerings of other manufacturers? With a dry weight quoted as 480lbs it is significantly heavier than the HRD Rapide's 430, the SS100 Brough's 440 and the Square Four's 420. It's worth noting that the Scott's figure of 480 comes from the internet - I couldn't find any contemporary figures to confirm it. As far as price is concerned its price of £115 is cheaper than the HRD's £138 or Brough's £140 but more expensive than the Ariel's £100. In terms of claimed power it ranks with the Brough at 48bhp, more than the HRD at 45bhp and the Ariel at 36bhp.

Perhaps Bill Cull's most notable achievement had nothing to do with motorcycles. It was a special joint developed for Royal Navy periscopes. What made this joint special was its adoption in the Austin mini drive train. Prototypes had universal joints which worked well enough in a straight line but as the steering lock increased so did the cyclic variation in speed of the driven shaft: the car lurched most uncomfortably, and the drive train wore rapidly. The periscope's special joint was the constant velocity joint and its adoption in the production Minis was the car's salvation.

POSTSCRIPT

I was at the National Motorcycle Museum today (Thurs, 27th) and they have, what they say is, the only other remaining 3-cylinder Scott – so I took a few pictures:



New Knight – made in Bedford

One of the more unusual motorcycles at Vintage Stony on New Year's Day was this New Knight (see separate article for some of the rest).



1924 Villiers-engined New Knight on display at Vintage Stony

According to the owner's display information:
 "This is one of only two known examples of this make. It was made in 1924 by Holloway and Knight of Foster Hill Road, Bedford. Later this marque was made in Peterborough until production ceased in 1929. They, like many other makes of the time, being after the First World War, made motorcycles using parts from various manufacturers. This one has a 147cc 2-stroke engine, Albion gearbox and Brampton forks. It does not have a front brake but has two rear that act on the "dummy" rim on the back wheel. The decompressor helps with slowing too. The original price was £28 new plus £2 for kickstart and clutch.

It was restored by the late Albert Wallis of Wilstead, near Bedford in the 1970s and given to daughter-in-law Sonia Wallis for her birthday in 1978. Ridden today by John Wallis. Albert found the previous owner in 1969 but he would only part with it by making a swap for a boneshaker bicycle which Albert acquired in 1969."

I did a little digging to see what else I can find out about this little-known marque. According to Richard Rosenthal's Encyclopedia of Classic Motorcycles, production at Bedford began in 1923 with 147cc and 269cc Villiers-engined models, and later included 172cc and 247cc side-valve JAP-engined motorcycles. Production levels were never high, and doubt exists over when manufacture ended.

The British Motorcycle Directory (Roy Bacon and Ken Hallworth) differs slightly, claiming they also used a 349cc two-stroke Villiers engine, and that the JAP-engined offering was a solitary 293cc sv four-stroke. This latter didn't last long, however, as the marque itself soon faltered, leading to its re-introduction with 147cc and 247cc Villiers-engined models in the summer of 1924; these machines featured saddle tanks and drum brakes to both wheels. The 147cc continued for 1925, plus a new 172cc model, and these then formed the basis of the range

for several years; Albion two or three-speed gearboxes and all-chain drive were standard. Only the 172cc model appeared in 1928, but the next year this was joined by a supersports version of the same capacity and a 247cc model appeared again, both the new machines having Sturmev-Archer three-speed gearboxes, but with the onset of the Depression years, the company turned away from the market.

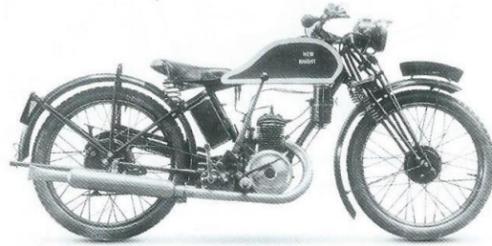


Illustration from Richard Rosenthal's book.

Both books claim production commenced in 1923 but they were being advertised in local papers as early as April 1922, perhaps to drum up a few advance orders:

Made in Bedford!

The 'NEW KNIGHT' MOTOR CYCLE

Fitted with 2 1/2 h.p. Jap Engine, Moss 2-speed Gear Box with Clutch and Kick Start, Drum Spring Forks, Amaco Carburetter, Foot Brake in Rear Hub (internal expanding, fully enclosed), All-chain Drive, Bendable Chain fitted, Saddle Tank, Loco-cylinder No. 5 Piston Saddle, Beldam 26 by 2 1/2 Heavy Tyres, Powell and Hammer Lamps, Separate Generator for Rear Lamp, Valanced Guards back and front, all on, with 2 Tool Bags, Tools, Number Plates, and License Holder, ready for the road.

Weight 165 lbs. Price 65 gns. Tax 30/-

Holloway & Knight Telephone 296
84 Foster Hill Rd
BEDFORD.

Bedfordshire Times and Independent March 31, 1922

Made in Bedford!

THE "NEW KNIGHT"

Model E.
Two-stroke.

Fitted with 2 1/2 h.p. Villiers Engine, Mark V., with Fly-wheel, Magneto, High Tension. (Lighting Set can be run from this magneto by the addition of coils, in no way interfering with the ignition, at very low cost). Amaco Carburetter, Beldom Tyres, 26 by 2 1/2, Lycett's High Grade Saddles, Tool Bag.

This machine has been thoroughly tested and should find a ready market at the exceptionally low price of **38gns**

Manufactured by
Holloway & Knight Telephone 296
84 Foster Hill Rd
BEDFORD.

Bedfordshire Times and Independent - Friday 07 April 1922

Vintage Stony (Stratford) 2022



The Lightweight of the Season

1 1/2 h.p. 'NEW KNIGHT'

2 Stroke, 2-Speed.

A Light, yet Strong, Reliable Mount, representing Sound Design and Robust Construction; built to the Highest Ideal and not to the Lowest Price. Suitable for Young and Old, also an Ideal Mount for the Ladies. Will take you anywhere without trouble.

Price, £36

WRITE TO-DAY FOR LEAFLET, TO THE MAKERS

HOLLOWAY & KNIGHT

DEPT. M. 84, FOSTER HILL ROAD, BEDFORD.

Other Models for this Season include: 2 1/2 h.p. 2-STROKE; 3 1/2 h.p. 2-STROKE SPORTS; 3 1/2 h.p. 2-STROKE (COMBINATION); & 2 1/2 h.p. NEW KNIGHT J.A.P.

Bedfordshire Times and Independent - Friday 24 November 1922

TO MOTOR CYCLISTS!

When Choosing your New Mount Don't Hope for the Best—GET IT by having a

'New Knight'

THE PERFECT MOTOR-CYCLE

Write for full particulars from the Makers—

HOLLOWAY & KNIGHT

DEPT. M. 84, FOSTER HILL ROAD, BEDFORD.

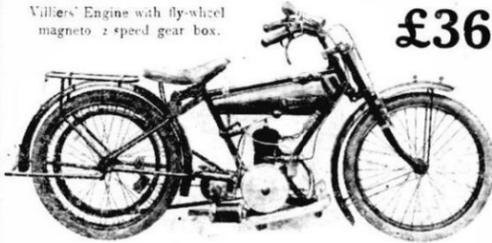
Telephone 288.

Bedfordshire Times and Independent - Friday 01 December 1922

1 1/2 h.p. "NEW KNIGHT."

Villiers' Engine with fly-wheel magneto 2 speed gear box.

£36



Drip Feed Lubrication, Aluminium Chain Case and Footboards, Brampton Spring Forks, Dunlop Tyres 24in. by 2in., Petrol Tank holds 1 1/2 galls. Price includes Lighting Set.

Sole Manufacturers

HOLLOWAY & KNIGHT

DEPT. M. 84, FOSTER HILL ROAD, BEDFORD.

Telephone 288.

Bedfordshire Times and Independent - Friday 08 December 1922

Interestingly, I couldn't find any newspaper advertisements later than December 1922 and during the production run. One can only speculate on reasons for this.



A tale of two clutches

BRYAN MARSH

Every Wednesday I head over to Bourton-on-the-Water for volunteers' day at the Cotswold Motor Museum and Toy Collection. It's a very pleasant 130-mile round trip on the bike (except when it's dark and foggy) and I get to play with some of their motorcycles. Luckily for me and my limited mechanical prowess (the term "dangerous with spanners" has been heard), the bikes aren't kept in running condition. They do, however, like to preserve their condition, including turning the engines over every six months or so.

During the year, it was found that the clutch was slipping badly on the SS80 Brough Superior and the clutch on the Calthorpe wasn't moving when the kickstart was depressed. Both problems meant the engine couldn't be turned over routinely and would need sorting out during the winter closure period. And that's where I come in. Apparently, they once had a strong motorcycle team but now they have me! (and more confidence in my abilities than me)



The SS80 clutch exposed and partially dismantled

Commented [A1]:

It looked to me that the Brough clutch was housed in an oil-bath primary chaincase, but any trace of oil was long gone – or perhaps it was supposed to run dry? The outer friction plate didn't look too bad, with the corks in reasonable condition.



The outer friction plate – corks looking not too bad

But the same certainly could not be said of the remaining fraction plates:

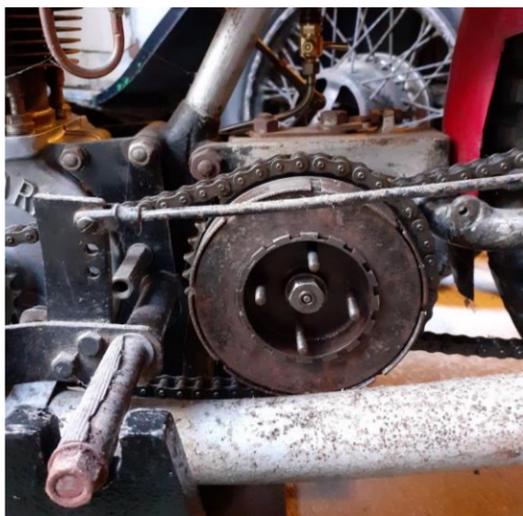


Perhaps not surprising the clutch was slipping. The plates have now gone away for re-corking, even though the bike probably won't ever even be started, in line with the museum policy of preservation in as good condition as possible.



Note the universal toolkit – hammer, screwdriver, WD40 and cup of tea

The Calthorpe is a former motorcycle football bike, in pretty much the state it was in when it last came off the field. As mentioned above, the kickstart could be depressed but the clutch basket wasn't turning. Luckily for me, a quick tighten of the centre nut, once the outer cover had been removed, was enough to solve the problem. Unfortunately, this means the museum now think I have mechanical skills...



The offending centre nut, found to be loose

The M-Shed Museum, Bristol

Despite being housed in the same building as the former Bristol Industrial Museum, the M-Shed Museum is much more about the social history of Bristol and its people. But I happened to be passing, it was free entry and I did manage to find these bikes:



The Beddoes family's Raleigh moped



Mr Dodge's 1914 Rover – ridden from 1914 until 1930 then stored in a shed, hence its very original condition.



Mr McCabe's 1956 Douglas Dragonfly, made in Kingswood, Bristol. One owner from new until shortly before his death in 2014

National Motorcycle Museum

A few exhibits that caught my eye:



Here's one I made earlier...



1973 ISDT Triumph TR5T



Always fancied one of these – Triumph Legend, based on T160 Trident



On the subject of three-cylinder motorcycles – 1915 Royal Enfield 675cc prototype



I had one of these – Triumph TR65 Thunderbird 650cc



How do you remember which lever does what? 1902-3 Matchless 2 1/4 hp



Baby Triumph – quite fancied one of these



Disc brake on 1906 Imperial 500cc, made in London