



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

Hard to believe but April was our best month ever. Thank you for your trust and support!

Astonishing given we have now run out of some pretty vital items due to suppliers, machine shops, chromium platers etc. not working.

Since we could not foresee the situation, the usual practice to have say, 100 of an item manufactured, only to have a quarter finished in order not to tie up too much money, and then to find out record sales of that item coincided with the chromers closing for quarantine caught us out.

Other issues arose from relying on the usual procedure of certain team members looking after certain stages of assembly or technical checks. That team member then disappearing into quarantine did upset the stock situation of items of which we have, theoretically, enough material in stock but that could not be gotten into a saleable condition.

Then again, it was perhaps good we did run out of some items because the packers were flat-out and doing overtime! At the moment some foundries, machine shops, and plating plants are re-opening again so I hope we will shortly get much-needed items back into stock. We hope to be getting back to normal in the next few weeks.

The Norton/Donington Situation

As you may have read the motorcycle assembly shed supported by fraudulent money-abducting schemes is now history. The Norton Trademark and some assets have been purchased from BDO, the liquidators, by the Indian TVS Group.

TVS have put John Russell, an ex-Harley and ex-Manganese Bronze manager, in charge. We look forward to working with John Russell and TVS. I have the hope this re-start of Norton is at long last a serious one after the succession of duplicitous characters I endured in the last 30 years, interrupted only by the honest but brief Kenny Dreer/Ollie Curme intermezzo.

After all the underfunded and mostly fraudulent false starts, TVS is a player that can get Norton back from the never-never dreamland the whole industry laughed at into the world of serious motorcycle development and manufacturing.

I wish TVS success with their new acquisition and a bright future for Norton!

Joe's ?th Birthday:

Well, I won't tell you how old I am, let's just say I am now officially a "risk group member".

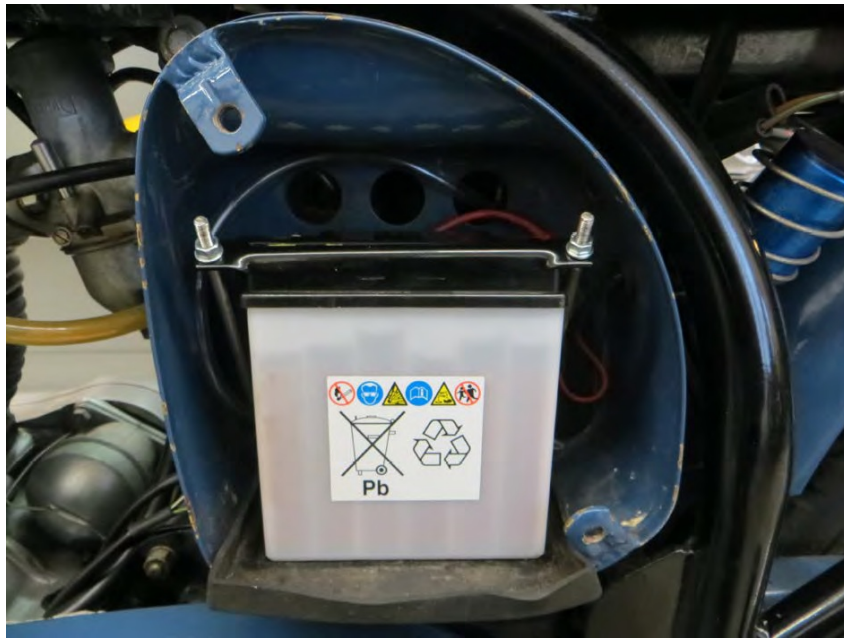
My friend Ralf, glasser by trade, sent me a birthday present he had made and intended to bring to Paranoiarling for my birthday but, like all race meetings presently, that was cancelled. Whether he wanted to tell me that time flies even for Norton Riders is open to speculation.



New items:

We have added to our "Featherbed Models" parts range. We now have the seat rails for Wideline & Slimline models, and the struts for the front mudguard. Plus the battery retaining bar for the Slimlines, an item constantly missing on secondhand bikes, and the boss needed one for his Mercury, too! I used to hold the battery in place with bits of foam, but now it can be fastened as intended again.

At the moment it is difficult to get anything made, so don't expect miracles in the near future. We will be busy enough just to get to our normal level on the routine items!



NM19101 BATTERY RETAINING STRAP

[Shop](#)

Our Bikes:

Joe:



Though I did use the Signal Orange Roadster (Angela Hemmings calls it ***“your tangerine coloured wotsit”***) to ride to work I did little else with it due to local Corona restrictions. Naturally, with the MOT (“TÜV”) due, I discovered a broken spoke in the rear wheel, only about 20,000 miles after the wheel was rebuilt. So that needs to go out, tire off, new spoke fitted, tire on, wheel back in. Not something I look forward to!

The Mercury has developed an electric issue. All of a sudden the ammeter went dramatically into the “Minus” zone. I fondly imagined it was but a shot ammeter but, switching the light on, it started to sputter and only switching the light off again let it run normally. Another one to look into!

Ashley:

Due to Corona lockdown and temporary quarantine nothing from me this time.

Simon: Who needs four gears on a Commando!



Upon leaving Andover I noticed my Commando's gear change had become faulty and I could not shift down from 4th. I quickly assessed the options: return to work and fix my bike, call the breakdown service or attempt to ride home.



I prefer to repair my bikes at home with my own tools so rule out returning to work. My experience with the breakdown service has always resulted in a two hour wait—how much longer would it be in the current 'lockdown' situation? I decided to try ride the 40 miles home in top gear, reasoning the roads would be quiet and largely free of vehicles.



I can vary my normal route to avoid urban areas. However, it's not possible to miss the small town of Ludgershall (photo 1), but luckily the right turn junction is traffic free and I don't need to stop. I try to change gear without success. The Salisbury Plain section (photos 2 & 3) is mostly straight with gentle curves - no problem.



A narrow lane (photos 4 & 5) allows me to avoid the town of Devizes but has some sharp bends. I keep the revs up and slip the clutch as much as I dare, hoping I won't get stuck behind a farm vehicle. No traffic and no stops. Another 15 miles to go—so far so good!



While riding I'm thinking what may be the cause of the problem: and conclude it's probably a broken ratchet spring. I rebuilt the

gearbox in 2011 and have travelled 20,000 miles without touching the transmission, apart from an annual oil change.

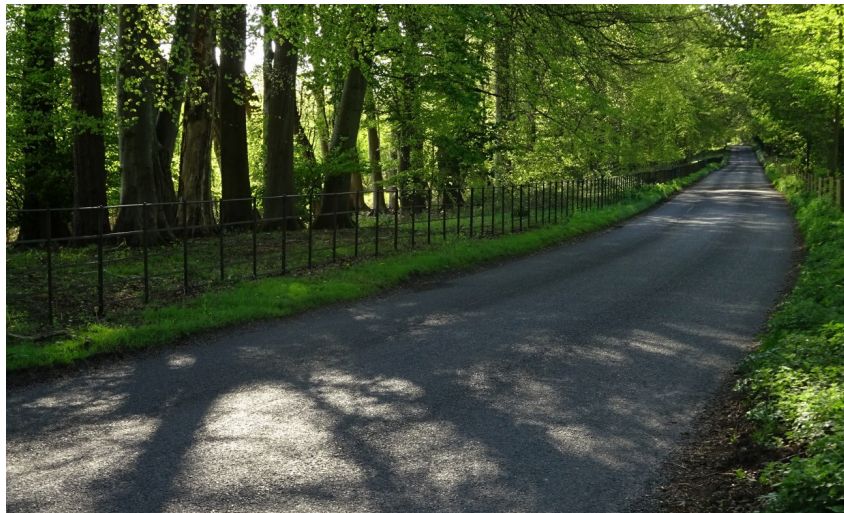


This sharp uphill bend (photo 6) is a challenge but I keep rolling onwards.

I have a 21 tooth gearbox sprocket fitted and am glad it's not a larger size.



It had to happen! Eight miles from home I have my first stop. At a 'T' junction (photo 7) a car is approaching on the road that takes priority. Lots of revs and clutch slipping are required to get back on the move. I'm hoping the fibre clutch plates can put up with the abuse.



Travelling from the south to my destination on the north side of Chippenham, I can avoid the town by using a lane which will bring me on to a by-pass that crosses near my home. (photos 8 & 9)



4 miles to go - home is in sight. This downhill section (photo 9) is easy and descends to a main road. With just two stops in 40 miles, I'm happy to reach my destination near the roundabout in photo 10.



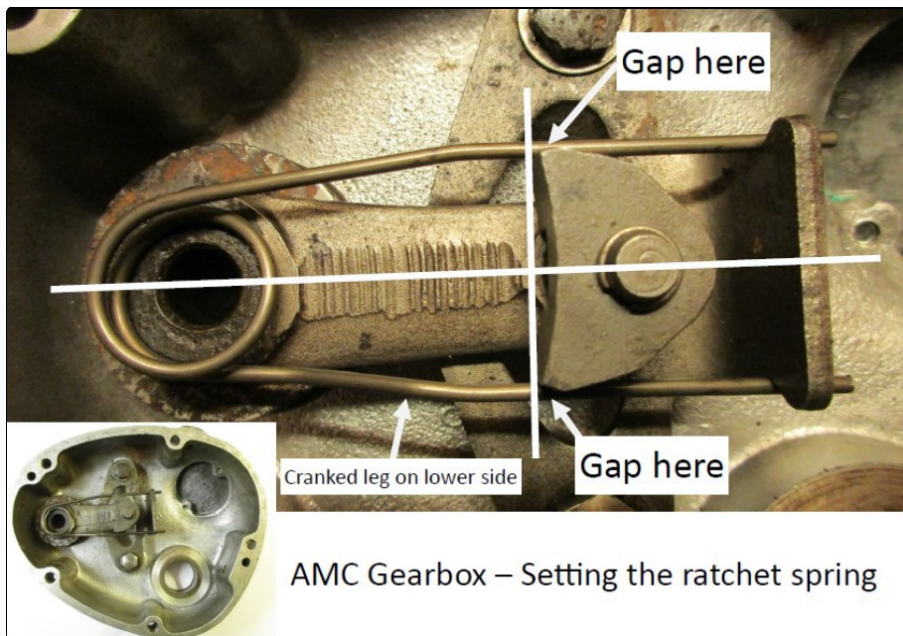


The gearbox cover is removed. The ratchet spring (part 04.0038) had fractured and it is soon replaced. It's important to ensure there are small gaps at the selector pawl.

[Shop](#)

Joe says:

Simon's incident is well-known amongst our "Old Boys Group" hence we always carry an 04-0038 spring with us. They wear over time and then break. The way to replace it at the roadside is to lean the bike at as much of an angle as possible to the left, thus getting the gearbox oil into the shell away from the outer cover, then to replace the spring with minimal loss of oil.



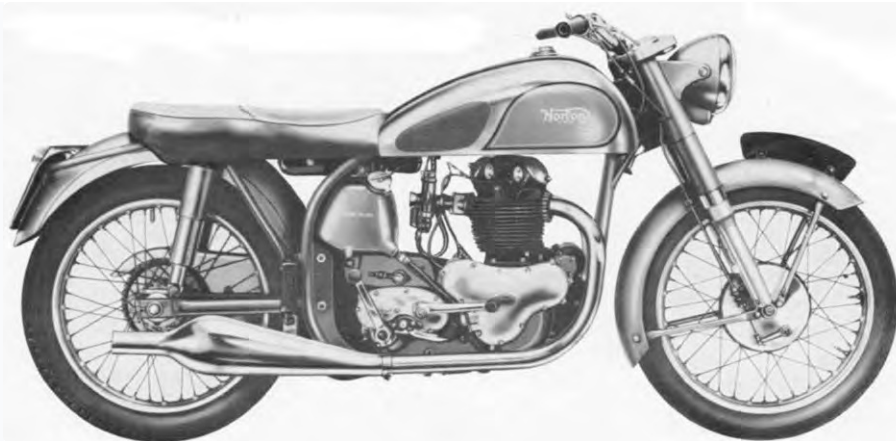
Triumph Design versus Norton:

Mike Jackson recently send me a link to a café racerized Dommi and in the following e-mail discussion said: *“I hope you agree with me that the Norton twin is still the most handsome of all early post war twins.”*

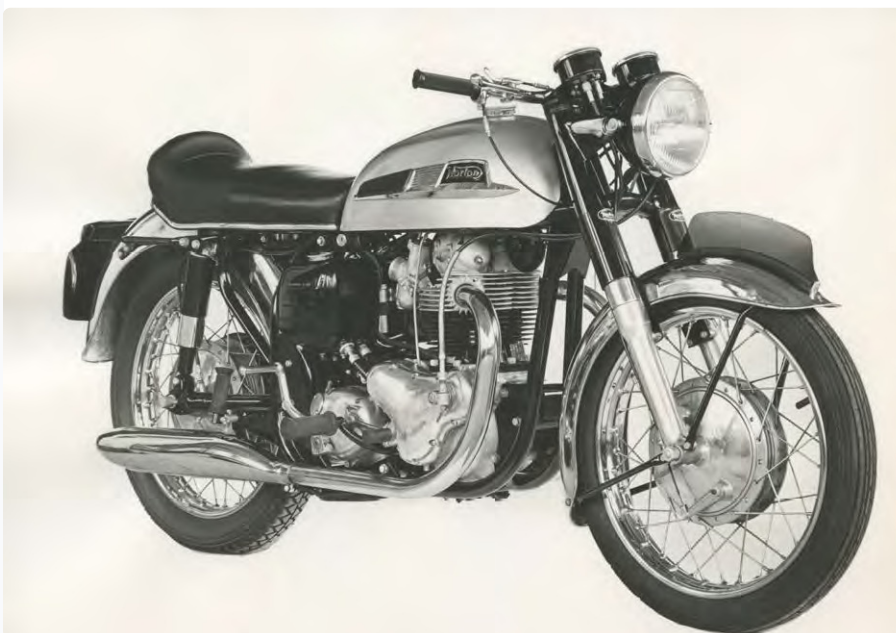
You may be surprised to hear I don't. I give Mike that Nortons were most probably the best British post-war twin from an engineering point of view- legendary handling due to the “Roadholder” forks in conjunction with the “Featherbed” frame, a delightful gearbox, and very good engines that were slower at first than the more highly tuned Triumphs but caught up with them in the 1960s, leaving no good reason bar the, let's say, “interesting” handling of the pre-Oil-in-Frame chassis to put a Triumph engine into a Norton frame. Edward Turner and his team may not have been the best in technology, but they certainly ran rings around the competition in styling. Triumphs had very pleasing lines and simply looked right.



Norton Dommis started beautiful at first with the very early models....



but then seemed to go on a downhill course with the bikes looking more and more staid from year to year until the, in my opinion, most bland of all, the Slimline models, came out. They looked solid and functional rather than light and sporty.



Only when the “Commando” came out this changed. The “Fastback” was probably too shocking to Norton diehards who had gotten used to a decade of non-design, but with the beautiful lines of the “R” and later “Roadster” and its variants design came back into the Norton world and the sales figures reflected it. In fact Commandos, again in my personal opinion, looked better than their Triumph contemporaries.

Mike Jackson is still obsessed with the

“Norton Girls”: A NOSTALGIC LOOK AT THOSE NORTON GIRLS - Part II

Last month's *NOSTALGIC LOOK AT NORTON GIRLS* concluded with the question ***“But did these advertisements succeed?”*** Yessir, they certainly did, especially in the all-important North American market! **THEY RAN FOR FOUR YEARS...**

Back then (1970/1974), back there (USA/Canada) the best-selling magazine was *Cycle*; their monthly circulation was 450,000 copies. As so often occurs with major publishers Ziff Davies (ZD), *Cycle*'s proprietor, owned and printed a raft of monthlies, covering all sorts of subjects from automobiles [known over here as cars], to boats, aircraft, surfing, fishing, and - because we're talking USA - guns.

One of the reasons for ZD's commercial success was a unique system that enabled readers to obtain free product details -- and literature - up to a maximum of six advertisers per month. Every fresh issue of *Cycle* contained a pre-addressed postcard upon which readers could tick any six products for which further info was required. Then, on the receipt of the postcards, which naturally included the consumer's address, *Cycle* tipped-off the advertiser concerned.

In Norton's case we received several thousand addresses per month, the other bonus was that if Chuck Smith or Hank Jones in Arizona wanted to know more about the *Commando*, we were now in a position to advise his nearest local friendly dealer. [There were many such dealers in USA, but, in large states like Arizona, “local” could imply a journey of 150 miles or more.]

Temptation

... comes in many forms.

Take the new Commando 850, for instance. To one man, it's the highly developed Norton 830 c.c. twin cylinder engine, conjunction of brute strength and finesse, with its 120 mph + speeds; to another, the superlative roadholding and ultra-responsive handling, echoing that racetrack sensation. To a third, its appeal lies in its no-holds-barred appearance and freedom-loving approach to life.

But find it yourself—the Norton experience!

 **Norton**
Commando 850s
Superplusbikes
—all with isolastic super-ride

For the name of your nearest U.S.A. dealer, write or call.
Exclusive Importers and Distributors:
East of Mississippi River: Berliner Motor Corporation,
Railroad Street and Plant Road, Hasbrouck Heights,
New Jersey 07604. (201) 288-9898
Exclusive Importers and Distributors:
West of Mississippi River: Norton Villiers Corporation,
6765 Paramount Blvd., North Long Beach,
California 90805. (213) 531-7138



ANGRIEST 'PHONE CALL EVER...

For me, the most memorable reaction to a Norton Girl ad came in an angry telephone call one sunny morning in April 1971. The uptight caller claimed he was a lay preacher from Alabama, who had just spotted our ad on the inside front cover of Cycle's June issue. ***"...this is outright disgustipating"***, he shouted, in a distinctive southern drawl, ***"y'all oughta be ashamed of yourselves...notta a goddam one of you Norton folks is ever gonna get to Heaven!"*** And more, in similar vein.

I was initially quite taken aback, nor did it help when he refused to respond to my polite enquiry as to what sort of machine he currently rode? I should also explain [to readers of Source] that Norton Villiers Corp were not the official distributor in Alabama, one of 43 states controlled by Berliner. I rapidly realised however that this was not perhaps the best moment to discuss how Nortons were marketed in different parts of America. The objective, pure and simple, was to calm the caller. He may possibly have spoken with Berliner, whose New Jersey number [like ours] was listed in the ad, but folks in NJ are not renowned for "taking prisoners", so he may well have already received a flea in his ear.

Finally, in an endeavour to curtail his vituperative sermon, I managed to explain how -- the previous Sunday, instead of going Desert Racing [my normal weekend pursuit during California's "cold" months], I'd gone sightseeing in Pasadena, where -- a young man, probably just back from Vietnam, was seen riding away from

that morning's Service at the Catholic Church, astride a 2-year old Norton Commando. What did he make of that, I ventured? I really shouldn't've bothered, for his rant simply continued, ever more loudly. The solution, a rare event for most of us, was to replace the receiver.

Luckily, we never heard from this gentleman again.



I suspect this is the type of advert Mike's caller referred to!

Webshop Updates

Just a quick reminder from our Web shop team.

Please note that once you have completed and paid for your order online, we are unable to make any further adjustments to the order. If you do need to change an item on a web order you have already completed, please contact our office via telephone or email.

Our secure payment system means that your payment details are not visible to us, and if any adjustments are to be made, we may

need your card details to either charge you for extra parts or refund you for any items removed. Any card details taken by phone or email are destroyed after use.

Andover Norton Calendar Competition

There is still time to get your Norton or Triumph Pictures submitted for a chance to be featured in our 2021 Calendar!

Please send your high quality images to newsletter@andover-norton along with some details and history of your bike.

We want to hear from you!

“The Source” has run for nearly 2 years now! We have had many a kind word or testimony from our readers to whom we say “Thank you!”

Feedback is always appreciated on which features you do (or don't!) like, and we have created a small survey to get your opinion.

<https://forms.gle/oMdoNdn1LagqeeC59>

We look forward to hearing from you!

**We hope you all stay safe during this
challenging time,**

The Team at Andover Norton.



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You received this email because you are registered with Andover Norton
International Ltd

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