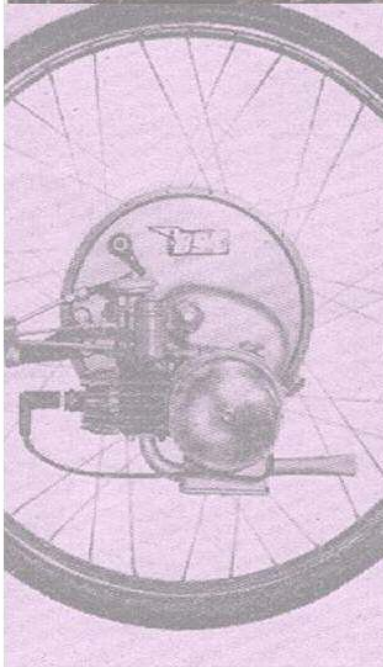
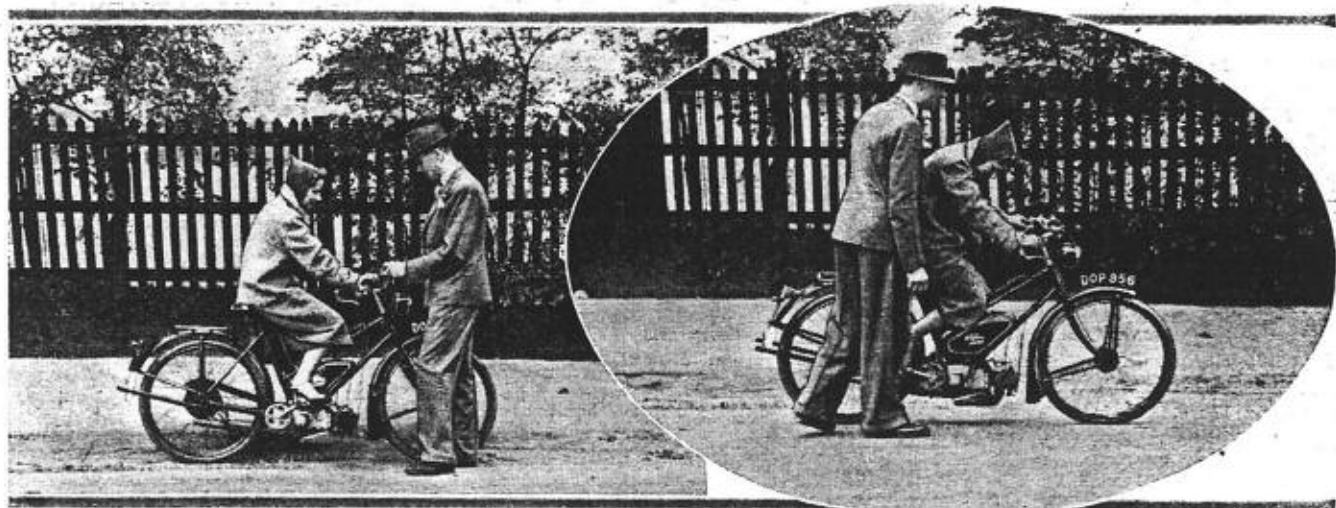


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Cycling Without Effort



I ADMIT it. I have just had one of the surprises of my life. The reason? One of the modern motorised bicycles—actually, a nineteen-guinea James "Autocycle."

They are sturdy, these machines. The frame consists of large-section tubes and the 98 c.c. engine is rigidly mounted in the frame. Two-inch section tyres, a clutch, a gallon petrol tank and electric lighting are all standard items of the equipment.

Simply by holding the clutch lever one can convert the machine into a perfectly normal cycle. After I had raised the adjustable saddle to accommodate my long legs, I found that the James could be pedalled with very little more effort than is required for cycling. The low gearing of the pedals partly accounts for this, but it is also due to the easy and smooth running of the machine.

But it is with the object of taking the "push" out of cycling that these little machines have been designed, so I pedalled off and let go of the clutch lever—the engine started and I stopped pedalling. Yes, it was as easy as that.

The First Ride

Throughout my temporary ownership of the James I was amazed at the easy starting of the engine. Even first thing in the morning, two or three turns of the pedals were sufficient to bring the engine to life, and only when the engine was stone-cold was it necessary to use the strangler and flood the carburettor. When the engine was warm it would start as soon as the clutch was engaged.

However, to return to my first ride, which was begun in the thick of London's traffic. I approached the first set of traffic lights fairly slowly, closed the throttle and, just before the machine came to rest, lifted the clutch. To my surprise the engine remained running, very slowly and quite evenly. On the "green," I helped the machine away, using the pedals, but after the initial

strain the engine left my feet behind and was soon doing all the work.

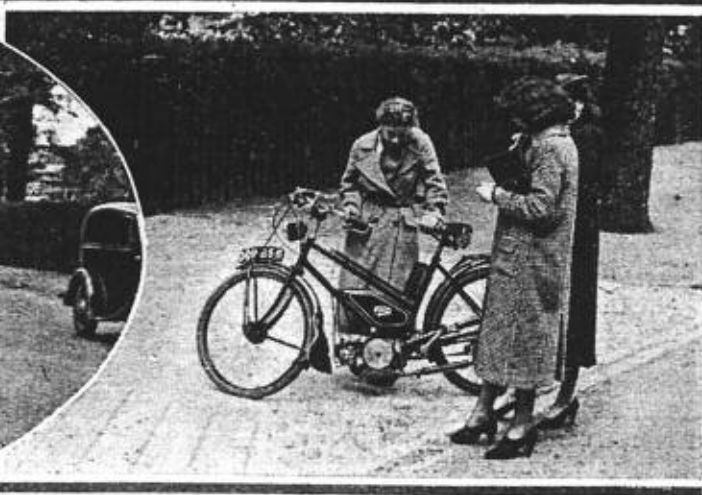
After that first ride I used the machine for numerous town jaunts, and with every mile my respect for it increased. It is extremely simple to handle, even under the most arduous traffic conditions. It steers well, even on bumpy setts, and has the inherent steadiness of the cycle when crossing tramlines. The brakes are good and enable the machine to be halted even when travelling fast down steep gradients.

As regards speed, on two occasions I registered 32 m.p.h. on the Smith speedometer, while 30 m.p.h. was frequently attained. At 25 m.p.h. the engine was perfectly happy, and it could be throttled down to 10 m.p.h. without transmission snatch. Under normal conditions I found that 20-25 m.p.h. was the most comfortable speed, but even when the engine was driven flat-out it never tired.

As a test, I made the engine pull my 12 stone away from a standstill, using the clutch and ignoring the pedals. This it did without undue clutch slipping, but in the normal way it seemed fair to help the engine away from rest with the pedals.



"Paton" Finds his Motorised Bicycle Romps Up Hills Even as Steep as 1 in 9, and Teaches a Beginner to Ride in Ten Minutes



So pleased was I with the performance that I determined to find a main-road hill that would call for 1 p.a. First the James and I assailed the few short hills near home. The worst has a gradient of 1 in 11 for approximately 200 yds., but the James romped up that with very little falling off in power, so I made tracks for the Crystal Palace district, where there are a number of useful gradients.

I started with the easy ones. First was the hill that the B.S.A.s climbed in the recent observed test. The James toured up the half-mile of gradient with ease, in spite of the fact that I had to shut down half-way up to tuck in behind a crawling bus on a corner.

Each approach to the Palace was tried and conquered in turn, finishing with Anerley Hill, which is almost half a mile long and has a gradient of approximately 1 in 9 at the top. Here the James felt the gradient, and on the steepest part the speed fell to about 12 m.p.h. Even so, the little engine gamely pulled me to the top without any need for pedalling. Eventually I had to resort to an unmade road of some 1 in 4 gradient before I could get the engine to jib.

As a final test I made a number of re-starts on the hills

leading up to the Crystal Palace, and on each occasion the engine did all the work after I had used the pedals to help it into its stride.

By this time I was thoroughly enthusiastic about the James, and I wondered how long a novice would take to learn to ride it. Accordingly, three young ladies came with me to a private road, and each in turn rode the machine as a cycle, and had no difficulty in managing it. None of these ladies had had any motor cycling experience, but after I had demonstrated how to use the engine, one of them got on the James and, with me giving a steadying hand at the back of the saddle, she pedalled off and started the engine without any trouble.

Really Simple

In about two minutes she was sufficiently confident for me to leave go the machine altogether and trot along beside her, and in a further three minutes she was willing to race me running—which she did with ease. I had taught an absolute beginner the A to Z of riding in about ten minutes! Such is the simplicity of the James.

Another thing I found was that the daily journey between home and office, which normally takes me 45 minutes by bus and 30 minutes by train, could be done on the James in 25 minutes and at considerably less cost.

Only one criticism can I apply to the James—as a motor cyclist I would have liked a larger saddle. No accurate check was kept on petrol consumption, but it would appear that the makers' claim of 140 m.p.g. is justified.

As regards cleanliness, the little James scores heavily, for the engine is away from the rider's legs and feet and the carburettor cannot blow back on one's clothes.

After my short acquaintance with the James I am certain that if I had to make a lot of short journeys, or if I lived a couple of miles away from the local shopping centre, I would certainly invest in one of these machines. It would be an excellent investment from the point of view of both economy and ease of handling.

