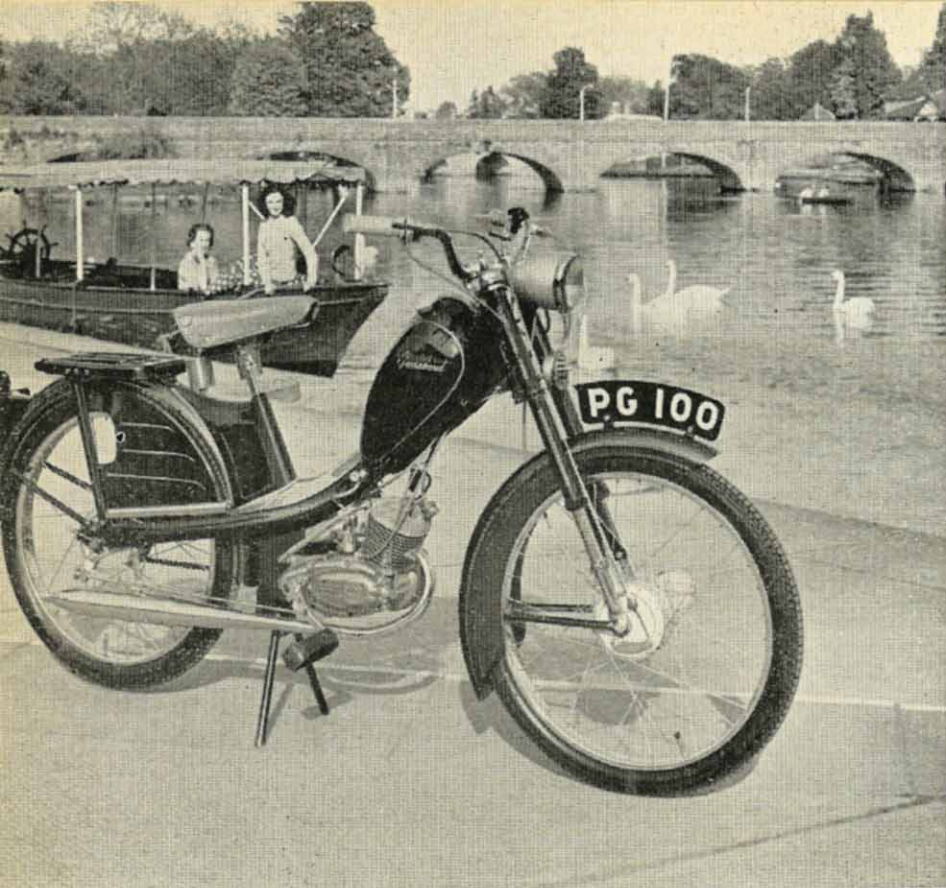


Twelve Months on a Workaday Gadabout

*Experience with
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by

ERIC MILLHOUSE



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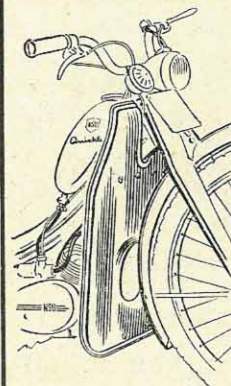
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MY Phillips "Gadabout" has just revved up to her first birthday, which seems an appropriate time to get out my "log" and find out just what she has cost to run and maintain during this first year; a year in which she has covered a little over 5,000 miles, mainly utility journeys in London.

Twice she has been de-coked, at 3,400 miles and at 5,000 miles, and on both occasions the opportunity was taken to remove the cylinder and inspect the piston-rings, which are still quite satisfactory.

There have been two mechanical defects during the period. After about 3,000 miles I had been feeling a severe vibration when decelerating, and as this rapidly grew worse the clutch-cover and clutch were removed. Here, the cause was soon located. The clutch centre-drive pinion, which engages with the primary-drive gearwheel, runs on a free-moving bush on the crankshaft extension, a nut on the end of which secures it and the clutch in place. It was found that,

due to this bush being noticeably wider than the axis of the pinion, the latter, when the engine was not pulling hard, was oscillating transversely across the bush, setting up a judder throughout the machine. In other words, there was appreciable side-play in the main bearing (though fortunately no sign of any "up-and-down") which could not be taken up by further tightening of the crankshaft nut because of the apparently excessive width of the bush. Accordingly, the somewhat unorthodox step of carefully grinding about 20 thous. from one end of the bush was taken. When reassembled, this left less, although still sufficient, clearance for the rotation of the pinion, but allowed the side-play to be taken up by the crankshaft nut. Have done a further 1,800 miles since this operation with no further judder.

The other major trouble occurred more recently. Following the last de-coke, a short test run indicated something peculiar about the rear wheel. Dismantled, the peculiarity emerged in the shapes of two

separate pieces of spindle! It had snapped close by the inner edge of one of the cones, and to my untrained eye the metal showed signs of a flaw at the point of fracture. The spindle was returned direct to the factory with a letter of mild complaint, and by return of post came a free replacement spindle, complete, without comment.

When about 4,500 miles had been covered, engine power fell off very markedly. Having tried most of the wrong "remedies" first—stripping and cleaning carburetter, checking ignition timing and contact breaker gap, etc., the trouble was eventually traced to a blocked hole in the baffle inside the main part of the silencer. Although the Handbook claims that the silencer can be completely dismantled for cleaning, in fact this baffle is welded into the silencer, and thus the only remedy is to poke out the obstruction with a stiff rod. After recurrences of these blockages about every 500 miles, and being uncertain as to the precise size of the two apertures, I consulted the Service Manager, to learn that whereas I had been clearing mine with a 1/8th in. rod, their actual size should be 5/16th in. Now, having chipped out *all* the encrusted carbon, power is very much improved.

Routine maintenance jobs have been regularly attended to, such as draining and refilling the gearbox, cleaning and adjusting chain and brakes, and so forth. Chain tension is rather critical, the least slackness setting up an annoying clatter against the chain-guard. Rear brake linings required renewing at 4,800 miles, when, to save taking the machine off the road complete shoes were purchased, thus providing a spare pair to be re-lined at leisure. Re-lining of the front brake is now impending.

Plug troubles occurred during the early months, the recommended Bosch type proving far too "soft" and rapidly burning away at the centre electrode. A Lodge "Silver Electrode" fitted at 2,000 miles, has since proved adequate. The rather flimsy bracket holding the horn snapped under its weight recently.

The rather small clearance between front wheel and mudguard valances, and the inability of the L.T. current to operate lights and horn simultaneously at moderate speeds, are other minor criticisms, and the speedometer, despite adjustments of mounting position, seems incapable of recording speeds above 30 m.p.h., oscillating violently thereafter, probably because of vibration. The seemingly unne-

cessarily complex way of attaching the front mudguard stays to the tele-forks—by two bolts inserted from the *inside*, into threaded holes on the *outside* of the tubular forks, particularly as one passes through a hole (not a slit!) in the brake anchorage plate, makes wheel replacement a fiddling job, to say the least.

Nevertheless, I can say the *Gadabout* has proved a reliable, lively, and economical mount, with excellent road-holding capacity, good front springing except at very low speeds, and a most comfortable saddle. The prop-stand begins where some others leave off:

Here is a summary of expenditure during the year:—

	£	s.	d.
Petrol (prices fluctuated during year)	10	10	2
Oil (lubricating)		4	11
Road Fund Licence		17	6
Insurance (Comprehensive)		1	10 2
Spares (2 plugs, 2 cables, rear lamp, pr. brake shoes, touch-up enamel)		1	14 5
Total cost for 5,283 miles		£14	17 2

Consumption: 5,283 miles on 37 gals, 1 1/4 pts., equals 142.184 m.p.g.
Cost per mile.....0.675d.



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