



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

Christmas is now just around the corner, and no doubt you have looked at our [2024 calendar](#) and our range of books to enjoy during the Christmas holidays and beyond. I myself look forward to hours of reading about my favorite hobby!

One thing we cannot offer yet is our latest new project, the brake drum front hub that fits Commandos and pre-Commando Nortons, too. We plan to offer complete wheels with the TLS Commando front brake plate assy [06.3281](#), as well as a kit of parts to convert disc-brake Commandos to drum front brake ones, a wish I heard more and more frequently in past years from people who want the “classic look”.

Our Ashley is all set to build the first complete wheel to test it in one of our Norton “template” bikes.



Pre-production front hub [06.1577](#), to be available shortly raw, assembled, and as a complete wheel.

The Norton “Dementius” V8 part 2

After writing my part one I finally got in contact with John Keogh again whom I had written a mail but did not get an answer for in time for the November “Source”. He corrected some points I got wrong.

Firstly, the design: “.... a retraction is needed: - I did not design the “Nemesis” bodywork - you can see my style in the “Combat” - organic but with tighter curves and very controlled lines; none of which are present on the “Nemesis”! I was asked to re-design it for an MCN article”

And continues: “In fact I see the various episodes as separate since I was being paid by different companies: I designed a still-born Superbike for March including a full-size carbon-fibre prototype (that

had no chassis nor engine!) and at the same time did a rather avant-gard cruiser that some of the March investors saw and liked- which eventually morphed into the much more conventional "Nirvana" twin i.e. now working for Norton; but I remember these meetings (now with John Silseth) being very disorganised with nobody really knowing what they wanted to build nor how to do it."

MARCH



SUPERBIKE

DESIGN - JOHN - KEOGH

The "March" superbike, the rough concept later to become the "Norton Manx" Four.

On the "Nemesis" re-style John writes: "Note the Nemesis re-style - getting rid of a lot of the "blobbiness" and poor surfacing, as well as the ridiculous forks - has now reverted back to the March name. I can't quite remember but think that the 750 Four started in 1996 as the March Superbike but then when the investors realised they needed a more realistic bike than the Nemesis in 1997, saw that they could revive the 750 Four as a simple, race-style machine."

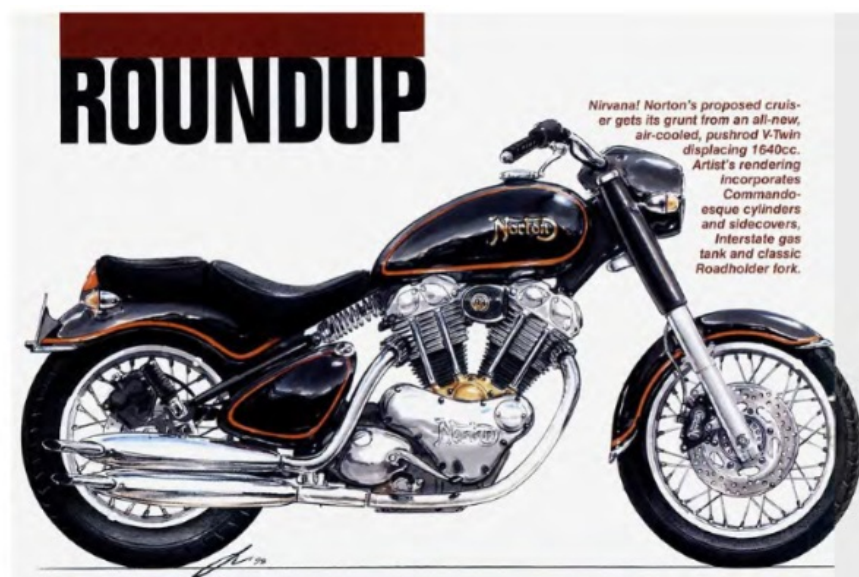


"Norton 750 Four"



John Keogh's idea for the "Nemesis", for MCN in 1997

And, yes, one reader sent me a very small picture of the "Nirvana" twin which was too small to reproduce, quite different to the "Norton Nemesis V2" Harley clone I showed the prospectus of. I remembered having seen this design at the time but never realized it was John Keogh's artwork. This "Nirvana" twin shows John Keogh knew his motorcycles and clearly refers to older Norton Models.



I'd say ES2-ish cylinders, but then what do I know?

The downside for the investors on this one, and remember I said a motorcycle doesn't fall from heaven, the investment, time, and technical background decide what is made, was that this is no easy clone to make with an S&S engine. It required a ground-up independent design hence was unlikely to ever being produced with the time and financial restraints of a small group of investors behind it.

Just to further wet your appetites, John also sent me his interpretation of a "modern" Commando:



It reminded me of a range of Commando designs he sent me years ago and which, I believe were either done for Kenny Dreer or were to show what could be done with Dreer's 961. Far more inspired than the conservative bike Dreer came up with and in the tradition of the Commando model variation with an off-roader, a JPN, a Roadster.... Now where did I file those?

Commando Petrol Consumption

Currently on U-Tube in Germany the brother of a well-known cartoonist happily wrenches away on motorcycles and shows regular videos of his deeds. Some videos show, let's say, "unconventional" methods to rebuild and tune a motorcycle. His latest victim is an 850 Commando, crashed by its previous owner.

In it Andi claims the Commando uses 8 litres of petrol in 100km. On questioning that he admitted it was just an estimate derived from a few short testrides. Since it intrigued me I looked through my petrol receipts of our recent "Tour of Germany", 1150 miles on B and C roads at (mostly) legal speeds with plenty of overtaking, stopping for orientation and biological reasons. The average was under 4.2litres per 100km in my case.

As my son Tim said: "Not bad for a motorcycle, though these days one should expect it from a car!" From memory our average was less than 4 litres when Tim and I went to a marriage at the Lago di Garda though the Alps a few years ago on our Commandos. Very hot days with temperatures well over 30°C, and I seem to remember just over 3.5litres.

If your Commando takes a lot more I recommend to look at the needle jets and jet needles that wear and need replacing if and when petrol consumption becomes excessive.

Genesis of Norton Parts: The Proddy Racer front hub

A few weeks ago I finally got round to sorting through all the items I had left over from buying dealer's inventories and job lots, plus parts I bought together with my private motorcycles. I put them all on the

small advert section of what used to be e-bay with a fixed price I considered fair and they were fair enough to sell nearly everything in a very short time.

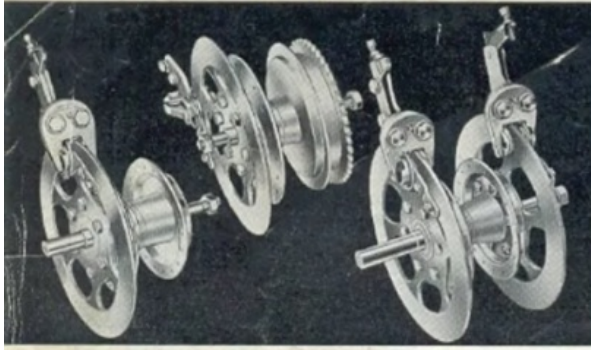
One item I had was a Campagnolo hub I found in the cache I bought from Angela Hemmings with a lot of original Norvil Proddy racer bits. It looked like a miniature version of the Proddy Racer hub we list as [06.3701HSD](#) (for single disc) and [06.3701HTD](#) (for twin discs), or as a complete wheel ([06.3701](#)).



The little hub looks familiar? Not without reason!

A Hungarian Campagnolo collector snapped it up and informed me it was used on small Ducatis in the early 1970s He also sent me this interesting leaflet:

CAMPAGNOLO HUB DISC BRAKES



are obtainable
as follows—

FRONT HUB with
TWIN DISC £50
SINGLE DISC £35

50cc Competition twin
disc (200 mm) £30

REAR HUB with
SINGLE DISC
with integral rubber

damper £50

Without damper £40

50cc with damper £25

without damper £20

PRICES Include calipers, cables and braze-on anchor plate for calipers, with a special setting tool for positioning the plate during brazing-on. The price of rear hubs includes a drive sprocket.

Twin disc front hub systems require a compensating lever to be used to ensure simultaneous operation of both calipers.

Campagnolo produce a compensating lever with alloy lever and bronze-bushed steel roller mounted in a steel hood.

TYPES For machines with steel fork legs—as for instance—

TRIUMPH — the hub system with braze-on fitting is suitable.

NORTON — the alloy legs not being suitable for brazing, a special bolt-on anchor bracket has been designed. Hubs supplied for Norton machines are suitable for both widths of forks. Spacers are supplied with caliper brackets when using wider (current) pattern forks.

CERIANI FORKS — a special caliper fitting has been developed for Ceriani alloy fork legs and hubs are available for machines with Ceriani forks fitted.

Enquiries will be welcomed from your agent by:

sole concessionaires:

THE HOLDSWORTHY CO., LTD.
LULLINGTON ROAD, LONDON S.E.20.

LOWSDALE & BARTHOLOMEW NOTTINGHAM

Catalogue above must date back to the mid-1960s with disc brake calipers that operate mechanically rather than hydraulically.

So when Norton built the first Production racer prototype in the late 1960s I guess it had an original Campagnolo hub, but when they went into small batch production they copied it. I know since I met the man who machined the three pieces to make up that hub for the Thruxton race shop, a wheel builder just north of Southampton, of whom I bought the last one left on his shelf in 1979 (now in our family racer). He told me they gave him a Campagnolo hub to copy, and he made batches of them. Many manufacturers used these Italian hubs, but at the time it was probably cheaper to get them made in England.



Katrin Seifert showing the Campagnolo-Type front hub on our 1970 Proddy Racer.

Ashley's Bit.

In recent weeks we have had many calls to the technical asking for help with parts or queries why the parts they have ordered don't fit. In this age where few of the new owners are familiar with or used a spanner / wrench the level of queries is becoming very worrying and in most cases we can't help.

Two of the recent calls as follows, the owner was looking for headlamp bulb. "will that BPF one fit my headlamp" reply "not sure what do you have fitted now" answer "I don't know" so try and found out a little more "So what does your current bulb fit into - is it H4 fitting" the reply "I don't know what that is" becoming more curious I asked "what Commando is it for" the reply "it's not, it is a 1953 AMC model" Considering the age and the many changes the fitting could have undergone it was anyone's guess as to what bulb would fit.

The second case, "I am trying to fit the composite cylinder head gasket to my 850 and the holes don't line up" my reply "is the gasket marked with top" on one side. "No" came the reply. "so it's a 750 head gasket" their reply "I'm not sure, but some of the holes do line up but the others don't, I don't think the gasket is correct" Calls like these are getting all too common now, and as you can see above it's getting to the point that we can't help. It might also explain why Norton Motors is as busy as it is.

Another problem we are seeing is a lot more is part finished and NOS parts, where these came from I don't know but suspect they were sold off back in the days of receivership to unsuspecting dealers hoping to be never seen again. Valve spring collars, gears, cylinder barrels, exhaust lockrings, have been seen recently. We often get offered these inventories, some measured in Tons, or how many container loads.

With the unknown history of the parts these are a gamble for anyone buying them and need a lot of hours to search through and catalogue the parts which can make them unviable in the long run. Part checking and manufacture is bad enough when dealing with drawings that are sometimes different to what was actually made, again, the recent hub

project highlighted this. For this project we had the drawings and an unused sample hub, so we were well armed to move forward. However, when the hub was scanned and dimensionally checked the aluminium around the brake track was wafer thin in places and not as per drawing, so we don't know if it was defective when made in the 70's and thus not used or whether all the hubs were made that way.

What Commando have you bought. (yes, really)

One thing that is cropping up more often is customers saying 'you have sent me the wrong piece' or 'that's not the piece I'm looking' This was first noticed with black airbox air filters, owners would ring and say I have bought a MK2A / MK3 and need an air filter, once it arrived they soon ring to say it is not correct, sadly to be informed that the genuine complete original Commando they bought has actually quite a few modifications that they think are what was on the bike originally having been sold an 'honest bike' Considering a lot of parts are interchangeable I wish potential owners would do their homework and look at photos found on the various club websites or even contact us to get sent a photo of what that model looked like when new.

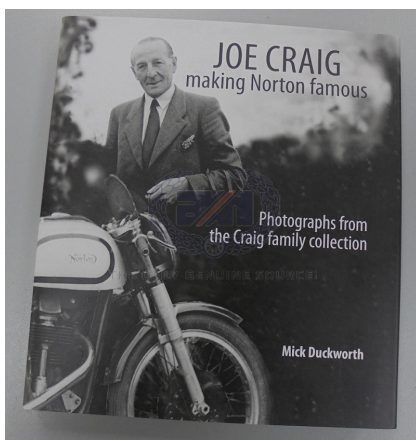
Auction catalogues are the last place to look, most bikes are not described well and one recent auction there was an S type being advertised, I did not check the frame and engine number, but these numbers would be the only thing that were on the bike that could have actually been S type, Headlamp, seat, battery cover, switchgear, exhausts were all wrong, it would be an expensive project to put back to S type.

We even send out brake pads to customers for their brake caliper on their original bike, only to be told a few days later they are not correct as they need the rectangle type pads!! Dzus fastener on the front of MK3 battery cover, rear lamp lenses, caliper pads and seal kits, air filters, we had it all recently. We think is due to those now buying the bikes were not about or cannot remember what the bikes came with when new. I suspect most reading this will know the differences and modifications, but it gives and insight into what we deal with on regular basis.

My Own Bike

Sadly I have not ridden it since mid September, I was diagnosed with a suspected ruptured ear drum which is still an issue. I will not ride without inner earplugs as most of my riding is high speed dual carriageway and motorway where noise levels are higher, the plan now is to try and get the treatment completed and see what hearing I may have lost, some of which was lost due to my past career as small arms instructor and range supervisor. Once sorted, the plan will be to fit quieter silencers to the bike, get some purpose made audiologist ear plugs and try to reduce the noise coming up from under the tank which I notice most when riding despite the Interstate tank.

Featured Products

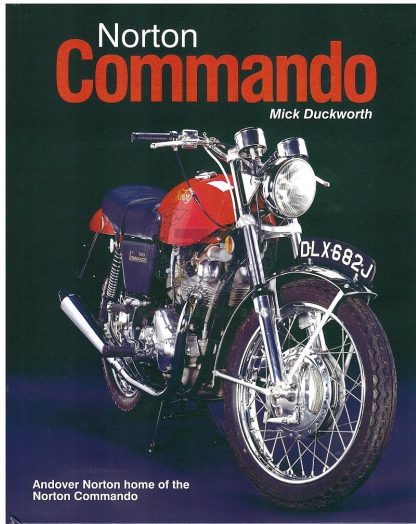
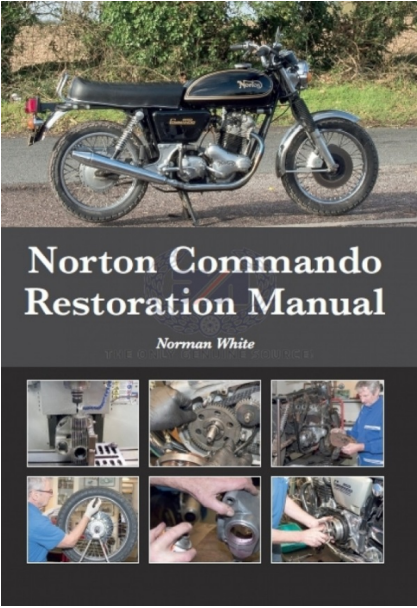


Joe Craig making Norton famous by Mick Duckworth

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Norton Commando Restoration Manual by Norman White

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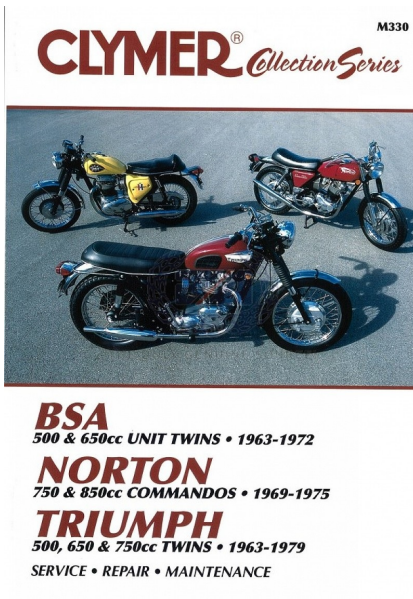
Norton Commando by Mick Duckworth

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Triumph Twin Restoration Guide by Roy Bacon

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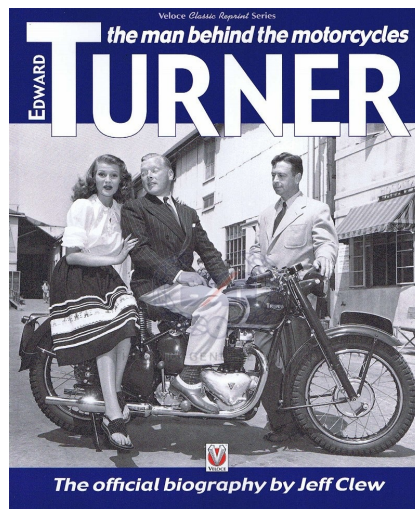


Clymer Workshop
Manual -
BSA/Norton/Triumph
M330

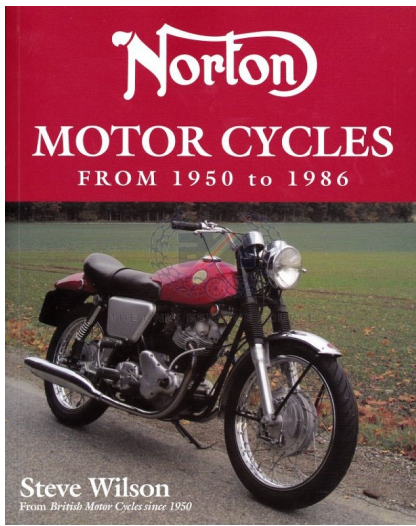
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Edward Turner - The
Man..... by Jeff Clew

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Norton Motorcycles



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**Wishing all of our readers a
Happy Christmas and New
Year!**

The Team At Andover Norton



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