

December
2010

Thirty third year
of publication

www.wessex-sec.co.uk

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter

Oak and Willow

By J. Kim Siddorn

A ghost story for Christmas

The wind soughed restlessly across the pool, stirring the sedge along the edge. It was an easterly and carried a hint of sleet, driving in a light, scrunchy drift along the edge of the riem. It gnawed into the face of the young man cycling along the path and the turned up collar of his British Warm did little to turn it away. He screwed up his eyes as a gust brought a freezing blast. Not far now.

The path was overgrown and icy puddles covered much of the way – time for another load of stone to be dragged up the mettled way but he grinned to himself at the thought. Fat chance that the company would rise to that particular occasion, he could just imagine the terse note that would come back when he asked.

He leaned his bike against the wall of the engine house and (using his sleeve) he grasped the polished brass door knob and went inside. It was gratefully warm, the waft of machine oil and a tad of exhaust gas lifting his spirits. He banged his boots against the step above that coir mat that proclaimed "North Somerset Water Limited", hung his coat on the hook and looked in the mirror to straighten his tie and button his waistcoat – the bottom buttons always came undone on the bike. He took his card from the rack, shoved it in the slot and banged the brass handle of the clock. "Ching!" it said cheerfully. He'd used up one minute of his three minute allowance.

"Morning Albert" he said, nodding to the older man who covered the night shift.

Albert took his watch from its fob and peered at it "Morning? It's near afternoon. Hours I've been waiting, my bed calls so loudly to me I'm surprised you didn't hear it."

Edward ignored the sally and enquired "Cup 'o char afore you go? Bloody freezing out there, mind."

"Go on then. I could do with a wake up sup. that I could." *Continued on page four*

Moving the Metal

For sale

Detroit 2.5 HP vertical, circa 1913. £750. **International Titan 1HP** horizontal £1,050. **International, M type, LT, 3HP, 1920, £450.** Tel John: 0122 5340432 or email wjohnfire@virginmedia.com.

Bamford 6bhp open crank engine, s/no: 8496. As-found, totally original on a trolley, unrestored, 99% complete, needs an oiler & petrol tank repair. Dry stored for 30 years. Lovely engine and a reluctant sale. £975. Tel. 01761 418926 or email tom.randall@dsl.pipex.com

Fred Biggs is selling his chaff cutter exhibit.

Lister D on 4 wheel trolley. A free standing 2 pulley reduction gear. A "Dennings of Chard" 2 speed chaff cutter, mounted on wheels and driven by a 4 foot pulley! For sale as a going concern - £300 no offers please. Phone Fred on 01761 413020

Wood-effect 15" high glass lined barrels. Just the thing for a small cooling tank. £15 each

Stuart Turner P55 Industrial engine. (photo 1 below) No magneto, but in good order. £80.00 ono.

Both above, phone Kim Siddorn 0117 964 6818

WANTED

BWCW Victoria engine. Phone Andy Vincent on 01749 812598

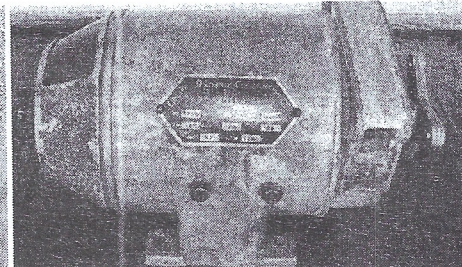
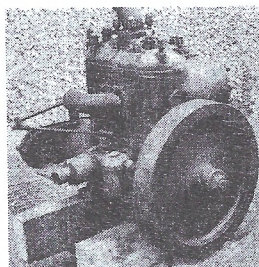
ABC engine. Particularly 1915 250cc Firefly but anything considered. Good price paid for right engine!

Stuart Turner flat twin generator complete. Alternatively, I just need the (apparently!) special dynamo. PLEASE look under your bench for one! (photo 2)

Both above, phone Kim Siddorn 0117 964 6818

PLEASE NOTE

- In future I'll run ads for **TWO** months. If you want to run it again, you'll have to phone me.
- I'm prepared to print a **SMALL** photo of your engine etc in this column IF I have space.



I wish you all a very cheerful holiday. May your God go with you, your engines always start and your pots never crack in the Frost!

Articles, cartoons, photos etc are always very welcome – this is not a one-man band, but an expression of all our thoughts and experience. Submissions should be preferably typed or word-processed or even handwritten, (if brief), - it is the content we're after, not the grammar or spelling, so please don't feel your efforts will be ignored. The editor reserves the right to change, edit, augment or lessen your Deathless Prose and asks all to note that opinions expressed in this newsletter may or may not represent club policy

Phone - 0117 964 6818

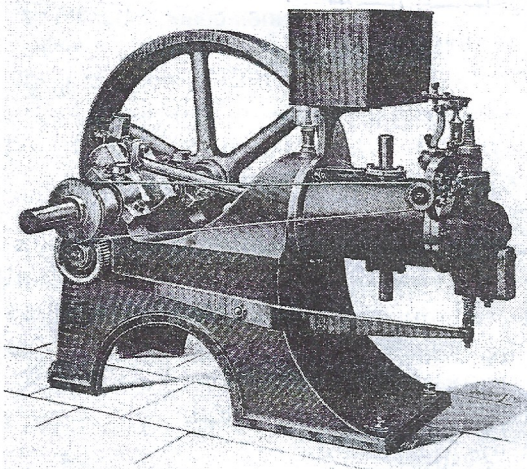
J. Kim Siddorn, 9, Durleigh Close, Bristol. BS13 7NQ or by e-mail to kim.siddorn@blueyonder.co.uk.

Featured Engine No. 47

The Petter Oil Engine by Eric Gay

This article is taken from a copy of 'Modern Engines', four leather bound books I found at a car boot sale a few years ago. Though not dated, I should say they were printed around 1900 to 1905 or even before. The engine I've chosen is the early Petter open crank oil engine, and being rather fond of the make as most of you may know I hope this may be of interest. It ain't going to be too technical and I am going to keep to the wording as printed.

This is a small engine designed for consuming common oils of paraffin, and works on the principle of ignition by compression and the heat retained in the vaporiser. The vaporiser is first heated by a lamp and, once started, the lamp is extinguished. If there is any place where a handy small oil engine is more appreciated than another, it is at a farm. Nowadays,



there are numerous machines for carrying out work formerly done by hand or horse. In this engine only two valves are used and of these

the inlet acts automatically, so that the exhaust valve alone requires to be operated by mechanism. This reduces the working parts to a minimum. There are no pumps, sprays, vacuum chambers, etc. to get out of order. Renewals and repairs can be made with perfect ease and at trifling cost. the material of which the valves are composed is a special mixture. It does not corrode, and will last for years in regular use.

The general arrangement of the governor is shown (right) and a separate view is also given of the following parts – A, The oil valve. C, The lower curtain. B, The upper curtain. D, The holder.

The oil valve A has a groove cut along its length, and coming to a sharp point at E near its lower end. The oil valve is controlled by the governor lever F, and works up and down in the oil inlet G, the result being to cut off the oil supply as the speed of the engine increases. When the stops this valve rests upon its seat H in the oil inlet and thus it is impossible for oil to run to waste if the engine stops when no attendant is near.

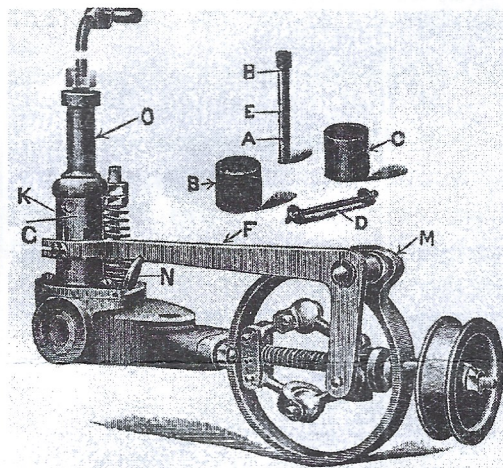
The upper curtain B is adjustable to the best working position by means of the screw K. The lower curtain C is raised by the governor lever as the speed of the engine increases, and thus the space for admission of air as well as the oil passage becomes contracted. D is the holder which carries the lower curtain C and raises the oil valve A. the governor

lever is adjustable at M when it is desired to alter the speed of the engine.

To start the engine, raise the governor lever on the hinged trigger N. Turn on the oil for about 5 seconds, the turn off again and immediately give the flywheel a few rapid turns. The engine should at once commence working. Turn on the oil tap again, and as soon as the proper speed is attained the trigger N will fall.

The upper curtain B requires adjusting with minute accuracy. If it is fixed too low the engine will take too much oil and insufficient air, the exhaust gases will appear smoky. The best plan when the curtain B is by slow degrees until the point is reached when no puffing back occurs. This must be done while the engine is running light. when properly adjusted the speed should be quite uniform, the explosions regular, and the exhaust gases perfectly colourless; but to obtain this it is absolutely essential that the vaporiser be thoroughly hot, and that no excess of oil be allowed to accumulate in the vaporiser.

There is a small spring inside the oil inlet G at the point O that presses the oil valve down and prevents it from getting stuck on account of grit or any other matter which may be present in the oil. In adjusting the governor lever at M to alter the speed of the engine, care must be taken to see that the holder D leaves contact with the oil valve A when the engine is at rest, otherwise the oil will not automatically cut off when the engine stops.



The engines are supplied with a small farmers outfit complete for about £50 including a chaff cutter and root pulper, and may readily be adapted to churning, cream

separators, pumping water, and other labour about a farm. The governor has been brought to a high pitch of perfection by years of experience and careful experiment; the object aimed at being (1) regularity of speed under varying loads, and (2) economy of oil consumption.

Now you will be able to adjust your Petter open crank oil engine to perfection! It is not too often that I visit car boot sales but I have been very lucky as I have found many old books on engines and engineering and all in very good order, I have six books on engineering with green leather bindings and gold edged pages and they cost me £6.00, so if you happen to be around car boots sales keep an eye open - you never know

Calendar of Events

Jan 24th Club night. Talk by Dennis Chedghey **"The Twin Towers"** A power struggle in Radstock Aristocracy - *Full 2011 list in January edition*

Chairman's report *(printed as received)*

By Brian Baker

the last monthly meeting of this year at the Court Hotel on Monday November 29th had guest speaker Martin Phippard give a talk on Carara Marble Extraction in Italy. Martin is no stranger to this club as he has given us talks before; always the subject revolves around heavy transport, such as the talk he gave us about the Australian Road Trains. Martin had brilliant slides of the mountains where the marble was extracted from. The entire mountains consisted of marble; this was cut from the mountain in huge blocks of over 40 tons each and then transported down extremely steep tracks on specially made flat bed trucks to the bottom of the mountain. The trucks were made specifically for the job with reinforced chassis's and multi drive wheels. The brakes on these trucks needed relining on a daily basis due to the very steep terrain. The quality of the slides and the fantastic scenery depicted was a credit to Martin and his friend who had carried out the filming. This was an outstanding presentation which I'm sure was enjoyed by all the members present, and on behalf of the club I would like to thank Martin very much. On one of the coldest days for years the Anti-freeze crank-up at Nunney on Sunday 5th December got off to quite a slow start. Usually when I arrive at Nunney about eight thirty there is already quite a line up of engines there. This time however there was only about three. Oliver and myself retired into the café in the warm. Soon more members arrived, some with engines some just to socialise. The owner of the café told me she was worried about the lack of people around as she had cooked all the meat etc for the Sunday lunch. However Oliver and myself had breakfasts and cups of tea and people started to arrive and do likewise, soon the café was doing quite a trade. I had to stay in the café all the morning as I was deputising for Jackie taking next years subscriptions as she and Robin were gallivanting around Belgium. On reflection it turned out to be quite a successful event, down on normal years but quite good in view of the awful weather we had experienced, yet on the morning once the fog had cleared it was a lovely sunny morning. Once the members had their dinner we had the usual raffle, plenty of prizes on offer, thanks to the members who brought some of them along. I would like to thank Oliver for braving the cold and selling all the tickets, he is now of an age where he is getting to be quite useful. I enquired from our host in the kitchen and she informed me they had done very well, so it ended well after all. After the raffle the members then loaded up and headed for home. Me, as soon as got in the door I was dragged out to go shopping, back along the road

I had just come from, to Frome. I would like to remind members that the membership subscriptions for 2011 are now due, Send them to Jackie Lambert, cheques made payable to W.S.E.C. Ltd. It will soon be time for the AGM on FEBRUARY 28th. This time we are putting on a free buffet for all who attend, so don't miss out, turn up. I would like to conclude my last Chairman's Report for 2010 by wishing all members a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

I saw a Spitfire Crash

By Connie Rushton

The first of August 1940 was a bright sunny day and to a six year old who was not aware of the turmoil going on in the world at that time and had just started the summer holiday, the day was going to be full of happiness. How wrong that was going to be.

My sister and I were playing in the orchard opposite our home over looking the village where we lived, we were aware of a plane circling around above us very high in the sky the engine note changed and suddenly the plane was screaming down to earth and did not pull out, it crashed only a matter of feet from the road and opposite the church.

Lieut-Commander George Bodley Kingdon R.N. aged 32 of H.M.S President died on that day. His ship H.M.S Boadicea, a B Class destroyer, was in for a refit therefore we presume he was testing for the RAF photo reconnaissance unit based at Heston.

His ship.

At the outbreak of WW2, H.M.S. Boadicea was attached to the 19th Destroyer Flotilla based at Dover during which her role was the escort of troopships. She then sailed from Harwich on 21 Nov 1939 to patrol the North Sea with three other destroyers. A German Seaplane, an HE 59, had dropped two magnetic mines shortly before that and one destroyer was lost though most of the survivors were picked up.

Her earliest major engagement of the war was in support of the evacuation of the 51st Highland Division from Le Havre in June 1940 and during this action she was extensively damaged and needed to return to Portsmouth for repair. Being in Dock for repair freed Lt Commander Kingdon to fly with the RAF.

On 6 Feb 1940 H.M.S Boadicea sailed from Boulogne with the Prime Minister, War Cabinet and Chief of staff for Dover.

Eventually on 13 June 1944 she was sunk by German aircraft off Portland Bill whilst supporting the Normandy landing. There were only 12 survivors from a complement of 182.

The aircraft.

The Spitfire K.9879, he was flying on the 1st of August 1940 was a Mk 1 with a two bladed propeller and this is still buried beneath the bungalow, too deep at 15 foot down to remove. The pilot was

removed at the time and was buried at Weston Mill Cemetery, Plymouth - I have been down to see it. On the stone at the bottom is written 'He has outsoared the shadows of our night'.

The engine and fuselage were removed in the 1970's. The crew that took it away seemed to know the history of the crash and could tell the interested villagers that the pilot had had trouble with the oxygen at high altitudes the day before the crash. My nephew had a spark plug and the local farmer whose paddock he crashed into has a valve spring plus an engine plate. On it are the following details – "Rolls Royce Merlin, SUPERCHARGER No 2111.8-58-1R". I am informed that the supercharger itself has been given to a museum in Liverpool.

Oak and Willow – Continued from page one

They both went into the engine room, the whirr and chuff much louder here as the big National gas engine went quietly about its work. The galley pot rested in the curve of the manifold & steam whispred from the spout. Edward dabbed it with a knowing hand. Using his cap, he lifted the heavy iron pot and poured the steaming water into the teapot.

The two men sat in companionable silence, watching the mesmeric governor as it rose and fell, the click of the belt tensioner telling the speed to the trained ear. They felt rather than heard the steady rush of water as it was pulled out of the riem and into the River Parrot on the other side of the dyke.

"That fastener's loose again Albert". It did this regularly and the arrangement was that the man who was on duty fixed it at the end of his shift when there were two men to deal with the heavy belt. In theory, the job required them to stop the engine and pull the belt round by hand until the fastener fell within reach. Well and good, but the man who wrote the rule did not have to then try to start a hot, heavy lump of an engine right at the end of the gas supply where pressure was lowest. Lower still with everyone in Bridgewater cooking their breakfast!

It was possible (though a sacking offence if you were caught) to do it by using a long piece of two b' four to lever the belt off the running pulley and if you knew what you were about, you could have the fastener re-riveted in a few minutes. Lifting the dead weight of the thick, two foot wide rubberised canvas belting took two strong men and dropping it's inner surface onto the top of the spinning pulley took skill and no little nerve, one man standing on the engine frame and the other lifting from the floor.

Albert was tired and a bit resentful about getting the riskier part of the task, even if tradition demanded that he take the risk as it was on his shift end. As Edward lifted the belt, Albert's foot slipped on the oiled iron and his legs went from under him, bringing him down on the steel cover of the crankguard. The oak two b' four fell in slow motion from his hands, falling in a slow, inevitable arc into the run of the twelve foot flywheel and it shattered into fragments.

One tore across the engine in a swishing arc, jamming in the governor and whacking the throttle wide open. Off load, it accelerated rapidly. Albert was amazed to find he was uninjured and slid sideways off the crankguard and fell in a heap on the floor on the belt side of the engine. Scrambling for the valve, he shut the gas off and the engine reluctantly slowed. As it did so, the trapped piece of whirling oak, deadly sharp and heavy broke free of the governor and spiralled across the room, ripping open Albert's throat as he turned.

Edward came to slowly, his head aching abominably where he had banged it on the guard rail as he fell. The engine was silent, ticking quietly as it cooled. His eye fell upon Albert lying in the corner, but the bright arterial spray across the wall told him that the silent body was devoid of life. There was blood everywhere – so much blood ...Trembling, he finished his tea whilst he decided what to do. It would only be an hour or so before the telegraph tacky-ticked into life to ascertain why the pump had stopped. It was bad - but Albert was a bachelor, Edward had a wife and two little ones to consider. He'd never get another place if he told the truth. What would it matter if he said he'd clocked in (only half an hour ago – it seemed ages) and found Albert dead? The oak had shattered into fragments, the belt was off but intact, the only thing was the bent governor rod – and that could mean anything. Slowly, he talked himself into it.

The Coroner banged his gavel. "We find that the accident was caused by the deceased, Albert George Whitney, attempting to replace the driving belt whilst the mechanism was in motion. Death by misadventure."

[illegible]

The winter had passed, spring brought green across the marsh, the willows dipping into the stream. The drouthy days of August, low water and the thock of bat on leathern ball on the village green, The autumn gales, driving the water away, the neap tides taking the water far, far out.

Edward cycled along the path – was it really a year? It had been hard at first to keep his own counsel, telling no one, not his wife nor his twin sister, not his dad – no one. But the dreadful memory was fading now and the new bloke was doing well – it was good to be in charge and he'd been surprised by the company's attitude – stone for the path, a promotion, a bit more money.

Ahead of him at the right angle of the dyke, Old Man Willow waited, ancient roots grasping at the slippery mud, trunk creaking with the strain. Edward ducked beneath the branches blinking his eyes shut – and so never saw the razor sharp splinter sticking straight out from the stress riven trunk. It caught him just under the chin, lifting him right out of the saddle, his bike skittering away into the black water. So he remained hanging there, his life soaking into the ground long since until the postman found him – blundered straight into him in the shadow of the tree.