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A slip and a potential soaking when a passenger makes a leap of faith from a Motomessenger outfit during a flood in the Thames valley. We take a closer look at sidecars and the part they played as commercial vehicles on page 36. Photo: Mortons Archive www.mortonsarchive.com

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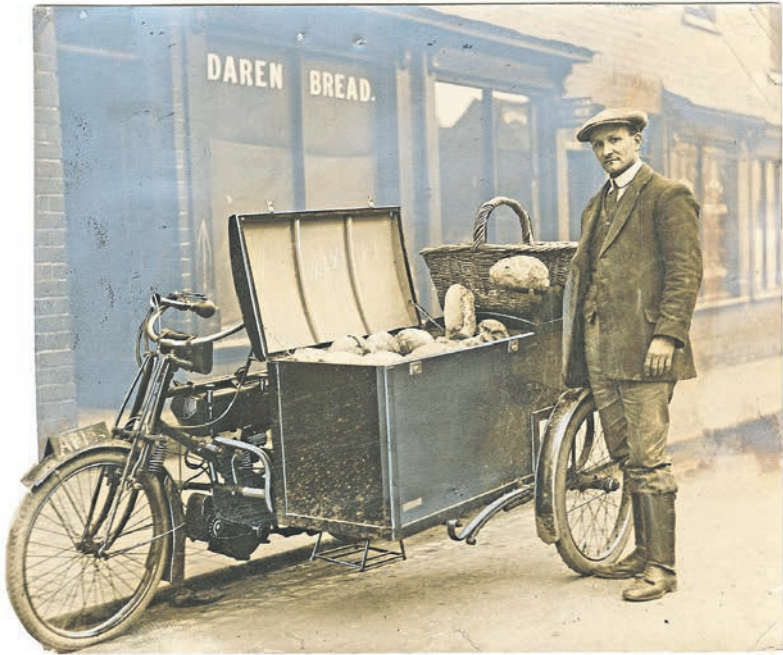
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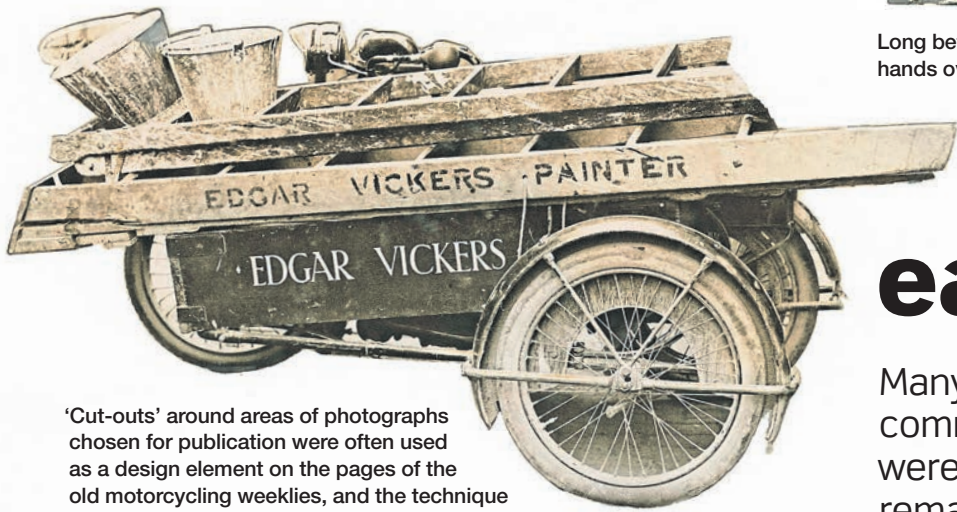
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Ah, the smell of freshly-baked bread! A smartly-dressed gentleman stands by an immaculately-clean box sidecar delivery outfit outside the premises of Daren Bread.



Long before plastic bottles had been thought of, a suitably-dressed delivery girl (or boy?) on a 'crate' sidecar outfit hands over a daily 'pinta' in a wide-brimmed and eminently recyclable glass bottle to an old lady standing at her gate.



'Cut-outs' around areas of photographs chosen for publication were often used as a design element on the pages of the old motorcycling weeklies, and the technique had been applied to this picture of painter Edgar Vickers' outfit, with his paint buckets wedged between the rungs of his ladders. Sometimes, very old prints become brittle and bits break off – and it looks as if this 'cut-out' once included an image of Edgar himself. What a shame!

Delivering the goods early 20th century style

Many of us still regard the sidecar outfits that were once so commonplace as 'cheap family transport', and that they certainly were – but **Pete Kelly** delves into the Mortons Archive to find a remarkable record of their early commercial use.

Anyone who saw the recent TV footage of the furious tropical storm that hit the Philippines will have spotted hordes of small motorcycles attached to home-made sidecars, using whatever materials had come to hand, as primary transport.

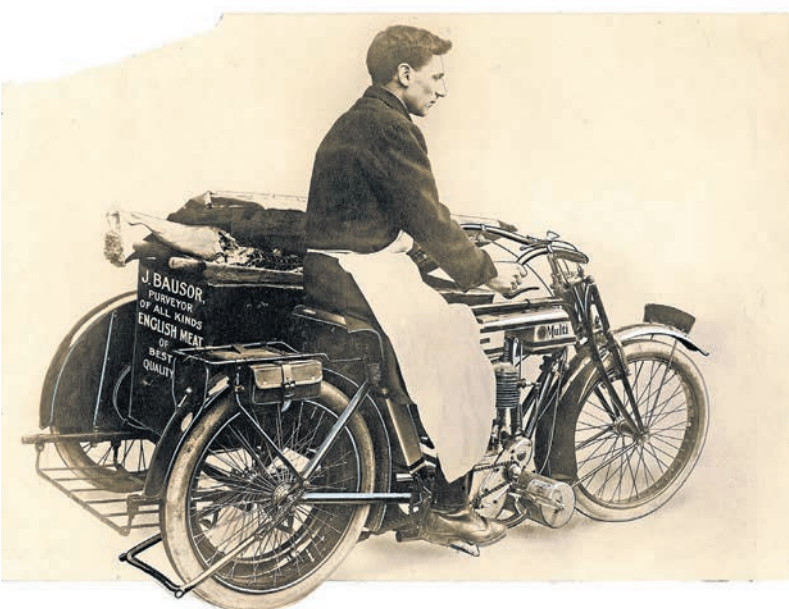
That remains the case in many small and relatively poor countries today – and that's certainly the way it

was in Britain from the beginning of the 20th century until the 1920s and beyond.

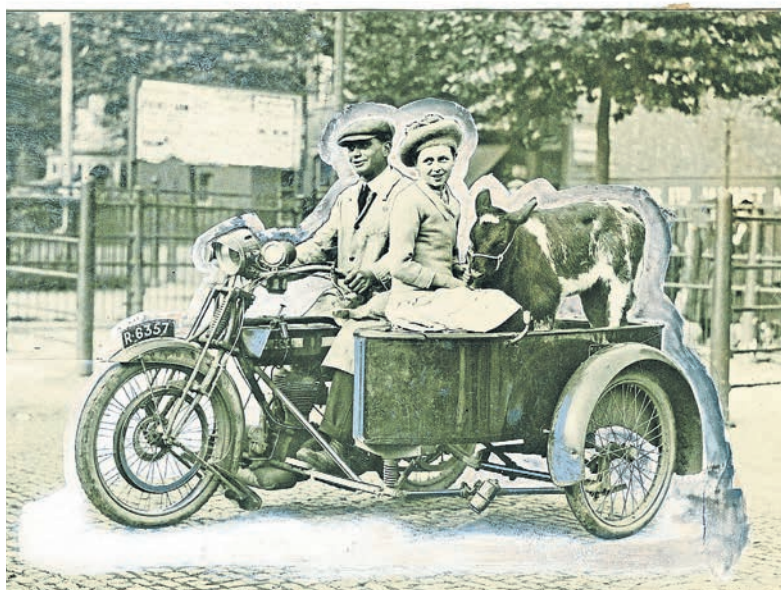
The precious images on these pages, some battered and bruised from more than a century lying in the box files of *The Motor Cycle* and *Motor Cycling*, tell an amazing story of enterprise and inventiveness in tough times, when sweeping chimneys, transporting farm

animals to market and delivering milk, bread, ice-cream, fruit, vegetables, meat, fish and poultry to customers' doors were just a few of the commercial uses that relied on the humble motorcycle combination.

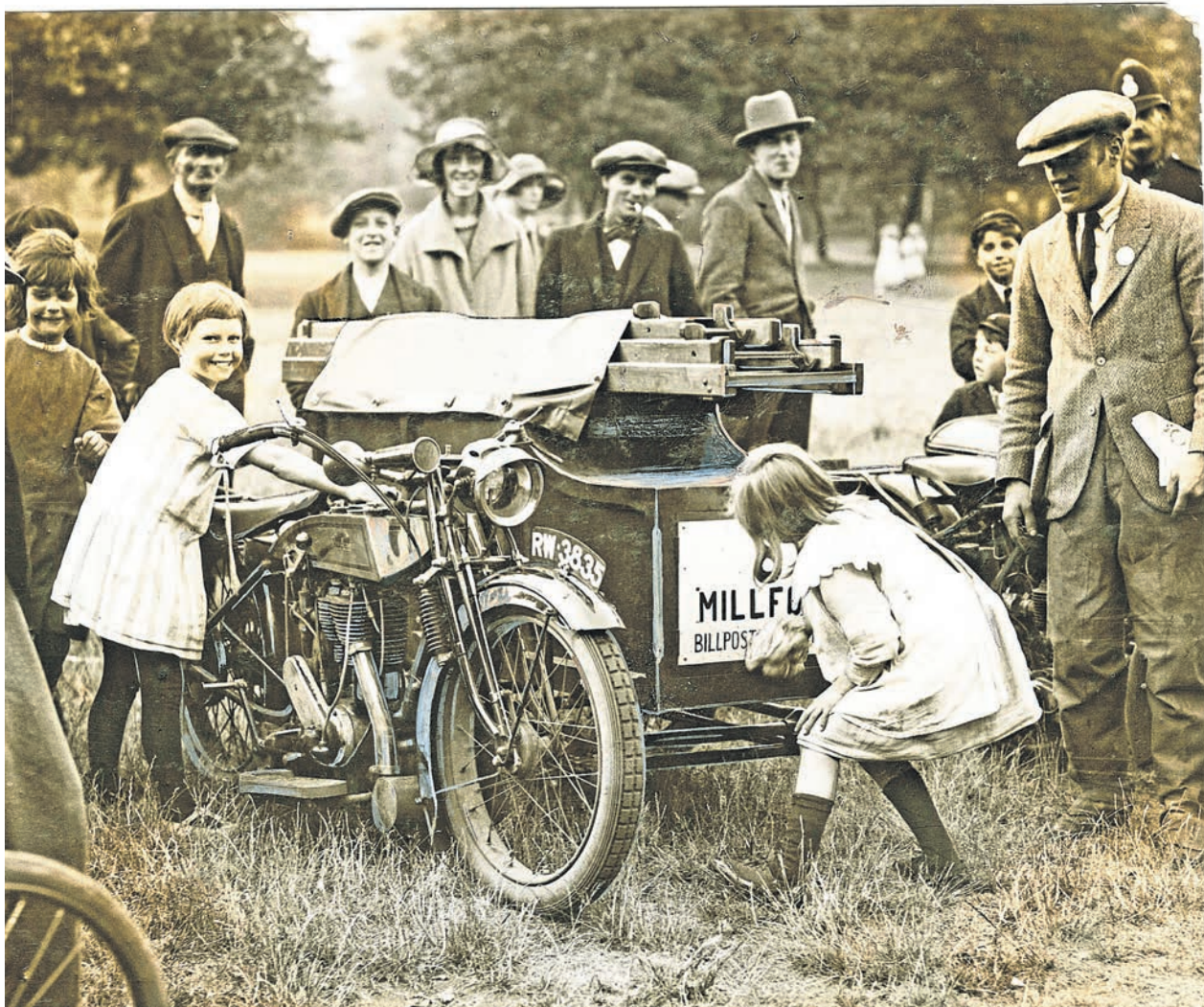
As the saying goes, one good picture is worth a thousand words – so let's just let these wonderful pictures tell their own story.



A tasty-looking joint sticks out of the back of this Rudge Multi meat-delivery outfit, whose rider is wearing a traditional butcher's apron to suggest that he might have chopped up the meat on the spot. The hand-painted sign on the back of the box sidecar says: 'J Bausor, Purveyor of all kinds of English Meat of Best Quality'.



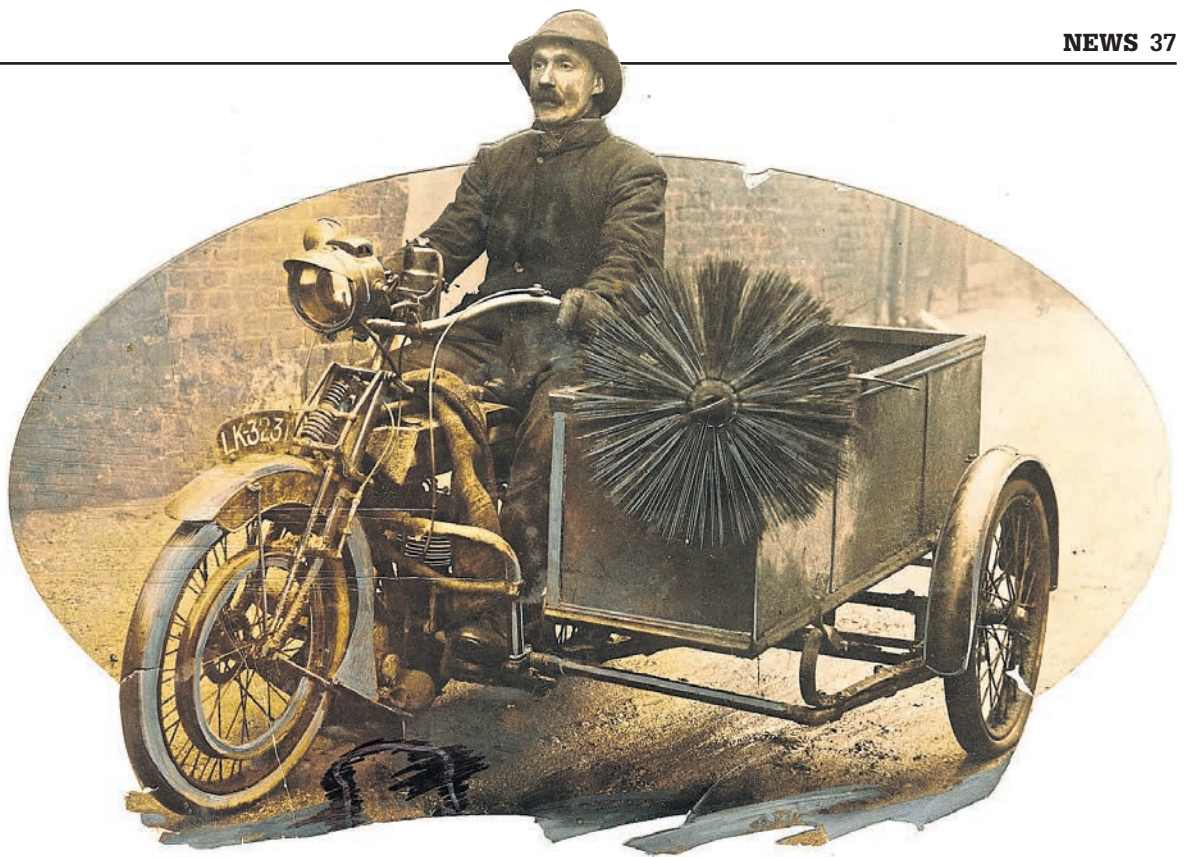
Now that's more like it, as a young lady holds on to a little calf.



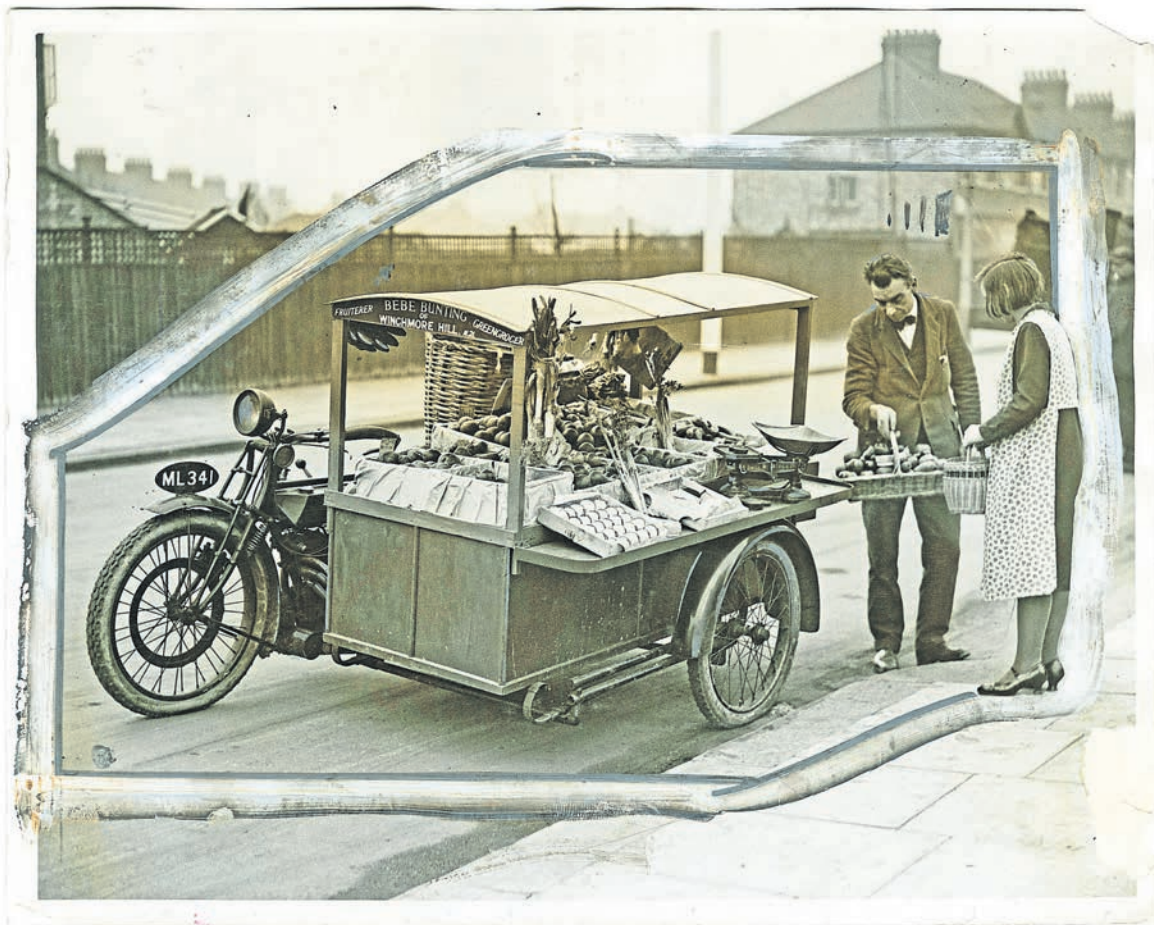
Before TV advertising came into vogue, many advertising campaigns were conducted on street billboards and the bill-poster, with his ladders, paste buckets and pasting brush, was a familiar sight. These children are obviously enjoying themselves as they play around the outfit of a bill-poster whose name is partially hidden but might have been 'Millford' or such-like.



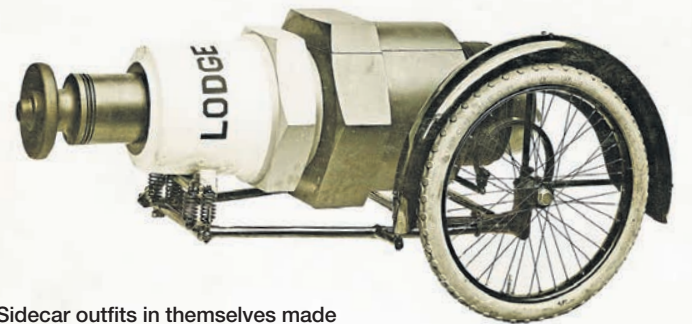
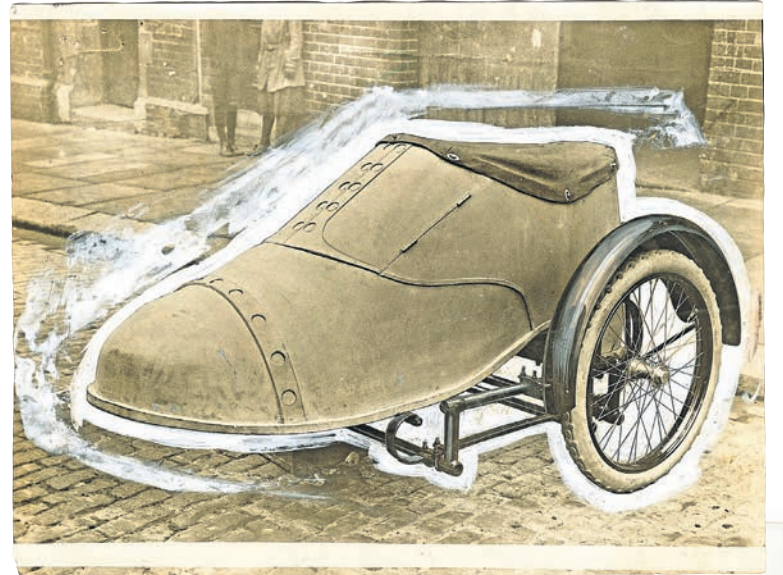
A load of bull – literally – but at least the brave rider of this V-twin would be all right on left-handers! Imagine if they'd had tread-depth regulations for that front tyre, though!



During the days of universal coal fires, if soot deposits inside the chimney were allowed to build up to a dangerous level, and then someone 'drew' a new fire too eagerly, the soot would catch alight and the effect was a roaring blowtorch coming out of the top of chimney pot, necessitating a call to the fire brigade. So never look down on the humble chimney sweep, for he performed a vital role and often used a sidecar outfit like this to carry his rods and brushes around.



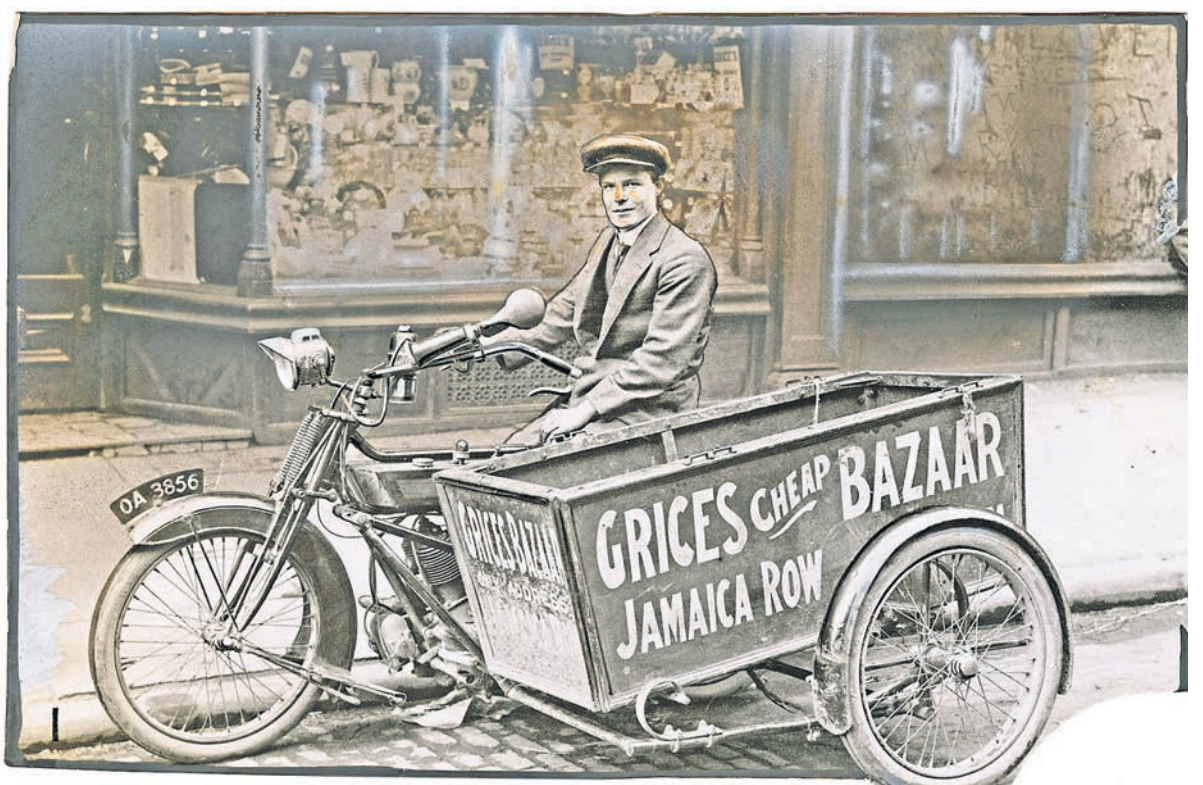
Many greengrocers and fruiterers were still making home deliveries well into the 1950s and '60s, but with horse-floats, vans or small lorries rather than outfits. This picture of Bebe Bunting's delightful delivery outfit, complete with 'counter' and scales, is surrounded by crude brush strokes showing how the editorial team of the magazine in question wanted it 'cropped' for publication.



Sidecar outfits in themselves made wonderful advertising tools, as these two pictures adequately illustrate.



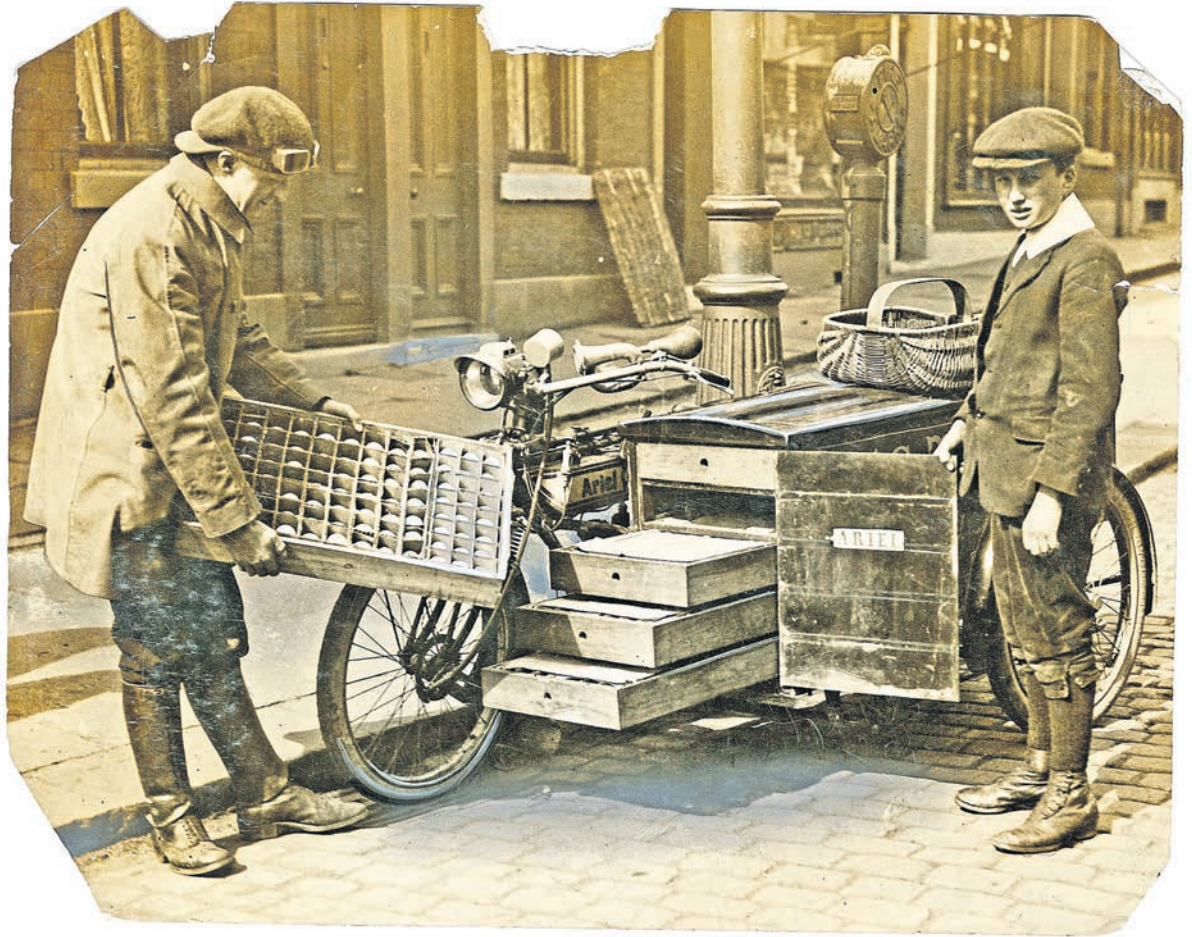
Ice-cream cornets are handed out to an expectant group of young boys from an outfit belonging to R. Moakes of Plumstead.



Where would you go if you wanted cheap pots, pans and other household items? Why, Grice's Cheap Bazaar of Jamaica Row, of course!

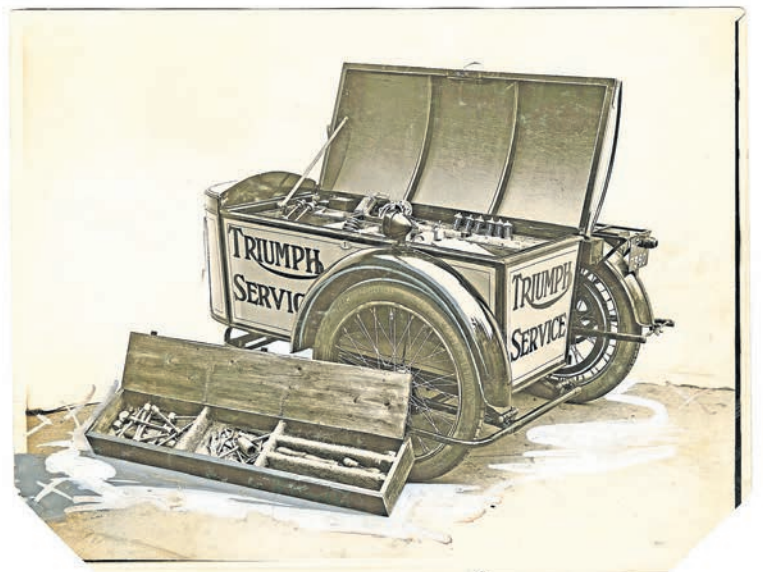
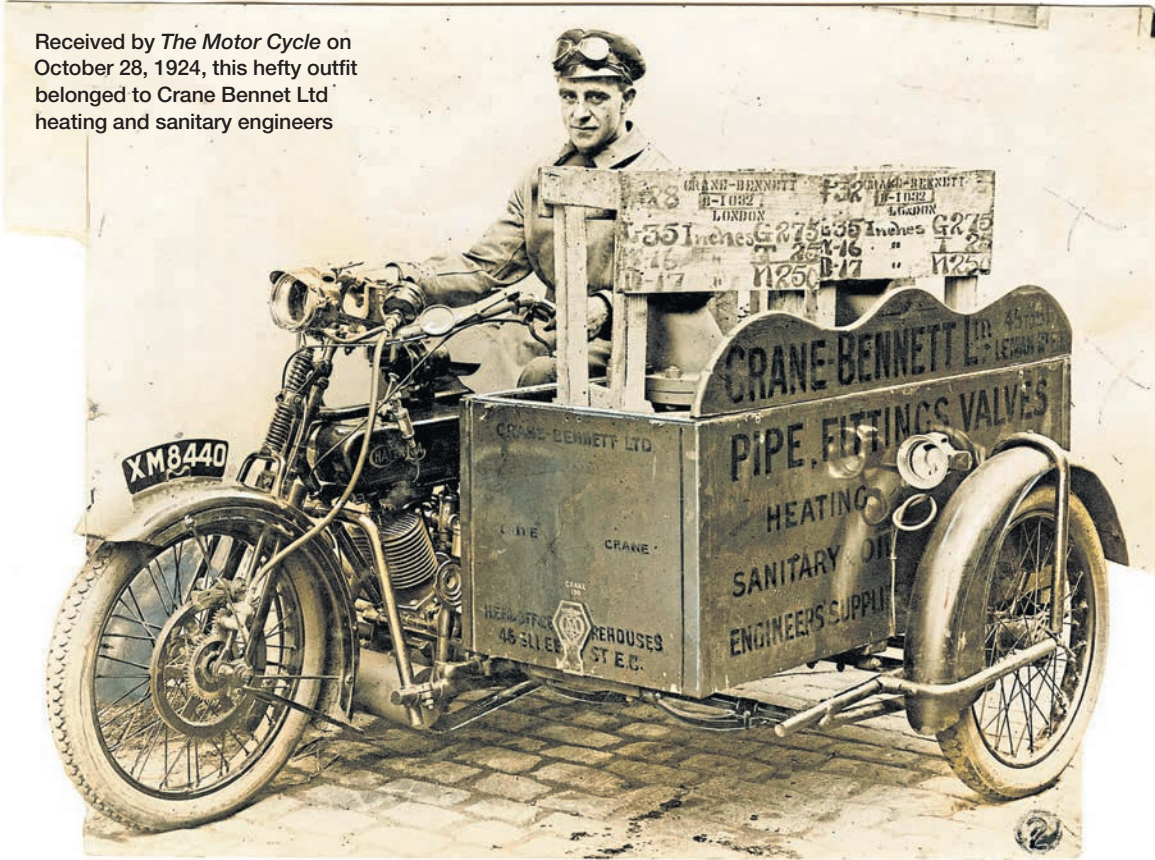


Two packages of Brooke Bond tea can just be made out inside this miniature delivery van marked 'No 1' – and it looks a bit like a tea caddy, doesn't it?

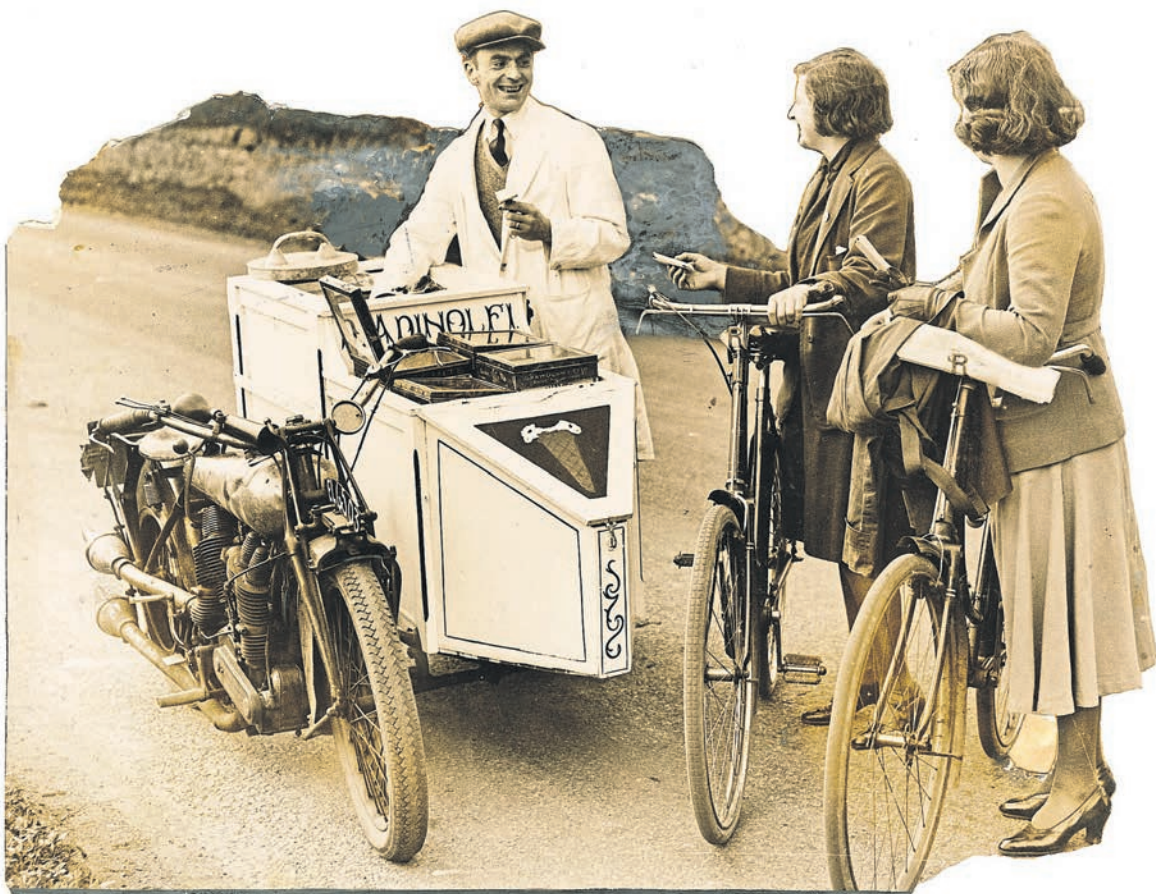


This Ariel delivery outfit illustrates a novel way of delivering eggs without them getting broken in transit.

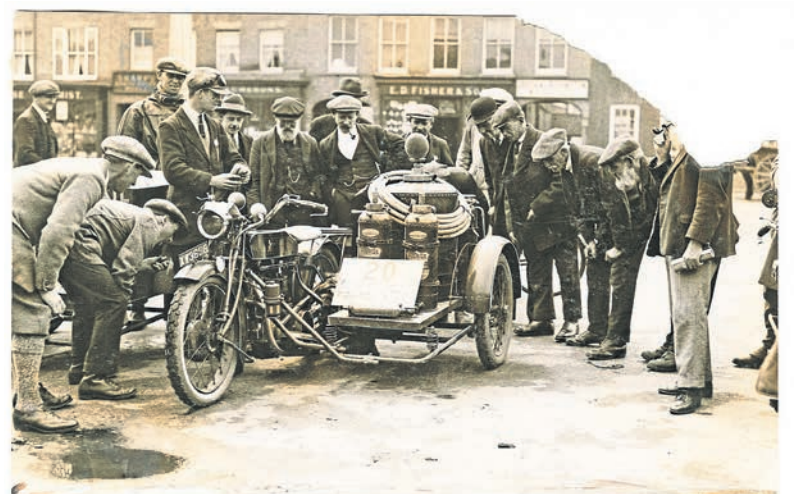
Received by *The Motor Cycle* on October 28, 1924, this hefty outfit belonged to Crane Bennet Ltd' heating and sanitary engineers



This smart Triumph Service box outfit is seen with its uniformed rider aboard and with the box opened to reveal everything that could possibly be needed to make any repair.



In this 1933 photograph, two ladies on tall bicycles stop for ice-cream from an outfit powered by a 1923 Brough Superior SS80 V-twin with a Montgomery front fork and BS cast-alloy expansion chambers



An eager crowd gathers around a remarkable outfit laden with fire-fighting equipment on a sprung platform