



ALTHOUGH it was built in Wolverhampton, this 1935 350cc single-cylinder Stevens motorcycle can truly be said to be at home in Andover.

Its new owner, Alec Stevens, of Godworth Clatford, near Andover, is the son of one of the four Stevens brothers who designed and built the machine.

Their trade name had originally been AJS — after Alec's uncle, Albert John Stevens — but the company went into liquidation in the early 1930s and the name was sold.

This sale began a chain of events that also led to Andover. Following the collapse of Associated Motorcycles in the mid 1960s, the AJS became a competition machine produced on Andover's Walworth Industrial Estate.



Subsequently an AJS employee, Fluff Brown, bought the trademark and now produces new competition motorcycles at a small workshop factory, not far from Alec Steven's home.

Meanwhile, the Stevens brothers had continued to make motorcycles and light vans in Wolverhampton. Called "Stevens," the bikes were not surprisingly very similar to the original AJS.

Only a hundred or so bikes were produced before the company went over to war work in 1938 — never to produce motorcycles again. Their last machine was specially built for Alec, who used it while he was an Army despatch rider.

There are probably now no more than half a dozen of these machines left in the country. Alec only obtained this one because a local motorcycle enthusiast saw it advertised in a magazine and drew his attention to it.

"I'm no mechanic," said Alec, "but I was keen to have one because of the family connection. It's no showpiece either. I've ridden it quite a bit this summer."

Photo: Ed Hendry.