
1955 Vincent Other

Stafford , 23 April

Lot sold	USD 68 370 - 75 207 GBP 50 000 - 55 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1955	Location	
Engine number	F10/AB/2B/10912	Motorcycle type	Street
		Colour	Other

Description

1955 Vincent 998cc Black Prince

Registration no. RLF 414

Frame no. RD12812B/F

Engine no. F10/AB/2B/10912

REAR FRAME NO. RD12812B/F

The ultimate Vincent Twin

1 of only 103 Black Prince models made

Excellent condition

The Vincent Black Shadow is widely regarded as one the most outstanding motorcycles produced in Britain in the post-WW2 era. The company had great success pre-war with their big twin 'Rapide' however, despite it's might, it was somewhat disadvantaged in terms of appearance and transmission which remained to be addressed by the outbreak of war.

Post-1944 the twin benefited from a radical re-vamp, amounting to a new 'Rapide' in all but name. Gone was the untidy engine which re-emerged as the smoothly-styled and immensely powerful Series 'B' unit twin, with re-engineered clutch, gearbox and lubrication system. Instead of the pre-war, largely traditional frame, the running-gear was built around a fabricated oil-tank / upper-frame member bolted to the engine, to which was attached the rear suspension. Forged aluminium Girdraulic forks and mighty - for the time - twin brakes at front and rear completed the assembly. The only minor criticisms were the wide engine, footrest assembly and the only partially-sprung dual-

seat. The younger writer was mightily impressed by the 'Do not exceed 104 mph in third gear' script on a local rider's giant 'Shadow' speedo!

By 1954, though, the market had changed, as had the company, now 'Vincent Engineers (Stevenage) Ltd.', a hint that the revised Series C motorcycles were not the only activity. Two potential master-strokes came in 1955, in the shapes of the conventional Series 'D' bikes, the re-engineered single and twins, with different frames and up-graded rear-end, together with the seemingly space-age 'Black Prince, Black Knight and Victor, the aerodynamically-developed Shadow, Rapide and Comet. These radical bikes were fitted with the astonishing glass-fibre fairings, designed for weather-protection and easy access. Sadly for Vincent, so radical were they and so necessarily expensive that customers were few and the factory closed its doors in December 1955.

RLF 414, the rare Black Prince for sale here, has been in the ownership of a committed Vincent enthusiast, now deceased, who insisted in first-class maintenance across his machines, aided in later years by a V.O.C. member who has prepared the Prince to a high standard for sale. In excellent and original condition and running well, it is apparently ready for the road following the usual safety checks and minor recommissioning, subject to the comprehensive safety checks needed for a 125 mph machine. Offered with a V5C Registration Certificate for the London number and a V.O.C. dating certificate.

Bonhams 1793

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