

The
Coaster



the magazine of the

**EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB**

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EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

"THE COASTER"

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to issue number 7 of 'The Coaster', some good articles this time; the S & N Easter Tour, another piece from Vic Elsdon, walking the White Peak Way and others. Also there is a quiz about Sussex from the Wardens of Alfriston YH, with a promise of a small prize. Plus the usual odds and ends.

Now that our D.A. secretary has become a star of radio & TV maybe our popularity as a cycling club will increase, and new members will be clamouring to join all the sections. For those of you who missed it Iris was interviewed on Southern Sound and also Coast to Coast about the 'See Sussex by Bicycle' leaflet, which she helped the County Council to produce. She spent quite a few hours being interviewed in different parts of the County - on her bicycle, the interviewers as well!!!

Don't forget the deadline for the next issue - mid-November.

David

HOSTEL CAPERS WITH THE C & H

Heard about that quiet chap Geoff Boxall who set the fire alarm off at Alfriston, throwing Mike in a tizz. Strange but none of the hostellers moved from where they were standing chatting. One even asked what they were supposed to do! All Geoff wanted was to make himself a drink in the members kitchen. He can't tell a fire alarm from a light switch.



Then there are things that go bump in the night and are Iris' excuse for waking up the mens' dorm. Take it at Guestling, where she heard loud banging noises and thought it was the plumbing, but when it persisted decided it was someone at the front door. Being noisy she had to look out only to find a strange woman claiming to be part of the Croydon YHA Group. Iris (having woken the others in the dorm) marches next door to where she thinks the men of the group are sleeping and wakes them up to go and rescue their group member.

The next time was at Overton where loud bangings on the girls' window awakens her. This time having to climb on the top bunk to see who it was she manages to wake all the girls, only to find two men asking to be let in. Funny said Iris but why didn't they try the back door leading to the mens' dorm. The banging continues so Iris then proceeds through the hostel in her nightie to wake Ken (and the rest) who isn't at all interested. Finally Ken gets up & challenges the intruders who, having none to good an excuse, disappear rapidly in a car. Maybe it was the two German girls staying there who were the attraction. By now Heather & Susan were wishing that Iris was a heavy sleeper like themselves. They don't hear a thing!

Finally, as you will read further on in this edition, there was the



potatoe masher at Whitwell. Meals here are an experience & not a very good one, especially when we remember the previous wardens cooking. So on the second night Iris attempted to resurect the boiled potatoes with milk, marge & the masher from the members' kitchen. At least we could eat them. The next night we were ready, all 12 of us, David Mason had the masher up his jumper before the supper bell went. Smugly we all sat down, milk & fat ready, and what did we get, soggy chips.

Even when we self cook ther are arguments on whether to peel the potatoes or not. With heated exchanges with Maurice insisting we need the roughage, and Ken saying he can go regular without that!

by Tom McAll

I was 11. I learned to ride my father's bike through the frame with a list to starboard of 15 degrees. This on the cobble stones of a Northern Tyneside town in 1924. The bike made an awful noise with loose mudguards rattling it was a worrying din. One day a boy came along on a brand new Rudge Whitworth bike and miracle of miracles it was absolutely silent on our terrible cobbles. I was jealous. The 1914-18 war was not far behind and amongst the war surplus were thousands of corrugated gas mask hoses at 6 old pence or 2½p per pair which fitted ones handle bars exactly and made marvellous grips. If one saved up 2½p one could hire a boneshaker for 1 hour from an old gent who did cycle hire. They were rough old machines and were ridden by us small boys through the frame. It was considered then by my father that drop handle bars were bad for you, it was an unnatural position and would give you heart failure. All proved wrong.

When we moved down South in 1926 my father bought me a bike to get to work, some 6 or 7 away from Burnham to Beaconsfield. It had solid rubber tyres about 1¼" wide tapering to 1" on the road surface. It had a back pedalling brake and I could sit on the saddle and reach the pedals. It was trouble free. One couldn't hurt it. It was very treacherous on an icy surface but it was indestructible. Eventually I graduated to pneumatic tyres and skipping a few years to the 1930's my brothers and self spread our wings a little. On weekends we rode from Slough to Littlehampton and back on a Sunday with a total allowable expenditure of 3p. To me a bike was a tool to get from one place to another. When work dried up in 1933 I slung my toolbag over my shoulder. I was a carpenter then and cycled down to Brighton, found a job within two hours and lodgings soon afterwards. I worked in Brighton and eventually became acquainted with the McCaffreys of Pevensy Bay and moved along to Pevensy Bay and they kindly housed me. They were a cycling family, Ernest the father was a cycle builder and Tommy the son joined Eastbourne Rovers Cycling & Athletic Club.

Family needs took me back to Slough but each weekend attracted by their lovely daughter Joan I cycled down on Saturday afternoons (we had to work on Sat. mornings) and arrived always in time to take her to the cinema. We then had The Luxor, The Picturedrome, The Classic, The Tivoli, The New Central, The Eastern & The Gaiety, also The Hippodrome, Winter Garden and Devonshire Park Theatres. (Before Television of course). I always came down through Windsor, Woking, Guildford, Horsham, Haywards Heath and I can still remember reaching Stone Cross on a hot summers day and smelling the sea and looking across the grasslands to its sparkling surface. It was about 90 mile and took about 5 hours. On the Sunday about 7pm in the evening I made my way back always via Uckfield, East Grinstead, Purley, past Croydon airport, turned left at Brixton across Tooting Common and followed the Olympics signs across London then on to the Great West Road and so to Slough. This was a sociable route. In the winter it was lighted most of the way and there were eating places open late on. Eventually I moved back to Pevensy.

During the war period I was a navigator on Lancasters and some of our trips were down to Pomigliano near Naples. Tom McCaffrey was stationed at Castel-a-Mer and I was able to deliver a bike to him by Lancaster. The R.A.F. had formed a club out there. Having got the war behind us and about 1947 or near I took Tom McCaffrey down to Betteme for the Betteme 25 and as accomodation was scarce was allowed to sleep on the Bar Counter with the carpet on top of me and became acquainted with the strong smell of Elliman's Embrocation used by the card playing racing men who never seemed to sleep. Eventually at the ripe old age of 34 I indulged in the racing game myself. My bikes

had always been mediocre working bikes up to now and with a pair of borrowed high pressures in my first race I was moving at an unaccustomed speed and hit the roundabout between Polegate and Hailsham making a sorry mess of the borrowed wheels and had to walk back to the start. However I carried on for another 10 years. One thing I did learn with my riding - I didn't seem to settle until I had done about 50 miles and 70 miles for me was the maximum distance without food then I must eat whether or not I felt like it otherwise the bonk would set in which required a recovery period. At the age of 43 I took up dinghy sailing and am still indulging in the sport with Pevensey Bay Sailing Club with my wife occasionally crewing me. I am 71 and she is 66. I made many friends in my cycling days and look back with nostalgia and gratitude to those stalwarts who organise, time-keep and marshal and make it all possible. Happy days. I remember many happy teas with the CTC when Arthur & Doris Wren were in charge of things.

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WEST KENT B C T C HEAT 1984

Can you answer these questions put by Richard Nicholl, who organized this years heat. You'll find the answers at the back of this issue.

NATURAL HISTORY

- 1/ What does an Ornithologist study?
- 2/ What is a Red Admiral?
- 3/ What is the name for a Badgers house?
- 4/ How many legs has a Spider?
- 5/ What trees are affected by the KNOPPER GALL?

LAKES (please note that spelling is important in this section)

What is the word used for lake in the following countries.

- 6/ Scotland?
- 7/ Ireland?
- 8/ Wales?
- 9/ In the Lake District, the lakes are called Meres, Waters and Tarns, only one being called a lake. What is its name?
- 10/ Where are the English LOUGHS?

RIVERS

- 11/ What is the name of the most important river on the map used in this B C T C heat? (O.S. 1:50,000 No. 188, Maidstone & The Weald of Kent.)
- 12/ What is the name of the main river flowing into Bristol Channel?
- 13/ Which major river rises on the same Welsh mountain as the River Severn?
- 14/ What port stands at the mouth of the Sussex River Ouse?
- 15/ Which river joins the Swale to form the Yorkshire Ouse?

cont'd/

CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

- 16/ In which town is the C T C Headquarters?
- 17/ Name the current national secretary?
- 18/ The HQ building is named after which founder member?
- 19/ Who was the first C T C member to become Minister of Transport?
- 20/ Which national secretary of the club was born at Pocklington, Yorkshire, in the same year as the club was formed?

* * * * *

DID YOU KNOW?

That near Polegate Station there is an underground fire that has been burning for 50 years and - so it is estimated - may go on for another 20. In 1929, an old wagon breaking yard was filled in with hot ashes, railway sleepers, dust and clinker. A wall of sand was put around the edge and the top was filled with rubbish and earth. There was no visible sign of burning but it was soon noticed that trees and shrubs on the land began to die and it was realised that the hot ashes had set fire to the rubbish. The fire gradually penetrated to a greater depth and "British Rail News" reported that plants then began to grow and some of the weeds present have flourished like large tropical plants. Here and there the earth has subsided leaving small craters through which smoke and steam rise. Presumably air will continue to creep in and so the fire will continue until all combustible material has been consumed.

* * * * *

OH DEAR, WOMEN CYCLISTS

Well before the days of the Women's Lib Movement - although during the lifetime of Emmeline Pankhurst - the question of female cyclists was causing some concern to men.

And it was in May, 1884, that the Eastbourne Gazette carried an article which nowadays would have feminists beating the office door down.

"Cannot some of our costumiers devise a suitable costume for lady cyclists? Anything more ungraceful or inelegant than the present costume worn by lady cyclists it is impossible to imagine.

I do not think that any lady above the age of short dresses would mount a tricycle if she knew what a guy she makes of herself.

It is too late now to discuss the question whether ladies should ride tricycles. They have settled the matter for themselves without taking the opinions of the lords of the creation into consideration.

The other morning I saw a couple of lady cyclists coming up Terminus Road at a rapid rate and at every stroke flop, flop went their skirts against the treadles forming a most ungraceful picture.

The male sex have adopted a very sensible bicycling costume, why should not ladies contrive an equally sensible tricycling costume?"

* * * * *

FIRST LAW OF BICYCLING - No matter which way you ride, it is always uphill and against the wind.

(Well Ken's rides always seem to be going uphill. Ed)

TOURING WITH TWO UNDER TWELVE

by David Mason

A kid's bicycle that was just right last year will probably be in need of major adjustments at least, or trading-in at worst, this year. Children have a habit of shooting up and outgrowing their machines very quickly. With a pair of offspring, one has to deal with the delicate problem of 'handing down'. The boy must be persuaded that his elder sister's bike is the same one he desired last year when it was new, and suited her to a 'T', and now he shouldn't turn his nose up just because she has gone on to something better - with gears! All things considered, the preparations for the trip which lasted 4 days over Easter on the Isle of Wight, went quite well. The bikes were cleaned by the kids - masses of sudsy water on the patio - polished and oiled, the tyres and brakes checked. Then the children, bikes and baggage were piled into the estate and off we went to Havant, where we had arranged to park.

First question from Susannah, aged 11. "Can we go swimming?". "No dear, we are going cycling with Geoff and his family, and we are meeting Ken and Iris and their party for more cycling when we get to the Isle of Wight".

Second question from Richard, aged 9. "Can we cycle to Blackgang Chine?"

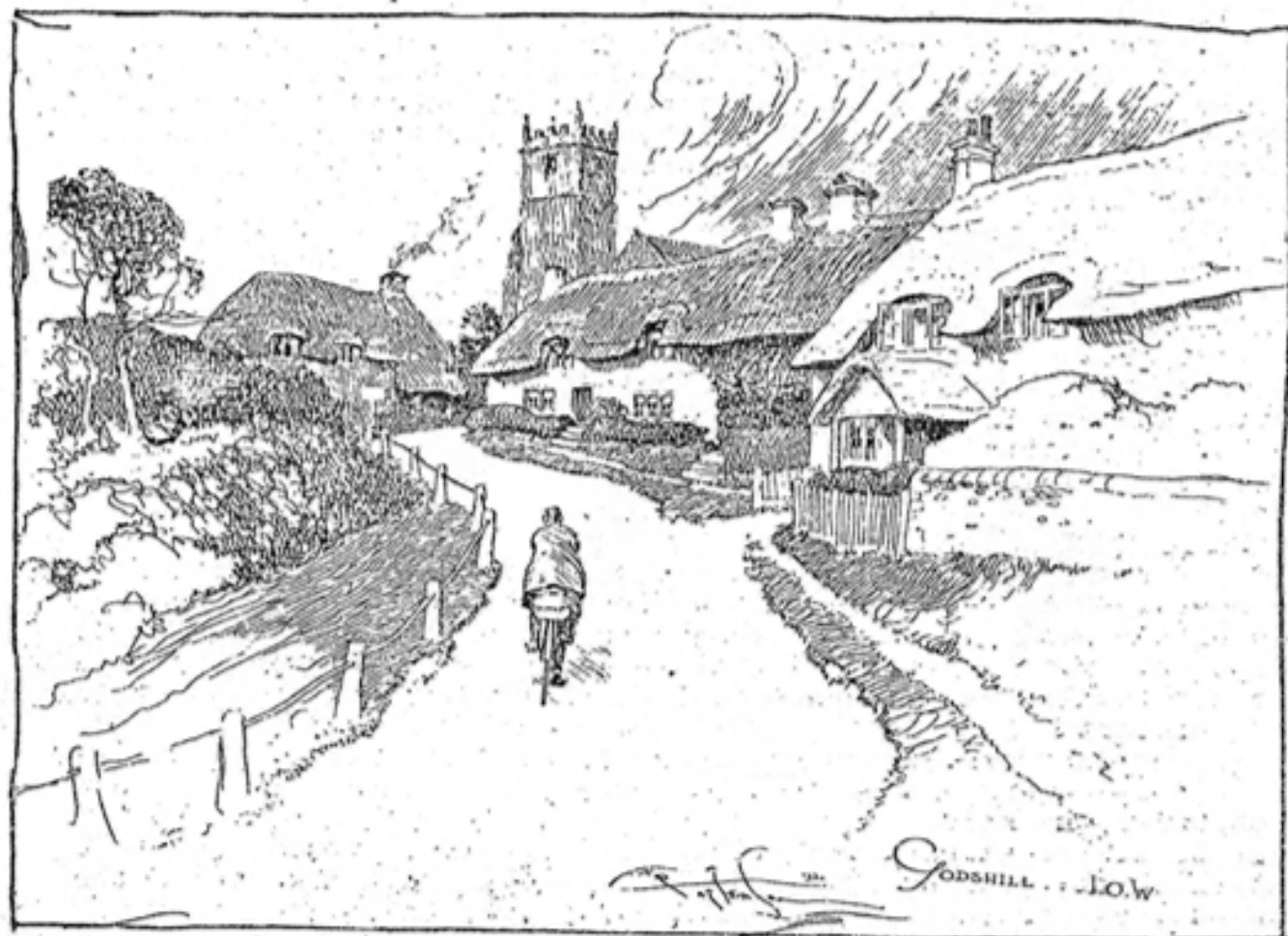
"WE'LL SEE".

The ferry journey over to the Island was a pleasant experience as the boat wasn't overcrowded and we found "heads" O.K. On journeys kids either want a drink, go to the toilet or both. Mine were no exception. With a girl of 11, it is essential she is accompanied by an adult female, and this was made possible by Jenny and Janet Boxall being present. Some Youth Hostels have family rooms, but we were staying at Whitwell, which had separate male and female dormitories, and this was again another reason for ensuring that an adult female accompanied the kids.

It is always amazing the stamina kids have. I would have thought that the hilly journey from Ryde to Whitwell would have tired them both out, but they only needed the sustenance of an ice lolly in Godshill to keep them going. I must admit to being overloaded on my bike, and the excess baggage had to be strapped onto Janet's bike for which I was very grateful. Certain slopes on the Isle of Wight proved too much for us and we walked, especially up onto Ashe Down. The descent to Newchurch was exciting and other than the stop at Godshill for ices it was plain sailing to Whitwell. Of course, like all Youth Hostels, this was perched on the top of a hill, so we walked up to the gates. The two soon settled into their dormitories. The men's dorm. was just off the main entrance hall and very convenient - yet the men's washroom was up two flights of stairs on the other side of the building. The ladies were three floors up, yet to wash they had to troop all the way down, and back up again. A very funny arrangement. The hostel meal was of the sort that I remembered as a kid and didn't compare with Alfriston. Nevertheless, the repast was enlivened with good conversation and a sudden squeal from Richard who had just lost his wobbly front tooth on a piece of Hostel bread. He soon recovered, though his gappy appearance took some getting used to. Unfortunately the meals didn't get any better during our stay. Iris had the idea of improving the boiled spuds by adding milk and butter (well, marge actually). By discreetly lifting the masher from the members' kitchen, she pummelled the potatoes into some form of edible acceptability. I was prepared on the third evening with the masher tucked up my jersey, and the warden brought in chips - much to everyone's amusement. (See page 2, Ed). Eating is an important part of cycle touring and knowledge of local eating places is a prerequisite.

Cont./

The Sunday run led by Brian to Brightstone was no exception, and although the 'closed' sign was showing on the selected cafe, a merry shout soon brought the proprietess forth. She was prepared for us and plied us with freshly baked scones, jam and cream, and coffee, all home-made. Thought of offering her the job of warden at Whitwell!



One of the many villages visited on the Tour

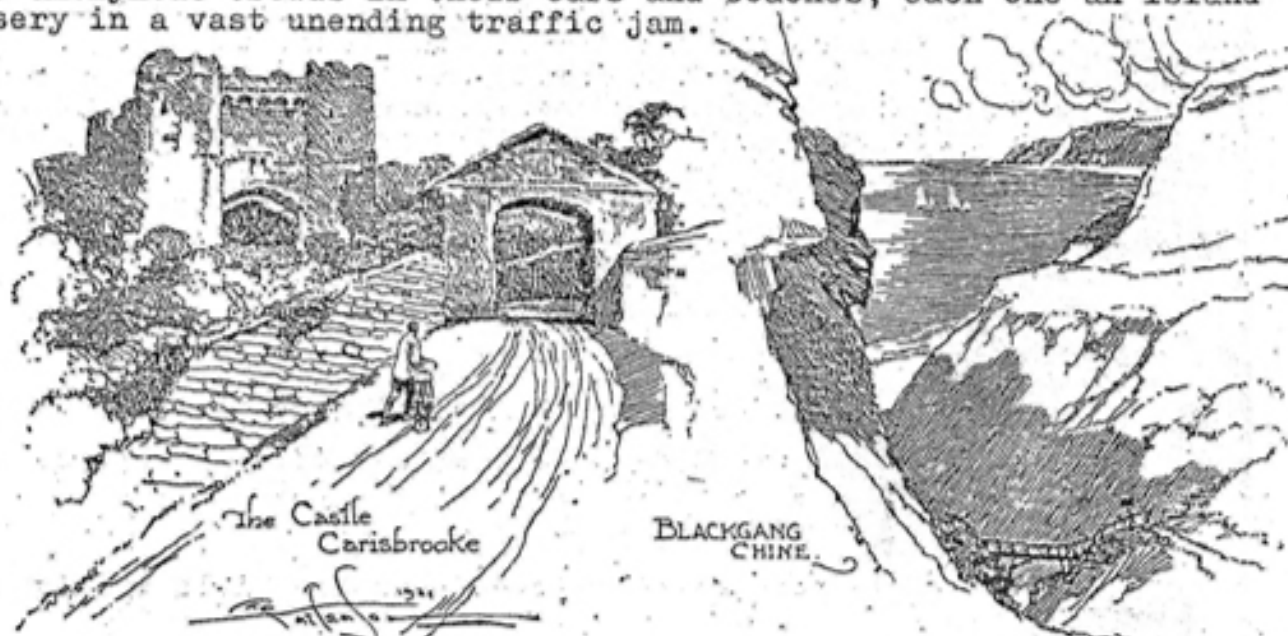
Obviously children under 12 cannot be expected to achieve speeds & distances of older cyclists and we had to bid farewell to Brian as he led his party on a run over Brightstone Forest towards Carisbrooke. About 5 miles of rough stuff included. We went to Calbourne and strolled along Winkle Street and Susannah bought postcards. She has a scrap-book which is filling nicely with pictures of places she has visited - mostly on her bicycle.

I had been concerned about the condition of the childrens' bikes; insisting on them checking brakes and tyres etc., and was therefore a little peeved when my saddle gave way and it took nearly fifteen minutes to fix. They creased up!!

We eventually arrived at Carisbrooke and headed for the Castle. A walk along the battlements was the change and rest from cycling that we needed. A break from cycling during the day avoids tiredness and to a certain extent, boredom, as children have to concentrate more on the road and avoiding each other in the narrow lanes. Very often spectacular views and interesting buildings are lost on the children. It will take time for the appreciation of wayside plants and flowers to become apparent to them - although Richard did notice that the bubbling stream at Winkle Street was filled with watercress. But a castle is different. It can be clambered over, imaginary battles can be fought. Susannah was intrigued by the donkey which draws the

water from the well in the centre of the castle. Not a very onerous task for the animal. It seemed contented enough. A picnic on the ramparts in beautiful warm sunshine followed, looking out over the moat system, now covered in grass, and the banks of flowers reaching up to the castle walls. A very short distance away the intrepid band of rough stuff pioneers were also basking in the sunshine in Brian's back garden. We soon joined them and spent a pleasant hour or so being plied with drinks and biscuits by Brian's wife.

One of the noticeable traits that a newcomer to cycle touring will soon become aware of is the extreme friendliness and hospitality of like-minded people. The fraternity of the wayfarers is so different to the anonymous crowds in their cars and coaches; each one an island of misery in a vast unending traffic jam.



The children had their way and we did visit Blackgang Chine on Saturday, but that "attraction" would hardly be sought by the wayfarer - he would probably avoid it like the plague. I was more impressed with the area to the North of Blackgang which we cycled to in the afternoon. St. Catherine's Down has two monuments on top. Both can be clearly seen from miles away, even from the back of the Youth Hostel. We arrived, breathlessly at the inland monument, which is a Grecian column surmounted by a large ball. It was built to commemorate a visit by the Tsar of Russia, who said he liked the place. Ironically on the other side of the column was a war memorial to soldiers who fell in the Crimean War fighting the Russians. The cycle ride down past the Hermitage over the fields was fun, as the little tracks and lanes back to the Hostel were also very enjoyable. Hardly a car in sight.

Bank Holiday Monday was also lovely and warm and before leaving the Hostel we had a photo session in the grounds. Brian had arrived from Newport and other hostellers were gathering their stuff together and standing proudly by their bikes. I was envious of Ken & Iris as their party had a further weeks touring ahead of them, but it was back home for us. I managed to pack the luggage slightly better this time and had no problems with the load. You can't avoid the central east-west spine of the Isle of Wight getting back to Ryde and this time we pushed our bikes up onto Arreton Down and had a breezy run along the crest to the crossroads on Mersley Down. We descended towards Havenstreet and took a very good bridle path into the back streets of Ryde, which was very busy with loads of trippers coming off the Portsmouth ferry. It was also a bit of a crush to get onto the ship. The kids needed more ices and mars bars.

Once in Portsmouth, the decision was made to avoid the worst of

the traffic and we returned to Havant via Hayling Island. This involved another ferry journey but it broke the journey up nicely and we were soon back at the cars. The trip back to Crowborough took two hours and I reverted to being an "island of misery" again in my metal tomb on wheels. Must get out on the bike again very soon. Still retain some pleasant memories of cowslips at Carisbrooke and cows chasing us at Chilerton. One very telling memory was of a wedding photographer at Gatcombe Church who completely forgot the bride as Geoff and Nicky went by on the tandem. I distinctly heard the photographer mutter, "Gosh it's a Roberts frame" as he turned and followed our progress, until a shout from the wedding group brought him crashing down to earth.

Mileage is unimportant when touring but the tally was 104 miles in the 4 days. Not onerous but not bad for two under twelve.

Many thanks to Geoff Boxall & family and to Ken & Iris Stevens and friends for their good company and assistance over the Easter trip. The kids thoroughly enjoyed it, especially the cream eggs!!

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THINGS CHILDREN WRITE HOME.

Dear Mum & Dad.....

....."Don't let him at my Atari"....!!!!

".....the sheet sleeping bags are made of some sort of canvas....."

".....the bed is COMRETBLE."

"I am sharing a room with my friends on the girls bannister."

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LONE RANGER

(Anonymous article I found in a magazine. Ed.)

Do you ever get the feeling that you personally are holding the whole world together, that if you relax for a minute everything will go flying off into space?

Take the other night. I felt a draught, traced it and found the back door open. I was about to shut it, when I noticed that one of the children had left a basement light on.

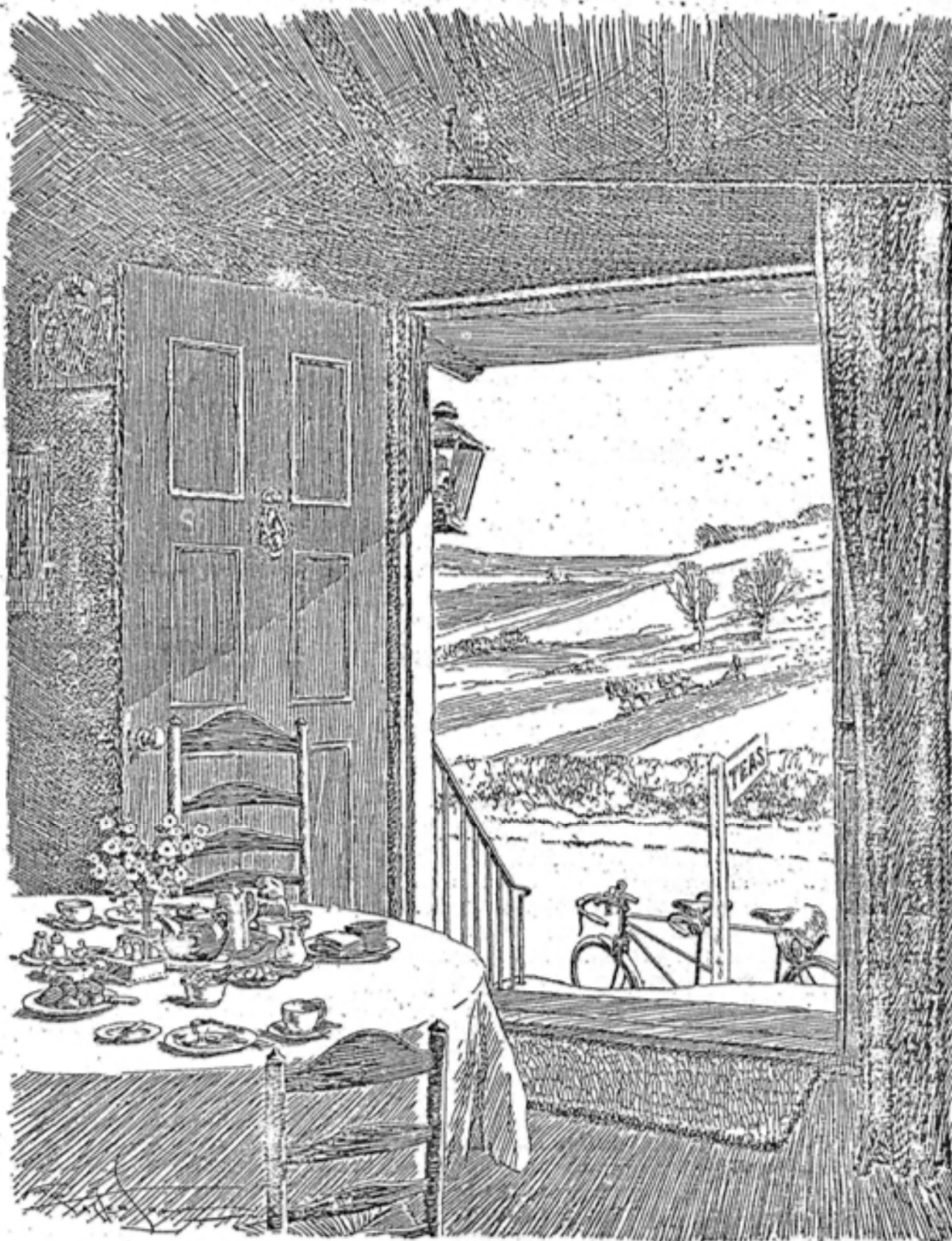
When I clattered down to put out the light, I noticed that the basement workroom light was also on. I walked over to turn off that one and discovered that a clock I had been working on had stopped. I got it started again, then found a puddle of water on the floor. I wiped it up, and on my way out I found that a dripping overhead tap was the source of the water.

I tightened the nut but the drip persisted. I traced the water pipe back to the nearest stopcock, closed it, and then replaced the washer on the tap. I managed at the same time to cut my finger. I went back to the workroom for sticking plaster. There was one strip left. I applied it, and then went upstairs and brought some more sticking plaster down to the basement for future emergencies.

I wasn't finished. While in the bathroom I had noticed we were out of toilet paper, so I trudged upstairs to the linen cupboard and dug out a roll. I was crossing the kitchen with the toilet paper when my wife asked, "Where have you been all evening?"

"Closing the back door," I explained.

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Time for Tea

THE GOOD TEA-PLACE GUIDE

(or Where to get a decent Cuppa)

by A.T. Drinker

The following is a list of tea-rooms/cafes etc. which have been frequented by members of the D.A., especially the Camping & Hostelling Section (Tea Drinkers Anonymous Branch). Unfortunately I have not been able to supply opening times for the establishments that I have included, but I hope to be able to supply these in a future edition. I would be pleased to receive any entries for a further list, including if possible what is provided, what the service is like and when they are open.

(If contributions are sent to me I will see that they are passed on. Ed.)

Alfriston

Several tea rooms here, due to the tourist trade in the summer. The "Copper Kettle" by the Market Cross is usually open at reasonable times for morning coffee or afternoon tea, and doesn't insist on a set tea, also their prices seem quite reasonable.

OPEN - Frequently, though winter opening seems to vary, at least one is usually open from 11.00 on a Sunday.

Barcombe Mills Station

A new venture, recently tried by the C & H section members. The old station has been bought and is in the process of renovation. Part of the old station buildings has been opened as a tea room, and they also serve cold snacks at lunch time.

OPEN - They claim they will be open 7 days a week, we must wait to see if this continues into the winter months. Nice cakes and reasonable prices.

Battle

Two tea places here to recommend. What was the old pilgrims hostel by the entrance to Battle Abbey. An old timbered building which may look expensive, but is in fact quite reasonable, their prices for meals look quite competitive too!

OPEN - for morning coffee & afternoon tea most of the year.

The other is "Tiffin" in the high street, just below the turning to Whatlington and on the same side of the road. No details on times I'm afraid but reasonable prices for coffee, tea and cakes.

Bramber

If you like plastic tea or coffee then go to the cafe behind the "Castle Hotel", if however, like most of us, you prefer real coffee then you'll like the little tea shop further up beyond the Zebra crossing. Nice friendly service and reasonable prices. Good home-made soup.

OPEN - at reasonable times most of the year.

Ditchling

"Mr. Grint's Bakery" just west of the crossroads in the centre of the village has been a favourite stopping place for some time. Reasonable prices and some great cakes, but service can be a bit erratic in the summer. May serve set teas only in summer but can still be reasonable.

OPEN - most of the year due to the bakery.

There is another tea-room, on the main road just North of the crossroads on the left. I've only been in once but found it quite nice, not restricted to set teas, and may be alright if Mr. Grint's is busy.

Duddleswell (Ashdown Forest)

What was the "Duddleswell Tea Rooms" and is now "Mr. Butcher the Baker". Tea, coffee and cakes, also pasties, sausage rolls, etc. Reasonable prices, and you can have the food hot if you like since they have a micro-wave oven.

OPEN - Frequently; used to be closed lunch times, but opening times seem better since change of owner.

Hadlow Down

Mrs. Osgood told us a couple of months ago that the tea-rooms should be re-opening around June/July, so hopefully they are now back in business. In the past we have always found her prices reasonable, and there is always a warm welcome for cyclists.

OPEN - weekends only I'm afraid except for booked groups.

Heathfield

"Antoinettes" on the main road near the Zebra crossing. Bakery with cafe/tea-room in rear. Reasonable prices for tea, coffee and cakes. Used frequently by C & H section.

OPEN - most of the year due to bakery.

Lewes

"Castle Pantry" cafe at the top of the high street opposite Keere Street. Coffee, cakes and hot snacks. Good home-made soup.

OPEN - most of the year.

We have also had a tea place in Cliffe High Street recommended to us, as yet we have not tried it, but are told that the prices are reasonable and they do not insist on a set tea.

Offham

"The Old Post House", very pleasant tea-rooms, good service and nice cakes. No problems for morning coffee but often do only set tea in the afternoon - though not usually in winter.

OPEN - most of the year, prices reasonable and often used by cyclists.

Polegate

"The Mill" cafe, in the shopping precinct facing the railway line.

OPEN - frequently, though has recently changed hands - service was always good and prices reasonable, hope it's still the same.

Uckfield

Tea rooms/cafe on the right hand side, just west of traffic at junction at top of high street. Reasonably priced and pleasant; no details of opening times, but they do hot food as well as tea, coffee and cakes.

Westham

"Swan Lake Cafe", at junction of A27 and B2191 just west of Pevensey. Very good, reasonable prices, and often used by sections. Hot food as well as tea & coffee. But make sure to ask if you want filter coffee and not just instant. The Seaford & Newhaven Section recommend the omelettes.

OPEN - frequently throughout the year.

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Travel Planning ?

Nineteenth century American writer Charles Dudley Warren advised :

"In making up a party for a travelling excursion, always be sure to include one ignorant person who will ask all the questions you are ashamed to ask, and you will acquire a great deal of information you would otherwise lose.

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Having decided that we would like to explore the area around Oxford we finally decided upon Inglesham, Charlbury and Oxford Youth Hostels as there are many interesting places near them.

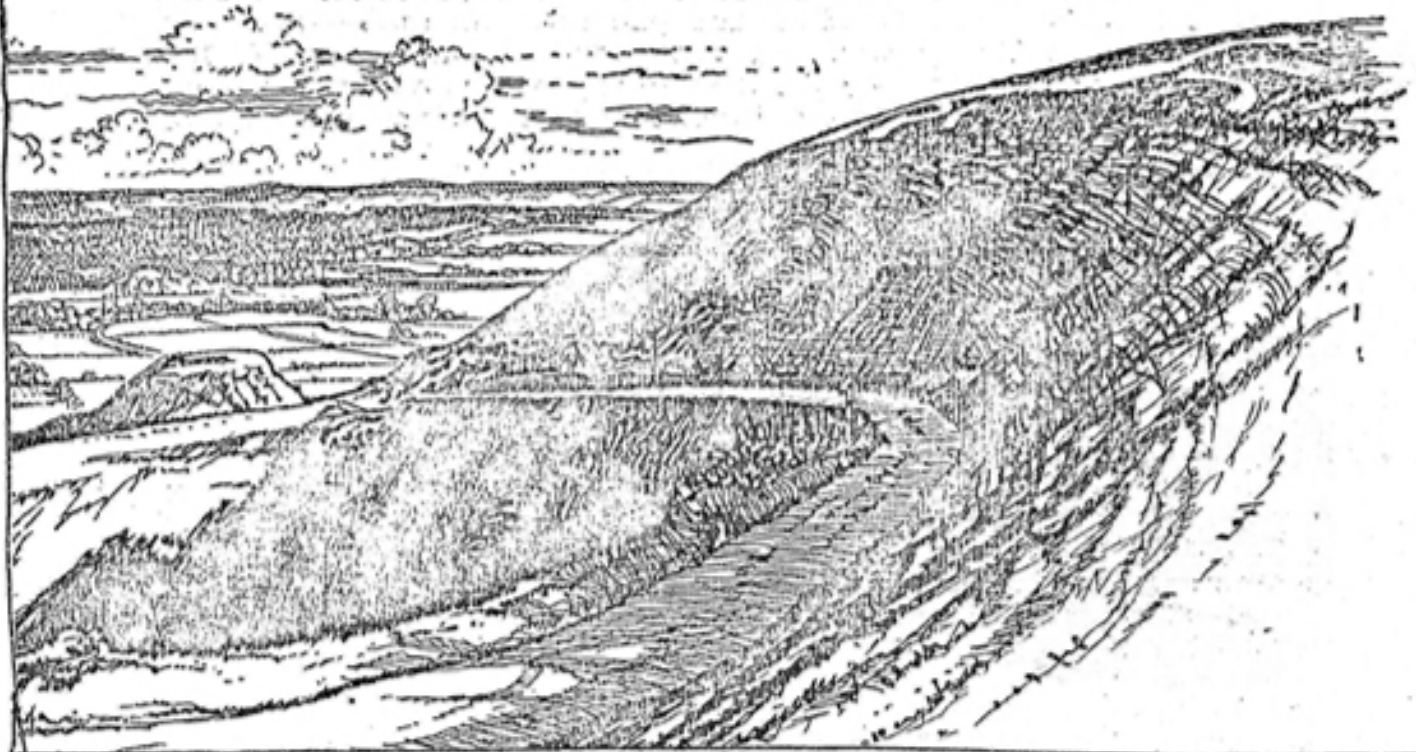
Good Friday morning five of us caught the 8.55am train from Seaford, changing at Lewes to join John Wells (from Polegate) on the train to Gatwick. Another change, on to Reading, change again for Didcot, this last stage were 125 trains and we and three other cyclists only just got on as there was a motorcycle in the luggage van already! Having written to the British Rail area manager to say we were travelling greatly helped as he had notified all the stations concerned and they were most helpful, Gatwick was the easiest change but reading was up and down stairs. If you are wondering why all the changes, it was cheaper that way and more pleasant that going via London. At Didcot station Richard Badger was waiting for us, he and his family had moved from Lewes three days before to a few miles from Charlbury. When one member decided not to go Jon contacted Richard who was pleased to join us.

Alec Dewhirst, having planned the itinerary, led us to the lovely old village of East Hendred where we had lunch on the green, by now it was really warm and several garments had been shed. A ride along the Vale of the White Horse to Uffington, unfortunately there was a mist hanging over the hills so we could not get a very good view of the prehistoric chalk figure on White Horse Hill (see picture over). It was here that Alec's derailleur decided that it didn't really like having the wrong bolt holding it together, and fell apart! After a few tries we managed to get it to hold and it held out for the rest of the tour.

A visit to the largest Tithe Barn in the country, at Great Coxwell was next, then on to Inglesham Hostel where William Sim was waiting for us, he had ridden the 150 miles from Uckfield.

So now we were eight, and next morning we passed through lovely villages of Cotswold stone on our way to the Cotswold Wildlife Park at Bradwell Grove. Three hours later we headed for Minster Lovell where the river Windrush winds through the village making it a delightful spot, with an old mill, and the ruins of Minster Lovell

cont./



White Horse Hill and the Vale of the White Horse, Uffington.

Hall, a manor house built in the 15th century, also the manorial dovecote of the same age. That night after riding through Wychwood Forest was spent at Charlbury.

After two lovely days we woke on Sunday morning to find it was raining. Doreen and I went to the 8.00am service at Charlbury Church and on our return the warden said as there were plenty of people to do the jobs there was no need for us to do anything. It was capes on for the ride to Woodstock, an old town with many interesting buildings, it was fine by now, so we walked round with an 'explorers guide' sorting them out.

Then to Blenheim Palace, four of us decided that a tour was a must so in we went, while the others toured the grounds. A palace it certainly was, the three staterooms were magnificent, gilded woodwork on walls and ceilings, with large hanging tapestries depicting the Duke of Marlborough at the Battle of Blenheim (1704). The green and red drawing rooms, and the green writing room, were equally splendid with 22 carat gold decorations on the ceilings. There was so much to see we could have stayed longer, but after two hours we found Joe (the other three had disappeared) and rode through the park to Bladon Churchyard to see Winston Churchill's grave amongst the family graves of the Spencer-Churchills. A wait to take another picture as a swarm of Italian tourists covered the area (I've got a good picture of an elbow!).

On to Oxford to see some of the city then to the Hostel in Jack Straws Lane on the outskirts, passing a re-enactment of the Siege of Oxford on the way. It was being done by the 'Sealed Knot' and they were everywhere that evening in their costumes and also on the river the next morning. A quick meal then down to the city in the evening, a long walk there and back but very pleasant. Monday morning it was down to the river where we took to the river for an hour, three rowing (Alec, William and Ann) and four punting (Jon, Richard, Doreen and John), with Joe feeling safer on shore to watch the antics.

cont./

We then said goodbye to Richard, with William deciding to return with us on the train so as to have another day exploring. Along quiet lanes still we found a pleasant pub (it was still very hot!) and had our lunch in the garden. A visit to Pendon Museum at Long Wittenham in the afternoon, very interesting and beautifully made models of a railway scene, also a layout (still in the making) of buildings from the area.

Arrived at Didcot in time for some to visit the Railway Museum before catching the train home, leaving John & William at Lewes, arriving at Seaford 8.25pm. A lovely weekend.

+ + + + +

CYCLING SHORTS

France 1896.

A few days ago a Lyon cyclist named Garand, a plumber by trade, who had undertaken to ride round the coping stone of a house now in the course of construction, successfully accomplished his feat in the presence of a large gathering. The coping stone is barely two feet wide and is about fifty feet of the ground.

Start pedalling.

Except for vast firms like shell, it might be best for a company to have no computer at all, says an article in the New Scientist. A lot of data processing work can be done much more cheaply by people, who "are often fairly good at thinking and need little programming."

People? But we thought they were obsolete?

Instead of installing a colossal electronic communications system to carry messages, the article recommends "a boy on a bicycle." And old-fashioned books are far cheaper devices for storing information than magnetic tapes or drums.

The delicious truth is out. The country doesn't need more computers. It needs more boys on bicycles.

For sale.

Three speed unisex Molten bicycle. Good condition.
(Dawlish Gazette)

+ + + + +

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

Cutting it fine by Moses Lawn
Expelled from school by Millicent Holme
The Sovereign by Iona Dudden
The Antiques by Fay Kingham
How to be a bus conductor by Miles Standing
Knighted by Watts E. Dunn
Wine and Women by Rex Holmes
The Homeless by Rufus Quickly
Song of the Shirt by Dryden Aird
The soldier's plate by Lydia Mestyn
Gossip by Liza Bound
The cannibal's supper by Henrietta Mann
The Insomniac by Eliza Wake.

+ + + + +

TWYFORD "CLIFFE VALE" POTTERIES, HANLEY.



THE "TWYCLIFFE."

PERFECT SANITATION,
HEALTHY HOUSES

OBTAINED BY ADOPTING THE
"TWYCLIFFE"
PATENT

PEDESTAL SYPHON W.C. BASIN.

A new departure, embodying the latest developments in Sanitary Science, as applied to W.C. Basins.

ADVANTAGES CLAIMED FOR THE
"TWYCLIFFE" SYPHON:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Perfect Safeguard against Sewer Gas and the evils arising therefrom. | Practically noiseless in action. |
| Extra large water surface and great depth of water seal (3 inches) and large body of water in Basin to receive and deodorise soil. | Simple in construction, reliable in action. |
| | No complicated mechanism to get out of order. |
| | Easily fixed as an ordinary Basin. |

A high-class article of superior material, workmanship, and construction.

GUARANTEE sent with each Basin.

NOW BEING ADOPTED BY ALL LEADING SANITARY ENGINEERS AND ARCHITECTS.

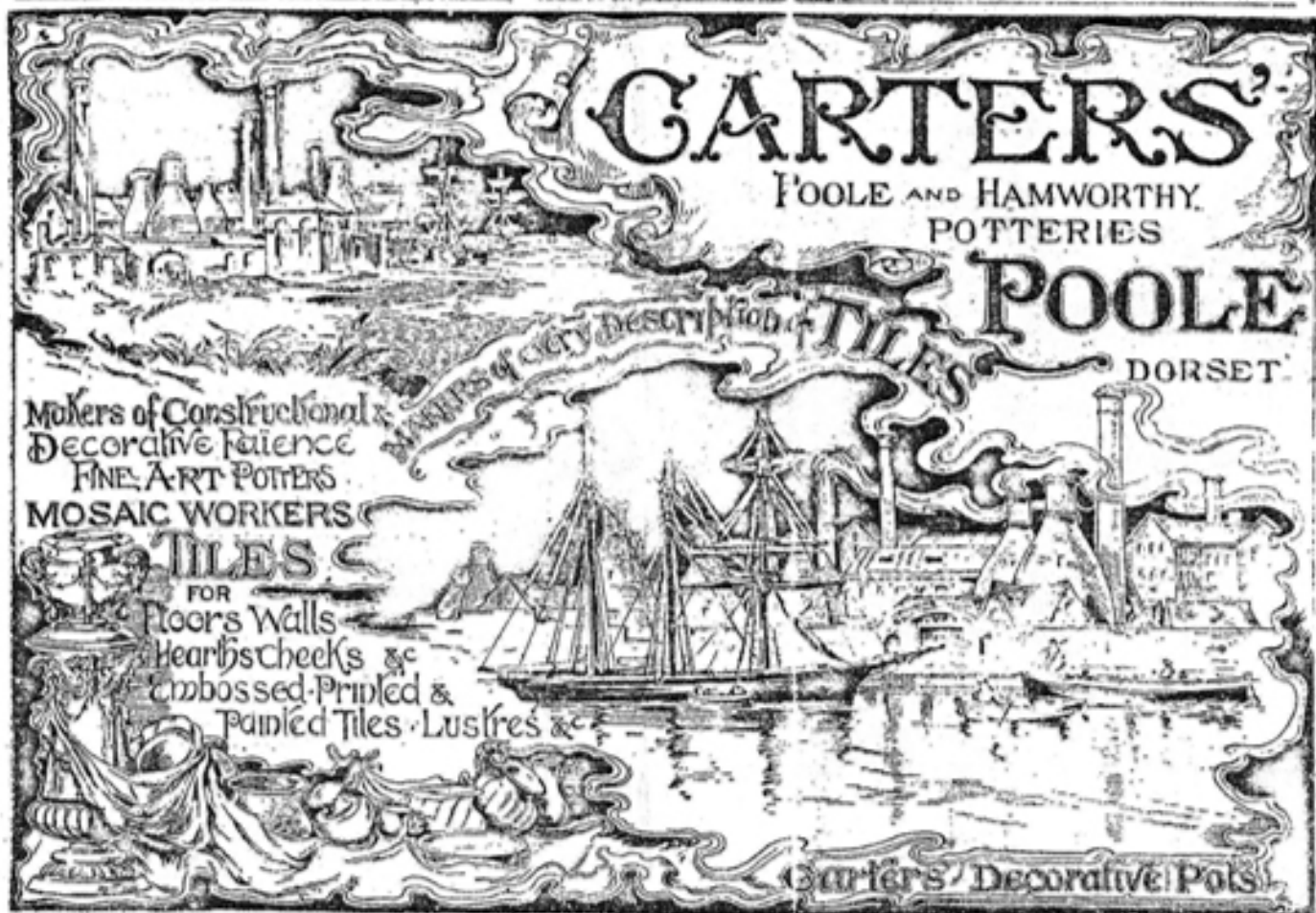
Made with TRAP OUTLET to suit Requirements of the LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL, and also with OUTLET in CENTRE.

CAN BE OBTAINED FROM MERCHANTS, SANITARY ENGINEERS, AND PLUMBERS.

To be seen in action at
LONDON SHOW ROOMS,
SOUTHAMPTON HOUSE,
SOUTHAMPTON ROW,
HOLBORN, W.C.

ILLUSTRATED DESCRIPTIVE SHEETS ON APPLICATION.

The essential complement to every cyclist's home.



Thanks to Ken Stevens for supplying these two excellent examples of old adverts, as well as the following cutting:

From the Plumber & Gas Fitters' Review - June 1896 Trade reports.

Castor oil opened with a little more activity.

Tallow is rather more active.

Bleaching Powder has moved rather slowly.

+ + + + +

ODD CUTTINGS

A man accused of stealing candlesticks from Carlisle Cathedral had his case temporarily adjourned when the court heard he had wax in his ears. (Cumberland Times)

Dublin police are investigating a robbery attempt in which the victim made a ten pound profit. (Belfast Telegraph)

He revealed: "We arrested one woman with a whole salami in her knickers. When asked why, she said that she was missing her Italian boyfriend. (Manchester Evening News)

Mr. Gallon had denied urinating, instead he said he was sweeping up with a long handled broom when the supervisor saw him. (!) (Sunderland Echo)

A salutation in a letter sent by a university's athletic's business manager read as follows: "Dear Athletic Supporter."

+ + + + +

"MY EQUIPMENT WAS
OF THE SIMPLEST."



GOING TO CAMP

From A LIGHT RIDERS POINT
OF VIEW.

Two members of the Camping & Hostelling section setting off on a recent tour.

+ + + + +

A CYCLING SHOE REPAIRER

I thought this was an extinct species until I was told of an ex-Brighton Mitre man (name unknown) who has a small shop in Framfield. It's down a short drive opposite the C. of E. school in the village. As he is semi-retired his ours are 9.15 - 12.30 and 2.15 - 5.00 on tuesday, thursday & friday only. He rebuilt a pair of my hand-made shoes for a reasonable cost and can be thoroughly recommended.

Peter Crowsley.

FOR SALE

Like coat-hangers that seem to breed in dark cupboards, I seem to find I have an out-break of handlebars looking for good homes. Maes, Randonneur(unused) & Cinelli.

Lurking also in a darkened draw are some new Chater Lea pedals & a pair of 32" Worthy worsted plus twos that must have shrunk around the waist when I put them away.

Open to negotiation as they, try phoning Edenbridge 862393, preferably before 6.30.

P.J. Crowsley.

+ + + + +

THE WHITE PEAK WAY

An 80 mile circular walk in Derbyshire

by Dot Collins

On Saturday, September 23rd 1983, four of us, Daphne, Thelma, Joyce and myself, travelled to Bakewell via London and Derby, using British Rail and coach.

The Hostel at Bakewell was a good one, as were all the subsequent ones we used during the week. Contrary to our usual practice, we booked our evening meals and found them all to be excellent.

Our first day took us to Elton, over Stanton Moor, pleasant walking with good views over the Derwent Valley. Descending to Birchover, we explored Rowter Rocks, a maze of rock caves and tunnels which were fun to scramble about on. Next point of interest was a scramble to see the Hermit's Cave, and on to explore some gritstone crags called Robin Hood's Stride, and so to Elton Hostel, an easy and pleasant ten miles.

Next morning we followed the Tissington Trail which used to be part of the old Buxton and Ashbourne railway. That's where we started to find mushrooms, which were abundant the rest of the week and we always finished up with enough for our breakfast each day. We followed the

River Dove to Mill Dale and a welcome cafe for cups of tea, then on through Dovedale which is an enchanting walk by the river, with lots of interesting limestone formations, Ravens Tor, Ilam Rock (a sheer pinnacle) and more caves, Dove Holes and Reynards Cave. We were fortunate in seeing it midweek (it seems it attracts hordes at the weekends). The weather was warm and sunny which all added up to an exhilarating 12.5 miles, ending at Ilam Hostel, an enormous place, once Ilam Hall, with its own parkland and church.

Our next stage to Hartington promised an easy 9.5 miles. More caves including St. Bertram's which we backtracked along a stony dry watercourse to view. Soon after, we had a 300ft. climb to look at Thor's Cave, very impressive and set in the base of a huge crag. It was very hot and we allowed ourselves a long lunch break, before continuing through fields (they all seemed to have menacing looking bulls in among the cows!),

eventually though joining the Dove again and finishing at Hartington.

Our next stage to Ravenstor was the longest, 13.5 miles. Our guide book warned us not to Dawdle, as the last miles were over difficult terrain. The route took us past some huge quarries, before entering Horseshoe Dale, grassy and pleasant walking, changing to a rocky path through Deep Dale with more craggy scenery. The path emerges at Topley Pike Quarry (not a pretty sight!). Following the path beside the yard to the road and on to the bridle way by the River Wye, we crossed the river where the path enters Clee Dale, very exciting and interesting, rocky and so narrow in places, we had to walk on stepping stones in the water - Great! Just the sort of terrain I like. Coming out



Ilam Rock

to the road, we had a short walk before climbing through the trees to the Hostel, marvellously situated high above the surrounding countryside.

There were a nice friendly party of German students there, learning the English way of life (they loved our English puddings!). They were lively company and were at our next three hostels. We also made friends with a couple from Kent, Wilf and Norah, who were doing the same walk as us, so we swapped our experiences each evening - they christened us "The Fearless Four".

Next day took us through Peter Dale, Hay Dale and into Dam Dale, then the track climbed to moorland, passing Eldon Hole, the largest open pothole in the area; it looked gloomy and forbidding and we had no wish to linger. Going down through Cave Dale it was very rocky and ends quite suddenly in Castleton Square. Almost at the end, we were temporarily halted as filming was taking place. There was a couple in period costume with two ancient bicycles and it was a B.B.C. production of "Goodbye Mr. Chips". So ended a varied and interesting 10 miles.



Our route out of Castleton took us past the Speedwell and blue John Caverns, which we would have liked to explore but time did not permit. We should have had marvellous views along the ridge separating Hope Valley and Edale. Unfortunately, the mist was down and over Mam Tor it was damp and windy with visibility almost nil. Descending slightly to Hollins Cross cairn, two bold

sheep appeared and eagerly shared our biscuits and chocolate! Up again to Lose Hill, then after Win Hill the ridge descends to road level. The last part of the walk follows the Derwent into Hathersage, another 12.5 miles.

Our last day and still thick mist, so we were cheated of superb views once again. Another ridge walk along Froggat Edge and Curbar Edge well known to climbers. Even though we were unable to see much, it was all new to us, and the odd-shaped rock formations were interesting. Reluctantly, we left the ridge and came down into Baslow and through Chatsworth Park with its famous Empress Fountain, which was shooting well above the trees. It is apparently the highest in Europe (290 ft. at full blast!). Coming out at Edensor village, our path took us through parkland, where we saw large herd of deer. Soon after, it was down by the golf course and into Bakewell, our final 12.5 miles.

A very enjoyable week; apart from the last two days, the weather was dry and warm, with plenty of sunshine. I must pay tribute to Joyce and Thelma for their expertise in keeping us on route. Daphne is very observant and made useful contributions to way-finding. Me? I just follow on - Baa-baa!

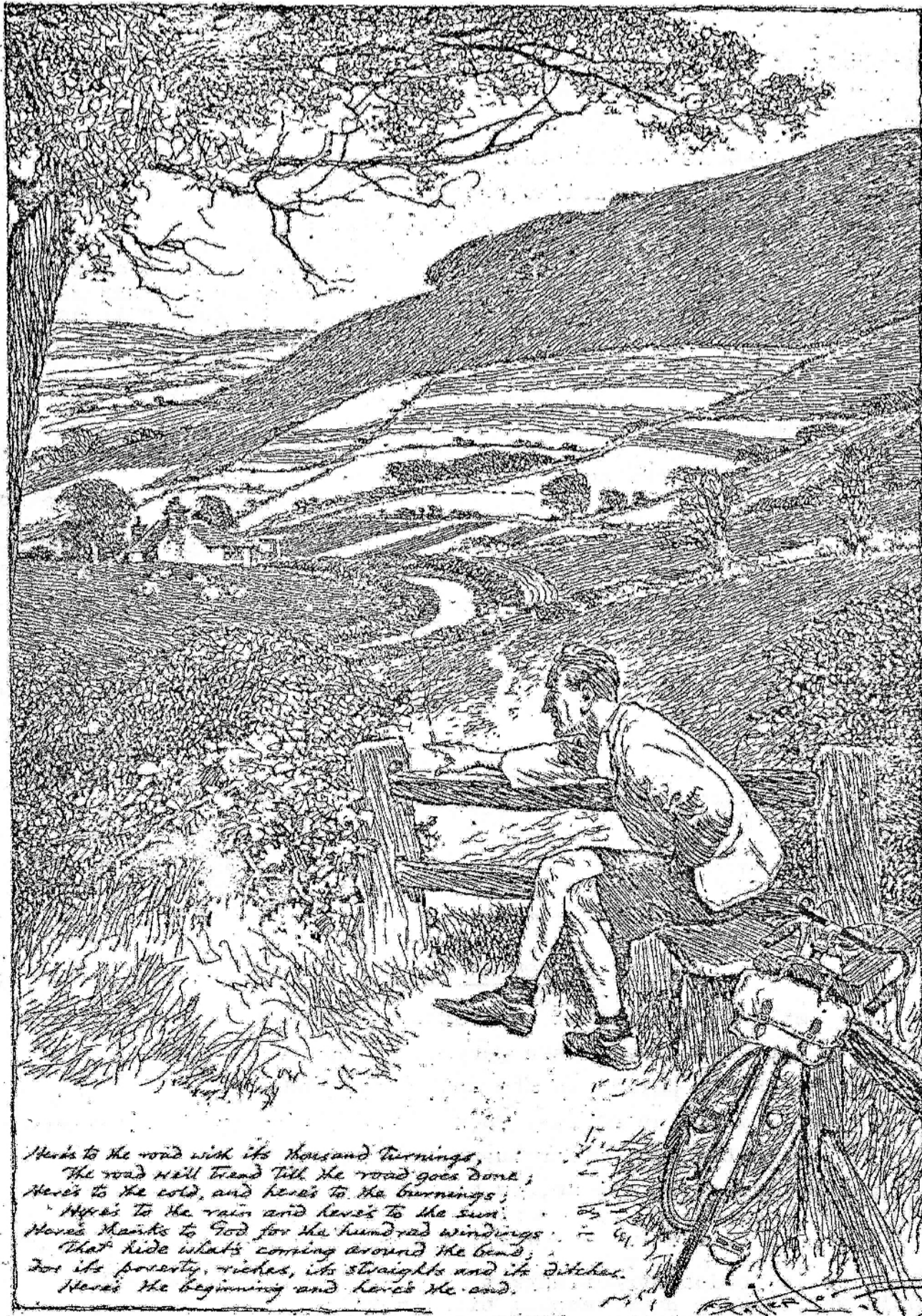
* * * * *

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW EAST SUSSEX ?

All questions are taken from O.S. 1:50,000 sheet 199, or thereabouts. The wardens of Alfriston Youth Hostel offer a small prize, a very small prize, for the first, all correct, set of answers they receive. (The Editor takes no responsibility for the deviousness of Mike Hume's mind.)

- 1/Pevensey Levels - how many and can you name them?
- 2/.The Street which is the "Staff of Life" and is good for you.
- 3/ For those in the Building Trade - Tile Manufacturers.
- 4/ St. Cornelia Connelly lived here. Where?
- 5/ When trained & educated these Ladybirds flyaway home, but where do they live at the moment?
- 6/ A lion had one once, which hostel has one now?
- 7/ What did Huggett have north of Hadlow Down?
- 8/ What's going to happen down on the farm just north of Hailsham?
- 9/ We've got roadways and railways, cycleways and byeways; but, oh Mole-like Daddy, what other way is there?
- 10/Did one of those world famous lovers once live there?
- 11/One of them loved Africa, Liz loved one from time to time, but before all this one designed part of this. Who and what?
- 12/There are four here and a wide one there. A wife viewed in horror from one & you'll find three more N.E. of Hastings. What?
- 13/Ancient Greek town of the Eastern Peloponnes with sails on it.
- 14/This place is ready to eat.
- 15/A not very nice 1,760 yards.
- 16/A bovine tree.
- 17/Do these run over when at the angle?
- 18/A coloured comedian.
- 19/If you've got the last one then how about Swift Water, one in the Wood and something that's quite rare?
- 20/To Bill and Coo" and I'm on the level.
- 21/How many teeth does this one have in the wood?
- 22/A barrel maker's high place.
- 23/There are two of these. Bisecting at right angles they might glow.
- 24/Used foe making felloes, there are five of these.
- 25/A noisy street.
- 26/Three more like 19/. One is a daring feat, another is Harty and this one is a bit of a mess!
- 27/It's tirrible down here!
- 28/Not usual for this type of organ.
- 29/Saying the same thing twice from a lofty position.

Cont./



Here's to the road with its thousand turnings,
The road will tread till the road goes done;
Here's to the cold, and here's to the burnings;
Here's to the rain and here's to the sun;
Here's thanks to God for the hundred windings
That hide what's coming around the bend;
For its poverty, riches, its straights and its ditches,
Here's the beginning and here's the end.

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

or I've heard that one before.

New shoes always pinch a little at first. They'll feel comfortable after you wear them a few times.

I was just going to write to you.

Except for documentaries, I never watch television.

Mr. Feemish is in a meeting now.

Your money will be cheerfully refunded.

I tried to phone you on Christmas Day (Mothers Day, Easter Day, your birthday), but it was impossible to get throu.

I don't know what got into Queenie - she never bites anyone.

Mr. Feemish has just stepped out of the office for a moment.

That's a very flattering style for you sir.

I'd never guess you were 60; you barely look 40.

I've found some great bargains at flea markets.

Mr. Feemish isn't at his desk just now.

The repairs shouldn't cost you more than - oh, £15.

Waiter, I'd just like to LOOK at the dessert menu.

I can't understand why you didn't get my postcard - I sent it as soon as we got there.

Mr. Feemish is out to lunch.

It takes me just 45 minutes to get from my front door to the office.

I really don't eat that much. My body retains a lot of fluid.

There's no reason why we still can't be good friends.

Mr. Feemish left a message that he'll be in conference all afternoon.

Yes, I was in town - but only for the day or I would have got in touch.

I'll need some identification not that we don't trust you.

I didn't see the sign officer Mr. Feemish left early today.

The queue seems to be moving very quickly.

My alarm didn't go off.

Your Comments on Our Food and Service Will Help Us to Serve You Better in the Future.

Mr. Feemish will telephone you as soon as he returns from Albania.

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER SMILES

The smile of a child as he starts for school,

Is a bit restrained, as a general rule.

The teacher's smile, in the same way, tends

To droop a bit as holiday ends.

But the smile much wider than the others,

As the summer riot ends, is Mother's.

* * * * *

Stallholder in London street market: "Lovely glass paperweights! The only way to keep housekeeping bills down!"

A 'ROUGH CROSSING' by Vic. Elsdon

Early in the year my friend Bernard and I laid plans for a Scottish holiday in the Western Highlands, which was to include, as its highlight, the rough walkers path through Glen Affric. The name Glen Affric had always attracted me, and with the opening of hostels convenient to the trip we made light of a crossing which turned out to be the toughest exercise we had undertaken for some years.

My friend had a fortnight at his disposal, but I had only a week, so it was arranged that he would have a few days in the Cape Wrath area and then come south in time to meet me on Saturday night at Cannich Youth Hostel, which lies about 40 miles S.W. of Inverness. All plans were put into action; rail ticket and night sleeper booked for a Friday afternoon start that would deposit me at Spean Bridge near Fort William at breakfast time on Saturday morning, leaving me about 60 miles of easy going to reach our rendezvous.

Suddenly out of the blue my eldest daughter who had been living in Dublin for the last twelve months, decided to get married in Ireland, choosing of course the very day calculated most to upset my plans. Had I been sensible I would have shelved the Scottish tour for another year and taken advantage of being in Dublin to have visited Southern Ireland, but somehow I had set my heart on Glen Affric and nowhere else would do.

As the wedding was being held early on the Saturday it was first hoped that I could fly back to London in time to catch the evening train for Scotland but that proved impossible. Feverish searching through time-tables revealed a suitable plane from Dublin to Glasgow arriving about 8.30pm. But how would the vintage Selbach make the journey? I did not care to send it unattended by rail, and though I could have taken it free on the plane from London to Dublin, and then free from Dublin to Glasgow, I was travelling in 'top hat and tails', and felt that this was hardly the attire for handling an oily bicycle removing wheels, pedals, etc., and finally I had it flown direct up to Glasgow as freight.

The wedding day came and proved bright and sunny until late afternoon when fierce gusts of wind blew accompanied by heavy rain, and it was a shivering shorts clad figure who emerged from the airport at Glasgow bearing a few possessions in a paper bag (my morning dress had been taken back to London by my wife) and set out on foot in a downpour for a distant hangar in which I hoped to find my bicycle. Quite damp from the long exposed walk, I at length found the freight section and retrieved the Selbach from its snug retreat only to find the front tyre flat. However it turned out to be a 'slow' so I pumped up hard and hoped it would last the eight miles into the city.

Now before starting off I got out the Scottish handbook from one of the front panniers and put it in my jacket pocket where I thought it would be readily available when I got near the Hostel. It was a hard wet run into the wind, over indifferent roads often with cobbled sections, and darkness was coming on fast, and when I reached the city centre and felt for the handbook, I was annoyed to find the wretched thing had disappeared. Fortunately the Hostel was on the telephone so I was able to find the address in the Telephone Directory, and after many inquiries at last drew up outside. You will have gathered that I had decided not to hang around for four hours in a draughty railway station to meet the London train, but hoped to make an early start next morning confident that something would be available. But this was Scotland, and Scotland on the Sabbath, so apart from a few locals no trains were running, I therefore, after adding a few pumpfulls of air to my tyre, set off northwards via Stirling Castle, Perth and Dunkeld, covering about 80 miles into the wind to reach Birnam Hostel where I met a Wessex veteran who had done 120

miles in the opposite direction and remarked how easy it had been!

It was now Sunday night, Cannich was still 140 miles away, and I was due there on Monday at midday. An inquiry at the railway station revealed a 6.am train which reached Inverness about 10am leaving me some 40 miles to go. Hoping the warden would raise no objection to my rising at the crack of dawn, I requested a ticket for self and bicycle and was annoyed to hear the official pronounce the distance as 101 miles two chains so he had to charge the cycle for 150 miles instead of the 100 which I had expected.

The warden was co-operative about my early start, provided I assured him of disturbing no one else, and I crept out at 5.30am next morning reinforced, owing to the fire being out, by a couple of eggs beaten up in cold milk. Not the breakfast I would have chosen but the best I could do in the circumstances. However a real breakfast followed on my arrival at Inverness, after which I set off post-haste riding alongside glorious Loch Ness for about 25 miles as far as Drumnadrochit. A hurried snack here and I turned westward with only 15 miles to go hoping to arrive about 2 o'clock. The last miles to the meeting place were on a deserted twisting undulating secondary road, well wooded and often accompanied by brawling streams and very pleasant to travel on, but my pleasure was short lived for whilst speeding down a fast incline I was aware of a flattening front tyre, which by the time I came to a halt was dead flat. A grass verge in front of a house happened to be near by and there I upended the machine and proceeded to locate the source of the trouble. Now I don't collect punctures very often and when I do they mostly wait until I get home where I keep a large tin of solution, and therefore the small tube of solution which I had carried around with me for about 18 months had never been opened. I plunged a pin into the top of the tube but nothing happened, I pressed the tube at the base but nothing happened, I squeezed the tube with the strength of despair with the same result. Either the tube had never been filled or in some mysterious way it had evaporated.

Recalling the emergency methods used by other unfortunates I tried the postage stamp cure, but as the glue on the cheap variety is less efficacious than the higher values it failed to work.

The house outside which I was halted was of course empty and only very few cars came by and anyway cars seldom carry solution. Now a hundred yards up the road lay a small lochan and under the trees in its margin I saw a parked car. On acquainting the owner of my plight, he cheerfully accepted the role of Good Samaritan and set off for a store some 4 miles away which he hoped could supply my needs. He was not a man easily turned aside, and despite numerous rebuffs returned 50 minutes later, an extra 18 miles to his credit, and a completely new puncture outfit. He apologised for being so long, steadfastly refused to accept payment, saying he was only too glad to be of some help, and drove off with a cheery wave of the hand. (Not many like that left today, Ed.)

Armed with my new solution my troubles appeared to be at an end, but fate had another trick to play, for scarcely had I got everything set out neatly on my cape on the grass, when suddenly the clouds opened and a veritable deluge descended. I dragged the up-ended machine to the wall of the house and tried to keep the solutioned tube from getting wet, only to notice that the open repair outfits, old and new, were steadily filling with water, so leaving the machine I flung myself to their rescue and, scattering tools right and left, pulled the cape over my head to prevent being completely drenched. Whilst engaged in this activity I failed to notice that the wall against which my cycle leaned was topped by a gutter which conveniently stopped high above my front wheel, and when my head emerged from the cape it was only to find a young Niagara at work, drenching every-

thing in sight, and so was forced to make another rapid move.

The rain was too violent to last long and it was with joyful haste that at last I was able to complete the repair started two hours before. Mounted once again I rapidly ticked off the remaining miles to Cannich, and was relieved to see my cycling companion still faithfully keeping watch for me, though some hours overdue. He had heard from a passing motorist that a tall bespectacled cyclist wearing shorts and a sporran was heading his way and guessed it must be me, though the sporran had raised a doubt in his mind.

As the rain clouds were threatening again and the mountains looked rather forbidding we decided not to press on as arranged but to stay at the local Hostel and get up to date on one another's news.

We scheduled to complete the 35 miles through Glen Affric to Ratagan next day, but we lingered in the sunshine over the first few easy miles to Affric lodge, which lies on a narrow neck of land surrounded by a dozen 3000 ft. peaks with Loch Beinn a' Mheadhoin before it and Loch Affric behind. Beyond Affric Lodge only a walkers path exists and we found cycling virtually impossible. Maybe in a dry spell things are different, but at this time the mountains were sending down literally thousands of streams ranging from trickles to raging torrents every one of which needed care in crossing and though carrying of machines was not necessary the going was really tough and we were only able to achieve $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour by non stop effort.



The ever changing mountains on either hand were fascinating as the clouds scampered over their huge flanks and streaks of white revealed water falls plunging down from dizzy heights which quite overshadowed the crazy path that wound its tortuous way from boulder to boulder.

We met no living thing on the route the whole of this long June day and even footprints of previous travellers were few, and it was round about 8.0'clock in the evening before the roof of Allt Beithe, a former game keeper's cottage, was sighted and two weary travellers were glad to stagger in. The warden welcomed us warmly for he had seen no one for four days, and had prepared tea for us as soon as he had spotted us about half a mile away. Refreshed we turned to unloading the bags and housing the bicycles, but the cycle shed proved to be occupied by a very dead deer, so we crossed a little brook and made use of the wood shed which was decidedly less smelly. /

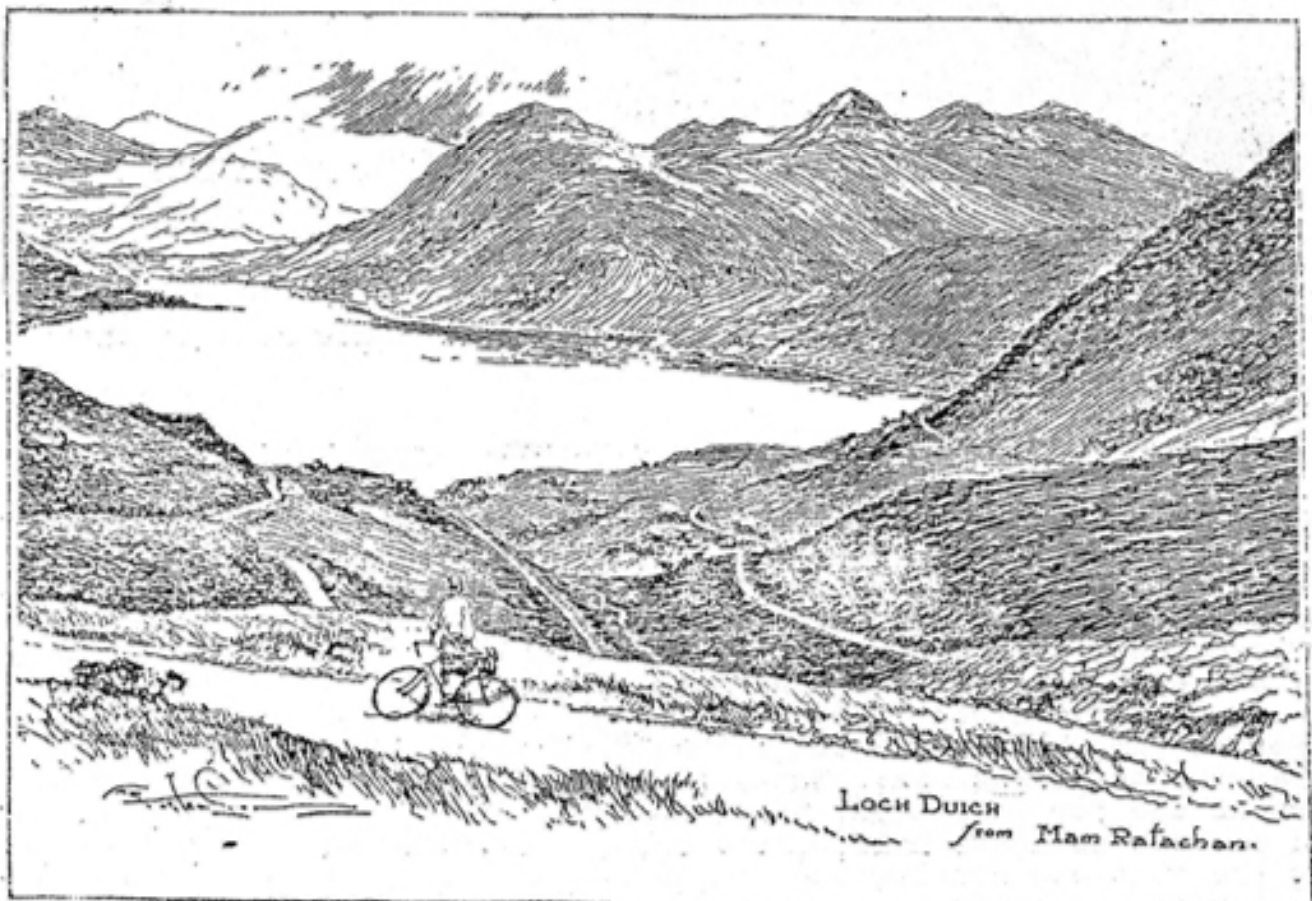
Next day proved even more exacting, as the path disappeared in broken swampy ground for long stretches, more over it rained. To give an idea of how difficult the going can be, it was more than two hours before we lost sight of the hostel roof, and the whole time we were zig-zagging strenuously across grassy water-filled hollows and deep peat bogs of the juiciest kind and it was immense relief to gain height again and link up with some semblance of a path.

Now it is practically impossible to get shelter from wind and rain on mountain passes, the elements always seem to be coming straight at you, and although we managed to brew tea and make sandwiches for lunch it was not a very cheerful meal.

All afternoon we crept upward and onward and at last breasted a great height and buffeted by the winds looked down on a broad valley through which the Croe river, far below, writhed from side to side. How we made the awful descent I will never know, we saw the skeletons of many sheep who had failed to make it, and when we at last stood at the foot and looked back at this fearsome rock strewn hillside it seemed quite unscaleable.

Crossing two swaying footbridges above the rushing waters, we came at last on a climbers hut, inside which we hoped to brew more tea. However the place was heavily barred and shuttered but we were able to get some shelter from the wind and rain and partook of a late tea on the leeseide. Though still beset by countless streams the going was much easier after tea, and it was with astonishment and relief that we suddenly came out on a newly made road with a billiard-table surface which led us along to civilisation at Croe Bridge and Loch Duich.

Across the loch, the white washed Ratagan Hostel built right on the shore, stood out clearly, and it was with a feeling of accomplishment that we covered the last few miles to curl up under its roof beneath the watchful eyes of the Five Sisters of Kintail, that massive chain of mountains that line the road to Skye.



Loch Duich
from Mam Ratachan.

THE BACK PAGE

B.C.T.C. Answers

- 1/ Birds, 2/ Butterfly, 3/ Sett, 4/ Eight, 5/ Oaks.
6/ Loch, 7/ Lough, 8/ Llyn, 9/ Bassenthwaite, 10/ Northumberland.
11/Medway, 12/ Severn, 13/ Wye, 14/ Newhaven, 15/ Ure
16/Godalming, 17/ Leng, 18/ Cotterell, 19/ Marples, 20/ Stancer.

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

WINTER SLIDE SHOWS AT ALFRISTON HOSTEL

- Oct. 20th "A Closer Look at Life"
Brian Wilkins will be showing us what
can be achieved with a camera.
- Dec. 1st "Where Cactus is King"
Neville Chanin in Mexico, his latest
tour.
- Feb. 25th "New Zealand"
More of Keith Wilkinson's travels.

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

DEADLINE FOR XMAS ISSUE IS MID-NOVEMBER. - - - - -
- - - - - WHY NOT WRITE AN ARTICLE ON YOUR SUMMER HOLIDAY? - - - - -

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

AND FINALLY

Kipling writing about the Downs from his home in the
Weald at Burwash.

'No tender-hearted garden crowns
No bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bow-hearted whale backed Downs.
But gnarled and writhen thorn-
Bare slopes where chasing swallows skim,
And through the gaps revealed
Belt upon belt, the wooden, dim
Blue goodness of the Weald.

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