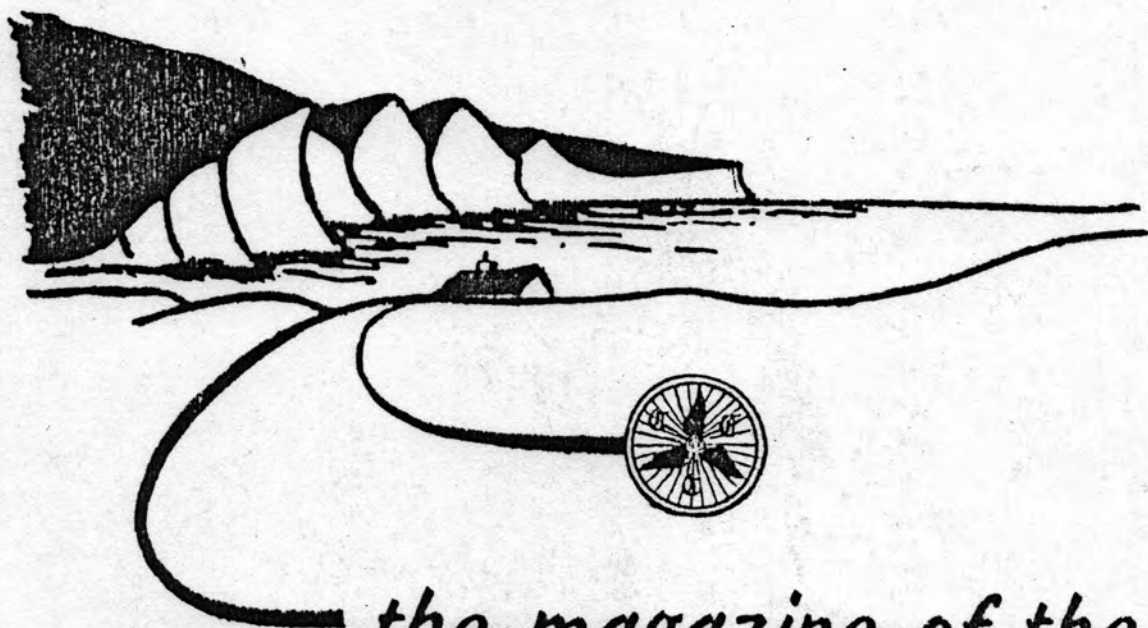


The
Coaster

no 13



the magazine of the

EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

13

20P



BUYING A BIKE

(We thought members might find this information useful.)



CHOOSING THE RIGHT SIZE

The most important aspect of buying a bike, whether it's new or second-hand is to get the right frame size. Correct size is critical if you are to maximise your performance, avoid physical injury and get the best out of your bike.

The following method allows you to isolate your nearest correct size from the wide choice available. Remember, though, this test must be done on each bike you are considering for purchase, as frame manufacturers often vary their frame design formula.

Where manufacturers make cycles with two or more inches between sizes, you will be faced with a compromise if your exact size is not catered for. As a general rule of thumb, always choose the smaller size and compensate by raising the seat and bars.

For symmetry's sake, seat posts should neither be all the way out or all the way down. Approximately 4" of seat post should show after adjustments for leg extension have been completed.

The test:

For sports, touring and commuting bikes:

Straddle the top tube with your legs 6" apart. You should be in stockinged feet. Lift both back and front of the cycle simultaneously pulling it up as firmly as possible into your crotch. You are now

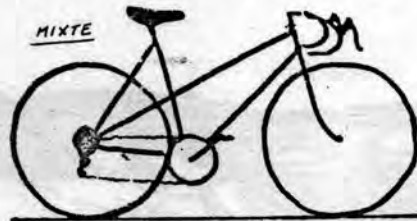


reproducing the effect of your passive weight on the saddle in reverse.

With the wheels parallel to the ground, have an observer measure the gap from each wheel to the ground. The gap under the wheels should be between 1 and 1.5".

Women's step-through and mixte frames present a problem as they have

no top tube. In this case, measurement should be made on a gents (Diamond)



frame and the results applied to the nearest women's frame.

Racing bike riders may prefer a slightly smaller frame to retain stiffness, in which case they should allow a maximum of 2" ground clearance and use a higher seat setting.

Mountain bike riders should also allow 2" top tube clearance. They should choose a machine that enables the rider to slide off the back of the saddle when it is at its lowest position and while his feet are still on the pedals and his hands are on the bars. At the same time he should still be able to obtain full leg extension without raising the seat post past its maximum extension mark. Mountainbike frames need to be smaller than road ones as you are more likely to be moving your body weight back on steep descents.

Position on the bike

Having chosen the model and correct frame size, your next task is to position yourself correctly on the machine.

SADDLE HEIGHT

Sit aside the cycle in stockinged feet. Have a helper balance the bike while you place the heel of each foot on the pedals and pedal backwards. Your leg should be straight at the bottom of each pedal stroke. It is important that you do not over-reach and that you do not try to



compensate for lack of leg length by tipping your bottom from one side of the saddle to the other to reach the bottom of each stroke.

If your leg is still bent as you pedal, raise the saddle. If you lose contact with the pedal at the bottom of each stroke, lower the saddle until you are able to rotate the pedals correctly.

FORE/AFT SADDLE POSITION

Your saddle should be positioned so that you can exert maximum power downwards on the pedals. If you are too far forwards or too far backward, you lose efficiency. You will need a helper again. Sit on the saddle in your normal



riding position with both pedals parallel to the ground. A line drawn from the centre of the knee behind the knee cap should fall through the pedal spindle. Move the saddle fore and aft to achieve this.

CORRECT STEM LENGTH

Whilst sitting on the saddle in your normal cycling position, reach forwards



to the brake levers. Your arms should be slightly flexed and your head up and looking forward. Your back should be approximately 45 degrees to the top tube. In this position, a line dropped from the tip of your nose should pass through the stem 1" behind the bars.

MESSING ABOUT WITH BIKES

by Keith Waterhouse

(Reprinted from the Daily Mail, Thursday March 26th, with the kind permission of the Editor.)

In a week in which the CBI announces the fullest order books for 10 years it is sad, though not surprising, to learn from an exhibitor at the Olympia Cycle Show that the British bike is all but extinct.

Raleigh - what a splendiferous name for a bicycle - is now American-owned. The BMX boom has bubbled out. Where twenty years ago we imported only 5000 bikes but exported a million, last year we imported 600,000 and exported just 150,000, and even they sported tyres, tubes, saddles, brakes, gears and chains manufactured in some other country.

In the circumstances, it seems tactless that Norman Tebbit should advise the unemployed to get on their bikes - since the bikes they got on would very likely have been made in Taiwan.

It is the old story of a complacent industry just letting the competition walk all over it, but what makes it especially depressing is that there is something essentially English about the bicycle.

A bike no matter how souped-up and new-fangled, conjures up images of leafy lanes and bowling home for tea by the light of a 'Voltalite' dynamo hub ('No batteries! British Made! Refuse substitutes! Send for testimonials!')

Pooter fans will recall how prominently The Bicycle News figures in The Diary of A Nobody. Jerome K. Jerome's three men, when they were not in a boat, were on their bikes, touring Germany (where pedals now come from). Sherlock Holmes rode a bike, though not so often as he took a cab. Jeeves rode a bike, but only in the country.

Nearer our own day, and more to the point, I myself rode a bike. Indeed, I came from a home which had bikes the way some houses have mice. My elder brother owned two (he still does) - a racer and a sit-up-and-beg. On wet days the racer, anointed in vaseline, was brought into the living room and propped against the sideboard. It could not be left in the scullery because that's where the sit-up-and-beg was, propped up against the mangle.

Other bikes belonging to other brothers festooned the house and garden. I did not personally own a bike, but by virtue of being senior paper-boy I had first call on the newsagents delivery bike, as sturdy a boneshaker as ever hurtled down a 1-in-5 hill with the rider's feet on the handlebars. The huge wicker pannier - over the front wheel - was felt to preclude me from membership of the Cyclists' Touring Club, but there were no other snags. Biking was bliss.

Few and forlorn were the dispossessed in our street who did not have access to a bicycle. But apart from the odd junior bike - fairy cycles, as they were known - magicked into the neighbourhood by Father Christmas, you never heard of anyone actually buying a bike, certainly not first hand.

You swapped Brownie cameras and Meccano sets for bikes, you borrowed bikes, you - shall we say - acquired bikes. But you never went down to Curry's cycle shop for any item more substantial than an Ever-Ready lamp or a celluloid-sheathed pump (Made and Guaranteed by the Apex Inflator Co., Birmingham). In the dumps the British bike industry may be now, but it would have been in them four decades sooner had it looked to us for its profits.

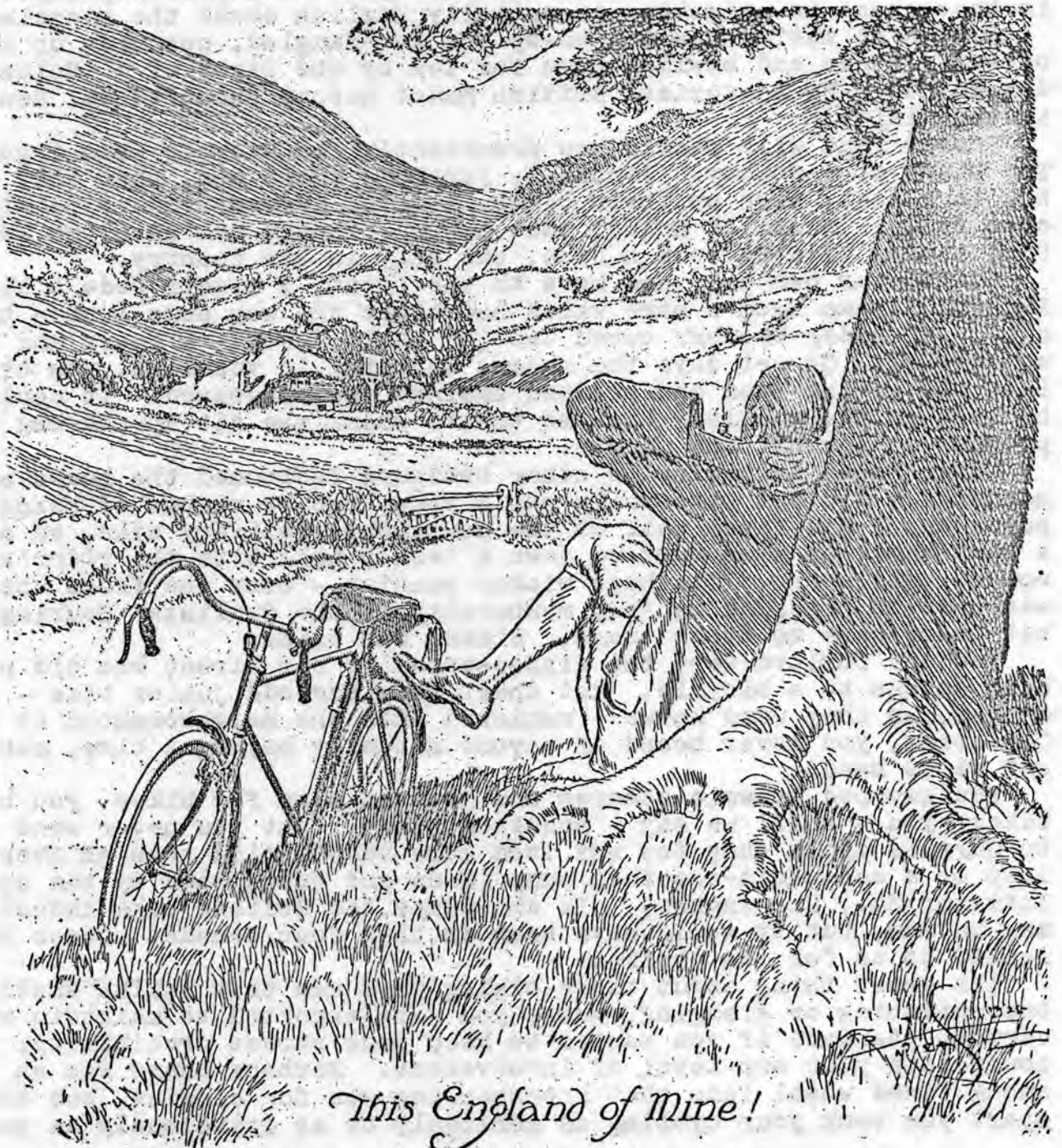
The great thing about those biking days was that unlike skating or tree-climbing or sledging, where you were expected to maintain a certain standard if you wanted to keep your street credibility, you could pick your own level of involvement. Perhaps there was an idea among fixed wheel fans that freewheeling was for cissies, but that apart you took your cycling as seriously or as frivolously as you

liked.

You could pack your saddle-bag with sandwiches and Tizer and head for Scarborough, perhaps getting as far as the local park boating lake - or you could never go further than the top of the street. You could regard your bike as a kamikaze instrument and career around the rim of a disused quarry on one wheel (the 'bucking broncho' position) or you could lean on your crossbar outside the public library and chat up girls. You could live in fear of getting your front wheel trapped in a tram line or go out and do it on purpose.

Mending punctures, with a bowl of water to trace the rupture with telltale bubbles, was great fun, as was giving your machine a coat of 'Club' enamel paint. You could, in fact, put in so much time tinkering with your oil-can or replacing accessories such as brake blocks and shock absorbers that your bike was rarely seen upright. But as Ratty didn't quite say in *The Wind In The Willows*, "There is nothing - absolutely nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about with bikes."

And now we're importing them from Taiwan. Oh dear. I do hope were still making our own John Bull puncture outfits.



This England of Mine!

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THE AUDAX UK 1000km RIDE AND END TO END

by Alec Dewhirst

Riding the Great Eastern 1000km from Norwich to Scotch Corner and back is quite a long way on a bike. We started on the 11th July at eight o'clock at night. I won't give you the whole route, just the main bits. Right here we go, you are on the bike with me, first stop Peterborough where we arrived at 7.45, then on to Lincoln (4.00) then Doncaster where I had a lovely meal at the Control. The time was now 9.00 Saturday evening (25 hours gone) and I was off on my way to York, but as usual I was getting sleepy, by now I could tell by the way I kept zig-zagging across the road, so the first bus shelter I came to with a seat I just laid down with my rain cape over me and dropped off. I awoke about three hours later with a light in my eyes, it was another rider seeing if I was alright, having found that I was still in the land of the living he was off again and so was I - to sleep again! I awoke feeling like a million dollars - well that's a lie for a start. Arrived in York at 2.30 Sunday morning, found the control point, then tried to find my way out of York, which is quite hard in the dark. On to Northallerton and then to Scotch Corner - the turn round point - at 7.30am. Then turn around to retrace the route back to Norwich, where I arrived at 6.00 on Monday evening having travelled 650 odd miles in 70 hours.

Just over a week later I was off to Land's End for the Big Bike Ride. I travelled down to Penzance on Friday, catching the train from Brighton, then rode to the hostel at St. Just. The hostel at Land's End is one of the best that I have stayed at, the warden is very friendly and the assistant Gill is very sexy. I think I will pay another visit next year. On Sunday I visited the surrounding area - Sennen Cove, Pendeen lighthouse, Cape Cornwall, Trengwainton Gardens (N.T.), and the local tin mines.

Well Monday came and the big bike ride was on, the object of the ride was to get from Land's End to John o'Groats, 876 miles, in under 4 days and 9 hours. The ride was to start at 9.00am., so I left the hostel at 8.00 to ride the five miles to Land's End. On the way I met a young girl also doing the ride, we had a chat about the ride and she asked me how long I was taking to do it, I said 4 days, she was taking two weeks - we rode on to Land's End.

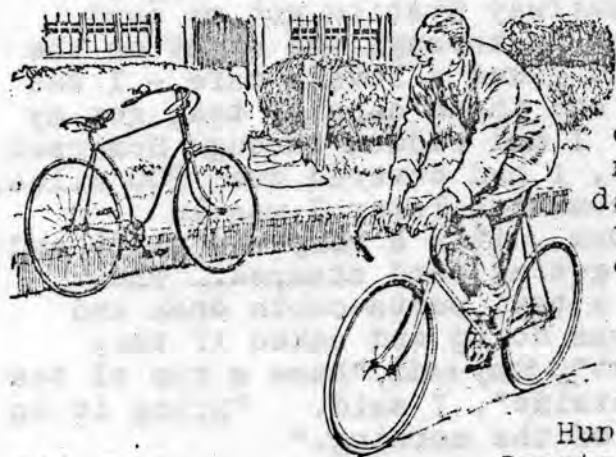
The time arrived and I was off. 9.00am 21st July 1986. I had to stop at Sennen Post Office to post a card to the organiser of the ride to let him know that I had started, it is to show that I HAVE started the ride and not just jumped on the bus. On the A30 the first stamp check was a petrol station, then on to Bodmin Moor and Okehampton. I was in Devon now and heading towards Tiverton and then Taunton. Arrived at Taunton at 12.25am., by now I had two stamps and was looking for somewhere to get a third done. If you've never been in Taunton early in the morning, well it's bad enough in day light, all one way systems. I finally found the Railway Station got my card stamped and had a cup of tea then it was on through the night on the A38. I arrived in Bristol at 2.30pm and found a lovely cafe - I was hungry by now - and had two breakfasts and three cups of tea, got my card stamped and then I was off again. I had ridden through Somerset and was now heading for Gloucestershire, I had covered over 200 miles.

Two more stamps on my card and two counties later I was in Warrington, Cheshire, the time was 2.10am., it's a very big place and I kept riding round to find someone to get my card stamped. The Railway Station was closed but I found a taxi porta-cabin open and knocked on the door, told them what I was doing and asked if they would stamp my card. "First things first", they said, "have a cup of tea and some food, where's your bike?" "Outside", I said. "Bring it in you'll get it nicked even at this time of the morning."

They didn't have a stamp, so one of them took me in a taxi to the Police Station. When we got back to the cabin one of them said I should get some sleep on the settee. Well I hadn't slept since the start, and by this time I had covered 380 miles so dropped off almost straight away. I awoke about 4 hours later, had some more food and tea then set off again. They were very kind and I shan't forget them.

I sent a postcard next since if you can't find anywhere open you must post a card at the nearest box to the next 50 miles you have ridden. On through Kendal to Carlisle, which is one of the main card stamping places. It was now 3.49pm on the third day and I had covered 476 miles. On over the Border into Scotland on the A7 with great lovely views of the hills and not a lot of traffic. I stopped at Hawick for a meal and then on to Selkirk, where I found the Police Station for a stamp on my card. 526 miles and I was getting tired now, so I found a bus shelter for a rest. I was woken by the rain and got back on the bike again. Another post card at 4.00am after only another 45 miles, then just outside Edinburgh I crossed the majestic Forth Road Bridge and continued to Perth. I was on the A9 now and it was still raining. On to Pitlochry - first stamp for 67 miles. I was now in the Highlands - the Grampian Mountains - but I couldn't see much with all the mist and rain. I stopped at a shop for some food, the lady asked me where I was going and I told her I was on a long bike ride. "I will sign your card", she said. It was only 32 miles from the last card stamp, but 67 and 32 are 99 which is as good as two 50's. She gave me a cup of tea and a cake and a sit by the fire. I thanked her then was off again.

I arrived at Inverness at 6.20pm after 55 miles (total now 725) and got my card stamped at the local Police Station. By now it had stopped raining. From Inverness the road starts to twist and turn a lot. I got my card stamped at Muir of Ord, because you can't cross the Kessock Bridge at Inverness and have to go round the old A9. The road runs along the Cromarty Firth and seeing all the oil rigs with their lights on was a great sight. The winding road to Bonar Bridge was very scenic with no traffic, after this I took a minor road, it was uphill but the view from the top was breath taking and there was a lovely ride down the other side to re-join the A9. It was now the fourth day and I stopped at a place called Brora to post a card. I had now covered 800 miles and this was when I got really tired. I stopped on the side of the road, laid my bike against a fence, took my cape off and sat down, then I put the cape over myself and dropped off to sleep. I was awoken by a voice asking if I was alright, it was a lorry driver who had stopped to see if I was alright. I told him I was very tired and he made me a cup of tea in his cab and I ate a bit of food I had left. He left me under the cape, I was still very tired but I had to get on.



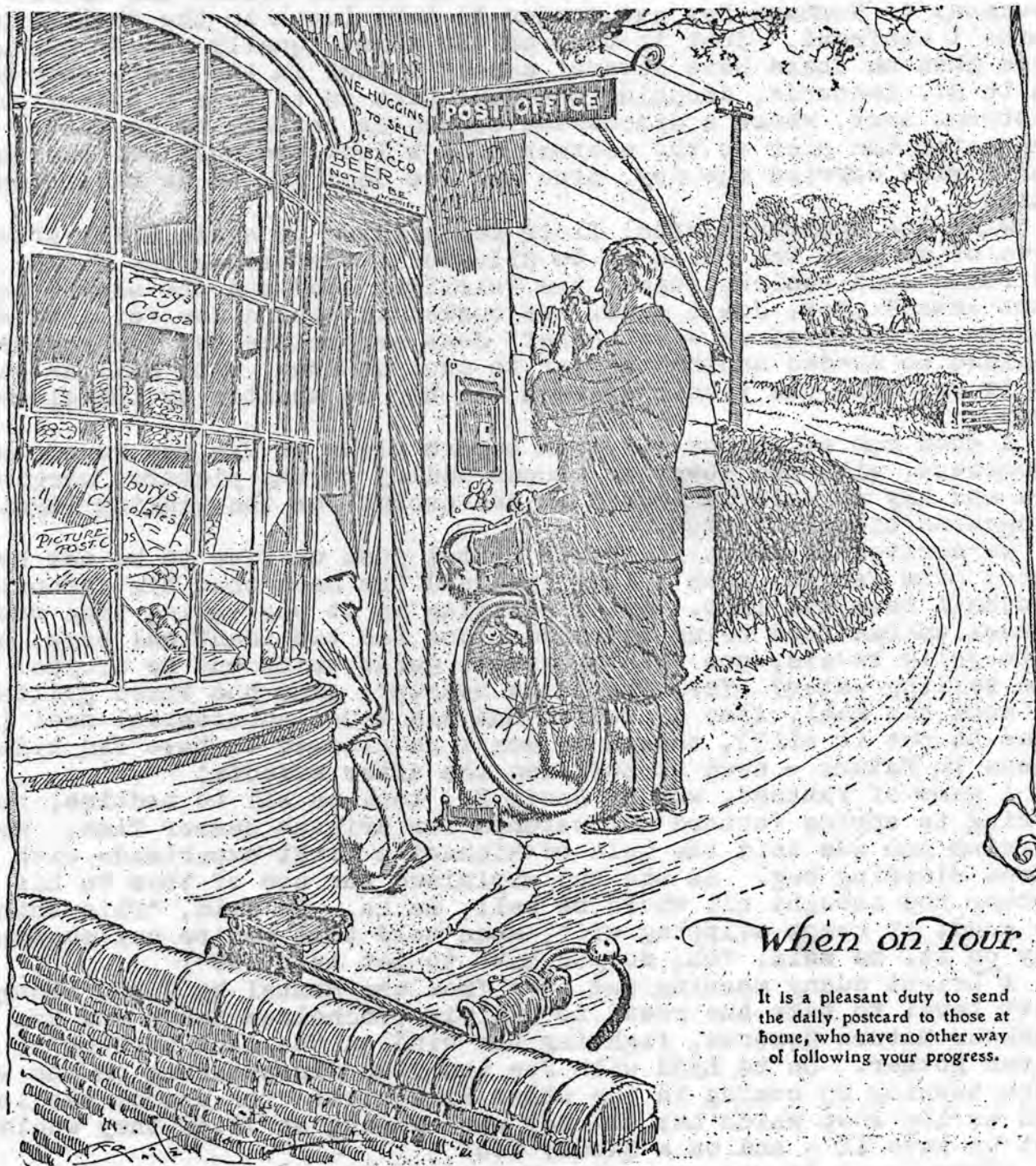
Right on Top.

The coastal road was very hilly, but the views were great. I came to a place called Helmsdale where the road goes down twists left and then right and then goes back up again, it must have been 1 in 3 - I was getting out of breath just walking up it. Well not far to go now and it was a lovely day. I took a minor road before I got to Wick and followed it to a place called Watten, then on to Kirk and Hastigrow. There was peat everywhere, dug out of the ground and piled up at the few crofter's cottages I saw. On to Upper Gills, Warse, Canisbay, Seato, Huna, and then there it was, John o' Groats. I felt so great that I had finally

made it, even though my body felt as if it didn't belong to me. I rode on down to John o' Groats, I could now see the Hotel all lovely and white. I went in and a girl signed my card and then asked me to sign the visitors' book, and I sat and looked at the names of all the people who had ridden before me. The owner then gave me a drink of the hard stuff. Well I thought it was a bit silly to go all that way for one drink - so I had another one. I had a meal, got my mother a present and then fell asleep on the grass.

I had started the ride on the 21st July at 9.00am and finished at 11.30am. on the 25th. Would anyone like to have a go with me next year? That's only a joke - or is it?

Just a final note to say that the Jan de Winter Clinic in Brighton for Cancer Prevention got a cheque for £460 from my doing the ride. I know the amount was not much, but every little bit helps and I think they are still taking donations. Well, that's about it - The End.



When on Tour.

It is a pleasant duty to send the daily postcard to those at home, who have no other way of following your progress.

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S. & N.'s EXCURSION INTO THE WILDS OF SUSSEX AND KENT.

by the Seaford Scribbler.

Gale force winds and rain on the Friday did not herald a good weekend, the forecast was for squally showers with strong westerly winds, veering N. West later & so it proved. Leaving Seaford on Saturday morning we rode out to Wilmington, where Robert said that dreaded word "puncture!". Out with the wheel, off with the tyre, in with his spare tube, guess what? He hadn't mended it from last time... s s s s s s s .. so it was mending time, and a lecture from Ann!

We sailed through to Westham Cafe to find Joe & Alec and David K. waiting for us, plus Debbie, who had hoped to come with us to the hostel but owing to the wind did not think she would make it back in time on Sunday for her Section's ride.

Rather later than we had expected we headed across the Levels from Pevensey to Normans Bay and Cooden to have lunch in the shelter on Bexhill seafront. Just in time as the first squally shower hit us; from then on there were several more. A look in the cycle shop then on to St. Leonards, dropping the Runs List in to Dave & Audrey's. Hastings next, where a discussion ensued as to what to do next. Adam suggested the pier as the weather didn't look too good but the ones for a ride carried the day, Alec and Joe deciding to do their own thing.

With the Section's usual flair for joining up again miles after, five of us took the route up to Silverhill then along the ridge, which we found much easier, joined the Fairlight road and who should we see just ahead? Yes, Joe & Alec. We tucked in behind Joe for $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile before he realised we were there! Just before the top the weather decided we needed another shower to cool us down, with hail as well! So it was into the picnic area at the top to shelter by the closed loos.

A good run along the top with superb views of Rye Bay round to Dungeness, with the lowering clouds adding to the picture, merging the sea and sky so well it looked as one except for the winking light from dungeness signal station.

We arrived at Guestling Youth Hostel just on five to be met by Barry (the Warden) with a long face and the news that his favourite football team had lost. After settling in it was eating time with miscellaneous food being devoured. Joe had two identical bags, one with jelly sweets, one with macaroni, guess which one he dropped in the boiling water? Yes, the jelly sweets! Adam had three grills going to cook his meal, Alec of course had his usual substantial meal (where does he put it all?), though he won't be allowed to have red kidney beans in future - even he suffered the after effects!

A game of Yahtzee, won by David K., took us all to bedtime, remembering to spring forward our watches for British Summer Time. Next morning Ann was told the tale of Michael's first experience with a sheet sleeping bag. As she had explained the use of them to his mother she thought all would be well, ha ha. He said, "This thing's no good, it keeps slipping off", when told that you're not supposed to lay on it, he said, "oh, do you have to get into it?"!

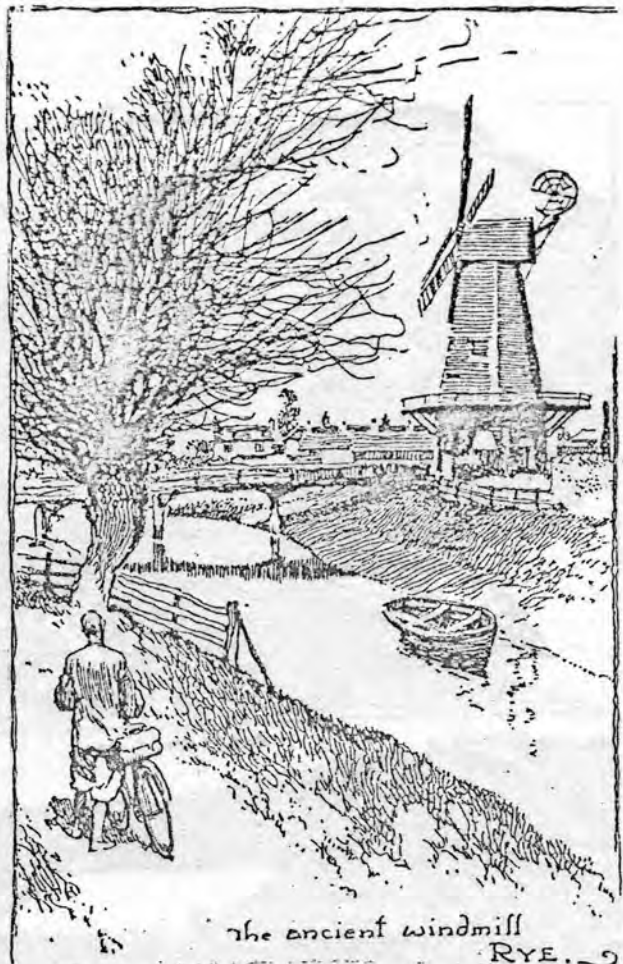
A bright sunny morning and away from the hostel by 9.30, along to Pett Level to take the route to Rye via Winchelsea Beach and Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, fighting the wind on the last stretch by the River Rother. On to Lydd with Joe and Alec disappearing on the way then turning up coming in the other direction! The church was locked and as the shop which has the key was closing at 12.30 they wouldn't let us have it - and on a Sunday too!

After lunch it was on to New Romney where we visited the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Light Railway, for the railway enthusiasts to enjoy the surroundings and Robert to ask, "Do you steer trains?"

Refreshments in the cafe there, then we headed across Romney Marsh, where on a narrow lane it was Michael's turn for a puncture, with everyone giving instructions on how to do it and some even daring to give a hand.

Passing old ruined churches we headed for Ham Street and the train to Polegate, via Hastings. Riding the last miles we reached home just as the light was gone, with Alec having trouble with his lighting with just two miles to go.

A most enjoyable weekend, making the most of the longer evening light.



The ancient windmill
RYE.

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ODD CUTTINGS

Labour MP Mr. Frank Field has branded the sport of dwarf-bowling, which involves using a midget strapped to a skateboard to knock down skittles with his head at speeds of up to 30 mph, as "perverse, sick and offensive."

But 30-year-old "Lenny The Giant", star of the act, being staged at two South Coast nightclubs, said; "I enjoy my job."

(Leicester Mercury)

Heinz do not use artificial flavours. The company sets its own standard, using only flavours that are entirely natural or nature-identical (synthetically produced, but exactly the same as natural flavours.)

(Heinz nutrition leaflet)

Croydon magistrates on Wednesday granted a drinks licence to Alcoholics Anonymous for a dance and cabaret on New Year's Eve.

(Croydon Advertiser)

A man clad only in underwear played the harmonica for a Honolulu Zoo elephant yesterday afternoon and was charged by police with cruelty to animals.

(The Honolulu Advertiser)

To claim that teachers are in the beer gardens by 10 am. is a gross exaggeration, since the headmaster and his deputies are always there to discipline staff who do so.

(unknown newspaper)

This is not the first time Gomme's has dismissed workers for industrial misconduct. On a previous occasion a number of men were sacked for boiling their underpants in a tea urn.

(Wycombe Midweek.)

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MAM TOR

DERBY BRIGHTS



HAM ROCK
BUXTON



ALSOP EN LE DALE



GOYT'S BRIDGE



MILLER'S DALE

TRAILS AND TRADITIONS: A WEEK IN THE PEAK

by Ann Rix

My younger son David and his wife Susan very kindly asked me last November if I would be able to go away for a week in the Peak District with them in May. I look after my mother, who is 96 almost blind and very deaf, so I said I would have to ask John (my eldest son). He is at home and looks after mother on Sundays and occasional weekends so that I can go cycling. John said, "You go mum, I'll have one of my weeks holiday".

On 23rd May off we went at 6.00am with cycles on the roof of their car to get as far as we could before the Motorways got too busy. A stop for about 8.30 after travelling up the M23 and M25, we were pleased to stretch our legs. Susan took over the driving for the next stretch along the A5 till Hinckley where we stopped for elevenses and then David drove again till lunch near Matlock. They had taken a self catering cottage in Miller's Dale (very good) so we spent some time looking round Bakewell, stocking up with food for our meals (their car is the first E reg. so we kept the weight down for the journey up!) and then had tea at the Original Bakewell Pudding Shop, and bought two large Bakewell puddings which served as a dessert for several days.

On Sunday we left the cottage about 9.30am. and climbed out of Miller's Dale the way we had entered it the night before. There were many cowslips on the grassy slopes either side with occasional patches of the early purple orchid. We headed for Chelmorton Church to see the (according to Cliff Kelly of the F.C.O.T.) grasshopper weather vane. We discovered that it was a locust as the church is dedicated to St. John the Baptist who fed on locusts and wild honey. A few miles further on the well dressings at Monyash were looking a little the worse for wear and we realised why, seeds had been used for some of the designs and the birds had thought them an easy meal.

We joined the High Peak Trail (on the course of the old Cromford & High Peak Railway) at Hurdlow, then it was along the track for about 14 miles. We were surprised to see the queues waiting to hire bicycles at Parsley Hay and met and passed many families doing their best on a variety of machines, enjoying the trail. We had our elevenses drinks there then on again; most stretches were superb and the Trail winds through such a variety of landscape. Through Newhaven tunnel, with the original Cromford and High Peak Ry. Co. plaques, dated 1825, above each entrance, and then round Gotham curve which turns through 80 degrees and in its day was the tightest of any British Rail line, only short wheelbased locomotives and rolling stock could use it. Across the stone embankment looking like a vast dry-stone wall, and on to Daisy Bank where we stopped for a picture of the millstone sign that denoted we had left the Peak District National Park. We saw several of these during the week on our journeys in and out of the Peak Boundaries.

Then it was Longcliffe and along below Harboro' Rocks. By now we felt in need of a rest and soon reached Rise End Visitor Centre at Middleton Top where we ate our belated lunch, after a chat to local cyclists about the area. A steep drop down Middleton Incline, and dropped down is right, you need good brakes for that one (708 yards long, with a continuous gradient of 1 in $8\frac{1}{4}$). Onto the road again and down through Cromford to Matlock Bath where the traffic was at dead slow, we soon found out why, it was taken over by motor cyclists for the day and the revving of their engines was unbelievable after the quiet of the trail. David looked for the quickest way to peace and quiet once more though we heard the noise for some time reverberating round the hills.

We found an excellent tea place near the river at Youlgreave, then enjoyed a walk along the valley from there, by the river to Bradford

and on to Alport. Well, Susan and I did, David realized at tea that he couldn't use his lock for the bicycles as he'd left his keys, which included the keys of the cottage, the other side of Stanton Lees on a gatepost when he changed into his shorts! Those who know the area will realize why, after deliberation, we sent him back alone for the keys, he having more energy, while we dallied along finding old bridges near Bradford and lifting our bicycles through the squeeze gates. We had just sat down on the seat at Alport by the bridge, having enjoyed the view of the river coming down Lathkill Dale, when up comes David having thankfully found the keys. We rewarded him with flapjacks and Mars bars, and a rest, before returning over the hills via Over Haddon and Taddington to Miller's Dale.



LITTON MILLS
Miller's Dale

That was a long day so we all felt tired by the time the evening meal was ready and decided that Monday would be an easy day. Out along the river road to Litton Mills, a steep climb up the track from there to the road near Litton Stack to drop down to Cressbrook Mill, then another steep climb up to Monsal Head for elevenses, with a superb view of the Monsal Head Viaduct crossing the valley below.

We were heading for Chatsworth House, the home of the Duke & Duchess of Devonshire. We arrived just as it was opening at 11.30am.; the leaflet advised allowing at least an hour for walking round the house, we finally came out 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours later having found it a most interesting and lovely place. Another late lunch then we took the short walk around the garden before having tea in the old stables. A look at Edensor village on our way out, this a previous Duke had had moved out of site of the house and rebuilt on the edge of the park, the only house not moved being a cottage tucked in a hollow by the entrance to the park.

It was warm as we climbed up through Great and Little Longstone to Monsal Head for our route back to Cressbrook Mill below. This time we walked along by the Wye to Litton Mills, this is a concession footpath as it is a wildfowl breeding area and there are 'no cycling' signs. We saw cycle marks along there, but it is such a beautiful spot it would be a shame to ride. We saw a moorhen on her nest and watched trout of many sizes in the river, there were only a few people walking so it was very peaceful.

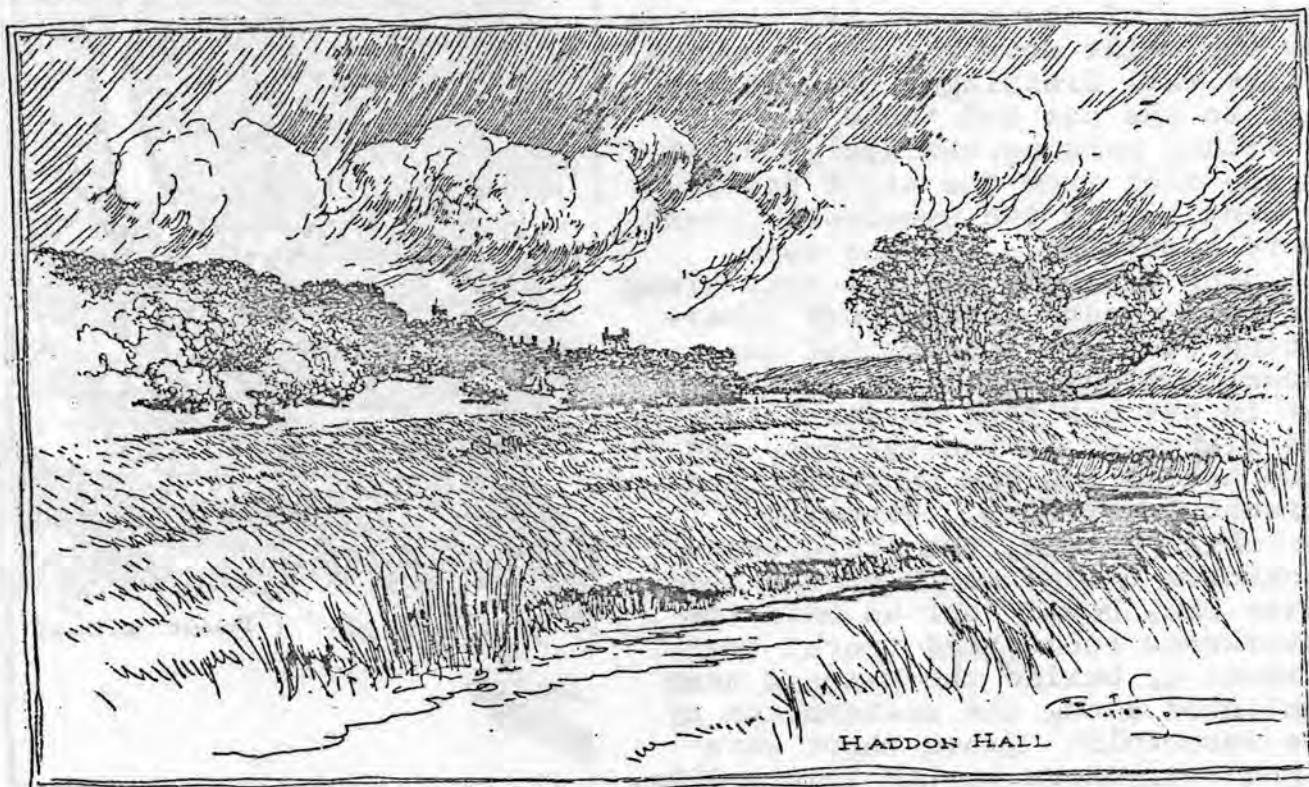
On Tuesday David and Susan went in the car to Tideswell for more supplies while I did a quick tidy up at the cottage, then we cycled up to Tideswell for elevenses in the cafe opposite the church. A look round the church, which has some excellent carving on the pew ends, then they collected some pork pies which were hot having just come out of the oven. David went to buy two then came back to check with Susan as they were rather large, they eventually decided to have one between them. A gentle climb to Peak Forest, down to Sparrowpit then a long climb to Windy Knoll (it was windy most of the way up). With Mam Tor rising above us on our left we dropped down to the Blue John Mine and had our lunch on the hillside nearby. A tour of the cavern, this took quite a while as being short staffed they were taking too many in each

group, which meant waiting at passing points. We were glad we had donned all our extra clothing and our trainers - cycling shoes would have been dangerous.

About an hour later we emerged into the daylight, and then it was down Winnats Pass, good brakes needed for this, to Castleton to find the cyclists' haunt that was recommended in 'Fellowship News', the Ramblers' Rest. Very good too, but we found they are not open for morning coffee only for afternoon tea and bed & breakfast. The size of the teapot for three would satisfy most cyclists, three cups each and still more in the pot.

Along the Hope Valley to Hathersage as David wanted to see Little John's Grave in the churchyard there. Grindleford next, then up to the plague village of Eyam to find the Riley Graves (N.T.) and then we wandered through Eyam reading the signs on the walls of the houses telling who had lived and died there at the time of the plague. Through Foolow to Tideswell and back to the cottage passing the entrance to Ravenstor Youth Hostel on the way. As it was late we thought we deserved a treat, so we had a wash and change and then sallied over the road for an evening meal at the Anglers' Rest, very good. We wrote our cards and posted them on the way back, little realizing that they would take over a week (9 days) to reach their destinations; we would have taken first class stamps but I don't think it would have made any difference as they were caught up in the election bumf.

Wednesday morning it was along to Litton Mills and a walk by the river again, to find the moorhen chicks had hatched, up to Monsal Head and then on to Baslow for elevenses. We found the tiny toll or guard house built into the bridge and had coffee in the very nice Barn House opposite. We also had a look at the church and its clock, one face of which has VICTORIA 1897 around it instead of the usual numerals. Then it was down through Chatsworth Park to Rowsley and then back up the



main road to Haddon Hall, the Medieval Manor House just below Bakewell. Owing to the fact that it was uninhabited for over 100 years when other great houses were being added to and altered, Haddon Hall is almost as it was when first built between the 12th and 17th Centuries and well worth a visit. We had our lunch before seeing the Hall to make sure we weren't late with it again.

Along to Bakewell before the banks closed then tea at the bakery in

Hebden Court, a collection of shops around a courtyard. Other people having tea were interested to see our jerseys, one couple were from Saltdean! A walk up the hill to see the Old House Museum and Bakewell Church, then along the narrow passages to find the old packhorse bridge. On to Ashford-in-the-Water to see the Sheepwash Bridge, a lovely spot, then it was back to Monsal Head and our walk back by the river for the last time.

On Thursday, Ascension Day, we were lucky enough to get into Tissington Church for the special service with a sermon by the Bishop of Repton. This was followed by the well blessings, there are six wells dressed at Tissington and all were beautifully decorated. We had used the car on this day so as to fit it all in, so after the service it was changing clothes and cycles off the roof-rack to ride the Tissington Trail to reach Ilam, a walk up Dove Dale to Lovers' Leap and the Twelve Apostles then on, through peaceful picturesque scenery, across the hills on the gated road via Throwley Hall to drop down to Waterhouses. Here we joined the Manifold Track to ride the 5 or so miles of tarmac track to Wetton Mill for tea. Afterwards we climbed up with superb views of the valley below and of the entrance to Thor's Cave above. The steep drop down from Alstonefield was interesting especially as we took the white road (an old packhorse road), not too bad if taken slowly, to come out by the extremely narrow Viator's Bridge at Milldale. Then it was up to join the Tissington Trail once more back to Tissington. A last look round the village now that most of the crowds had gone, we saw the slide show about the making of the well dressings, then it was back to the car and 'home'.

Friday morning, the cycles still on the roof from the night before, we went to see the Speedwell Cavern above Castleton. All our warm clothing on again for the trip along the underground canal, very interesting (but not recommended for claustrophobics, Ed.) We left the car in the car park at Castleton, had elevenses in the village, and then headed for the Ladybower and Derwent Reservoirs. Reaching Yorkshire Bridge, the picturesque packhorse bridge south of the Ladybower Dam, David took us onto the waterworks road (read track) that climbed up beside the Dam and then continued along the western arm of the reservoir. Since there were signs everywhere saying things like, no entry, no through road, and no vehicles beyond this point, we weren't too sure of the advisability of this, and neither was David, however our fears were put to rest when a digger driver, having his lunch by the dam, told us the signs were only to keep out motorists and we were perfectly welcome to continue. It was well worth it, with beautiful views of the reservoir with thickly wooded slopes on all sides, reminding David & Susan of the Lochs in Scotland. We ate our

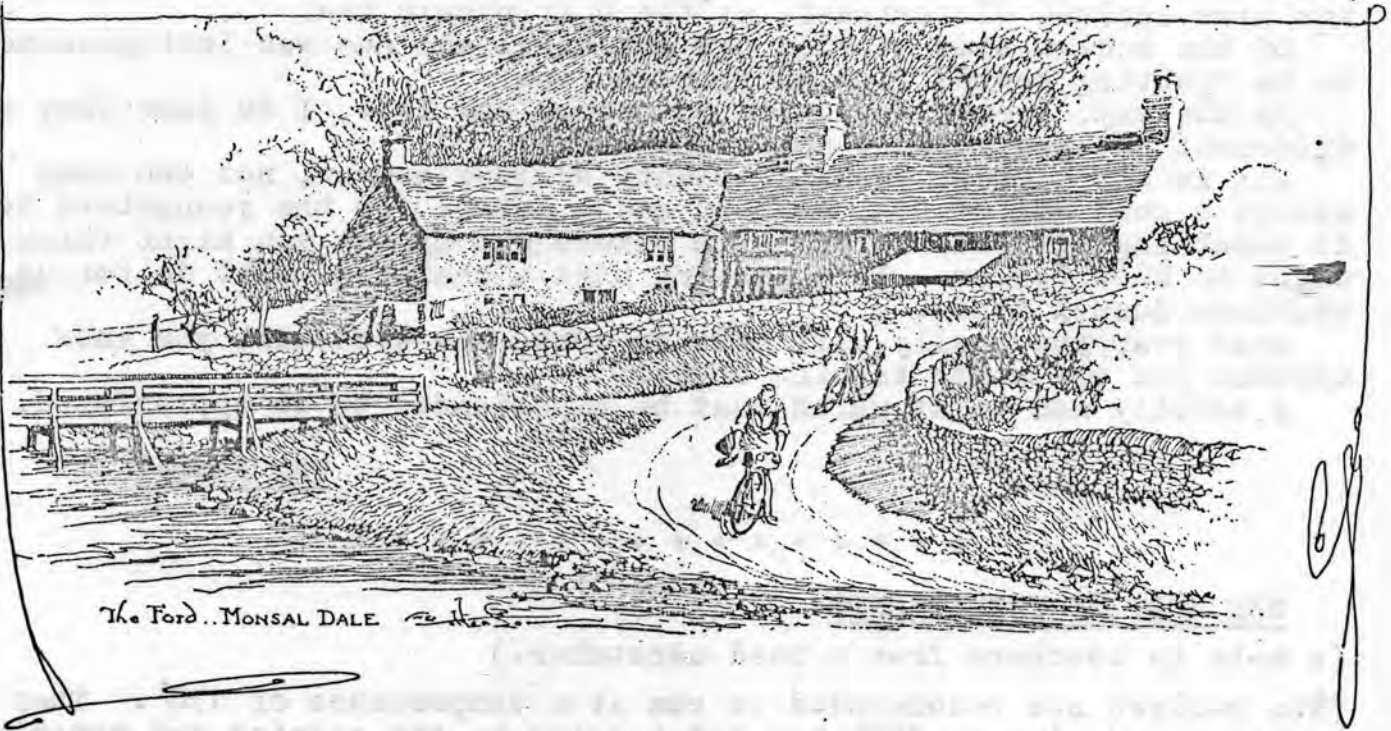


lunch on a grassy bank looking down the reservoir and watching the fishermen casting from the bank.

Reaching the end of the track we joined the A57, that runs along the north of the western arm, to reach the minor road that runs up the northern arm to Fairholmes and the Derwent Dam and Reservoir, and on past the Howden Dam and Reservoir to King's Tree. At this point the tarmac road ends but a sandy track bridleway continues round the top of the Howden Reservoir and back down the eastern side to cross under the massive wall of Derwent Dam to Fairholmes. We took the bridleway, and crossed the old packhorse bridge at the northern end (this originally stood at the village of Derwent, flooded when the reservoir was built) to enjoy the peace and quiet and the views from the other side of the reservoirs, getting back to Fairholmes to have afternoonses at the snack bar there and a look at the visitor centre. With all the sandy tracks it was a good thing that it was our last day as the blocks and chains were getting solid.

We arrived back in Castleton in time to change and have fish and chips just as the Garland Ceremony was starting. This is always held on the 29th May, Oak Apple Day, and is said to commemorate Charles II's escape after the Battle of Worcester. We followed the procession of the Garland King and Queen, both on horseback, with twenty-eight girls in white dresses decorated with fresh flowers, all around the village for about 2½ hours. The procession stooped before each pub for the girls to perform the Garland Dance, but also parted down the middle at strategic points - they should have had someone trotting behind with a shovel and a large bucket! The large hooped garland that completely covered the King down to his waist was hoisted up to the church tower at one point, the centre or queen posy being placed on the War Memorial later, and then the girls performed 6 very intricate dances around the Maypole.

It was a marvellous week, the only times it rained were when we used the car - on the way up, Thursday morning, a little bit Friday evening, and on the way home on Saturday, though we managed to dodge the showers as we looked round the National Tramway Museum at Crich that day. There is so much more I would like to see in the area, and only hope that I will have the opportunity to go back again.



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ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN

With all the regular night hawks missing, the Super Randonneurs being otherwise engaged, it was left to a dozen lesser mortals to brave the all night ride into Kent.

Led by Ken "I'll know it when I hit it" Stevens the group left Hailsham at 21.00 hours bound for a first brew up on the seafront at Hythe. After a tour through very dark and poorly signposted lanes, and a delay while Joe's lights were overhauled, our first night-stop turned out to be quite a long way from Hythe, Tenterden to be exact. Perhaps Ken should have put his glasses on when looking for the Pole Star. The venue was a childrens' play area which was floodlit to dissuade vandals and so we descended on it and proceeded to light stove, brew tea and consume our midnight feast.

At Hamstreet Debbie left us as she wanted to get back to Boship in time to watch a 25 that morning.

The standard of lighting was excellent and the drunken motorists on their bleary eyed way home must have thought they were seeing a UFO.

Soon after 4.00am with the sky already quite light we brewed up once more, had a little shut-eye and then pushed on to Breakfast. Three miles out of Charing on the main Canterbury road Joe slipped off the back never to be seen again. All through breakfast at the Happy Eater we looked in vain for Joe. Even after Robert had polished off a second breakfast he still hadn't turned up.

By now it was warming up and bit by bit we parted with our night gear until by Headcorn it was shorts again. At Bedgebury it was time for lunch and a delightful kip in the sunshine before continuing on our way through the woods and the orchids in the Pinetum. At Ticehurst more tea - where did they put it all? I here you ask - and it was here that Jon's throat infection, that he had tried to placate with a diet of anti-biotics got the better of him. He left us to go home.

From Heathfield the pace became hotter as it became clear that the 16.00 deadline for tea was in danger. The President hung on grimly as the group sped on. That grand 'Fella' Iris had to be fed with liquorice allsorts to raise enough steam to get over Glynde Hill and the nine arrived victoriously at the D.A. picnic tea.

Of the twelve that started two absconded and one was lost presumed to be "getting there" with BR from Ashford.

By the way, I must apologise to Debbie and Iris, I do know they are different but you mustn't spoil the story!

All in all a great weekend, plenty of good humour, not too many miles, a good mix of D.A. members and a chance for the youngsters to do something different along with others who by now you might think ought to know better. It's amazing what a challenge will do for us stubborn Sussex types.

Next year you really will have to come, how else will you know whether you are worth talking about?

A totally mad night which must be experienced to be appreciated.

The Farmer

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THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT?

(a note to teachers from a head caretaker.)

"The boilers are recommended to run at a temperature of 170°. They have been running at 170°, but today owing to the moaning and groaning they have been set at 200°, well above the advised setting. If anyone hears any rumblings, or sees steam appearing from the boiler house, run like the clappers."

A LETTER FROM INDIA

We print here the second of Judith Tucker's letters about her year in India.

Dip. Tse Chok Ling Monastery,
Camel Track Road,
McLeod Gary,
Dharamsala,
H.P. India.
12.9.86

Dear All,

The monsoon is over. We had had very heavy rain, sometimes for an hour or two either at 1.30pm or at 6.00pm. But that has stopped. There is cloud above here and I suppose it's cooler, though it's still not 'cardigan weather' and the morning sun is very hot. The monks tell me this month's weather is one of the best. By October the snow monkeys should have arrived and with them the winter begins. At present the Himalayan bears are around. They are not the largest but are the most vicious and unpredictable. The local people are very frightened of them. They (the bears) like sweet corn and it's ripe now, so they come near the built up areas. Unlike the leopards who take and eat small dogs but don't seem to frighten the human beings at all!

I wonder whether I truly described the beauty of this place in my last letter. It really is indescribable. The steep slopes, forested and the towering Himalayas above. I just love walking in a leisurely way, a meditative way. So I don't mind that it's quite a distance to the Tibetan library or the Tibetan hospital or the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV). I have been to one of these three places on most days - helping dress the scabies, impetigo etc. at TCV; reading in the library or doing the ward rounds with the Australian doctors at the hospital.

The children of TCV (an S.O.S. village) are really lovely - so friendly. I've visited them in their 'homes' where they sleep 2 or more to a bed with one 'home mother' to 46 children, and sometimes a 'home father' who goes out to work during the day. One day I went when they had a girls v. staff football match. I'm not keen on football, so wasn't it exasperating to enjoy it - but it was hilarious! Some 'home mothers' were wearing their long traditional dresses and whenever anyone succeeded in kicking the ball (and often when they didn't) instead of clapping the audience roared with laughter. At one stage one woman scored a goal with her shoe while the ball stayed where it was!

Sept. 2nd. was 'Democracy Day' and after a long speech explaining that Tibet should have democracy (in Tibetan, of course) there were the most spectacular dances and costumes, etc. from different areas of Tibet. Every participant was presented with a white scarf (the traditional thing to do).

I thought one young monk (12) did not look well at all so, with Lama Thupter's permission, took him to the hospital. He had gardias and hookworm, severe chronic anaemia and may have T.B. glands. So he's having treatment for the first 3 and we are to return at the beginning of Oct. to investigate the T.B. if his ESR is still raised.

At the Library I have been studying every word uttered by the U.N. on the subject of Tibet (and its treatment by China, Ed.) and discovering why nothing was done. For ignorant people, like me(!) - it was because although India protested to the Chinese in 1950, the Chinese then agreed to a 17 point treaty/agreement with the Dalai Lama (who believed Gandhi was right to always try to work towards agreement without force) which said that Tibet is part of China but that the Dalai Lama could continue to rule, that the Buddhist religion, customs

etc. would not be interfered with, and that China would only deal with foreign policy (suzerainty). China broke this agreement continually over the next 9 years until 1959 when people were being killed (one million were killed), monasteries destroyed, and children taken for 'education' to China. Then the Dalai Lama fled with thousands of Tibetans to India. At this time the west had refused to allow a communist representative for China on the U.N. and Tibet didn't belong to the U.N., also it was considered an internal Chinese matter and so under Article 2, para. 7 the U.N. could do nothing. Eisenhower was due to meet Krushchev to discuss disarmament and 'lessen the Cold War' ... so Tibet lost out. For light relief I've been reading H. Hanner's '7 Years in Tibet', very good book. With the Dalai Lama's book 'My Hand and My People' I'm beginning to get a very good idea of Tibet and Life there. I've also seen 2 'World About Us' films on Tibet and 'The Ocean of Wisdom' (a Buddhist film about the Dalai Lama). He's in the USSR at the moment but when he returns I'm looking forward to meeting him.

I've visited the nunnery and watched Buddhist 'debates' both there and at the dialectic school (mainly monks). The person being examined sits cross legged on the floor and answers in a cool correct logical way while the 'examiner' stands over him or her, swaying from one foot to the other, waving his arms about, slapping one hand down on the other and producing incorrect arguments or difficult questions.

The English 'lessons' continue with the little ones learning fast and being fun to teach. Some of the older ones don't want to grade from words to sentences - but considering their lack of education in any but the Buddhist sense, it's not surprising. I divide them into two classes sometimes as there is such a huge difference in their level of understanding. I can leave the little ones to hear each other read, but I can't leave the older ones at all so it's hardly fair on the little ones.

Both at TCV and at a co-operative in McLeod Gary the Tibetan people make the most lovely rugs and carpets in complicated and beautiful designs, weave their colourful aprons with embroidery threads and make equally colourful bags and coats. Unlike Indian women, Tibetan women seem to be confident and more 'equal' to their husbands/men generally. Indian men seem to dominate their women and the women look so miserable compared to the cheerful Tibetans. As I will be staying with Indian families when I travel south I hope to get to know them better.

18.9.86

One of the things I have been slow to understand is the Tibetans' lack of accuracy. If they said 'perhaps' or 'maybe' in front of every factual statement it would be easy. But their happy go lucky attitude means that they cheerfully produce 'facts' without even meaning them! It applies to times of events, statistical figures and ages. I am starting to understand their system with ages at last. Their first birthday is the day they are born and they add a year on that day every year (if they know the date, which most don't) or, more usually, on their New Year (first full moon in February). So the New Year is everyone's birthday, and frequently a child of 3 months for example, is said to be 2. It explains the fact that children look so much younger than the age I have been told. So these little monks are 8 years old!

When Thupter says something will start at 7.00am he means probably 9.00am! When I went to the Performing Arts to find out when their dress rehearsal would be (they are on a European Tour now) I was told to come on Monday morning. I did, to find it had happened on Sunday evening! One gets used to it.

The 'season' is said to have started - for tourists. There are a few 'tourists' who are here for as long as possible, studying -

buddhism; lessons from 9 - 10 am & 11 - 12 (free) and Tibetan language lessons 2 - 3 & 4 - 5 pm (small charge) and reading in the library in between. But there are many real tourists spending a couple of days in each place. Many of these arrive here in McLeod Gary and decide to stay awhile. This place has that effect on people. The other day as we waited outside the Temple for the Dalai Lama to come out we were American, Israeli, Italian, German and English. I had to sign a press release as the American is a professional photographer and took photos of our English lessons too. A Dutch girl has been staying in the monastery but has moved on - in her place are a Canadian couple. Also there are a German couple, and two Tibetans here for the Youth Congress A.G.M. A Swiss laboratory technician sent here by Swiss Aid is considering setting up another small lab. to test sputum for T.B. at the TCV. So there are masses of people to meet.

The retreat which the older monks have been having finished with 5 days of Fine Puja - a most spectacular event when 32 dieties names are repeated 10,000 times each, as well as many other chants, while offerings are burnt - food of every sort, good protein foods they never eat - millet, dried peas, brown rice, etc. The chant sounded like "OM AH VEGETABLE VCO WHO". Of course it wasn't vegetable!

In the evenings guests (at present one German couple), Thupter and I have 'dinner' at approx. 6.00pm. We have to remember when aggressive mosquitoes alight on us not to swipe at them! We are in a buddhist monastery and these mosquitoes could be a reincarnation of our grandmothers!! (The boys, before the Fine Puja, had to take the wood apart to look for wood lice etc.) When we sit in the evening, usually indoors, we have to keep doors and windows closed to keep out "the grandmothers". We have been known to decide (when Thupter is not present) that these "grandmothers" may prefer to be precipitated towards their next life and we explain to them as we do it that we think they'd prefer to be something else! When a colourful moth flutters in we can be heard to say "now there is a beautiful grandmother". With opposite remarks when large spiders dominate the loo! (they are huge!). The loos are a similar shape to ours but are let into the floor, they have an s bend but no cistern. There is a tap at squat level both for washing (there is no loo paper) and, with a small jug, so that one can manually 'flush' it.

29.9.86

I am sending a list of all the TCV children in home 13 to Beth and it would be lovely if anyone who feels they could write regularly (not necessarily frequently) to one of these children could tick the name off. I won't ask Beth to photocopy it as some children would get lots of postcards and some none. So please contact Beth (details from the Editor if anyone is interested) if you would like to choose a name - and remember the ages are approx. and over estimated. If anyone would like to send "their child" a present, a drawing book of good quality paper seems to be the most treasured thing. They have almost nothing of their own. Picture postcards are very popular.

3.10.86

I had a lovely day taking 3 children out from Home 13 on sunday. They were so pleased with such small things. We talked to the calf here at Tse Chok Ling for ages. I don't think they had ever been that close to a calf before. As this calf is an orphan it will stand still to have its head, or under its ears scratched for an indefinite length of time. It was at this stage that I discovered that the children would love to drink milk! They have no milk at TCV except in tea. We played hide and seek on the way back to TCV.

Yesterday was the day at last when armed with my passport and camera I went to the Dalai Lama's home for a "personal audience". It did not look like rain when I left and there had been no rain for 2 days, so I didn't even consider taking a waterproof. The skies opened

in a downpour that was more like the monsoon again & I arrived dripping from head to toe! The usual security check by the Indians and I was sitting in the waiting room (the 2nd of October was Gandhi's birthday when Rajiv Gandhi was shot at).

I was shown into the room, where I presented the Dalai Lama with the white scarf and "Tashi Dell - lay" (= hello), but he came and shook my hand. We then talked about his article on "The Human Approach to World Peace" - about education for lessening aggression and nationalism (world-wide), about more contact between east and west, about everyone taking individual responsibility for their countries actions. He approved the young's criticism of him - a challenge he called it to thinking for themselves. We agreed sadly about the war toys and their effect on the child who plays with them. I told him about the Eirene All Faiths Chapel at Molesworth; he roared with laughter at the idea of asking twice a day, everyday, to come into the chapel for meditation. He wanted to know whether there were Pershing weapons based there. He presented me with a beautiful white scarf and then gave me a book (autographed) and autographed my copy of his article. Afterwards we came out of the room onto the terrace where the General Secretary took a photo of us together. Altogether I was so impressed with his ordinary humanness - not a bit like I would expect a world religious leader to be. All the way back the Tibetans and monks looked at my autographed book and touched their foreheads with it. I forgot to say that the Dalai Lama gave me a hug and was very anxious about my wet clothes and my health!

till next time,
Judith.

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Le Tour de Fox.

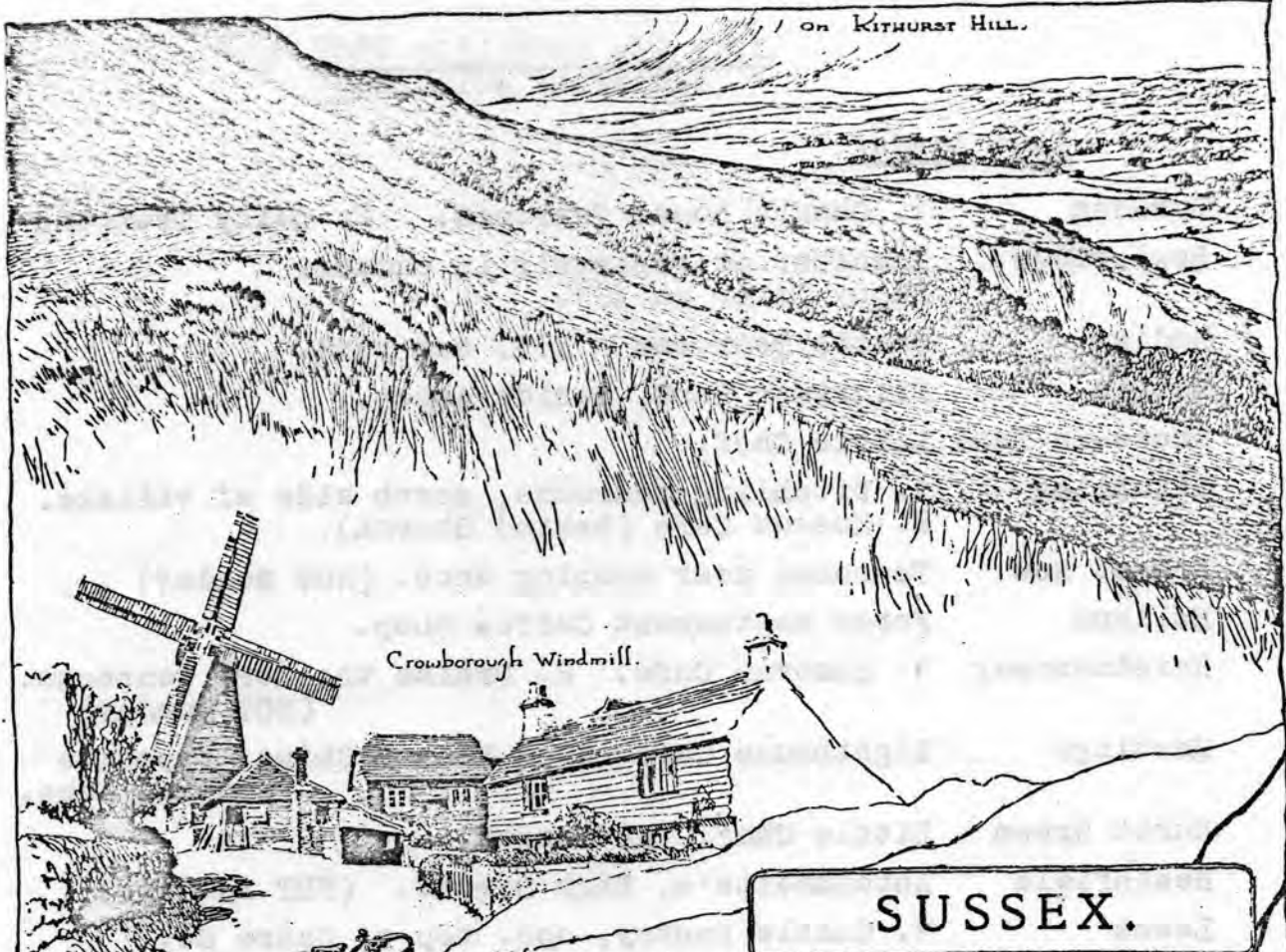
I'd watched the T.V. Tour that night,
And head ablaze with continental glamour
Cycled down a dreary road
Through spoiled country fields fighting factories,
Dead offices, car parks, depot tips and excavations,
Elation giving place to desolation.

Then twenty feet away a revelation.
A fox with streaming tail sloped over tarmac
And up the bank to hedge and cover,
Lighting up the night like no other,
Sweeping aside confused and gloomy speculation.

Fox oh fox, you lifted my heart,
Sped my feet again,
I chased home smoothly
"Comme un coureur dans le tour"
Thought of you often for days still pleased,
Told my friends of a vision that was real.

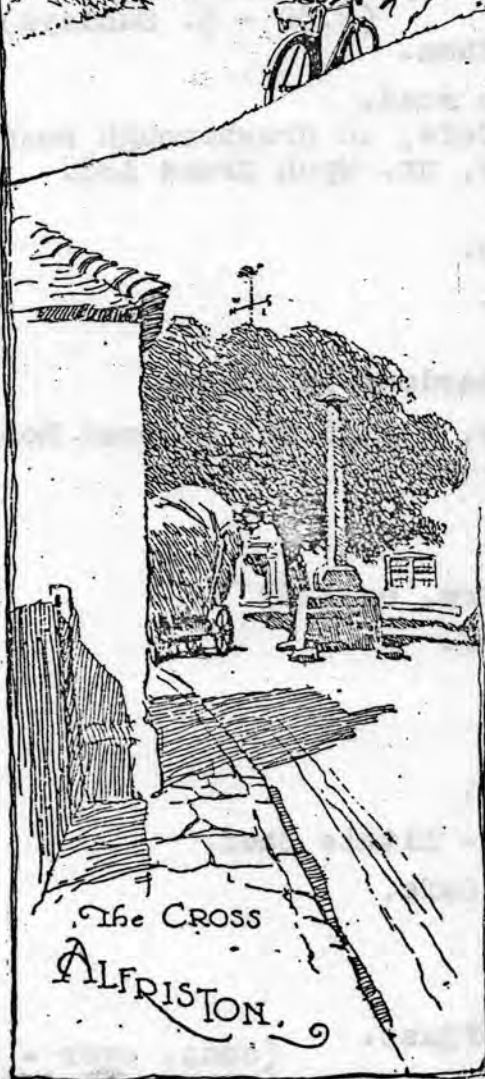
Jeff Cloves.

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Crowborough Windmill.

SUSSEX.



The Cross
ALFRISTON.



The old Oast House
POUNSFLEY
Sussex-Kent border.

D.A. TEA ROOM LIST 1987
(additions welcomed)

East Sussex

- Burwash 1. Chaunt House Tearooms. 2. Daisy Tearooms
- Bowlbridge SnackBar at reservoir in summer.
Happy Eater on A21.
- Bodiam Castle Tearooms N.T. car park.
- Battle Pilgrims' Rest, beside Abbey.
- Cross-in-Hand Little Chef.
- Ditchling 1. Ditchling tearooms, north side of village.
2. Museum Cafe (behind Church).
- Forest Row Tearooms near camping shop. (NOT Sunday)
- Halland Forge Restaurant Coffee Shop.
- Herstmonceux 1. Samovar Cafe. 2. Praise the Lord tearooms.
(NOT Sunday)
- Hastings Lighthouse Cafe. Good Fish & Chips, opposite
boating lake.
- Hurst Green Little Chef. A21 north.
- Heathfield Antoinette's, High Street. (NOT Sundays)
- Lewes 1. Castle Pantry, opp. top of Keere St.
(2.30 - 5. Sundays)
2. Old Post House, Offham.
- Nutley 1. Little Chef on main road.
2. Nutlin Farmshop & Cafe, on Crowborough road.
3. Ashdown Farm Centre, nr. Wych Cross A22.
- Pevensey Bay 1. Castle Bakery.
2. Several other cafes.
- Rye Several open everyday.
- Sheffield Park 1. Railway
2. NT Sheffield Park Gardens in summer.
- Ticehurst Plantation Tea Company, 1 High St. (closed Monday)

West Sussex

- Angmering Roundstone Garden Centre, on A259
- Cowfold Tearooms at cross-roads.
- Henfield Tearooms in High st.
- Fellbridge Happy Eater.
- Houghton Bridge Tearooms in summer.
- Five Oaks Nth. of Billingshurst - Little Chef.
- Horsham Hillies Garden Centre Cafe.
- Hickstead Little Chef.
- Fontwell Little Chef.
- Pulborough 1. Copper Kettle. A283 East. (cont. over -)

Pulborough 2. Garden Centre, A283 West.
 (cont.) 3. Toat Cafe, about 2 miles N. on A29
 Storrington Pond Cafe, just N. on A283
 Whiteways Lodge, Arundel Tea bar in Summer.

Surrey

Hookwood Little Chef.
 Cranleigh Tea Rooms, in high st.
 Farnham Bourne Mill.

Kent

Cranbrook Bakery, NOT Sunday. Tea Rooms in summer.
 Headcorn Aerodrome Cafe.
 Ide Hill Tea & Coffee House 10 - 5 Open Sundays
 (summer only?)
 Sissinghurst Castle NT Tearooms.

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EVERYDAY SUSSEX No. 3

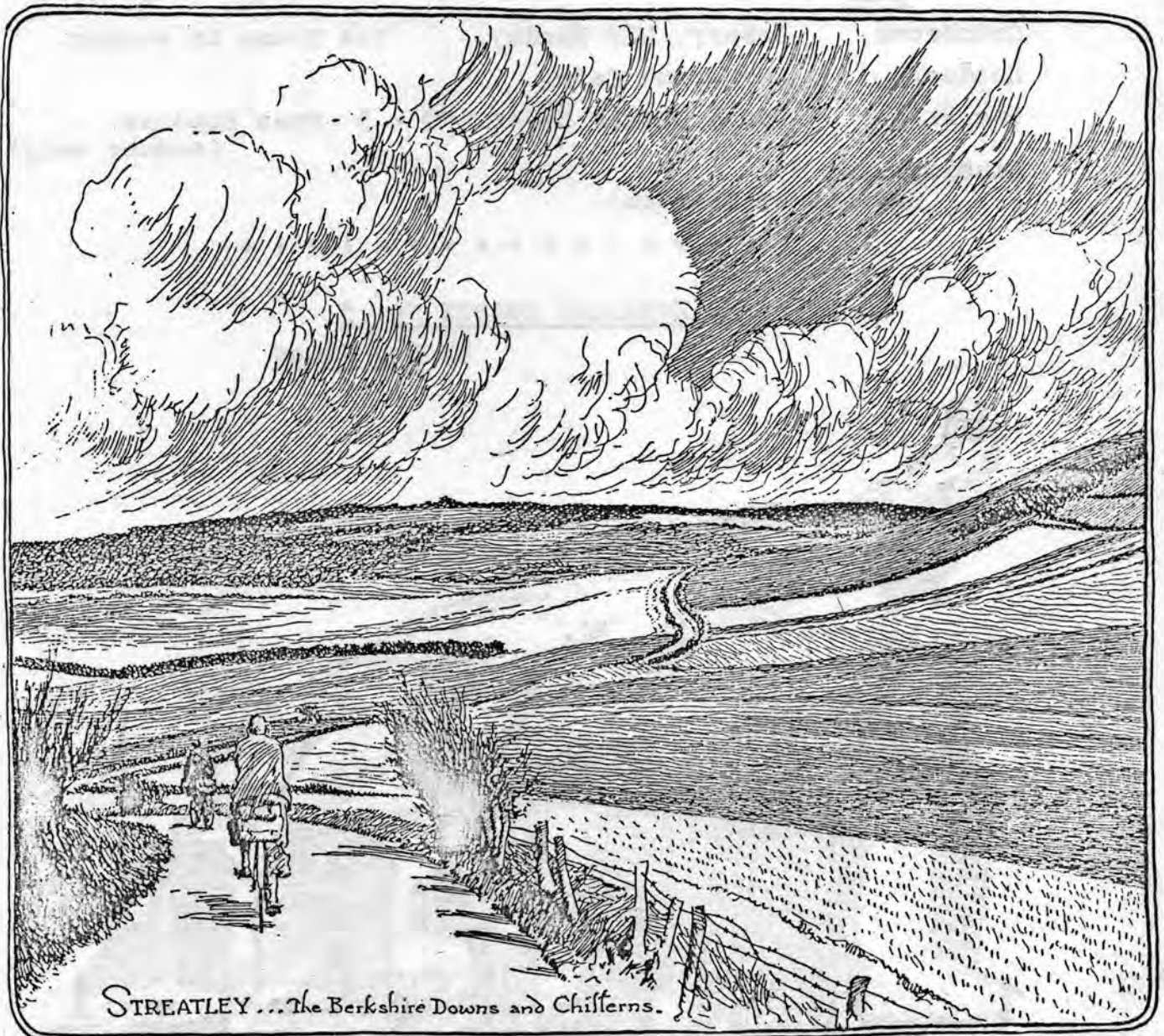
by Roy James



NET STORES.
HASTINGS.

by Ann Rix

A good journey on the train, 8.02 from Seaford to Reading, via Lewes and Gatwick. David & Russell gave Ann a shock by appearing at 7.00am in time for early tea; as it was such a lovely morning they decided to ride from Hailsham instead of using the car as planned. With Michael having throat trouble and unable to go this left six to board the train, Colin getting on at Newhaven making us seven. The half hour wait at Gatport Airwick was taken up with wandering round the Complex. Arrived at Reading 10.50am., so were soon out along the road to Goring and Streatley to have lunch by the river and watch the boats going through the lock.



STREATLEY ... The Berkshire Downs and Chilterns.

Leaving there Jon says turn right, David says NO, straight on! Well he said it, up a very steep hill, then what sounded like three loud shots in succession - yes, you've guessed it, three spokes gone in the back wheel, a massive re-building job. Fortunately he has a helico-matic hub so could whip the block off easily. In with the new spokes, tunes them up. Ann says that looks alright. David says just a bit more, then ping! Another goes! In with another and we're on our way again (he bought several spokes in Wantage next day but did not need them).

It was very hot as we journeyed along through rolling countryside to West Ilsley where soon we found a good bridleway to take us up to the Ridgeway. This led us along to the hostel, passing the monument to Baron Wantage.



THE ANCIENT RIDGEWAY

The Youth Hostel, well, to start with it was only partly built - I know what our electricians and plumbers would think of it, not to mention the carpenters who would have a fit. Nothing fitted well, we were told the Official Opening was not till the following Friday(!), but being the first night open those involved with the project arrived for a bubbly drink which some of us were given as well, though we weren't

to sure about anything to celebrate, especially as we were having our meal while they looked around. Mind you the hostel is in a superb spot on the Ridgeway overlooking Wantage. Five old barns have been brought to the site, an old chalk quarry, and re-erected, plus a lot of new wood which must have cost a bomb. It is being built by a Trust as the Ridgeway Centre, with the Y.H.A. allowed to use it.

We were put in the Superior cabins downstairs as the standard dormitories were still being built, with ship type dorms. for school parties (Jon has film of these as we explored the upper reaches that evening to see how far they had got)! No separation of the sexes! So Ann, Colin and Adam shared a cabin, with David, Russell, Jon and Robert in another. Only two double gas rings were in operation in the members' kitchen (two were under the bench waiting to be fitted!). We were informed that the large plastic boxes under the bench were for us to put our food in for the night, having inspected same we did nothing of the sort - thick with dust from the building work, not very hygienic. Several families were there that night so it was queueing for the kitchen, saucepans were in short supply, also too small for the gas rings! Woke next morning suffering from the toxic fumes from the treated wood, the bunks were not long enough so some had heads bashed on the shelf misguidedly placed behind the pillow. (I'm told they were also woken by the sound of the workmen coming to fit the showers - at seven o'clock in the morning! Ed.) Duty, guess what? Moving boards and rubbish from one room to another that was already deep in off cuts.

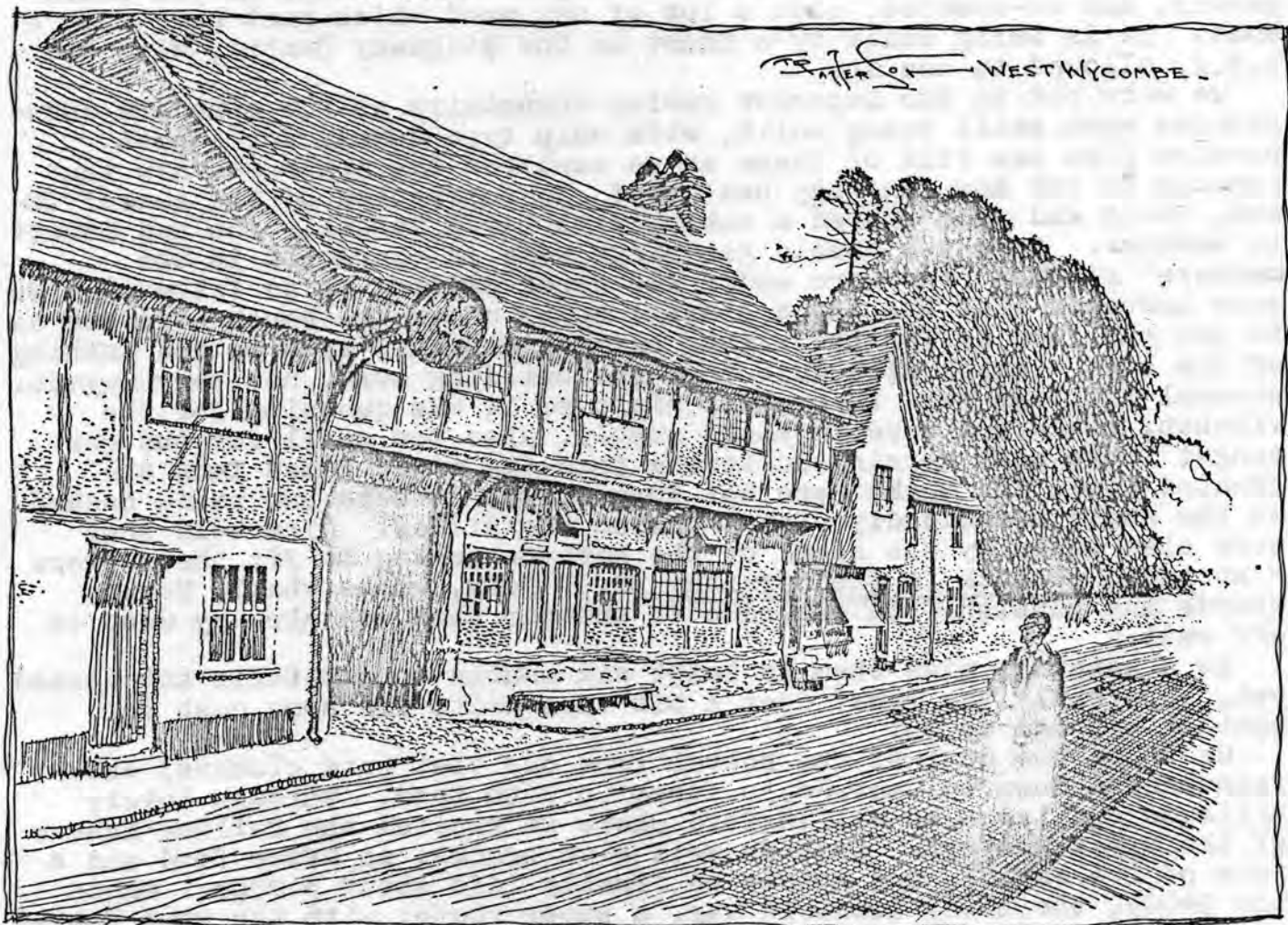
So a warning, give them at least six months to get their act sorted out, apparently the Trust does a bit then waits for more cash for another bit and so on.

We shook the dust of the hostel from our feet (and clothes) and freewheeled down to Wantage to stock up with food. Through lovely villages and lanes to Wallingford where we visited the Railway Museum of the Great Western. Cafe as well with snacks, so after food and a tour of the engines and models we finally left about 3.00pm. On to the B4009, the Lower Icknield Way, a super route; with the wind behind us we sailed along with not much traffic and soon covered the miles to Ivinghoe. A slight divergence by three ended with them reaching the hostel first while the rest wondered where they had got to.

After 56 miles that day we enjoyed Ivinghoe Hostel - showers and a decent place to sleep. Ann and another hosteller went to church on Easter Sunday, then after breakfast and duty jobs we found Ivinghoe Beacon, left the bicycles at the bottom and climbed up to enjoy the superb views of the surrounding countryside, though very breezy. David, Russell, Robert and Adam disappeared into the hawthorn thicket at the bottom to help the owner of a radio controlled glider to find

his machine; they finally emerged with bits of hawthorn attached and looking rather the worse for wear. Ann, Colin and Jon listened at the edge to the noises coming from the thicket, and thicket was definitely the word for it. Then photos of the lads on the monument on Pitstone Common before dropping down the steep track to Aldbury. Dodged in a cafe there, just as a shower came, with some other cyclists, one of whom had lived at Seaford, and Peacehaven! A cold wind kept the speed down on the way to Bradenham.

We had met some of the Northampton D.A. at Ivinghoe, and at Bradenham it was just us and the Nottingham D.A. in the old school house. Ann was the only female! So when we told the warden of the time we had had at the Ridgeway he said, "Oh, would you mind sharing again? That would solve my problem"! So it was the same three again plus Robert this time. Bradenham has 18 beds, with dorms. of 4, 6 and 8, the four being used as a family room if needed as it is at the back of the hostel with two doors, one from inside and one from outside, so the warden just locked the inside one. Just got settled in when Ann, hearing the Church bell just before 6.00pm., said she'd make her bed later and shot over the road for Evening Communion. The lads played football on the green till dark, wearing David out and so he dozed for a while as it was quite in the hostel with Notts. D.A. having gone down the road to the pub.



Monday was cool to start with as we rode through the old village of West Wycombe. We went up to the Cave hoping it would be open but alas, even after climbing the hill to see the monument at the top it was still closed, and we were told it would not open till 11.00am. On we went over the Ridgeway, through lovely quiet lanes to have a pub lunch for a change. Then a dash to Reading hoping for the earlier train but ended up with the one we had intended to catch, the 3.40 to arrive at Seaford by 6.17pm. David and Russell having still 12 miles to ride.

All in all a very good weekend, with the seven wondering how the other three were getting on in the Brecon Beacons on their mountain bikes.

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Since food would appear to be a subject dear to every cyclist's heart we include the following - extracted from 'Mr. Punch's Music Hall Songs', Ed.

Bacon and Eggs

Now blest be the Briton, his beef and his beer,
And the strong waters that keep him in cheer,
But blest beyond cattle and blest beyond kegs
Is the brave British breakfast of Bacon and Eggs -

Bacon and eggs,
Bacon and eggs;
Sing bacon,
Red bacon,
Red bacon and eggs!

Thus armed and thus engined, well-shaven and gay,
We leap to our labours and conquer the day,
While paltry pale foreigners, meagre as moles,
Must crawl through the morning on coffee and rolls -

Coffee and rolls,
Barbarous rolls;
Sing coffee,
Black coffee,
Vile coffee and rolls! . .

What wonder the Frenchman, blown out with new bread,
Gesticulates oft and is light in the head!
Our perfect control of our arms and our legs
We owe to the ballast of bacon and eggs -

Bacon and eggs,
Unemotional eggs;
Sing bacon,
Fat bacon,
Brave bacon and eggs!

O Breakfast! O Breakfast! The meal of my heart!
Bring porridge, bring sausage, bring fish for a start,
Bring kidneys and mushrooms and partridges' legs,
But let the foundation be bacon and eggs -

Bacon and eggs,
Bacon and eggs;
Bring bacon,
Crisp bacon,
And let there be eggs!

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