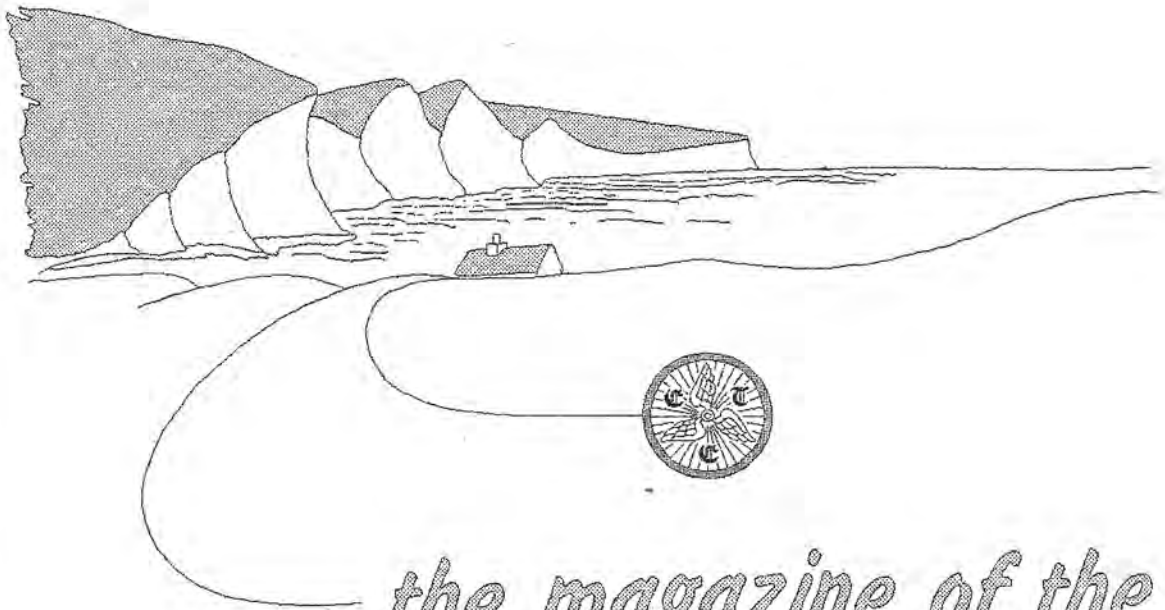


The



Coaster



the magazine of the

EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

No. 24 Summer 1993

25p

*East Sussex District Association
Cyclists' Touring Club*

PRESIDENT MR. DENNIS JAKEMAN

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"THE COASTER"

Issue No. 24, Summer 1993

From the Editor's Desk.

Another nice warm summer, and time for another magazine. Unfortunately, despite the favourable comments made about our mag., articles and other contributions seem to be rather few and far between. We may once again be forced into the situation of producing only one issue for a year. I hope that this summer will prove me wrong and I will be flooded with contributions to keep us going for a couple of issues. We can but hope.

Well what have we this time - a couple of new poems from Harold, an article about the very successful 'invasion' of Normandy by the Seaford & Newhaven Section from my mum, an article and some pictures from Roy James, Alsace and the Semaine Federale with Ken & Iris Stevens, as well as a crossword and some other bits and pieces.

Cycling seems once again to be gaining popularity as a leisure pursuit, thanks in many ways to the popularity of the mountain bike, and councils for once are keen to jump on the band wagon. We have recently seen the preparation of a draft Recreational Cycling Strategy in East Sussex, and there is now the suggestion of a Utility Cycling Strategy to compliment this. If these are implemented, and don't just end up on a shelf to gather dust, we may find ourselves with a network of cycle ways around the county that will help us to avoid the big main roads and get us relatively easily into the quiet Sussex lanes we all love. A pipe dream, well maybe, but we are finding that we are being consulted and our opinions being listened to more than in previous years.

David.



THE CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

The Cyclists' Touring Club (originally known as the Bicycle Touring Club, the present title being adopted in 1883) was founded at Harrogate in Yorkshire on August 5th 1878 by Stanley Cotterell. It is Britain's national cyclists' association, devoted to the encouragement of cycling for recreation and as a means of transport, and to the protection of cyclists' interests.

The CTC was the first Touring Club to be formed in the world. Membership details may be obtained from:-

C.T.C. National Headquarters,
Cotterell House, 69 Meadrow,
Godalming, Surrey, GU7 3HS

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THE COASTER is published by the East Sussex District Association of the CTC. The opinions and comments expressed herein are the opinions and comments of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the East Sussex D.A. or its Sections. Contributions on any matters relating, even vaguely, to cycling are always welcome and should be sent to the editor.

SEMAINE FEDERALE ALSACE 1992.

by Iris Stevens.

When Ken saw that the FFCT Touring week was to be in the Alsace, he said, "Let's go!". We had not been in this part of France since Heather was a baby, then it hadn't been by bike.

The one problem was the date, 2nd-9th August. I was in the New Forest for cycle week up to that weekend, and it was a good 300 miles driving across France. A plan was devised and the ferry booked from Ramsgate to Dunkerque. We'd saved our Barclaycard Profile Points to get a free trip, but it did mean having to drive further for the ferry.

After work on Friday Ken drove down to the rallysite near Brockenhurst just in time for a few sausages at the barbecue. Then next morning we made our farewells and drove east, stopping off at home to hand Heather my dirty washing and pick up the clean lot. Also changing my bike from a rather dusty mountain one to a freshly serviced touring one. Then it was off to Ramsgate for the night ferry. Not a good one if you are hoping to catch a couple of hours sleep - it's geared to eating and shopping. So it was two bleary-eyed people who drove out of Dunkerque at about 3.30a.m.

After many stops and catnaps we arrived at our destination, Rouffach, on the edge of the Rhine valley, for the 54th Semaine Federale International Cyclotourisme.

We collected our information pack, routes and camping details and drove the mile to our allotted site. There were 4 or 5 of them scattered around the edge of town. Feeling utterly smashed, our hearts sank when we saw the stubbly cornfield and thousands of tents and caravans. And us with lightweights! However a young man soon offered to show us our pitch, which fortunately was on an end, giving us plenty of breathing space. We prayed it wouldn't rain, as with all the dusty soil it would be a quagmire. We threw up our tent and crashed out until about 7.00 next morning.

Emerging from the tent to make a 'cuppa' an amazing sight greeted me. About 20-30 French cyclists standing at a long water trough washing and shaving. Others were standing in front of a row of 30 or so doors, these were the toilets. If you could see a pair of feet under the door, you knew that one was occupied! Looking towards the road I could see an endless stream of cyclists heading out into the open countryside. Rousing Ken I said, "You've just got to see this." He said, "Come on let's get out on the road as soon as possible!".

In town for some breakfast and the placards were saying, '11,000 cyclo's en Rouffach'. The place was milling with them. We decided not to waste time looking around the cycle show, leaving it till we got back. The route today was green and took in the wine growing area, with a choice of 4 routes - 41km, 64km, 102km or 161km. We decided on the 102km but as we all go off in the same direction, and finish likewise, you could change your mind on the way round.

We joined in on this enormous clubrun, overtaking and being overtaken by an endless stream of club folk. This was to be the pattern for the whole week. Superbly waymarked routes - a randonnee every day without a brevet card. The weather was glorious, very, very hot, 36°-38°. There were food and drink stops, some with entertainment. We were given free drinks of wine by some of the growers in the wine villages and the best of all, a beer tent back at the finish in Rouffach. I have never consumed so much beer in one week in my life. Out on the road we drank water from garden hoses, farm-yard hoses, fountains in the middle of villages and even fire hydrants! Wherever there was water cyclists were filling bottles. We had flat rides along the Rhine and very tough mountain climbs all in temperatures of 90°F plus. We sweat buckets, but oh! what a superb week. There were apparently 35

British there but we only met about 8 including those tough Audax riders, Bernie & Ann Daws. They were getting out on the road at 6.00am, because of the heat, doing the longer rides each day. We soon cottoned on to the fact that the routes were always 10-15 kilometres longer than stated.

At the checkpoints food and drink were available at reasonable prices. And were we pleased to see some of them, especially on top of the Grand Ballon, where we downed several bottles of mineral water and a traditional plate of Alsace meats.

The hardest day was Saturday, climbing up and down all day. The ascent of Petit Ballon was very tough, especially in the heat. After cresting a false summit we stopped at a bar and made the mistake of having beer instead of our usual water. We soon paid for it, legs like jelly and light-headed. The sun was beating down remorselessly on the bare-topped mountain. As we reached the last bit of shade I said, "We'd better have something to eat!". Next thing I knew was, on looking at my watch, that we had been asleep for 3/4 of an hour! Gathering brains and legs together we then tackled the final kilometers over the top before the long freewheel down to the town of Munster. Saw the Daws here filling their water bottles in the fountain. Then it was off further down the valley before a sharp right and up once again. That was cruel! Stopped at the hydrant at the bottom and then back through the vineyards to Rouffach.

The final Sunday dawned and everyone was getting ready for the farewell parade. Club jerseys from all over France. Some dressed to represent their region, coal miners from the North, pirates for St. Malo. The groups were very large, showing the popularity of the Touring Club in France. A large group came from Holland and another from Sweden. Unfortunately the English did not get together otherwise we would have been represented. However we did put on our Lewes tops and got a shout from Keith of East Surrey C.T.C. who was riding with his friends from Rouen.

We rounded it off by meeting up with six other Brit's for the farewell lunch. Wine, beer and 'Eau de vie' - fantastic. Music, people dancing between the tables. What an atmosphere. Will we go again? Yes, most certainly. Not in '93, Rouen being the venue and an area we know quite well, but 1994 Loire here we come!

ME OLD LEG IS ACHING,
ME OLD BRAIN'S A BAKING.
ME CRANKS IS BENT
ME GO IS WENT.
AND JUST THE OTHER DAY.....
ME STOKER PASSED AWAY.

NOW THE TANDEM'S GOING TO RUST,
ME THINKS THE CHAIN IS ALSO BUST.
NOW ME DAUGHTER'S COME TO STAY
SHE WANTS THE TANDEM THROWN AWAY.
I DROP MY TEARS IN LONELINESS
ME WHOLE WORLD'S IN AN AWFUL MESS.

HAROLD '93

LOWDOWN...ON BICYCLES

from "The Observer" Magazine, 24th Jan. 1993

1. The bicycle is the most efficient means yet devised to convert human energy into propulsion. A cyclist can comfortably maintain a speed of 10-12 mph (four times walking pace).
2. There were 15 million bicycles in this country in 1991.
3. In 1645, Frenchman Jean Theson was given a 30-year privilege to 'put into use a small body on four wheels driven without horses but by two men'.
4. Two wheeled machines, propelled by the riders' feet paddling along the ground, first appeared in Paris: the hobby-horse in 1816 and two years later the 'draisienne' invented by Baron Karl de Drais.
5. A 1991 survey found that two-thirds of cyclists are affluent male homeowners.
6. Kirkpatrick Macmillan, a Scottish blacksmith, produced the first self-propelled bicycle in 1839.
7. Macmillan rode his bike to Glasgow, where he knocked down a child. A magistrate imposed a fine of five shillings, but paid it himself because he was so intrigued by the invention.
8. J.B. Dunlop patented his pneumatic bicycle tyre in 1888.
9. The 'ordinary' bicycle, also called the 'penny farthing', came into vogue in 1872. The front wheel could be 5 ft. in diameter, the rear only 12 in. The 'safety' bicycle of 1885 is the basis of modern bikes.
10. Variants have included Alex Moulton's 1962 machine with 16in. wheels and spring-rubber suspension and the £3000 Lotus racer on which Chris Boardman won gold at the 1992 Olympics.
11. In 1903 editor Henri Desgrange declared that his paper was going to 'fling across France those uncouth sowers of energy who are the great professional riders of the road'. The Tour de France was born.
12. An American G.I., Roger Johnson, who 'borrowed' a bike while based in Britain in 1944, last year eased his conscience by giving 100 bicycles to children in Northamptonshire.
13. Pierre Michaux and his son Ernest were the first to make bikes in large numbers. In 1862 they made 142 of their wood and iron 'bone shakers'.
14. James Moore won the first recorded bicycle race in the Parc de Saint-Cloud in 1868.
15. Leonardo da Vinci is said to have drawn a bicycle. But whether the sketch was by him or a student remains debatable.
16. 'I swear on my wife,' said top Italian racer Franco Chioccioli after a 1992 report that saddles ruined riders' sex lives, 'I've never noticed that riding a bike could make me impotent.'
17. The BMA reported recently that the benefits of cycling to work could include living two-and-a-half years longer. However, around 300 cyclists a year die on the roads.

18. Nearly half of all cycling accidents are at T- or staggered junctions. When children are involved, games or doing tricks are the likely causes.
19. In a comparison of 150 towns and cities last year, York was judged the best city for cyclists, and Liverpool the worst.
20. Swiss pharmaceutical company Ciba-Geigy successfully offered employees free bikes recently to give up their company car park spaces.

BIKES IN POLITICS: "He (my father) did not riot, he got on his bike and looked for work" (Norman Tebbit, 1981)

LONGEST DISTANCE TRICYCLED UNDER WATER: 116.66 miles, by a team of divers in Santa Barbara, California, USA, on 16-19 June 1988.



HOL'S COME ROUND ONCE A YEAR
 FRANCE AND HOLLAND ARE QUITE NEAR.
 GET THE MAP OUT, READ THE LOG
 CAT WITH NEIGHBOURS, SHOOT THE DOG.
 FOREIGN CLIMES ARE OURS TO SAVOUR.
 NOT FOR US: SCOTCH, WE FAVOUR.
 INVERNESS AND INVERARAY
 HOPE THE WEATHER'S NOT CONTRARY.
 ROUND THE LOCH, DON'T FALL IN.
 JOHNNY WALKER, LONDON GIN.
 HAD TOO MANY, OUT WE STAGGER
 WIFE GETS FRUITY: THINKS SHE'S JAGGER.
 WE'VE NOT TIME FOR HANKY PANKY,
 MUST REACH HOSTEL, BY LOCH LANKY.
 WHISKY, GIN AND BIKES DON'T MIX
 WE ARE IN AN AWFUL FIX.
 PEDAL UP HILL, ALL THE DAY
 LEAVES NO TIME IN WHICH TO PLAY.
 GEE! I LOVE THAT WIFE OF MINE
 BUT, CYCLING HOL'S ARE NOT THE TIME.
 WE NEED OUR STRENGTH WITH WHEELS TO TURN.
 SLEEP!! TONIGHT IS WHAT I YEARN.
 WE'VE NO TIME TO STOP AND GROPE
 IF KIRKCALDY IS OUR HOPE.

SO! CYCLISTS FAR AND NEAR
 NEXT ... ON YOUR HOL'S, HEAR
 IF IT'S MILES YOU WISH TO RIDE
 FROM YOUR LOVE THIS FACT DO HIDE.
 LEAVE HER HOME, WITH WOOL TO KNIT
 AND SEE BESIDE YOU A CHAP DOES SIT...

HAROLD '93

AWINTER'S TALE

by Roy James

Wednesday, January 16th did not start well. Wind and rain lashed the bedroom as we woke. Downstairs the post man had left a final demand for the water rate and I was off work minus a thumb nail after an accident.

By 10 a.m. however the rain had ceased, and I was able to consider going out on the bike. Too late to meet the Midweek Section at Horam, I was nevertheless determined to get pleasure from the day. In 15 minutes I was on my way and about a mile down the road it had started to rain again.



Putting a cycle cape on is easy when there is no wind and you don't wear glasses, but there was and I do. If anyone had been there with a video camera they could have shot a winning sequence for "You've Been Framed".

The bike knows the way from Langney to Hankham and Rickney without any help. That lovely lane slips suddenly away from the busy B2104 and has always been a favourite for me. Passing the primary school, tyres zipping on the smooth, wet road, I knew already the route that I would take. Turn left at the bridge, taking care on the dung spattered surface at Rickney Farm, at the same time keeping a watchful eye open for

the old, sleepy-eyed dog who often cannot resist the bait of whirring ankles as they go by. Straight on then past Slyes Farm and Downash, where the juiciest of blackberries grow. Next the jumble of Hailsham, made easier to traverse this damp and foggy day because of a singular lack of traffic. Over the A22 and a pleasant ride beside ancient Abbots Wood, where one summer evening I heard for the first time the sweet song of the nightingale.

Turn right for Bates Green Farm and the narrow lane that finally after many a twist and turn arrives at the Yew Tree Inn. Time now for elevenses. So into the yard of the Church of St. Pancras and the memorial seat tucked into the corner of the walls. Sheltered from the north wind and catching any sunlight that may seep through the clouds on a winter day, this wooden seat has given rest to many a rambler or cyclist. In the tiny garden of remembrance beside me the first flower of Helibore Niger bowed meekly to the fine rain falling silently to earth, while I, huddled in cape and hood, sat drinking coffee from my flask. Then a moment of wonder. From the side of the church and less than a dozen feet away appeared a fox. No longer in its coat of red, but in a covering more like damp, brown-grey sacking. It looked neither to right or left, just slipping between the gravestones until it reached the stile on the far side of the church yard. There it stopped, turned and saw me. The look of surprise on its face was almost tangible and in a second it was gone. Such rare moments make the gloomiest of days memorable.

The rain had ceased now and I left the quiet of this lovely country churchyard and cycled on towards the reservoir, stopping at Chilver Bridge to look for the heron that often stands silently here beside the Cuckmere River. In their excellent book "The Cuckmere", Edna and 'Mac' McCarthy claim that the name of the river comes from the Saxon for 'fast flowing water'. The reservoir controls

the flow today, but even so the recent heavy rain had swollen this normally placid waterway into something of a torrent.

Now I set myself a good pace and soon had Drusillas and Alfriston tucked away behind me. Over the bridge to Plonk Barn, Litlington and West Dean village. Winter or summer I always visit the Church of All Saints in West Dean. The adjoining rectory dates from the 13th century and it is not difficult to believe the claim that Alfred the Great once had a royal palace here. Perhaps more important to this cyclist is the fact that in the corner of the churchyard on a fine day is the ideal place to get out the tea flask. But today did not encourage me to linger. A heavy mist had settled over all, the threat of more rain decided me to move on.

The bridle path along Friston Bottom was heavy with mud, made worse by the heavy machinery being used to thin out sections of the forest. Beside the track I saw my first Lesser Celandine of 1993. I always make a note of my first yearly sighting of this timid yellow flower, but I think the 6th day of January will be hard to beat.

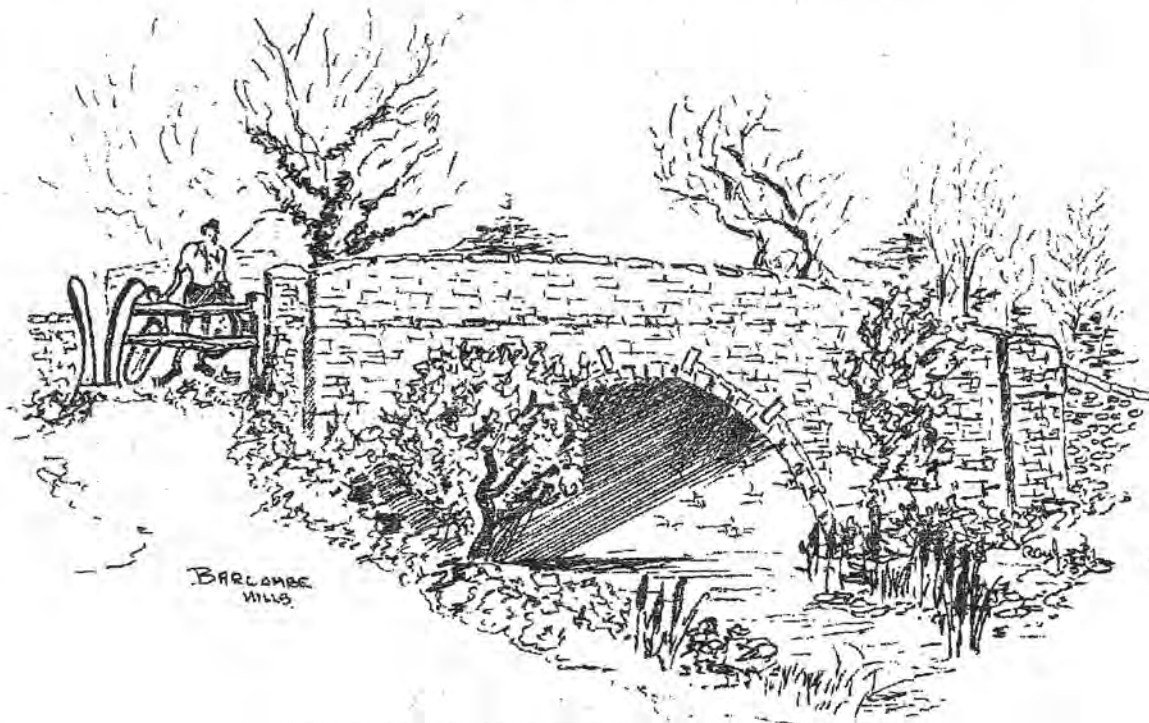
Turn right onto the Friston road and then, shortly after, the brief hell of the A259 as I drop down the hill to East Dean. Watch for the little turning on the right and instantly a peace settles over everything. As I near the coast at Birling Gap a thick fog blankets the land and I cape up once more. A light, following, south-westerly breeze helps me towards Beachy Head and all the way the mournful notes of the fog horn add melancholy to the scene.

As I pass the Beachy Head Hotel rain begins to fall once more, but I am ready for it. Free-wheeling now, down to the sea front, heavy rain at my back, I ask myself the question,

"Why do we do it?"

But we all know the answer.

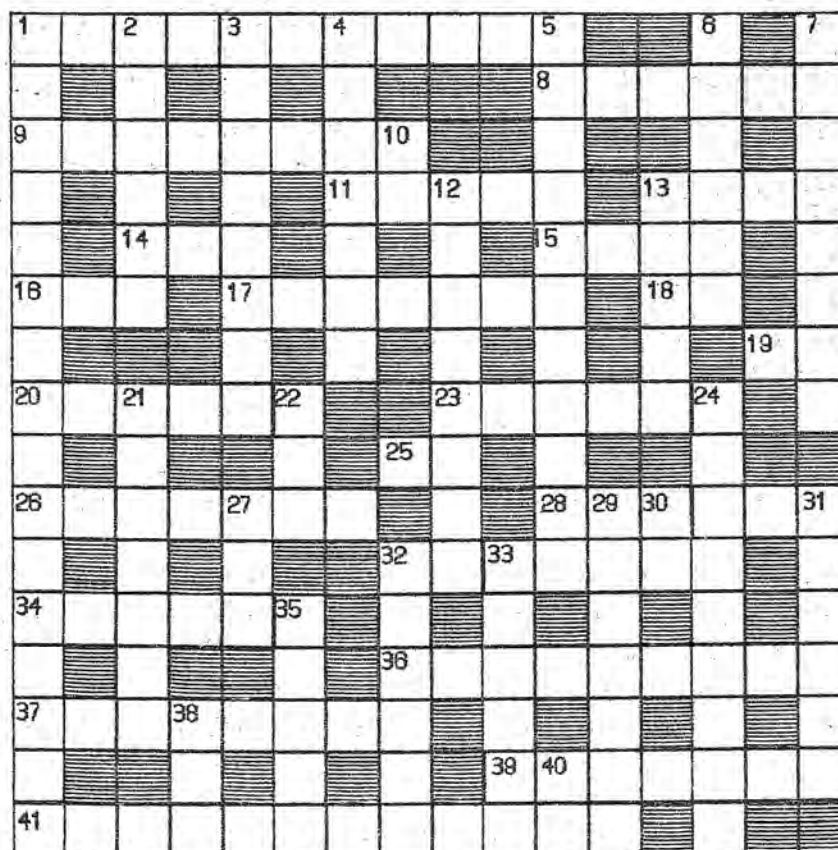
"Because we enjoy it."!



EVERYDAY SUSSEX No.14 by Roy James.

THE EDITOR'S CROSSWORD.

It would help you to know that some, but not all, of the answers have something to do with either cycling or Sussex. Good luck, it's just for fun, answers at the back.



ACROSS

DOWN

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Is this path for the birds? (6,5)</p> <p>8.&6.down. Birthplace of the mountain bike. (6,6)</p> <p>9. Poetic Lord of Blackdown. (8)</p> <p>11. Gear shift. (5)</p> <p>13. Flower supporter. (4)</p> <p>14. Highest tube? (3)</p> <p>15. Lazy. (4)</p> <p>16. Ancient town, not one of the Five (3)</p> <p>17. Stupid? Absolutely! (7)</p> <p>18. Abbreviated cartographers (1,1)</p> <p>19. 90 degrees from 10 down. (1,1)</p> <p>20. ER would keep these tax men fit. (6)</p> <p>23. Wealden river. (6)</p> <p>25. Short for local group. (1,1)</p> <p>26. Corporate Cinque Port (7)</p> <p>28. Beaten egg dish for americans (6)</p> <p>32. Jack is stupid! (7)</p> <p>34. Caused by something loose. (6)</p> <p>36. Frozen sweet in crime case. (anag. 3,6)</p> <p>37. Stock village near Battle. (8)</p> <p>39. Often open for teas in the summer. (7)</p> <p>41. Went Hill Brow to Haven Brow. (5,7)</p> | <p>1. You don't need pins for these (10,6)</p> <p>2. He didn't rule the waves at Bosham (6)</p> <p>3. Four yearly sports event. (8)</p> <p>4. This might be needed if your bike breaks down (4,3)</p> <p>5. Done to ease moving parts. (11)</p> <p>6. see 8 across.</p> <p>7. It records distance travelled. (8)</p> <p>10. Abbreviated direction. (1,1)</p> <p>12. Fifty something tourists? (8)</p> <p>13. Incline. (5)</p> <p>21. Jack and Jill went up this hill. (7)</p> <p>22. Organ of hearing. (3)</p> <p>24. Demoted to the back of the bunch (9)</p> <p>27. This will provide 5 down. (3)</p> <p>29. Reflects - on what's behind you? (7)</p> <p>30. In French. (2)</p> <p>31. Drunk and usually cross at cycling dinners. (6)</p> <p>32. Stage whispers. (6)</p> <p>33. Cold time. (3,3)</p> <p>35. Not an odd speed. (5)</p> <p>38. Charge. (3)</p> <p>40. Chemical symbol for argon. (2)</p> |
|---|---|

NORMANDY '93

By Ann Rix.



The invasion of eight Sussex cyclists to the region of France that gave us William the Conqueror took place in the first week of June. David had suggested a weeks holiday somewhere, back in October, were any of Seaford and Newhaven Section interested? Not much support to start with, then France as a destination was mooted and numbers started to grow. Yours truly was not too happy about leaving these shores, the furthest I'd been was to the Isle of Wight!, but David said of course I was going.

Geoff & Jenny Boxall, David & Susan and Dick Colyer had all been before so knew what to expect, but for Clifford Avery, Martin (23 months) and myself it was a new experience, especially with another language to cope with. It was a real holiday for me as Geoff & Jenny and David & Susan had done all the bookings between them, so I just went with the flow.

We were lucky in that the chalet where we were going to stay (owned by Wally Happy, a member of Norwood Paragon) would not be needed till the following Sunday night. Normally they are booked Saturday to Saturday, but two friends of Wally's were riding down from Dieppe and taking two days to do it. This meant we were able to get the cheaper rate on the ferry by travelling on the 7.30am from Newhaven on Sunday 30th May (Bank Holiday Weekend) and returning at 5.30pm on Sunday 6th June.

It poured down on Saturday night as David came to collect me and my bicycle and luggage but eased up soon afterwards (after he'd got wet putting the bike on the roof). Dick had already taken his to David & Susan's as it would go with us to spread the load between the two cars. I stayed the night with them so as to get an early start and make sure I was there! Clifford stayed with Geoff & Jenny for the same reason and then they picked Dick up at Denton Corner on Sunday morning. We all met at the railway station car park at 6.20am as we had to be ready to board by 6.30pm, two cars with four in each.

The crossing wasn't too bad, a bit of a swell out in the Channel which caused some of us who hadn't got our sea legs to lurch about a bit and so we took Dick's advice not to move unless we needed to. It was a lovely morning so we had a good view of the cliffs as we left our native shore.

Our watches put forward one hour we arrived at Dieppe at 12.30pm French time. Nobody looked at our passports going out which saved time. Into the harbour at Dieppe, past the people sitting outside the cafes, seeing the castle in the background. Jenny kindly telling me all the places of interest we could see as we approached. Then it was down to the vehicle bays ready to roll of the ferry, the Stena Londoner, to start our journey through France.

Our first destination was the Foret de Brotonne, which we reached by 2.30pm, to find a suitable spot for our picnic lunch. We parked in a lovely quiet place amongst the trees with foxgloves giving a bit of colour amongst the grasses. Martin enjoyed scampering about after being in the car. On then to Bournville on the D139. It makes it very difficult to follow some small roads as the numbers change from one region to another, it had been the D131 through the forest. Lieury, Thiberville, Orbec and then the D4 for about 9 kms. to find the D164 to take us to the little community of La Croupte, our

place of abode for the coming week. La Croupte is in a Triangle formed by Lisieux, Livarot & Orbec.

Wally has three chalets there, one he and his wife use which has a large garage with room for the bicycles of those staying at the chalets. The other two are let for holidays, taking eight in each with two double rooms upstairs and two downstairs, plus the communal area and kitchen, also washroom with showers and the toilets.

The evening meal was soon underway with Jenny and Susan in charge then washing up was done by the menfolk. I was detailed to prepare the sweet for Monday nights meal and baby sat whilst the others had a stroll and explored the neighbourhood. We had arranged the first two meals beforehand so as to make it easier with settling in and the fact that most shops in France are closed on Mondays.

Geoff, David & Dick made arrangements to leave at 7.00am next morning to ride to the two miles to Fervaques for the bread. It was alright going but meant a long climb back, so they were ready for breakfast on their return. This ritual was observed every morning except Friday, when David wasn't up in time to go.

It was decided to visit Lisieux on the first day, so with David leading us off we went through the very quiet lanes, it seemed just like Sussex except we were riding on the other side of the road. Clifford and I were surprised how well we managed, no trouble at all, mind you we kept behind the others mostly and so were reminded where we ought to be! Masses of orchids, just the same ones as here, also other wild flowers. We had our first 'Chocky' chocolat and bought cakes to go with it, had a wander and then climbed the hill to the Basilica. The impressive Ste-Therese Basilica, modelled on the Sacre-Coeur in Paris, though looking old was only consecrated on July 11th 1954. Inside is an immense nave built to accommodate the crowds of pilgrims. Unfortunately there was something going on with masses of young people coming and going, so we couldn't use our cameras inside but just had a look. Then it was a ride round the streets of Lisieux until we found our way to the Jardin Publique, by the Palais de Justice, for our lunch. David having consulted the map, it was then back through the lanes to the East before dropping down to the valley of the Orbiquet and the long climb back up to the plateau around La Croupte, having enjoyed our first days cycling in France.

Tuesday it was decided to head for the coast and visit Honfleur, but as it would be too far for Jenny to enjoy and we would need some shopping done it was decided to all go by car part of the way and ride the rest. The cars were left at St. Gatien des Bois, beyond Pont-l'Eveque, so that we could follow the green routes (picturesque) to Honfleur, stopping off to visit the Chapel of Notre Dame de Grace before the steep descent into the old port. Unfortunately the chapel was occupied but we did have a quiet look inside.

Honfleur is on the Seine estuary, at the foot of the Cote de Grace hill, and its old dock, church and old streets combine to make it a delightful town and an artists paradise. You can always find someone painting or sketching by the dock. We spent some time in Honfleur, had our chocolat and a wander round, then suddenly realised what the time was! Nearly noon and in France almost all the shops shut from noon to 2.00pm and we needed bread and cheese. Well we were able to get the bread but not the cheese but we managed, and we had some cake with us so that sufficed. Dick, Clifford and I wanted to ride all the way back, so David provided a route for us to follow. We kept with the others part of the way, then left them to make their way back to the cars and then to go shopping at the superstore we had seen on our way out that morning.

We had a hill to climb at first, up to Beuzeville, so Clifford and I decided it was time for a walk up part of it. We then followed the D22 to Bonneville and the D284 to le Faulq and Moyaux. We were

intrigued by the cooked spire of the church here but time was marching on and we kept rolling. We rolled a bit too far here as we followed the main road through Moyaux. We needed a right turn onto the D137 but could we see it? No way. Retracing our way back we found it, no wonder we had missed it, the road no. was round the corner of a narrow lane. Back on route we followed this for several kilometres, with more picturesque green routes in places, to join the D164 then D47 to La Croupte, arriving back about 6.30pm very pleased with ourselves (especially me to have found the way) to find that the others had only got back about 10 minutes before.

Each evening after our meal it was discussion time as to what to do next day. A destination decided upon David then worked out a route. This meant he usually missed out on the washing up! shame, but he does a very good job of leading so we forgave him.

Wednesday - It was Camembert to be visited today, so off we set but descending a steep hill David found trouble braking. This was serious as he had Martin on the seat behind him. Martin and his seat were lifted off onto the verge much to his dismay, he couldn't understand it. Investigation found the rear brake bolt was moving, a large nut from my store of 'things that might be needed' was fixed in by Geoff with a plastic fastener to stop it moving. Martin and seat replaced and on we went.

This was a day for things to happen. We reached Vimoutiers, had our cafe-au-lait or chocolat and a look round, Geoff found a shop that sold jubilee clips, then it was a visit to the fascinating Musee du Camembert to find out all about the making of this famous cheese. The Gothic church was one of the few buildings undamaged in the bombings of the D-Day landings in June 1944, 90% of the buildings in the town were demolished. There is a plaque on the wall to the Canadian soldiers who died. We found a statue of Marie Harel in the new Salle du Beurre (butter market), also a new statue which is inside the entrance of the Hotel de Ville (town hall) until the new plinth is ready outside. Having rambled round the outside of the church (closed from 12.00 till 2.00) we found nearby the old statue of Marie Harel, still standing but with her head missing - not even tucked underneath her arm! This happened in the bombing and her head is in the museum.

Marie Harel was a farm woman from the village of Camembert, she perfected the soft cheese which the village gave its name to at the end of the 18th century. A strong tradition claims that during the French Revolution of 1789 Marie Harel hid a priest at her farm and in thanks he gave her the recipe for making the cheese.



As we left Vimoutiers, after lunch by the river, the wind was cool and as we rode towards Camembert the clouds were gathering, then down came the rain. We sheltered for a while till it eased then carried on again through the intermittent showers. It was just as we reached the crossroads at the edge of Camembert and turned right that Clifford's brakes didn't hold owing to the wet and he ran into Dick. Off came Clifford and sprained his ankle. Dick, fortunately, came out of it quite lightly with just a shattered rear reflector. A sit down on the bank for Clifford till he felt a bit better then we climbed the hill to the village, where we sheltered in the grandly named 'Maison du Camembert', a new museum devoted to, and shaped like, a Camembert cheese! By now it was very wet, and we had already visited one museum, so we did not linger but headed back to Vimoutiers passing the Beaumoncel farm (Marie Harel's home) on the way.

Sheltering from the rain out came the Arnica cream, to ease the ankle, then decided we'd better head back the quickest way. As we went there was a shout from David of "puncture!". As it was critical to get Clifford back as soon as possible, he, Geoff, Jenny and I kept going leaving Dick with

David, Susan and Martin. Martin, bless him, had to be lifted off onto the verge on his seat again and was not very happy to see us going. It happened yet again, as David had another puncture after that. They still managed to catch us up at Fervagues in time for the climb up the hill to La Croupete. It was Arnica out again and Clifford was told to keep his leg up and rest it. Susan found an elastic bandage in their first aid kit, so I bound the ankle up, a procedure which was followed every night and morning till we left which helped relieve the situation. Clifford tried to rebel and wanted to help as usual but was told by his nurse that his ankle would not get better unless he rested it, and the others all agreed so that was that.

This of course meant some rethinking on what to do now as Clifford could certainly not ride. Geoff came to the rescue for the next day, he volunteered to ride back after elevenses, have lunch with Clifford and then they would both come out in the car to meet us in the afternoon. Wally and his wife were at their chalet that day, so Clifford had someone to talk to and could sit outside our chalet in the sunshine.

This worked very well. We set off for Orbec and then suddenly found ourselves being passed by veteran cars, with British number plates! First half a dozen together and then more and more in two's and three's, we couldn't believe it. On reaching Orbec we found they had stopped there as well, they were over here on a touring rally, a couple of hundred of them! Though not all out together. David and I learnt this from a couple who came up and introduced themselves as members of Audax U.K.! We had a look at the cars that were parked in the car park and took some pictures and then went for our chocolat. Getting quite a liking for this, but did miss our several cups of tea. I was able to find some more interesting places to add to my slide collection for another slide show. I'm already booked to do some, so hope the slides come out alright! We had passed wash houses on other days and today it was more of the unusual coloured cattle of Normandy.

The distinctive brown and white breed of cattle were brought over from Scandinavia at the time of the Viking invasions in the 8th and 9th centuries. One in four of all French cows belongs to Normandy - five and a half million of them! They have endowed Normandy with a reputation for dairy foods of great quality. A good cow can yield up to 30 litres (6¹/₂ gallons) of cream-rich milk each day. Cream is still the mainstay of Norman cuisine.

Geoff left us at Orbec as we headed on to Bernay and lunch. After climbing steeply out of Orbec, David turned us off onto a minor road and we found ourselves threading our way along tiny little lanes, some with grass growing up the middle, until we began to wonder if he knew where he was going. Then we came through a little village onto a slightly wider road, passing occasional houses set back in the trees, and suddenly we were in Bernay having avoided the busy main roads until the very edge of the town. Into the centre of town to find the very nice Jardin Publique, complete with playground for Martin. Every time we stopped we tried to find an area where Martin could run about. He doesn't sleep as much on the rides now, about an hour sometimes, but is much more interested in what is going on and where we all are, making sure we're still there! We passed through a lot of places during the week named after St. Martin so felt we were definitely in the right area.

After lunch we had a wander round the town with its many old buildings and beside the Charentonne river on which it stands. We were hoping to look inside the former abbey church, started in 1013, but this was in the middle of some restoration work and we could only view the outside. The East end caught our eye due to the original wall tiles on the three curved ends having been replaced by thousands of wooden shingles, which really stood out in the bright sunshine.

From Bernay David took us down the D33, the green route running along not far from the river

to cross it at St. Quentin-des-Isles, with many shaded stretches from the forests we passed through, especially on the next stretch to Broglie. It was here we were to meet Geoff & Clifford at 3pm and we arrived as the clock struck 3, good timing by our leader. Geoff and Clifford had not long arrived and we were able to all have afternoon tea for the first time on holiday. Susan had taken their large flask full of hot water on our journey from home the previous Sunday, so it was used once again. Geoff and Clifford brought it in the car with the cups and instant tea, etc., Jenny bought some cakes from the shop nearby and so, much to the interest of the inhabitants in the centre of Broglie, we enjoyed our refreshments.

Broglie was very busy, an almost constant stream of heavy lorries passing through the main street below us which only Martin enjoyed. A look at the church there, it was built with an interesting combination of limestone and ironstone. Jenny's bike was then fitted onto the roof rack of the car and she, Geoff and Clifford left to do some more shopping in Orbec while the rest of us headed towards la Chapelle-Gauthier and then home. David wanted to take us to find the source of the Orbiquet, though we nearly missed it, it wasn't very well signed, just a board by a bridge. Along a brick path beside a meadow to the foot of a cliff where a dark pool of water emerged to move, quite swiftly, through the meadow to form the river. Just up the hill from here we came across some more wayside memorials, well one was a memorial the other a calvary. There are a lot of the latter everywhere, nearly every crossroads has one, which reminds you that this is a Roman Catholic country.

Dick, Susan, Martin and I enjoyed our ride back, especially Martin. I don't know though whether David did. The thing was Martin had had his waterproof coat on earlier in the day to keep him warm, and when it was taken off the straps on his seat were not tightened, as he soon found out! Realizing he could move a bit more he was pushing himself up and looking over the back of the seat at us, laughing and really enjoying himself. He was still safe but of course rocked the boat a bit and so his movement was curtailed the following day.

The evening meal was much enjoyed by all, we certainly lived well and enjoyed the varied selection of French cheeses. Jenny said she felt quite guilty spending out so much on the latter, we told her not to worry as we were only too happy that she was willing to shop, and make such a good job of it into the bargain. After all we were in the 'fromage' area of Camembert, Livarot and Pont l'Eveque.

Thursday evening and it was time to decide what to do next day. The feeling was a visit to Caen would be nice, but it would be too far for Jenny, Clifford couldn't ride and it would also be too far for Martin. Before going to France Susan and Jenny had both said that no way were they going to drive over there, on the wrong side of the road! However as they wanted to see Caen they kindly said that if we wanted to ride, Jenny would drive and Susan navigate, and Clifford and Martin could keep each other amused in the back. So on a lovely morning Geoff, David, Dick and I set off. Well we tried to - outside the gate my front tyre went down. At least we could return to clean up before starting off again. A few kilometres down the road it was Geoff's turn, though with the small wheels of the Moulton this didn't take long and off we went again.

David, once again, had found a very good route and we enjoyed rolling along at a fair pace and headed for Mezidon. We were lucky enough to find a cafe just off the main street, in a little square, and sat and enjoyed our elevenses at 'Lucette's'. A bulge was noticed on David's tyre, it could have resulted from the brake rubbing on Wednesday. This was repaired while cakes were found at a shop down the street. This is what I found unusual, we are used to having the cake while we drink at the same place.

Much refreshed on we went, the next stop being Bourguebus to get a picture of the most unusual church. One side of the spire came right down at a different angle to the rest and gave it an odd appearance. Soon after this we were reminded of Yub Moore as we went through the village of Hubert-Folie.

Caen was reached and we eventually found our way through the maze of roads to the public gardens in the Place de la Republique, where we were due to meet the car travellers at 1pm. We arrived there first, to our surprise, the others had been looking at the shops and exploring the castle area. We had our lunch together in the gardens, Martin loving the fountain, a very sophisticated one with jets going up and down at different heights making bubbles float along for him to burst.

A walk towards the castle, with David, Susan, Martin and I having a look at St. Peter's Church on the way. This is a mixture of different styles of building as it was started in the 13th century and continued in the 14th and 16th. The organ, vault and steeple were destroyed in 1944 and were reconstructed in the original style soon after. We then climbed to the top of the castle walls from which we had superb views of Caen. Then it was a wander past the shops to where the others had left the car at St. Peter's Basin by the River Orne which flows through Caen. Dick and Clifford popped into a model shop on the way and came back with leaflets. Cups of tea all round as they had brought the makings once again.

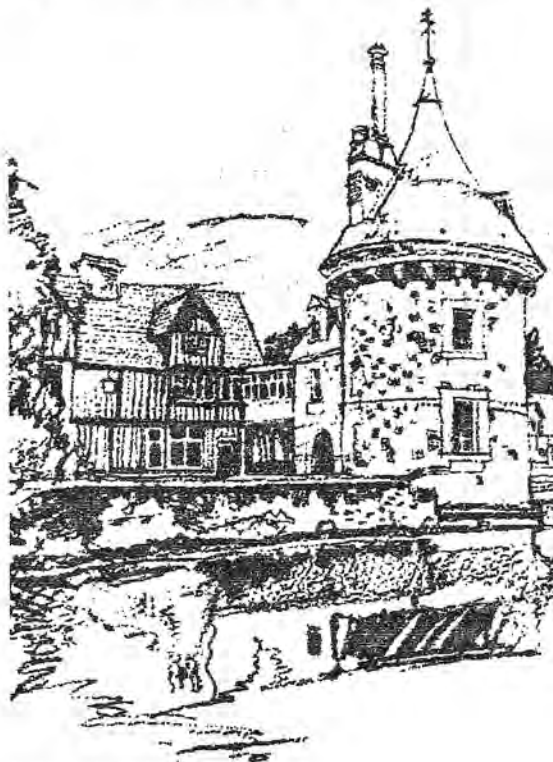
It was a little easier getting out of Caen, though we did have to retrace one bit as the road we wanted started of as one way, in the opposite direction! We took a different route back to Mezidon - we had to go back to 'Lucette's' - she was pleased to see us again and asked Geoff if we had had a good promenade. Some more cakes were bought and brought back to the cafe where we sat outside and relaxed with our chocolat. I was detailed to go and pay and try out my limited French, this I managed to do and ask for the Toilette. I was presented with a key and directed to the 'corridor' (alley). On my return I was offered a sugared almond by Madame, much to the amusement of the other three.

We then followed the same route back from there as there wasn't another good direct route, and we had had to go back to 'Madame Lucette', also we kept away from the main routes. There were a few steep hills and it was very hot, and on one very narrow lane the grasses almost met in the middle. The D47 took us most of the way, but we had to watch for the junctions in towns as I mentioned before. Back to Fervaques and the long climb up once more, then back to the chalet to find that the others hadn't been back long and were surprised to see us. We'd ridden 83 miles but it hadn't felt like it.

Saturday and Clifford said he could ride, so we headed out past the 16th century manor house at Bellou, following part of the 'Route du Fromage' to Livarot for our cakes and chocolat. Susan and Dick both bought a Livarot cheese here to take home. We certainly knew they were there, phew! Dick put his in a plastic bag, tied the top, into another one and did the same. This was much better. Susan's went into the car when we got back! Another purchase was rubber solution, use was made of Susan's French/English phrase book for this and they found it under repairs, so if you need to ask for it, it is "je besoin du colle" ("I need some glue").

Lunch was had in the gardens of the 'Manoir de l'Isle', which houses the local Musee sur le Fromage and the local School of Music. So we could hear the music and Martin delighted in the fountain and then we had a stroll round the gardens till the museum opened at 2.00pm. It was interesting to learn that for Livarot cheese the milk must be collected within 25 kilometres of Livarot, but for Pont l'Eveque cheese the milk the milk can come from anywhere in Normandy, which is

reputed for its rich milk.



Château de St-Germain-de-Livet

complete with white ribbons. They told us the wedding party, bride and groom to be, etc., posed for their photos in the gateway to the chateau with the building as a backdrop before they went into the church for the wedding. The car loads of guests had driven round and round the village with horns blaring, making a noisy din, we had heard the row inside and wondered what it was in aid of.

Back for our last meal at the chalet, after which Jenny suggested some of them took me to see the church at La Croupette, which they had seen earlier in the week. This meant down a grassy track and avoiding the nettles to where, as well as the church, there was a wash house plus a small area of water surrounded by railings to which were attached pieces of rag. This is believed to have healing powers - you dip a piece of rag in the mucky water (think about the problem) - then tie the rag to the railings and tis said it works. The church is only open three times a year, so we were not able to see inside.

That evening there was a lovely sunset, a fitting end to our stay. We were packed up, tidied up and ready to leave by 10.00am as requested, and headed back towards the Forêt de Brotonne, with a stop for one last chocolat at Bournville. Then it was through the forest and over the Pont de Brotonne to stop and eat our lunch in the grounds of St. Wandrille Abbey (to the interest of passers by). Then we headed back for Dieppe to visit Roger and Agnes, friends of Geoff and Jenny, who'd invited us all for tea. A lovely fresh fruit salad, cake and tea was most refreshing, after which they came with us down through the market. This was crowded, Martin was carried by Dick otherwise he wouldn't have seen much, only legs. Geoff and David, with Clifford, drove down and then had a job to park. They did see Dennis and Maggie drive by and we saw them later on the boat.

A calmer crossing this time and then we were home again after a lovely week away over the water.

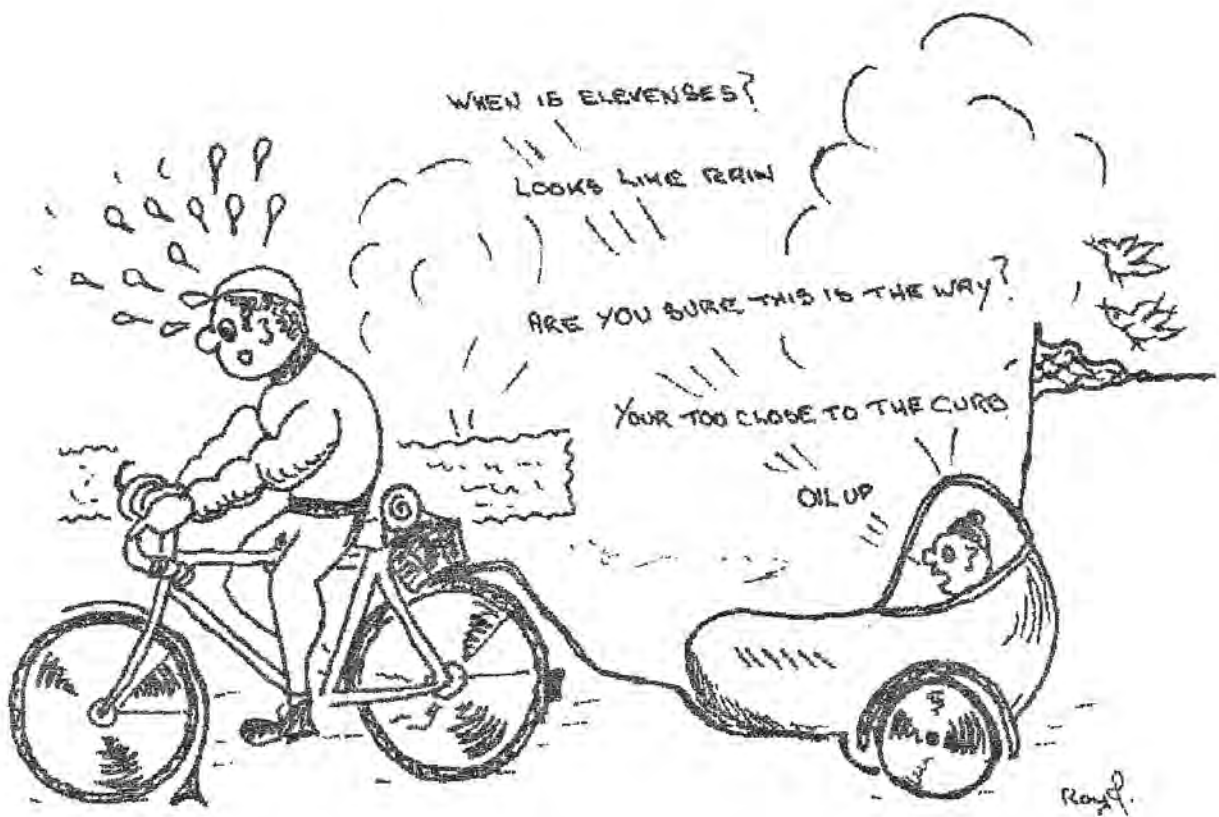
Back to our steeds and as I had said that I would like to see a chateau we made for St. Germain-de-Livet. As this lies in a valley we had a steep descent. As we arrived there were a lot of people there dressed up to the nines. We wondered what was happening as our cycling gear didn't exactly fit in! It turned out that there was a wedding at the church opposite, so Dick and Clifford stayed in the shade by the gate and watched all the comings and goings (reported to us afterwards) while the rest of us had a guided tour of the Chateau. Well, sort of, we were handed English notes to follow while he gabbled away in French to the rest of the group. Then as we tried to fit the notes to the objects in one of the rooms he apologised and said it was newly opened and there were no notes for it! St. Germain-de-Livet is a 15th and 16th century castle, surrounded by a moat, Martin thought there ought to be fish but we didn't see any. The outside of the castle has highly original stone and brick chequered decoration and looks very imposing.

On rejoining the watchers of the wedding we found that another one was now in progress and outside the gate was standing a superb De Dion Buton (veteran car)

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD.

ACROSS. 1. CUCKOO TRAIL. 8 (& 6 DOWN) UNITED STATES. 9. TENNYSON. 11. LEVER
13. STEM 14. TOP. 15. IDLE. 16. RYE 17. IDIOTIC. 18. O.S. 19. S.E. 20. EXCISE. 23. ROTHER.
25. D.A. 26. SEAFORD. 28. OMELET. 32. ASININE. 34. RATTLE. 36. ICE CREAM.
37. NINFIELD. 39. GARDENS. 41. SEVEN SISTERS.

DOWN. 1. COTTERLESS CRANKS. 2. CANUTE. 3. OLYMPICS. 4. TOOL KIT.
5. LUBRICATION. 6. see 8 across. 7. ODOMETER. 10. N.E. 12. VETERAN. 13. SLOPE.
21. CLAYTON. 22. EAR. 24. RELEGATED. 27. OIL. 29. MIRRORS. 30. EN. 31. TOASTS.
32. ASIDES. 33. ICE AGE. 35. EVENS. 38. FEE. 40. AR.



(No idea who this could be! Ed.)

DEADLINE FOR CHRISTMAS ISSUE - 2nd WEEK IN NOVEMBER.