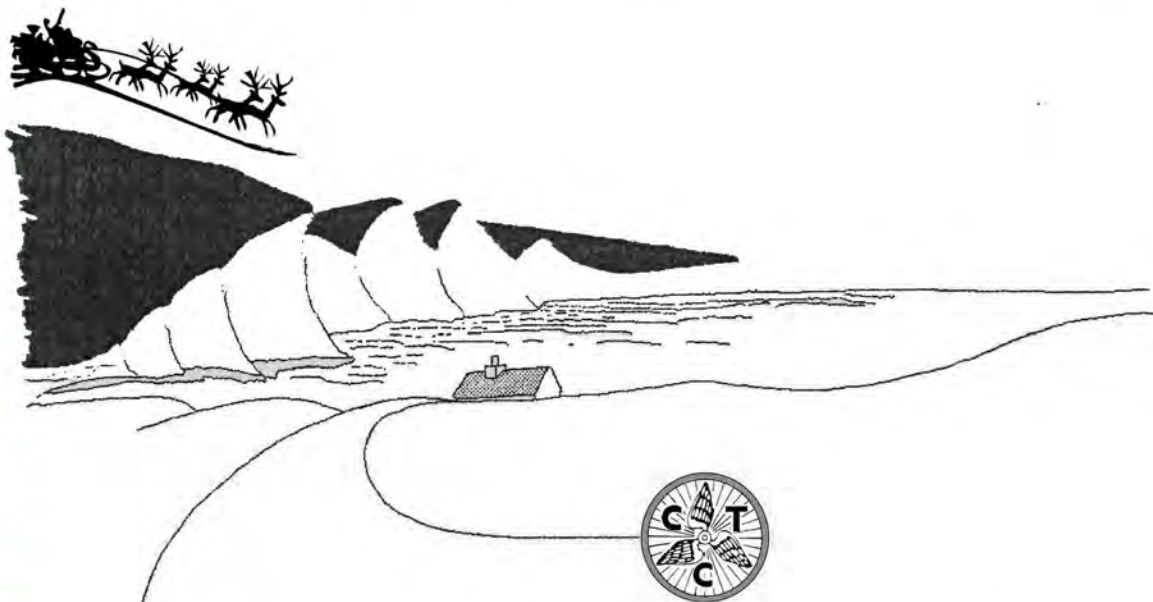


The



# Coaster



*the magazine of the*

EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION  
CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

No. 37 - Christmas 2000

75p



*East Sussex District Association  
Cyclists' Touring Club*



*Secretary & Editor:*

*David Rix, 27 Fullwood Avenue, Newhaven, E. Sussex. BN9 9SP*

**"THE COASTER"**

*Issue No. 37, Christmas 2000*



***From the Editor's Desk.***

*I hope that most of you have 'weathered' the floods, etc., with no ill effects. The severe weather has had an effect on our cycling, curtailing one or two recent Sunday rides, I hope some of you have fared better. We just have the heavy snowfalls in January to look forward to now!!*

*Not a packed issue this time, but a varied one. We've got an article from Frank Dewberry on his End to End ride and another from Bill Earl on his recent sojourn to the US. Together with the usual 'odds and ends', I hope you enjoy this issue and I look forward to seeing lots of you 'up the road' in 2001 - weather permitting!*

*Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year.*

*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 C.T.C. 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

or from the local District Association (D.A.) Secretary or one of the Section Secretaries whose addresses are listed below.

### EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

D.A. Secretary: David Rix, 27 Fullwood Avenue, Newhaven, BN9 9SP

#### Sections

Eastbourne & Hailsham: Marion Ball:  
5 Horam Park Close, Horam, TN21 0HW

Hastings & Rother: Peter Jenner:  
8 Hazelwood Gardens, St. Leonards on Sea, TN37 7HL

Mid-week Section: Esther Carpenter:  
10 Maplehurst Road, Baldslow, St. Leonards on Sea, TN37 7NA

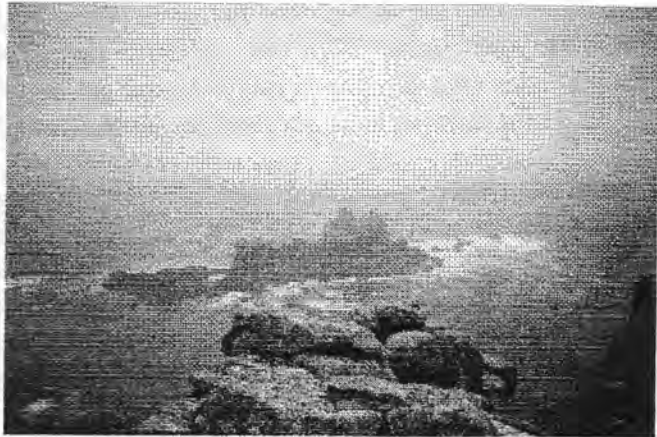
Seaford & Newhaven: Ann Rix:  
3 Sutton Drove, Seaford, BN25 3EU

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## ONE MAN'S E2E

By Frank Dewberry

The first problem I had to deal with was getting 3½ weeks' special leave from my job as Head Gardener in Eastbourne. June was a very difficult month for such an application and I was pleasantly surprised when permission was granted without very much trouble. Detailed planning could now be started and in this task I found the CTC E2E Route Sheets and Accommodation List most helpful. My idea was to be self-supporting on the trip as well as self-propelled and I intended to cover about



55 miles each day with one rest day each week. In the event this plan of campaign proved to be quite practicable but it gave little spare time for visiting places of interest or stopping for camera shots along the way.

As expected, Cornwall and Devon proved to be hard riding with several 30% gradients around Crackington Haven, Boscastle and Tintagel and I found my planned 10mph reduced to 2½mph at times. On the small lanes I found myself completely at a loss at some junctions through not having a compass with me - this was an item I had decided would not be required on the trip (Mistake number one!). My next error was quite inadvertent. Having encountered rain on my run down from Penzance station to Lands End, I left my cape hanging up to dry overnight in the very convenient bike shed and then forgot all about it the following morning - something I much regretted and had time to ponder over during the next few days! I also discovered as the days passed that touring capes are not a standard stock item in the modern bike shop. I had reached Market Drayton in Shropshire before I achieved success in my search.

The Accommodation List included quite a variety of B & B places and I was hoping to stay at two or three farms en route. In the event I stayed at only one - Greenway Farm, Wiveliscombe, where I was able to enjoy one of the best sojourns of the whole trip. It was a sizable mixed farm, but their dairy herd had been slaughtered because of BSE and had been replaced by 500 goats which produce milk for specialist cheese-making. My evening was spent firstly enjoying an excellent meal down in the village and then, in front of a huge log fire, discussing some of the seemingly endless problems which beset the farmer in these difficult days.

Around the Bristol area the roads were very busy and it was a relief to be able to turn onto the Bristol and Avon Cycleway, which is well surfaced and has a preserved railway running alongside serving Bitton, Oldfield and North Common stations. I had a little bit of trouble locating the Severn Bridge afterwards but I think that may have been my own fault!

Booking accommodation from the CTC list as I went along generally worked well, but local events such as weddings and country fairs sometimes took up all the available rooms causing me to change my plans here and there. It seems to be a fact of life that B&B

signs sprout on all sides when you do not need a place to stay and then melt away completely when you are hunting desperately for a bed somewhere.

Considering that I was following an official route during the month of June it was surprising that I met so few other end-to-enders. However one such was a fellow guest at Ross-on-Wye, who explained that his plans were very flexible combining the best of the B&B and Hostels routes. The only definite aspect was that if he did not manage to get home again after two months his wife would set out to look for him. (I only hope she was not too forgetful otherwise he may still be languishing on the road somewhere).

During the early part of my second week I managed to find time to look around Ludlow and also to stop at Much Wenlock and admire the Guildhall with its incredibly richly-carved Council Chamber. Here my pleasure was jarred a little when I was apprehended in the act of using the camera. I was suspected as being of the same ilk as someone who also, a few weeks earlier, had used a camera and had returned to burgle the premises two days later. I was glad to get away without having the camera confiscated!



A slight detour to visit Ironbridge was well justified because it proved to be a highly atmospheric place, especially immediately around the famous bridge designed and built by Telford in 1779. Mid-afternoon I arrived in Knutsford and was able to have a look at the remarkable collection of Penny Farthings and other early designs of bicycle in the Courtyard Coffee Shop. If you arrive at the premises riding such a machine you get your tea free! Another facility in this area which is free of charge for cyclists is the Toll Bridge over the Manchester Ship Canal near Warburton which

I crossed a little later on my way to Leigh in Greater Manchester where I stayed the night.

The next day I set off happily northwards again but was soon in trouble, delayed by a confusing network of one-way town streets as I was making for Lostock Junction. With some expert local help eventually I found my way through and reached Blackburn just in time for lunch. The town centre was very busy with a lively atmosphere but my attempt to book my overnight stop at Slaidburn was unsuccessful so I reached that village in the late afternoon wondering exactly where I was going to spend the night. As it happened I need not have worried at all - the village inn bearing the name 'Hark to Bounty' had a room available. That name apparently has nothing to do with Captain Bligh or his ship but refers to one of our four-footed friends who was so named and used to frequent the inn with his master over one hundred years ago. The inn is certainly very old and built entirely of stone as are the majority of houses in the village. Little has changed in recent years.



I had been hoping to stop next at 'Appleby-in-Westmorland but found that I could not do so because of the annual 'Appleby Fair' so I stopped a few miles short at Orton - not a very good decision. Breakfast the next morning was quite late and I was not on the road again until 10 o'clock and facing quite a long ride to Langholm just over the Scottish Border. I stayed for two nights at the Reivers Rest Inn and spent my rest day walking on the hills around the town. Mine host recommended the particular routes which were based upon his considerable experience in helping to regenerate the energies of the somewhat jaded end-to-enders who turn up on his doorstep. At least I survived the treatment!

The next stop, Peebles, is another attractive town with baronial-style towers on various buildings in the High Street. That evening I borrowed the 'Spokes' street map of Edinburgh and was able to set off the next morning knowing exactly which roads I had to follow to get to Princes St. and Edinburgh Castle. The city was very busy but it was only when I decided to follow the A90 out to the Forth Road Bridge that conditions became unpleasant.

After the A90 experience it was a relief to reach the peaceful, civilized atmosphere of my overnight stop at Cleish, near Kinross. The route next day passed between Perth and Crieff and I was able to stop and look at the charming thirteenth century church of Fowlis Wester. Inside there is a Celtic standing stone which used to adorn the village green but some thirty years ago was moved inside the church to preserve it in good condition.

Wayside catering facilities can be rather few and far between in Scotland and this is particularly true of the winter sports area in the Cairngorms. Several places in the area were advertising tea, coffee, refreshments etc. but, since it was the middle of summer, they were all firmly shut up and deserted. Having mingled with tourist crowds in Braemar I deviated a few miles off route to stay overnight in Ballater. At breakfast I was asked where I was heading for. My reply "Inverness" was met with the unnerving response "You'll no' get thro'. The bridge is doon." Having set the scene for a full-scale emergency my informant launched a succession of five urgent telephone calls on the subject of the collapsed bridge, the last of which, fortunately, established that the bridge had been repaired and reopened to traffic. I did not fancy a major detour on what was already a longish ride to Culoden and beyond.

On several occasions I found it quite difficult to get back on the route when setting off after breakfast and this was the case at Inverness where I had to seek directions to Kessock Bridge before I could get properly on my way. I was relying on individual map pages from the spiral-bound edition of the Ordnance Survey 3-miles-to-the-inch Road Atlas and these are necessarily short on urban detail. However, by this stage of my travels route complications were a thing of the past - the A836 would be my route for most of the remaining distance to John O'Groats. Most of that road was described officially as 'narrow road with passing places'. There was very little traffic most of which seemed to be German motorcyclists who fortunately were not attempting to utilize the power of their massive machines.

North of Lairg the route through Sutherland was gently undulating and from Altnaharra onwards it follows the course of the River Naver right to its estuary which is marked by an impressive golden sandbank jutting far out to sea. The CTC appointment at Bettyhill overlooks this coastline stretching away westwards into the mist. Inside the building a notice made it plain that I had arrived almost sixty years too late. Had I arrived that much sooner I would very likely have had King Haakon of Norway as my fellow guest because it appears that he was a frequent visitor during his wartime exile.

The last stage along the coast of Caithness is undulating and unremarkable although the sea is in view much of the time. There are no trees or mountains and incidentally nothing to obstruct your view as you suddenly realize that you are looking at Dounreay Nuclear Power Station (known as 'The Dome' locally). It was decommissioned in 1996 but you can still get quite a decent cup of tea there and the heavy water does impart a certain distinctive flavour. A few miles further along the coast is the fishing port of Thurso, which is very grey but has an appearance all its own. There I met a group of four end-to-enders - all work-mates. They had had to split their trip into three separate stints because they all worked for the same small firm in the midlands and it was impossible for them all to be off 'on holiday' at the same time for three weeks on end.

I understood that my destination point at John O'Groats was situated right by the main crossroads and I was quite surprised when, just meandering comfortably along, I saw the signboard of the guesthouse right in front of me. I didn't realize that I had in fact arrived as I had hardly seen any other building of any sort in the vicinity. It was at least dry when I got there after rain most of the day, but a few minutes later the heavens opened yet again giving my faithful steed a thorough wash down in the yard because the strict rule of the house was that bikes were placed in secure storage at 9p.m. each day and not one minute earlier!

I estimate that I had covered 1,050 miles in my eighteen days riding. Having luckily suffered no punctures or mechanical problems it was only on my arrival the next day at Wick station that I found myself in a problem situation. No Scotrail train could take my bike that day, the next or the one after. Only three bikes were allowed on each train. The only ray of hope was that the Post Office might be able to help. With boxes provided by Safeway I succeeded in packaging the bike well enough for transport southwards by Parcel Force. This arrangement saw the hike delivered home one week later in good condition, apart from a seriously damaged rear wheel. This damage was soon put right and did not detract too much from my sense of satisfaction in having completed the ride more or less as planned without any major problems. What's next? Who knows?



Everyday Sussex by Roy James

## Kringle Enterprises: 12 Days of Christmas Division – an Economic Review

In the present economic climate it is deemed inefficient to run any promotions at anything other than peak efficiency. Therefore, effective immediately, the following down-sizing measures are to be implemented in our “Twelve Days of Christmas” subsidiary.

1. The partridge will be retained (we have a positive policy of employing minority groups), but the pear tree, which has proved unviable – never actually producing the forecasted cash crop – will be replaced by an artificial one, thus providing considerable savings in maintenance.



2. Two Turtle Doves represent a redundancy that is simply not cost effective. In addition the matter of their romance during office hours could not be condoned. It has been agreed that one post be retained and hopefully the other can be shed through voluntary redundancy.



3. The Three French Hens will be retained, for the good of Anglo-French relations and, after all, everyone loves the French.

4. The Four Calling Birds have now become outmoded and will be replaced by the use of e-mail and an automated voice mail system, with a call waiting option. A full analysis is under way to determine who the birds have been calling, at what times, how frequently and for how long they talked.

5. The Five Gold Rings have been put on hold by the directors. Maintaining a portfolio based on a single commodity could have serious negative implications for institutional investors. Diversification, primarily into other precious metals, but also adding a mix of T-Bills and high tech. stocks, would appear to be in order.



6. The Six Geese-a-Laying are now seen as a luxury, which can no longer be afforded. A production rate of one egg per goose per day is indicative of the gradual decline in productivity. Three geese will therefore have to be let go, and the selection process will be improved to assure management that, in future, every goose it employs will be top quality.



7. The Seven Swans-a-Swimming is obviously a number chosen in better, more lucrative, times. Since their function is primarily decorative it would be better served by mechanical swans. The existing swans will be retrained to learn new strokes and possibly aerial display techniques, thus increasing their chances of re-employment.



8. As you are probably aware, the Eight Maids-a-Milking concept has been the subject of an enquiry by the EEOC. The quite blatant sexual discrimination has been questioned and therefore a more balanced male/female workforce is being sought, although some male applicants are unsure about wearing the bodice and cap. Also, some of the more militant maids consider hand milking to be a dead-end job with no chance of up-

ward mobility. We are currently looking into automation of the process which may permit the maids to try a-mending, a-motoring or a-mulching.

9. Nine ladies dancing has always been an odd number. It has been decided that this function will be phased out as these individuals grow older and can no longer do the steps. Taking on replacements would mean advertising the posts on an equal sex footing, and Nine Ladies & Men Dancing does not have the same ring to it. The other alternative, employing partners for the ladies, would involve extra expense and so eventual removal is the only viable option.



10. Ten Lords-a-Leaping is overkill. The high cost of upkeep for Lords, plus the expense of international air travel, has prompted the Compensation Committee to suggest replacing this group with ten out-of-work MP's. While leaping ability may have to be sacrificed, there could be significant savings as we expect an oversupply of unemployed MP's in the near future.

11. & 12. Eleven Pipers Piping and Twelve Drummers Drumming is quite simply a case of the band getting too big. By substituting them with a string quartet, cutting back on new music and doing way with uniforms, considerable savings can be made.

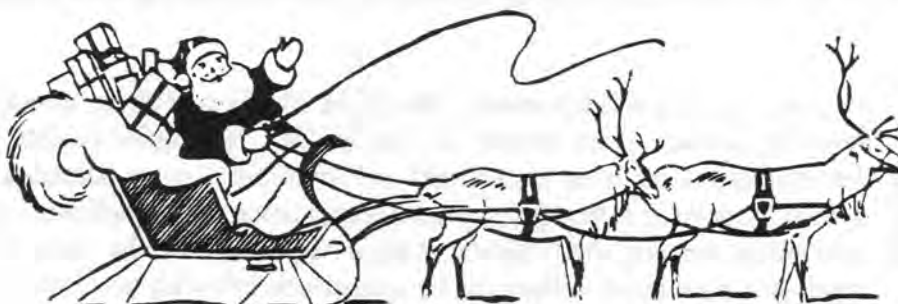


Overall we hope to see a substantial reduction in people, fowl, animals and related expenses. Though still to be completed, studies indicate that spreading deliveries over 12 days is incredibly inefficient. If we can manage to drop ship all items in one day, service levels will improve considerably.

We are currently still considering the lawsuit filed by the Law Society seeking expansion of the 'gifts' to include the legal profession ("thirteen Lawyers's-a-suing"). There is concern however that this could open the floodgates to other professions.

Even greater cuts may be necessary in the future for the group to remain competitive. Should it come to that, the Board will have to request management to look very hard at other areas. For instance, are all eight reindeer really needed to pull Santa's sleigh, and in our Classic Fairy Tales subsidiary are all seven dwarves really essential in the Snow White Division.

E. Scrooge (chief auditor)





## THE EARLY DAYS OF THE C.T.C.

by Bill Whiting



I've been rather busy of late and I have only just found time to read a copy of 'Cycling' that dropped through my letter box a little while ago. I see the date of issue is 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1917 (you can appreciate that I have a little catching up to do on my correspondence). As I was browsing, wondering if 'Neighbours' was the only programme that the BBC transmitted, I came across an article by A.W. Rumney, describing "an interesting history from the pre-pneumatic period". It made fascinating reading. I've culled a few points from it, to share with you.

In the 1870's, cycling was a sport which was well established. The skills and thrills of riding an ordinary were, naturally, were exploited by the more daring and athletic of the younger generation. Roads were poor - no steam rollers or tar macadam. Loose stones were just dumped for passing traffic to work in. The railways had taken the cream of the longer distance travel and the coach trade had faded as a result. Maps were scarce and poor. Road books were those of Paterson (not Frank, the artist) and Cary, and even these were out of date. Hotel keepers were scornful of tourists with next to no luggage, shallow purses, sweaty and dusty. Such was the lot of the cycle tourist of those days. Every town had its cycling clubs, but these were highly regimented and not to everyone's taste.

Feeling bereft of cycle touring companions, a Mr. T.H. Holding, a mature but still keen cyclist, wrote to 'Bicycling News' of 30<sup>th</sup> June 1876 complaining of the difficulty in finding suitable touring companions. This sparked a brisk correspondence in the magazine, which spread to its rival 'Bicycling Times'. This caught the eye of one Stanley Cotterell, a medical student at Edinburgh, as well as a number of others, including G. Lacy Hillier, Louis Meldon of Dublin and his touring comrade, C.W. Fagan. "Meets" were a feature of those days and at the second Harrogate meet of 1878, a meeting was called by means of a circular letter signed by S. H. Ineson (of Bradford) and S. J. A. Cotterell. It sought the formation of a touring club with the following objectives:

- (1.) The appointment of consuls to give information as to road surfaces to any member calling on them;
- (2.) the provision of fellow tourists;
- (3.) the giving of information by letter as to road surfaces anywhere in Great Britain and Ireland through the Consuls and by application to the Secretary."

The 'requirements' were concisely put as "members and consuls". Membership was to be strictly amateur.

The meeting was held in the Spa Rooms (Harrogate) on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1878, with about 70 in attendance. Tom Holding was in the chair. Subscriptions were set at 2s 6d (12½p) a year. Stanley Cotterell was elected honorary secretary and Ineson, hon. treasurer.

As you can imagine, Cotterell found he was very busy with club correspondence. He therefore started a "Monthly Circular", the forerunner of the 'Gazette' (now CT&C). The first issue was just two pages long, one of which was a listing of the 52 consuls. The other page consisted of a letter from the Secretary, who announced that he had no tours proposed for that month. Badges were to be had at 2 shillings (10p). Club notices would appear in 'Bicycling News', 'Bicycling Times' and also 'Bicycling' (a 3d [1½p] monthly run by W.

D. Welford in Newcastle); a list of tours would be published (those of 500 or 1000 miles in three issues if desired); maps were delayed a little "until really needed"; vice-presidents were appointed (no names); rules were to be revised; and new members sought.

In fact, the list of members was never published (the circular was not produced for a while). The membership list, which was eventually produced was in alphabetical order to "avoid jealousy". It contained 104 names.

The first AGM was held in Harrogate in 1879. Membership, by then, had risen to 718, of whom 100 were consuls. Clearly, too, the workload generated by members was too great for an honorary secretary (Cotterell almost sacrificed his medical prospects to ensure the club had a secure foundation). He resigned and W. D. Welford was appointed full-time secretary at a salary of around £15.20 per annum. During the first year a handbook had been issued at a price of 6d (2½p); chief consuls appointed; lists of tours and dangerous hills were compiled; and maps of Edinburgh and Newcastle districts published.

It may seem that much of the action and energy was in the north. However, the South was taken care of by E. R. Shipton, who had been hard at work all the time - a second Cotterell. The first council meeting was held in Newcastle in September 1879 and from that date, continued monthly until the First World War.

He may only have been overtly pivotal for the first year of the club, but it is significant that the rock solid groundwork put down by Cotterell has lasted over the years. It will also not have escaped the reader's mind that the CTC headquarters in Godalming is housed in Cotterell house and not Welford house. Welford was a very efficient secretary who consolidated Cotterell's work, but he was not the "founding father".

The Spar rooms in Harrogate still bear a plaque commemorating the formation of the club.



MY U.S.A. INVITATION CYCLE TOUR  
August 23<sup>rd</sup> - September 14<sup>th</sup> 2000

by Bill Earl

Having decided to visit my daughter, who had been working at a summer camp, I flew with my bike to Charlotte airport in North Carolina, intending to cycle the 130 or so miles to join her.



Before I left I was somewhat apprehensive, as I had written to the CTC for travel information on the USA, but it appeared rather vague about being able to cycle and camp. I flew from Gatwick to Charlotte with British Airways, my bike being all inclusive in the fare. I was thrilled to get a window seat since we flew over southern England, where I was able to identify many familiar places, then later, with the help of the in-flight route map, follow the coast of Canada, over Hudson Bay and down over mainland USA to Charlotte.

Our arrival was 4.30 p.m. local time. It took ages to get through immigration, but I chatted to some extremely friendly American fellow passengers, who were dumbfounded at my plans to cycle on the highways. They did however offer me 2 maps of some of my intended route. Once through immigration and having collected my panniers intact from the carousel, I spied 2 bicycles leaning against a pillar. I collected mine and a fellow Brit. claimed the other - thankfully both in perfect condition.

Getting from there out of the airport was not straight forward, as we had to be separated from our bicycles again while we went on the moving walkway and through customs. Once through "nothing to declare" there was no sign of the bikes. I was getting anxious, as all this was taking up valuable cycling daylight.

When I saw an airport worker coming through a door with golf clubs, I left the other bike owner looking after our luggage while I went to investigate. Peering through a window I saw our bikes in the back of a pickup truck. I asked an official about them and after what seemed like an age we were reunited.

While I was busy assembly my cycle, with the time for finding accommodation diminishing, I was aware of someone standing by me, and looking up I saw a woman in a pin stripe suit complete with suitcases.

"Where are you going cycling?" She asked. I told her my proposed route and she

suggested she looked at my plans as she herself was a cyclist. Having looked at my plans she seemed concerned about me finding my way through the maze of roads ringing the airport, let alone finding accommodation for the night. Before I knew it I had been offered a ride and a night's accommodation at the home of Linda and Rick Spitz on Lake Norman. Luckily I was able to put my bike on the park and ride bus which took us to the airport car park where Linda's MPV was parked. In the back was her bicycle -- a top quality US postal team replica. Not only picked up by a woman at the airport -- but a woman cyclist!

During the 15 mile journey along interstate 77 I learnt that she had just returned from a business trip to Amsterdam. Now 50, she had, as a racing cyclist, been a state champion in her day. She then used her mobile to phone her husband and tell him she had picked up yet another stray to add to her collection of two cats and a dog that she had rescued!

On arrival at their Lake side home I was welcomed in with a flagon of chilled beer, as the temperature was in the Nineties, despite being early evening. Linda gave me a short tour of the house and showed me to the guest bedroom, which was on garden level with French door was opening out onto the Lake. In the adjoining room was a mini-gym with more French windows onto the Lake and standing by them was Linda's training bike, a Brian Rourke racing bike, on a turbo trainer.

As she was still concerned about my intended route for the next day, Linda proceeded to phone around her cycling friends to try to get me a more suitable map. One friend came up trumps, though he was reluctant to lend it, so Linda suggested collecting it and photocopying it at her neighbours. So we jumped into Rick's car and did just that!

Their hospitality knew no bounds as, after a freshen up, I was whisked off to a nearby restaurant, where they treated me to an evening meal with all the trimmings. To top that, on the way home we called into a supermarket where they stocked up on sports drinks and high-energy bars for my onward journey. As I fell into bed that night, I had to pinch myself that I could have been so very fortunate to of met up with Linda, a fellow cyclist, and that all the Americans I had so far encountered were unbelievably helpful and friendly. All my fears seemed unfounded.

I woke next morning and, as I had been given permission the night before, I took a swim in the Lake, the wonderful warm water being just 15 m from the house. After breakfast I packed my panniers, but before I could load them onto my bike, Rick suggested he gave me a lift five miles down the road to the junction of highway 73 where I would be on my route, heading to Lincolnton. Before I said goodbye to Linda, who was going cycling with a friend, she said I had better have an extra large water bottle as I only had one, not having realised how hot North Carolina could be. She not only gave me one of her own bottles, but also insisted I take her pepper spray with me in case of any danger on my travels. Then Rick loaded my bike into the MPV and off we went. I tried to express how grateful I was for their amazing hospitality and such a brilliant start to my holiday. Rick said they would be more than pleased to see me again on my return in three weeks time.

Once alone on my bike, I rode along highway 73 towards Lincolnton. The road surface was wonderfully smooth without a pot-hole for the whole thirty miles, with very well behaved like traffic. As I entered Lincolnton around lunchtime I came to the town square and immediately noticed a cycle shop next to a Café which had a bike up on the roof, made out of rain water pipes and fittings; the name of the Café being "Fausto Coffee". I stopped to take a photo and went for a browse in the cycle shop, where I got chatting to

the owner who also owned the Café next door. He was very helpful and found me some cycle route pamphlets, and also re-filled my water bottles. Having bought my lunch and sat in the shade of the square eating it, I cycled on, heading for Forest City, though as the day was passing by I realised I might run out of daylight. By the time it started to get dark I had not reached Forest City, so I began thinking about where I could pitch my lightweight tent that Roy James had given me a year or so before. Along the road I could see a voluntary ambulance depot with a nice grassy area to the side and rear. I thought I might get help here. I entered the control room where three young fellows were sitting and politely asked if I could have permission to pitch my tent for the night. True to the friendly nature I had now come to expect, one of the young men replied that he would just have to check with his superior, which he did, and I was in! I was greatly relieved as, although I had passed 1 hotel earlier in the day, there had been no campsites.



My night was very peaceful and the next morning, having packed up, taken some photos, re filled my water bottles, and extended my gratitude, I set off again; selector Maggie first port of call being a garage where they served wonderful coffee at 45 cents a cup. Further along the road I went through a dairy farming area and also many white wooden Bungalows, and just like in the American movies they had verandas with rocking chairs on.

I dawdled onwards, admiring the countryside and reached Forest city about lunch-time. The heat and the weight of my bike contributed to my late arrival. I went shopping for my lunch. Forest city looked like it was stuck in a time warp. On either side of the Main Street were shops and up and down cruised pickup trucks and large Chevy saloons, the drivers with James Dean haircuts and one arm resting on the window. Up the centre of the Main Street ran a large grassy area with fountain, where I sat under the shade of a fir tree having my lunch. After lunch I browsed in the pawn shop having been attracted by the guns in the window. Noticing my British accent the owners tired me with questions about the royal family! Actually I think they knew more about them than I did, especially concerning Camilla!

Leaving Forest city I made a wrong turning and went about eight miles out of my way. I asked directions of a Hillbilly family in a beat up truck, who drew me a very detailed plan. They also asked if on my return to England I would send them a postcard, which I have done -- of the fishing boats at Hastings. Eventually I was on highway 108, heading for Columbus. By about 5 p.m. I was beginning to feel drained from the heat and stopped at a garage for a rest and a coffee. The young man serving took pity on me and made a fresh cup even though it was out of hours for serving coffee. Normally I never take sugar in drinks, but I had a craving for something sweet and added to sugar sachets to my drink. To accompany this I had a sugar coated sweet doughnut and then went back for more coffee with sugar and bought another to keep "behind my ear " for later on!

Even though I was only about 25 miles as the crow flies from my daughter's camp, it was up in the mountains and I was now getting short of time, so headed off with the same thought of wild camping again. I didn't really want to travel in the dark. I cycled on until dark and then began looking for somewhere suitable. I spied a friendly looking bungalow with a wooded garden and hoped I might be in luck. I knocked on the door and a retired gentleman answered and once I had explained my needs he gave permission for me to pitch my tent at the side of his land. It was now pitch black and I had to erect the tent by the light of the small torch I was carrying.

After another peaceful night and without disturbing the gentleman, I packed up early and moved on, and having used my remaining water for washing and cleaning my teeth, I made use of a nearby builders and was able to refill my bottles. I headed towards the mountains and having gone from ordinary terrain without seeing a cyclist, I came to a mini pass, where suddenly I had a mixed group of cyclists on racing bikes overtaking me, constantly coming by in twos and threes all the way to Saluda, where outside a Café were parked dozens of bikes. I spoke to a couple of the riders, who informed me that this was a 70 mile training route, always busy on a Saturday morning. After some coffee and two more sticky buns, I moved on to the last leg of my journey to Camp Greystone at Tuxedo, where my first necessity was a cool off in the wonderful lake.

Having met up with Helen we set about making plans for our next fortnight's adventure. We settled on hiring a car and heading for Memphis in Tennessee and Elvis Presley's Graceland, followed by a tour of the state. This is exactly what we did which was a great success and another wonderful experience.

Arriving back in North Carolina and having spent a night at my daughter's camp, I returned the hire car in the morning with my bike on board, then headed off north through an apple growing area and on to chimney rock, where I spent a magnificent night in a campsite by a bubbling mountain stream, where I was able to have a camp fire and brew a cup of tea.

Next morning I re-lit the fire, brewed more tea, packed up and headed downhill to Lake Lure where I had a refreshing morning swim. After cycling about 35 miles the road met up with my outward route at Forest City. Contrary to its name it is more the size of Hailsham! That evening I came across a sign indicating fishing, picnicking and camping that I had not noticed on my outward journey. I went down the dead end road about 1 1/2 miles and arrived at the fishing site. The family who ran it were very friendly, but I had to turn down an invitation to go to the local fair, as I had not erected my tent or eaten yet. I was the only camper, apart from their dog, five cars, some chickens and one too many mosquitoes! Typical of American hospitality I was not charged for the night. After an interesting night, I packed up and felt sad to leave the little dog who followed me up the camp track. Before I rejoined the road, I passed half a dozen or so wild turkeys, that ran across my path into the field. I carried on cycling along the B-type road until I came to Polkville, where I went into the general store just to admire the 30's style building. As in some other stores and supermarkets, complimentary coffee was brewing. Delicious!



As I had been invited back to the lake side home of Rick and Linda Spitz is eyed headed towards Lake Norman, passing various small rivers, where I stopped on the bridges to admire the wildlife, including the fish, some terrapins, and many wonderful butterflies. Arriving at the southern end of Lake Norman, the largest lake in North Carolina, I stopped to read the information board on the damning of the river and the building of the dam. By the time I arrived at the Spitz residence it was dark and unfortunately Rick and Linda appeared to be away as they had warned me they might be. I had tried phoning them on three occasions but was never able to catch them in. However, I felt confident that they would not mind if I camped in the front garden. I went next door to tell the neighbour and spent a comfortable night followed by a super swim next morning, then showered myself off with the garden hose!

My USA experience was completed with a leisurely ride passing through a country park, then heading off towards the airport. Dawdling in the park made me have to rush, but I need not have worried as my flight was delayed 5 hours. As compensation we were given a complimentary meal ticket. Not wanting junk food, I hunted around and was able to find a "pub" with catfish on the menu. A generous man from Alabama bought me a beer as I was down to my last buck!

N. B. Since arriving home, I have done nothing but play Elvis LP's and talk non-stop about this incredible experience and the wonderful country. I have even been dreaming about my return journey.



Ashdown Forest  
a sketch by Frank Patterson

## A DORSET DIARY

by Bill Whiting

We have finally made it! The house has been sold and Margaret and I have moved to Dorset. Quite a few in the Wednesday Mid-week Group have known our aspirations. It happened quite suddenly. After a year of trying to sell the Kent house, we sold to a young couple who wanted a fast completion. We grabbed the opportunity and ran. The weather has been as awful that I have been unable to ride out on a Wednesday recently, to say farewell to my many friends in the D.A. To them, my many apologies. The omission saddened me, but storms and floods (we were saved from that disaster, thankfully) dictated a more sheltered existence. Even our journey to Dorset was hindered by floods and fallen trees, but that is behind us now.

Why have we moved? There are a number of reasons. The younger section of the family has gone to Plymouth to work. Margaret's niece is seriously ill, with no hope of more than a marginal recovery and her parents need family encouragement in their adversity. We have known the village for 30-35 years and have a sturdy circle of friends. Lastly, we have left behind us the traffic and blood pressure hassle of the South-East of England. Oh, and it has some of the best cycling country in this land of ours (East Sussex, of course, has the rest!).

Cyclists who do not know Dorset say to me - "those hills!". Yes, hills abound, but so do the valleys, the views and the fresh air. In fact, I find that my average speeds are 3-4 miles higher and my endurance in excess of 40-50 miles here. A ride a few Fridays ago, from Rotherfield to Waldron, eight or so miles each way, was a real killer. The road surfaces here are better, the traffic less (on the lanes and byways), and the gradients generally easier. There are certain lanes with hills you soon learn to avoid. Near farm yards, the roads can be coated in a natural, low friction, material, but you soon get wise to that one! Your nose warns you!

The local D.A. is very active (even more so next year as organisers of the Birthday Rides), with Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday rides. Officially starting in Dorchester, the ride starts with, perhaps, no more than six riders. As lunch-time approaches one is aware of other groups tagging along. At lunch 50 is not unusual - just slightly more than ESDA's Midweek gathering. Small groups travel by train or car from Bournemouth, Poole, Weymouth, Sherbourne and many other places. Trikes, tandems and safeties are all represented at lunch. After lunch the small groups sometimes regroup and go their separate ways, just like ESDA!

I shall miss my many cycling friends. If any of you are ever this way, I should be pleased to see you. My address is temporary and we may have moved to something more permanent in 3-4 months time. In the Spring it may be wise to check with Jonathan in the local Post Office (next door to the "Three Horseshoes" pub) to confirm our whereabouts. For the foreseeable future though we are at 4, Rosamond Court, Burton Bradstock, Bridport, Dorset. Best wishes to you all and many thanks for the pleasantly memorable outings we have shared, mainly on a Wednesday.



## DISCONNECTED JOTTINGS

by Bill Whiting

In the correspondence columns of cycling (22nd Feb 1917) was a plea, by one, Maurice Selbach, for a supply of unwanted footballs for his platoon (or as he said "what is left of it"). Anyone who can apply should send any footballs to him at an army address. Maurice survived his time in the trenches, unlike many of his comrades. He returned to cycle racing, and then frame building, after the end of hostilities. He died in 1935, as a result of an accident in south London, while overtaking a lorry. I suspect a tram rail had something to do with it. Lorry breaks were poor and many tram routes were paved with wood blocks, terribly slippery in the wet, but they did dull the reverberation of moving trams.

And now for something different (sorry, Monty Python!). It was a Scot, Kirkpatrick Macmillan, that invented the bicycle as we know it. For many years, Britain was a major manufacturer of cycles for world markets. It produced many interesting and innovative designs (some valuable, some just crazy!). Over the years, collectors have gathered examples from the mundane to the exotic. Now, a number of these collections have been brought together as the national cycle collection, based in Wales. More than 200 machines are on display, each with a story to tell. Exhibits include the achievements of such stars as Tom Simpson, Barry Hoban, Billy Dovey and others. Collections have come from the national cycle Museum, Tom Norton, David Higman, Raleigh and more. There is still a great deal more to be done, with many fine machines in storage. A permanent home for the collection has been found (in the UK's very first specially designed car showroom -- an exhibits in itself) in Llandrindod Wells; but all this costs money. One source is the entry fee, but another important source is donations and the support from the friends of the national cycle Museum and national cycle archive.

The archive itself is administered by the cycle touring and countryside trust. It is the custodian of the historical records of the BCF, the CTC; the John Boyd Dunlop papers and the Alex Josey papers (a fascinating collection from the pre-1939 period). The archive is maintained and operated by the University of Warwick library, modern records Centre in Coventry. Its services are available to any genuine enquirer, free of charge.

You could become a friend and help to secure the future of this collection. Apart from knowing that you are supporting something of national value, other benefits include free access to the national collection at Llandrindod Wells and *four* newsletters a year updating you on the progress of the Museum and archive. By current standards, the subscription is very reasonable. For further details contact Andrew Millward, friends of the national cycle Museum and archive, 20, Reddings Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 8LM.



### Odd Cuttings

A number of 'dotty' days were suggested by the British humorous writer Miles Kington in *The Times* of January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1985. Mr. Kington pointed out that diaries contained rather boring entries against certain days, such as 'Early Closing Day in Lagos'. He suggested that one's own diary could be brightened up considerably by adding such days as **First Sunday after Placido Domingo; Stepfather's Day; Bash-a-Pom Day, Melbourne; Day of Miraculous Conception of Germaine Greer, Australia.**