

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.  
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 Turpin: Date: 25.4.00 P2C3

<p style="text-align: center;">DICK TURPIN'S WEEKLY GOSSIP.</p> <p><b>D</b>URING times of war it behoves us all to show our patriotism and love for our country. The Excelsior C.C. mean to lose no chance of doing this, and are arranging to turn out in strong force on the day tidings reach us of the relief of Mafeking—a day we all hope to be near at hand.</p> <p>The Club have a few Chinese lanterns in their possession for the use of the members, but as these are totally inadequate for such a big thing as this muster, I am requested to make the suggestion that all should themselves purchase one or two lanterns.</p> <p>It is hoped that every member will turn out. Three or four lanterns are all that is necessary, though, of course, thoroughly decorated machines will be welcomed.</p> <p>The Club have now started their run season, going to-night to Littlehampton. On Wednesday next a social evening has been arranged at the Lamb Inn, Angmering, riders leaving the Railway Bridge at 6.30.</p> <p>Ever and anon fierce discussion rages around the respective claims of Kirkpatrick Macmillan (the Scotch blacksmith), Pierre Lallemont, and others for the credit of inventing pedal-driven bicycles.</p> <p>This question can, of course, never be settled, but I think it will interest not a few to know that the driving wheel of the first safety bicycle is in Worthing, and now serves the purpose of a sign at Mr. Biggs' workshop in Montague-street.</p> <p>Mr. Biggs, who has been building bicycles for thirty-seven years, enjoys the distinction of being the builder of this particular machine, which was called "Lawson's Original Safety Bicycle." H. J. Lawson, the now prominent financier in motor-car and steam omnibus circles, being the inventor.</p> <p>Lawson at this time—1875—was a chum of Mr.</p>	<p>car and steam omnibus circles, being the inventor.</p> <p>Lawson at this time—1875—was a chum of Mr. Biggs. Both were members of the old Brighton Bicycle Club, and together they went on a trial spin to Henfield with the new machine.</p> <p>The fame of the invention spread to Coventry, and eventually the two pioneers of safety bicycles followed their reputation and went there too. Mr. Biggs still retains his agreement with the now defunct Tangent and Coventry Tricycle Company, by which he agreed to fill the highest position in their factory, a post he occupied for many years at the time when Coventry gained her new lease of life by becoming the chief seat of the new industry of cycle-making.</p> <p>The safety bicycle at the period of its inception was vastly different from the bicycle of to-day. The driving wheel was usually about forty inches in diameter, the steerer being quite small, and the driving mechanism consisting of levers, connecting rods, and cranks.</p> <p>Of course the machine met with a lot of opposition, the favourite nickname for it being "The Crocodile," but it marks the beginning of the present era in cycling, and we owe a debt of gratitude to the sturdy pioneers.</p> <p>All cyclists remember the case of a little girl who was fined 10s. for riding her diminutive tricycle on the footpath at Blackburn at the instigation of her father.</p> <p>Reading of this, the crew of H.M.S. <i>Barfleur</i>, on the China Station, clubbed round to pay the fine, with the result that they sent 30s. The parents, greatly touched, gave the money to charity, and in thanking the gallant tars, enclosed a photo of the little one, which now delights the generous sailors.</p> <p>The thousand miles motor trial seems to excite a great deal of interest. The first day, Monday,</p>	<p>the journey was from London to Bristol, 118½ miles. Yesterday was occupied by exhibiting the vehicles in Bristol, the programme for to-day being Bristol to Birmingham, a jaunt of 92 miles; whilst to-morrow will be taken up with another exhibition.</p> <p>Speed contests are to be rigidly suppressed throughout the thousand miles. The party seem to be enjoying themselves pretty well, a big dinner being held prior to the start. Mayors and other big men turning out to welcome them <i>en route</i>.</p> <p>Doubtless the movement will do much to popularise the new means of locomotion, which, when once started, should create a great deal of trade.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">DICK TURPIN.</p>
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## CYCLING.

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Lawson at this time—1875—was a chum<sup>ii</sup> of Mr. Biggs'. Both were members of the old Brighton Bicycle Club and together they went on a trial spin to Henfield with the new machine.

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The fame of the invention spread to Coventry, and eventually the two pioneers of 'safety bicycles' followed their reputation and went there too. Mr. Biggs still retains his agreement with the now defunct Tangent and Coventry Tricycle Company, by which he agreed to fill the highest position in their factory, a post he occupied for many years at the time when Coventry gained her new lease of life by becoming the chief seat of the new industry of cycle-making.

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<sup>i</sup> More normally "Lallement". I have stayed faithful to Richard Long's spelling.

<sup>ii</sup> I know too little of cycling history to query this, although it is very like a story which had A.K.J. Starley and another riding to Henfield on a side-by-side machine, which repeatedly swerved due to the difference in the riders' leg power. This version goes on to say that Starley, once home, sat down and designed the differential, which I believe Starley denied.