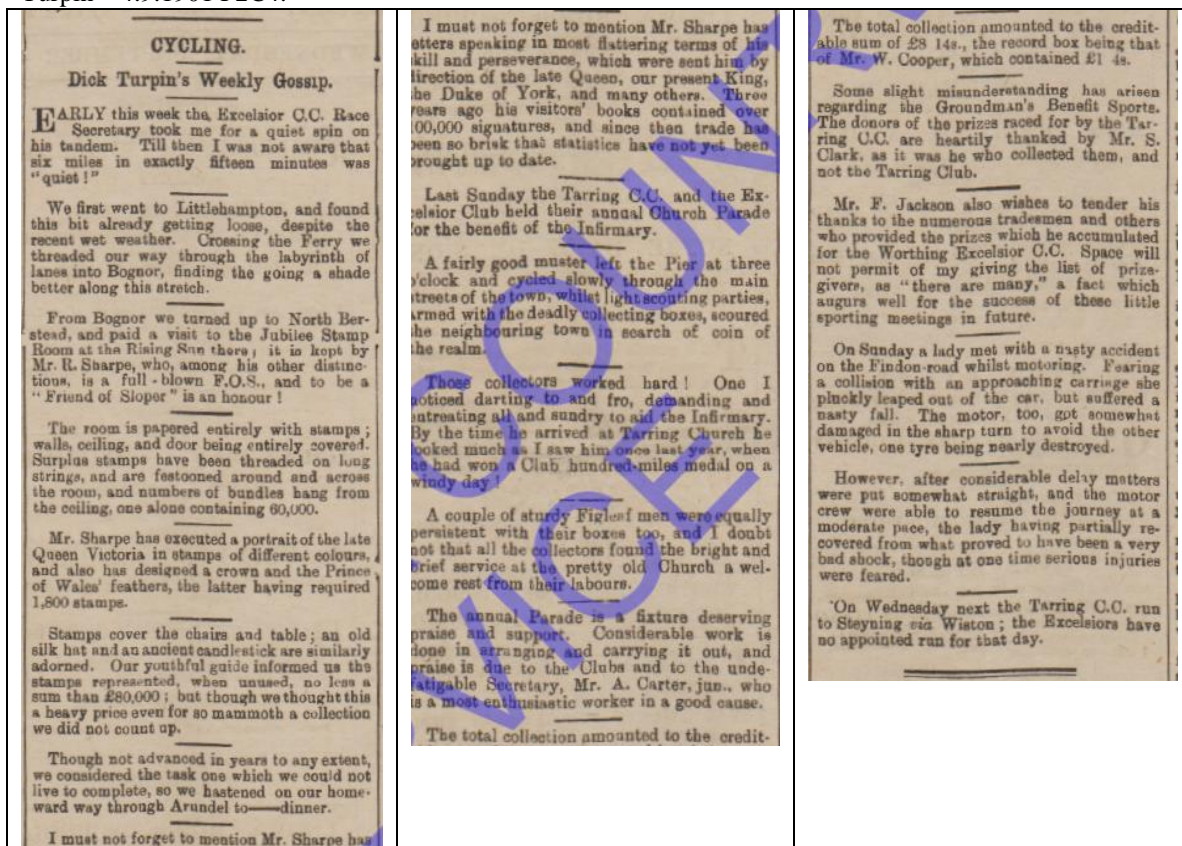


Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.
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Turpin - 4.9.1901 P2C4.



CYCLING

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.

EARLY this week the Excelsior C.C. Race Secretary took me for a quiet spin on his tandem. Till then I was not aware that six miles in exactly fifteen minutes was "quiet!"

We first went to Littlehampton, and found this bit already getting loose, despite the recent wet weather. Crossing the Ferry we threaded our way through the labyrinth of lanes in to Bognor, finding the going a shade better along this stretch.

From Bognor we turned up to North Berstead,¹ and paid a visit to the Jubilee Stamp Room at the Rising Sun there; it is kept by Mr. R. Sharpe, who, among his other distinctions, is a full-blown F.O.S., and to be a "Friend of Sloper" is an honour!

The room is papered entirely with stamps; walls, ceiling, and door being entirely covered. Surplus stamps have been threaded on long strings, and are festooned around and across the room, and numbers of bundles hang from the ceiling, one alone containing 60,000.

Mr. Sharpe has executed a portrait of the late Queen Victoria in stamps of different colours, and also has designed a crown and the Prince of Wales' feathers, the latter having required 1,800 stamps.

Stamps cover the chairs and table; an old silk hat and an ancient candlestick are similarly adorned. Our youthful guide informed us the stamps represented, when unused, no less a sum than £80,000; but though we thought this a heavy price even for so mammoth a collection we did not count up.

Though not advanced in years to any extent, we considered the task one which we could not live to complete, so we hastened on our homeward way through Arundel to --- dinner.

I must not forget to mention Mr. Sharpe has letters speaking in most flattering terms of his skill and perseverance, which were sent him by direction of the late Queen, our present King, the Duke of York, and many others. Three years ago his visitors' books contained over 100,000 signatures, and since then trade has been so brisk that statistics have not yet been brought up to date.

Last Sunday the Tarring C.C. and the Excelsior Club held their annual Church Parade for the benefit of the Infirmary.

A fairly good muster left the Pier at three o'clock and cycled slowly through the main streets of the town, whilst light scouting parties, armed with the deadly collecting boxes, scoured the neighbouring town in search of coin of the realm.

Those collectors worked hard! One I noticed darting to and fro, demanding and entreating all and sundry to aid the Infirmary. By the time he arrived at Tarring Church he looked much as I saw him once last year, when he had won a Club hundred-miles medal on a windy day!

A couple of sturdy Figleaf men were equally persistent with their boxes too, and I doubt not that all the collectors found the bright and brief service at the pretty old Church a wel-

come rest from their labours.

The annual Parade is a fixture deserving praise and support. Considerable work is done in arranging and carrying it out, and praise is due to the Clubs and to the undefatigableⁱⁱ Secretary, Mr. A. Carter, jun., who is a most enthusiastic worker in a good cause.

The total collection amounted to the creditable sum of £ 8.14s., the record box being that of Mr. W. Cooper, which contained £ 1 4s,

Some slight misunderstanding has arisen regarding the Groundman'sⁱⁱⁱ Benefit Sports. The donors of the prizes raced for by the Tarring C.C. are heartily thanked by Mr. S. Clark, as it was he who collected them, and not the Tarring Club.

Mr. F. Jackson also wishes to tender his thanks to the numerous tradesmen and others who provided the prizes which he accumulated for the Worthing Excelsior C.C. Space will not permit of my giving the list of prize-givers, as "there are many," a fact which augurs well for the success of these little sporting meetings in future.

On Sunday a lady met with a nasty accident on the Findon-road whilst motoring. Fearing a collision with an approaching carriage she pluckily leaped out of the car, but suffered a nasty fall. The motor, too, got somewhat damaged in the sharp turn to avoid the other vehicle, one tyre being nearly destroyed.

However, after considerable delay matters were put somewhat straight, and the motor crew were able to resume the journey at a moderate pace, the lady having partially recovered from what proved to have been a very bad shock, though at one time serious injuries were feared.

On Wednesday next the Tarring C.C. run to Steyning via Wiston; the Excelsiors have no appointed run for that day

(No Dick Turpin by-line)

i "North Berstead" is verbatim.

ii "undefatigable" is verbatim.

iii "Groundman" is verbatim.