

CYCLING

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip

Source – Worthing Gazette *.pdf files

At Worthing Local Studies Library.

Turpin. 14th October, 1903. P2C5

CYCLING.

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.

A CYCLING paper informed us last week that autumn has now commenced, and thereupon proceeded to make a feeble attempt to work up a flicker of enthusiasm on the subject of short spins, leafy lanes, and the usual etceteras of autumn riding.

Certainly the astronomical autumn starts work towards the end of September, and runs along—in beautiful indifference to the far from autumnal weather we are usually getting—right away to within a few days of Christmas.

But I must confess to not feeling very hopeful about those leafy lanes, unless the weather soon assumes an aspect more in keeping with our ideas of autumn.

Still, when the rain temporarily ceases operations cycling is extremely pleasant; the countryside looks its best, and the roads—vastly improved in construction of late—dry up with praiseworthy promptitude, even after heavy storms.

On Wednesday I found the road to Reigate none the worse for the heavy rains of the previous days; but on Thursday the Irrepressible rain-producing Durant sallied forth upon that precious twelve hours' ride of his—of course it rained as usual after twenty miles, but this time he came back ahead of the storm.

He says he has given up medal rides!

Next day we both went for a run out, and

Next day we both went for a run out, and the roads were in splendid trim once again.

We took the Horsham road as far as the turn for West Grinstead, where we struck eastward along the beautifully flat and trim road through Cowfold and Bolney.

Here we crossed the main London-Brighton road, and kept on our easterly course, which, not quite so flat, was able to boast of some prettily wooded country.

Along this road the Irrepressible pointed out Cuckfield Place, an Elizabethan mansion of fine proportions, which was the Bookwood Hall of Harrison's Ainsworth's stirring tale of that name; then we steered through Cuckfield, and on to Haywards Heath in time for dinner.

Thence southward to Ditchling, passing Jacob's Post, which stands near the entrance to the common, surmounted by a rusty and doleful looking rooster in iron. It marks the spot on which a Jewish pedlar was hung in chains nearly two hundred years ago.

I like to sit around and meditate when I see these things, but the Irrepressible was adamant, and dragged me through Ditchling and over Clayton Hill, where we managed to score over a motor cyclist who found the climb too much for him.

We then headed through Henfield and Steyning, and reached home just as our cyclometers had registered sixty miles, both of us anxious for another autumn spin in Sussex, when the Clerk of the Weather sees fit.

The Excelsior Club have already had under

consideration the question of winter amusements, but no programme has yet been arranged.

The Sussex Centre Council of the N.C.U. will meet in Worthing next month, and the Excelsior Club hope to entertain them at a light spread, to be followed by a smoking concert.

Later on there will be the annual Dinner, and it is possible that a dance may be held also, though the Club would not undertake a weekly gathering of terpsichoreans, as was done last year.

The Boxing Day Walk is again being arranged for, I am pleased to say. It is an event which promises to have a long life, and should go down to posterity as "Miles's Annual."

DICK TURPIN.

CYCLING.

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.

A CYCLING paper informed us last week that autumn has now commenced, and thereupon proceeded to make a feeble attempt to work up a flicker of enthusiasm on the subject of short spins, leafy lanes, and the usual etceteras of water riding.

Certainly the astronomical autumn starts work towards the end of September, and runs the long - in beautiful indifference to the far from autumnal weather we are usually getting - right away to within a few days of Christmas.

But I must confess to not feeling very hopeful about those leafy lanes, unless the weather soon assumes an aspect more in keeping with our ideas of autumn.

Still, when the rain temporarily ceases operations cycling is extremely pleasant; the countryside looks its best, and the roads - vastly improved in construction of late - dry

up with praiseworthy promptitude, even after heavy storms.

On Wednesday I found the road to Reigate none the worse for the heavy rains of the previous days; but on Thursday the Irrepressible and rain-producing Durant sallied forth upon that precious twelve hours' ride of his - of course it rained as usual after twenty miles, but this time he came back ahead of the storm.

He says he has given up medal rides!

Next day we both went for a run out, and the roads were in splendid trim once again.

We took the Horsham road as far as the turn for West Grinstead, where we struck eastward along the beautifully flat and trim road through Cowfold and Bolney.¹

Here we crossed the main London-Brighton road, and kept on our easterly course, which, not quite so flat, was able to boast of some prettily wooded country.

Along this road the Irrepressible pointed out Cuckfield Place, an Elizabethan mansion of fine proportions, which was the Rookwood Hall of Harrison's Ainsworth's stirring tale of that name; then we steered through Cuckfield, and on to Haywards Heath in time for dinner.

Thence southward to Ditchling, passing Jacob's Post which stands near the entrance to the common, surmounted by a rusty and doleful looking rooster in iron. It marks the spot on which a Jewish pedlar was hung in chains nearly two hundred years ago.

I like to sit around and meditate when I see these things, but the Irrepressible was adamant, and dragged me through Ditchling and over Clayton Hill, where we managed to score over a motorcyclist who found the climb too much for him.

We then headed through Henfield and Steyning, and reached home just as our cycles had registered sixty miles, both of us anxious for another autumn spin in Sussex, when the Clerk of the Weather sees fit.

The Excelsior Club have already had under consideration the question of winter amusements, but no programme has yet been arranged.

The Sussex Centre Council of the N.C.U. will meet in Worthing next month, and the Excelsior Club hope to entertain them at a light spread, to be followed by a smoking concert.

Later on there will be the annual Dinner, and it is possible that a dance may be held also, though the Club would not undertake a weekly gathering of terpsichoreans, as was done last year.

The Boxing Day Walk is again being arranged for, I am pleased to say. It is an event which promises to have a long life and should go down to posterity as "Mile's Annual."

DICK TURPIN.

i I wonder whether Dick is right here. The road eastward through West Grinstead leads first to Partridge Green, on to Ashurst and then into Steyning. To ride directly to Cowfold I think he and Ted Durant must have ridden further north and turned eastwards at (then) Buck's Barn cross-roads. That road is not flat – no big hills, but undulating, with a fair portion of dead ground.