

THE WHEELING WORLD

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<p>THE WHEELING WORLD. A WEEKLY SURVEY. Dick Turpin's Cycling Gossip.</p> <p>Our One-Act Comedy. BASKING in the sun, idly gazing across the Arun and away over the meadows to Arundel Castle, standing out sharp and bold against the sky, Bert Hales, Ashford, and I awaited the coming of the Excelsior Club.</p> <p>We were at Burpham, having ridden there by the road as per sign posts. At Poling, on the Arundel road, we turned to the right and bounced over the uneven surface as we pedalled up to cross roads where Highway Upperton years ago terminated his career by the then fashionable method of being gibbeted. Poor wretch!</p> <p>Then the rough track descended abruptly past an old chalk pit, and climbed with equal suddenness to the summit of another hill, whence it plunged recklessly into Burpham.</p> <p>Excelsiorite Gale, like us, chose the sign-posted route. But does not recommend it!</p> <p>Looking down the river, we saw the main body of the Club at a distant spot, where the easy young road—only twenty-five years old—from Arundel Station bent into view.</p> <p>"Another quarter of an hour!" said Ashford; and sure enough at the allotted time Captain Duffield and party were pulling up where we sat. An hour went quickly, after which tea, to the accompaniment of nearly a score of tongues. For Excelsior teas are one act comedies, in which each player has a speaking part!</p> <p>He "Knewed" Worthing!</p>	<p>He "Knewed" Worthing! Some of us discovered the oldest inhabitant of Burpham after tea. We were roaming along the top of the cliff, selecting wild flowers and enjoying the frequent glimpses of the Arun, wriggling away northward past Stoke's pretty little Church.</p> <p>"Worthing!" exclaimed the old chap, as we chatted with him on the cliff: "I knowed Worthing afore you did, I reckon!" And with many a laugh he recalled his boyhood escapades, many of them in Broadwater and Worthing.</p> <p>Greenfield and Sawkins, wanting exercise, took some of the ladies a-boating, but the walk through the meadows towards Stoke claimed most of us.</p> <p>Then as the sun wrapped himself in an evening cloud, and went to rest behind Houghton Hill, the signal was given, we formed up, mounted, and reluctantly left Burpham. A cheery "Good night!" came from a large round face full of smiles.</p> <p>'Twas the oldest inhabitant again, on the look-out for our departure.</p> <p>"To Get There First!" A quartette of Excelsior boys were recently riding from Horsham to Worthing—Duffield, Durant, Greenfield, and Standing. There had been a road race, and our boys—glad to have seen their London friends, Robbins, Pett, and Fisher, finish the hundred miles in very little over five and a half hours—were themselves setting a good pace.</p> <p>Three strangers overtook them near West Grinstead.</p> <p>Durant—remembering he had been following speedmen for seventy miles—thought of the coming climb at Knepp Castle, and decided to bring on the inevitable crisis—you know, good reader, what speedmen are!—before the hill was reached. So promptly sprinted!</p>	<p>Result—a spread-eagled field, and time to get up Knepp Hill; then a ding-dong race for fourteen miles, Greenfield, Standing, and one of the strangers getting away; Durant—despite previous ride—and Duffield leaving the two other strangers hopelessly in the rear, with little chance of finding their speedier companion again that day!</p> <p>Ah! these speedmen. 'Tis in vain I oesh the rambling E. V. Lucas: "To get there first! 'Tis time to sing The knell of such an sin." in his "Song Against Speed. They will keep on.</p> <p>Trying His Strength. At Arundel the other day I encountered Frank Melhurst. Starting well on in the afternoon, he had been to Fareham and back "to try his strength," and ridden the first sixty miles without a dismount! I wonder what this portends.</p> <p>After finishing some small tyre repair a day or two ago, I unwittingly commenced to clean my bike. Yes, fancy cleaning it! The trusty steed trembled nervously at the unwarmed experience. Then "Phew!" exclaimed the back tyre. It was too sudden a shock.</p> <p>And the tyre has not been its old self since I removed that three months' accumulation of road material. In two days three patches have been put on, the valve twice re-sealed, and an old patch re-fixed. The tyre leaks more rapidly than ever now! I must put the mad back.</p> <p><i>Dick Turpin</i></p>
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We were at Burpham, having ridden there by the road as per sign posts. At Poling, on the Arundel road, we turned to the right and bounced over the uneven surface as we pedalled up to cross roads where Highway Upperton years ago terminated his career by the then fashionable method of being gibbeted¹. Poor wretch!

Then the rough track descended abruptly past

an old chalk pit, and climbed with equal suddenness to the summit of another hill, whence it plunged recklessly into Burpham.

Excelsiorite Gale, like us, chose the sign-posted route. But does not recommend it!

Looking down the river, we saw the main body of the Club at a distant spot, where the easy young roadⁱⁱ - only twenty-five years old - from Arundel Station beat into view.

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Result, a spread-eagled field, and time to get up Knepp Hill; then a ding-dong race for fourteen miles, Greenfield, Standing and one of the strangers getting away; Durant - despite previous ride - and Duffield leaving the two other strangers hopelessly in the rear, with little chance of finding their speedier companion again that day!

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*"To get there first! 'Tis time to ring
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----- **Trying His Strength.**

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And the tyre has not been its old self since I removed that three months' accumulation of road material. In two days three patches have been put on, the valve twice re-seated, and an old patch re-fixed. The tyre leaks more rapidly than ever now! I must put the mud back.

Dick Turpin

¹ Dick Long is a little adrift here. Elderly Jack Upperton was tried at East Grinstead, found guilty of attacking the Steyning mail, was hanged on Horsham Heath, and his corpse returned to be hung in chains near the scene of the crime. This story is expertly told at Valerie Martin's "This is Findon" web-site, at http://www.findonvillage.com/0143_findons_mounted_postboy.htm and in a book "Horsham, a Millennium of facts...". Bungled and inhumane hangings on Horsham Heath were key in bringing about "the drop".

ⁱⁱ At first I thought this "new route" (constructed 1882) was the main road from Poling to Crossbush, but on reflection realised that it must be the road which runs parallel to the railway, from the bottom of the Causeway, to Burpham.