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RIDING NORTH

The Journal of the North Yorkshire D.A.
of the C.T.C

Issue 16 - Autumn 1987

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Editors: Anne and Mike Haseltine, 145 Greenshaw Dr. Haxby

Copy deadline for next issue - 29th February 1988

- WANTED - NEW EDITOR (S) -

This issue, the thirteenth with which we have been involved, is the last that your present Editors plan to create. Unlucky for some, you may think, but that does not necessarily mean that our successors (whoever they may be) will be unlucky.

The fact is that, apart from the first three issues which Alan Leng produced before he was called to higher office, Riding North has been a responsibility of the Haseltine team for six and a half years, and we feel that we are in danger of becoming stale. In this time we have both taken on other duties, not only within the Club, which limit the attention we can give to the magazine and, feeling that it needs new ideas now, we believe it is best to have a change of editorial thinking.

The task for the new Editor(s) is not formidable - after all, we couldn't have continued for this long if it was. The most difficult bit is trying to persuade contributors that the deadline date for the next issue really is just that, and not the date to start thinking about writing something for the DA mag. Of course, if our advice is sought by our successor(s), it will be given willingly.

We offer our grateful thanks to all those without whom we could not have produced thirteen issues - those who have supplied material for Riding North during our tenure - especially the handful of regulars, including our resident artist (whose desired anonymity we hope we have succeeded in preserving). Also appreciated are the members who have undertaken the task of selling - in theory it ought to be easy to get rid of 200 copies in a DA of over 600 members. (one member demonstrated that by personally selling 70 copies of a recent issue) but we rarely have seen queues! - and lastly thank you to those who regularly buy Riding North.

As no successor has yet come forward, copy for issue no.17 (deadline 29th February 1988) should continue to be sent to:

Anne and Mike Haseltine.

A SHORT WEEKEND

At 7pm prompt, eleven stalwarts, including one tandem, left York Station in near perfect weather with a slight north-west breeze. Stopping only briefly at Wetherby, good time was made to Skipton. I was third in the bunch to stop at the first chip shop, but even then Ray (Johnson) was already tucking in to curry and chips to set the style for what became a weekend eating tour.

It was Saturday, June 20th, and the North Yorkshire D.A. of the C.T.C. were having their annual 24 hour Standard Ride. The route John (Hessle) had picked was clockwise from York, through Wetherby, Otley, Ilkley, Skipton and Settle, using the A65 to cross the Pennines. Down through Ingleton and Kirby Lonsdale to Crooklands, then into Lancashire via Kendal bypass to join the A road to Windermere at 98 miles.

Ray's wife saw us off at York, no doubt hoping to get a fitter husband back on Sunday night. I think she probably got a heavier one. He was already planning his supper stop as we rode into a clear sunset.

There were no mechanical hold-ups, and, as the traffic naturally got lighter, we stayed together all evening. The pace being brisk, we steadily gained on the scheduled time to Skipton.

The chip bar proprietor offered tea and coffee and we all stoked up. Meanwhile it was discovered that a spoke had stripped in the tandem rear wheel, but without the correct size key not much could be done.

It was now quite cool, and all the extra clothing was donned as we filled in time. Going to find the town toilets I returned to find the group gone, and thinking they were ahead of me, I set off into the night. The main road over to my home county was familiar to me, and the clear still night allowed for an easy ride, first to Settle for a short stop before tackling the climb up Giggleswick bank. Then the drag past Clapham with the Forest of Bowland showing as a dark outline against the starry sky on my left.

I had by now realized that the others were behind me, and so I just potted along enjoying the hoot of an odd owl and the occasional rustling sounds of small hedgerow animals startled by my almost silent approach. Other traffic

was very sparse with just the odd car driver blinding me with full beam headlights. The group wouldn't be bothered so much, being more easily seen.

The road surface was much better than around towns and suburbs, but I did notice that those pairs of 3" square studs now planted along the road were more obvious. Maybe they are breeding! Passing a sleeping Ingleton, I steadily descended towards Kirby Lonsdale and the Crooklands roundabout to join the Kendal bypass.

At first this road is easy going, but then it gradually climbs and becomes the A591. With the lights of Kendal twinkling below and to my right, I could see the dark outline of the Westmoreland hills beyond. Then, beyond that, the thin sliver of a quarter moon appeared. It was now 2am

The village of Staveley was where I ate and rested whilst waiting for the group to arrive and dawn to break. The cyclists came first; the hum of tyres and the muted voices echoing down the street before they came into sight around a bend. All together now, it was just 4 miles along the road to Windermere where Stan, (Ray's Father-in-law) was waiting with the back-up car full of goodies. Knowing this, no-one hesitated in plunging down into the town. As I followed them with only the sound of wind rushing past my ears, the string of red tail lights looked very bright and rather eerie in the half light.

Once stopped, out came the gas stoves and in a short time hot flasks were refilled with more boiling water, for tea was the main favourite. Stan had also brought his "chilly-bin" full of sandwiches with various fillings and it wasn't long before the boxes were all empty. Ray complained that we were all a lot of vultures as he hadn't been able to get a fair share.

Apart from one service vehicle and a pedestrian, nothing stirred in Windermere as dawn eventually came, and some time had passed before we moved off to tackle the highest main road (1489 feet) pass in the Lake District. Starting at the edge of town the road passes through attractive Troutbeck, the wooded areas bounded by low dry-stone walls, But it is always upwards, and gradually the fells came into view. The early morning sunlight was kissing the hilltops and it was all really too nice to rush. Not that I was able to, anyway.

Regrouping near the Kirkstone Inn, snapshots were duly taken of views across towards Ambleside and the lake below. It now felt warm enough to take off a jacket, but we knew a cold blast would face us descending to Patterdale as the shaded valleys would still be cool.

Having drunk our fill of the stark beauty of the hills, we dropped down to savour the tranquil valley holding Ullswater Following a winding narrow but traffic-free lakeside road as the sun now glinted on the moored sailing boats, the only movement on the still water was of wildfowl.

Eventually leaving the lakeside we bypassed Penrith to head for Appleby and breakfast.

During the night the rear wheel of the tandem had shed a few more spokes, but it was still turning as the rush was on now for the "Little Chef". Ray was still hungry! Of course we eleven cyclists were the first customers. The manageress along with two teenage girls were kept busy as orders came for full breakfasts and then extras such as more tea, toast and doughnuts. The bill mounted up, and a rota was suggested for the washing up. Luckily we were all solvent. With plenty of time, and not really looking forward to the main road drag over Bowes Moor, we retired to sunbathe on the rear patio. I bet you didn't know that Little Chefs had one. It was just a patch of concrete surrounded by grass, but welcome to stretch out weary limbs and carry on gently pulling Ray's leg about his eating habits and the size of his breakfast bill.

I wondered where we could have morning coffee as others contemplated moving on at their own pace in smaller groups. The Sunday traffic was already building up on the busy A66 allowing only single file riding and it was agreed to re-group at Richmond.

However, the sun was shining and spirits were high now we were well over halfway and heading for home. On through Brough and Bowes I pedalled in company with John and facing an easterly breeze. I was glad eventually to turn southwards onto a country road stopping at West Gilling, a nice little village just three miles from Richmond, I enjoyed a nice cool pint with my sandwiches outside the pub. This hostelry serves meals and has pickled "bums" for sale. It's well worth a stop, especially after 173 miles of cycling.

When I eventually arrived in Richmond, Stan was there replenishing drink bottles and dispensing a steady supply of Kit Kat. He said he'd tried to fit in a little fishing en route, using his favourite rod in the lakes, but hadn't caught anything. I think he'd been too busy looking after cyclists to get much time to himself.

Northallerton was the next planned stop, at "Mrs Hesse's Tea Shop" in the Main Street, and very welcome it was. The best cup of tea of the weekend and homemade wholemeal scones with real butter and jam. With lots of spare time, we ate local ice cream and mulled over the steadily weakening tandem wheel.

It was all quiet side roads from here to York, which turned out to be a good thing. I think Andrew (Kirby) was mesmerised by watching the rear wheel of the tandem, as he started to fall asleep. The wheel had lost about eleven spokes and was definitely lopsided.

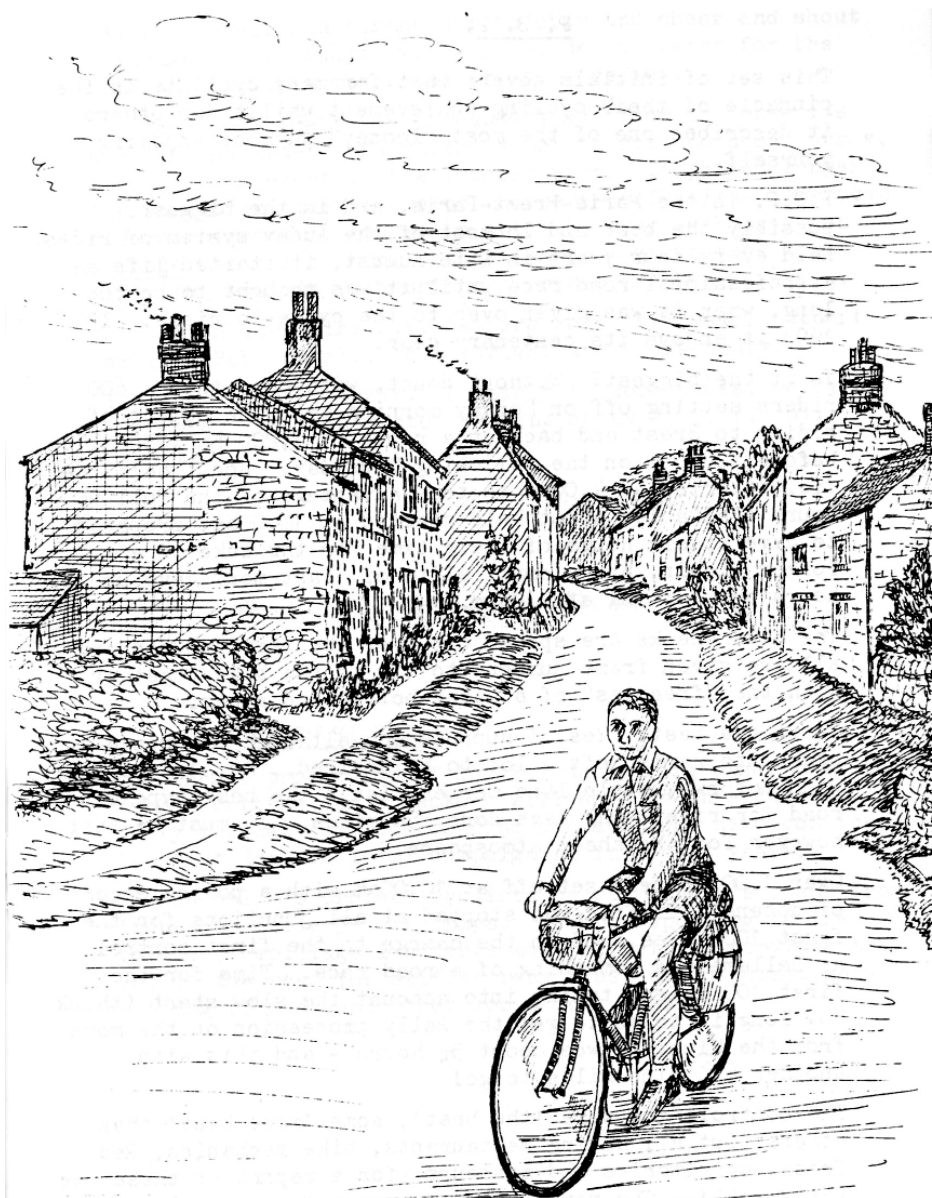
We stopped for another picnic (yes, Ray was still eating). Some of us decided to count the tandem spokes, then rubbed our eyes and looked again. It had only 36 to start with and now looked rather sick. However, some bright spark worked out the remaining mileage and claimed that we had enough time to walk to the finish.

Nevertheless we pedalled on until about nine miles from the finish, when there was a loud twang and a shout as a few more spokes gave up. With thirty-five minutes left it was decided to push the machine with its two riders. Keith Benton worked it out on his Avocet computer: 12 mph was a safe speed and Andrew, claiming the strongest right arm, did most of the pushing. It certainly kept him awake.

We cycled on amidst some ribaldry. Mike Firth told the tandemists it would be all right as there was still a bit of rubber left on the tyre sidewalls. The unlucky steersman struggled to keep a straight line as the wheel banged against the chain stays. Someone else suggested it may need a respray later. This had Iain Sellars, the stoker, anxiously looking down and wondering how far sideways his chain could whip. While we all joked the steersman kept shouting "How far to go?"

The poor fellows had to walk the last mile to Skelton, but we were all on time and I'm sure the whole effort was worthwhile. See you next year?

C.A.Dense



NUNNINGTON

P. B. P.

This set of initials covers what for many cyclists is the pinnacle of their cycling achievement whilst for others it describes one of the most "looney" ways of enjoying yourself.

P.B.P. is the Paris-Brest-Paris, and is the biggest, possibly the best and longest of the Audax system of rides. Held every four years in late August, it started life as a professional road race until it was thought to be too long, when it was given over to the cycle-tourists. In 1991 it enjoys its centenary year.

Is it the biggest? Without doubt, with more than 2,600 riders setting off on Monday morning with the object of riding to Brest and back on a route of 1,220 Km (758 miles) before 10.00pm on the following Thursday. About half the field started at 4.00am to take advantage of the full 90 hours available; about half started at 10.00am, prepared to give up six hours of their time for the sake of a longer lie-in, and a small elite of "Fast men" gave up 12 hours by starting at 4.00pm.

The bike checks are spread out over the previous day and all are given frame numbers to fix to the bike together with the "freebies" of a water bottle and a cap.

Is it the best? Yes, I suppose so, although the route back into Paris left a lot to be desired. An A1 type road with motorway style lane mergers isn't the best type of road for riders who have done 750 miles. It must be best however for the sheer atmosphere.

Over 1,000 riders set off at 10.00am with a police escort of dozens. Traffic was stopped at all junctions for the first 100 miles, and so the charge to the first control at Belleme was something of a road race. Time for the first 100 miles, taking into account the slow start (think how long it takes to get the Rally procession on the move from the Minster) was about 5¼ hours - and this with another 650 plus miles to go!

The controls too were 'the best', some 'more best' than others, but all having restaurants, bike mechanics, Red Cross, dormitories and masseurs (for a report on these see Bob Worall!). The route too was, apart from that last bit, the best, for in each of the towns and villages along the way the locals had turned out to

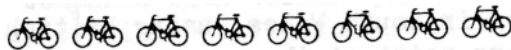
clap and cheer and shout "Courage" as we swept by. Many handed up water for the bottles and, in some instances, free coffee!

The longest? Again yes, because apart from the one-offs such as the End-to-end which is not an out and home course, the 1,200 Km event is the longest ride. It proved longer for some than others; one of the semi-professional American riders covered the course in a little over 44 hours - an average of over 17 mph. Other lesser mortals took just under the maximum 90 hours to average just over 8.4 mph.

Four North Yorkshire D.A. members rode this year. Stuart Hamblin, Bob Worrall, Wally Wright and yours truly.

Will they ride it again? Possibly in some cases, certainly in others. Will they stop talking about P. B. P. '87? Unlikely!

Keith Benton



BEAT THE BEET

The annual procession of lorries delivering sugar beet to York's British Sugar factory will soon be in evidence. Sadly incidents of overloading and spillage have continued to occur despite local campaigning in recent years.

Please help to protect cyclists on our county's roads from injury by these 5-6 lb lumps. Prompt reporting to the police of spillage incidents may yet help to convince the DoT of the need for stiffer penalties, and of compulsory netting of beet and other loose bulk loads.

PFH

AN ENGLISH CYCLIST'S VIEW OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In 1928 at the age of 14 I joined my first cycling club and in 1929 became a member of the Cyclists' Touring Club and enjoyed club riding and cycling around the British Isles.

In 1939 the second World War put a stop to my cycling and after six years in the army I returned to civilian life to bring up my family - cycling, unfortunately, did not play a part in those busy post-war years. I joined the motorized section of society, drove a car for business, earned a living for a while driving long-distance trucks, ambulances and driving instruction.

My views of the countryside in which I travelled were fleeting, cursory, and I had little time to "stand and stare" and appreciate my surroundings. Life moved in a faster lane and didn't leave much time to appreciate the finer parts of the lovely country in which I lived.

1973 saw me return to my first love - the bicycle. I gradually increased my mileage and went on my first long tour - 700 miles in South Wales, using British Rail to get me to my starting point at Abergavenny. So at 59 I was back re-living my youth after 34 years in the wilderness. I had re-discovered the only "civilized" way to travel - the train and the bicycle.

I was now determined to make up for the lost 34 years, and in the last 13 years have cycled in France, Germany, Spain, Corsica, Majorca, Minorca, Switzerland, Italy, U.S.A. and my beloved Ireland.

At 72 I decided it was time to visit my son and family in Western Australia - I had not seen my grandchildren for fourteen years.

Bill (my son) sent me the three tour leaflets of Western Australian Government Department for Sport and Recreation, so I planned to stay two months of the Spring in Western Australia to do the three tours - "Hills/Avon Valley", "South Coast" and "South West" and to ride in the "Prospector" to Kalgoorlie - a lovely experience which I'm sure other railways could do well to copy. The service was wonderful.

I have now completed my visit and returned home, having accomplished all the things I set out to do - day rides Mullaloo (where my son and his family live),

a trip on the "Prospector", the three cycle tours, meeting different people, enjoying the hospitality of the Youth Hostel Association, meeting the "Cyclist Touring Association" folks - the "over 55 Cycling Club" and all the Australian people who made me so welcome.

As well as the time I spent in Western Australia, I also took the opportunity to visit New Zealand for a couple of months cycle touring, and fitted in some time in Melbourne and Tasmania.

So I say to all those who gave up cycling "Come back, all is forgiven", you don't know what you are missing!

BILL MARSHALL

* * * * *

WEDNESDAY WHEELERS

York Wednesday Wheelers held their second AGM at Kirkham Abbey on August 26th, when a membership list of 26 was reported compared with 16 last year. Numbers turning out weekly continue to fluctuate but in recent weeks have averaged six. Arthur Beecroft, Peter Redhead and Tom Smith are now responsible for compiling the quarterly runs list, and Walter Rich continues to act as secretary.

The Section has tried various starting times with varying degrees of success, but at the AGM it was decided to stick to 09.30 throughout the year, runs beginning in Exhibition Square. A three-day hostel run to the Dales was planned for October and this year's Christmas Lunch will once again be at the Gate Inn, Millington.

The Section's policy continues as before - medium-paced runs of 50-60 miles with plenty of time to look at objects and places of interest en route. One pleasant feature in recent months - which will continue - has been the practice of meeting with members of the Autumn Tints when their wanderings lead them to a watering hole in the western half of the Wednesday Wheeler's territory. At one such joint gathering, at Hillam in July, 64 cyclists were present - a record!

York Wednesday Wheelers extend a warm welcome to any cyclists - young or old - who would like an occasional midweek outing in good company.

Walter Rich



THE TRACK OVER DEAD MAN'S HILL

AUDAX RIDES 1987

Because Harrogate Festival was held earlier than usual this year, there have been three separate series of Audax rides this year.

In April, as part of the Festival, two 200 Km events were run, one to the coast and one to Stokesley and Richmond. This latter course was a new one and turned out to be slightly (about 20 Km) over distance. Both events had dry fine weather but were bedevilled by a stiff westerly breeze. North Yorkshire D.A. had fourteen riders in the events, some after their National Competition points as Festival events were classed as "away" rides. Most unfortunate of the local members was Mike Firth, who found it somewhat difficult to climb Carlton Bank at the top of Bilsdale with a snapped rear axle.

Early July saw the second series, this time the hillies, the Super Grimpeur 100 Km on Greenhow Hill and the 150/200 Dales Grimpeur. As an experiment these were held on the same weekend, Saturday for the 100 and Sunday for the 150/200. The idea seemed popular with many outsiders coming for the weekend and we hope to repeat the idea next year (more of which later). The 100, with its difficult descent of York Follies, saw the only accident of the weekend with Dave Sanderson from Hull making contact with a Cortina wing mirror. Although he had a nasty cut to the head, he insisted on finishing the course - he had one last climb of Greenhow to go and finished with two minutes to spare before being taxied to hospital where he was detained overnight, partly because he told them that if they let him out he was going to ride the 200 the following day!

Bob Boyd answered a last minute plea from Touring Week organiser, Alan Pocklington, to organise a mid-week event with a moderately hilly 100. Although entries were not high, all successfully completed the scenic course.

The September East Coast Rides were held on a day which someone "up there" slotted in for us between a shocking Saturday and an even windier Monday, and although there was a fairly stiff westerly breeze, the ride was in almost unbroken sunshine. Nineteen members of the D.A. successfully completed either the 150 or the 200 course.

Many thanks to those who took part. Next year (and here comes the plug!)

Harrogate Week and the Malton based Birthday Rides follow in quick succession, and so the provisional calander is as follows:

Saturday,	23	July	100 Km	Super Grimpeur
Sunday,	24	July	150/200	Dales Grimpeur
Wednesday	27	July	100 Km	moderate hilly
Sunday	31	July	200 Km	Grimpeur - Moors from Malton
Tuesday	2	August	100 Km	Coast from Malton
Thursday	4	August	150/200	Bilsdale/Richmond from Malton
Sunday	11	Sept.	150/200	York - East Coast – York (but only if someone else organises - it's my Silver Wedding Anniversary weekend!)

D.K.Benton

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HERE WE ARE AGAIN!

For the second time that well-known York Section cycling family, the Hepworths, carried off third prize in the Family Outfit competition at the Rally on Knavesmire.

This was 9 year old Mark's last public appearance on his 16" Raleigh Micron, which is now aloft in the loft until younger brother Richard graduates from his Hann trailer.

Offers for the latter, from next summer onwards, will be gratefully received by Dad.

Mark is now whizzing round on an 18" Dawes lightning - his parents can't keep up with him!

"WHEEL YE NO' COME BACK AGAIN" (part one)
(the Hepworth Family on Tour - not again!!)

On a grey Whit Saturday morning, the Hepworth entourage pedalled to York Station for another fortnight "north of the Border". Nearly 400 miles and 14 hours later, we alighted, under the shadow of Ben Nevis, at Fort William Station. A short ride to Mrs Lee's B B preceded a sound night's sleep.

On Sunday morning we took the A82 north, turning west in 2 miles onto the A830. Near Corpach we crossed the swing bridge over the western end of the Caledonian Canal before heading north again on the B8004. Here "Neptune's Staircase" an impressive flight of locks, takes the canal down to its confluence with the sea. We watched the huge electric gates in action. The operator told us they were once manually worked by carstan - 126 turns to open or close each pair - phew! A BR Steam Special to Mallaig chuffed by as we set off again through Banavie village.

Ten miles on we reached Loch Lochy and followed its west shore. At Clunes the road became a Forestry Commission track - rough in parts, but a pleasant alternative to the parallel A82 across the Loch. Near Kilfinnan tarmac reappeared and we sped along to Laggan Loch cafe at Loch Locky's northern end.

The cafe housed an exhibition about the Caledonian Canal. Conceived as an 18th Century "work experience" scheme for emigrating crofters, it connects the chain of three lochs along Scotland's Great Glen to the sea on east and west coasts. We planned to follow it to Inverness for our first week.

Outside, a boat entered the next section of canal from Loch Locky. The lock gates swung shut and we wheeled across them to join the A82 for a short ride to Loch Locky Hostel.

Monday found us on the busy A82 again. It followed the west shore of Loch Oich, then crossed over the next canal section to high ground on the east side of the valley. A welcome descent brought us to Fort Augustus - another bygone military establishment which, like Fort William, once enabled the conquering English to keep the rebellious Scots under control! In the town centre, more locks brought the canal down under the A82 and into Loch Ness. We visited the local museum, then continued northwards.

A crowd of Wolverhampton Wheelers passed us at Invermorriston as we stopped for a breather. Then on to Loch Ness Hostel, delightfully situated on the shore of this famous lake. After tea we went down to the water's edge. The boys tried to bait Nessie by throwing pebbles in, but to no avail!

We left on Tuesday in a genuine Scotch mist. The A82 became more undulating. As we crawled up one hill, a descending HGV's tyre blew out. Having duly jumped out of our skins, we were stopped at the next bend by temporary traffic lights. Our northbound lane was coned off for ¼ mile for roadworks. We dismounted and pushed uphill on the "wrong side" to avoid the fast traffic on the remaining single lane. Near the end, our path was blocked by excavations. A kind workman put all the traffic lights to red and we wheeled the last hundred yards in safety along the southbound lane.

Back in the saddle, we sped downhill with frequent glimpses of Loch Ness through the pine trees. Then a rocky headland appeared with the ancient Castle Urquart perched imposingly thereon. We strolled along its battlements and enjoyed panoramic views along the Loch. No wonder it is a favourite spot for "Nessie" watchers.

A little further along the A82 we stopped at Drumnadrochit, where a local hotel houses the "Official Loch Ness Monster Exhibition". We saw a scale model of the Loch, archive and scientific data and some of the submersible boats used to explore the dark waters.

Now we left the A82 and took the A831 west along Glen Urquart. A gentle ten mile climb took us past Loch Mickle. After a picnic (on an ant's nest - unknowingly at first) we continued to the summit for an exhilarating two mile descent into Cannich, and a couple of nights at its hostel.

The scenic Glen Affric was our Wednesday destination. Two miles of level riding brought us to the foot of a steeply ascending single track road. We pushed up a good mile before remounting. The River Affric rushed through its rocky gorge many feet below, often hidden from view by lush vegetation. The Loch Benevie Dam appeared. Soon we were walking across its huge concrete wall, while water thundered from the hydro-electric turbine outfall below.

Two miles on, we found a peaceful spot by the lakeside and flaked out for half

an hour. Then a patch of blue appeared in the grey sky, and in ten minutes we were bathed in brilliant sunshine. A lone salmon fisherman sailed past as we prepared to return to Cannich.

Back at the Hostel we changed into our posh clothes and walked to the local hotel for a slap-up dinner. (Yes, you've guessed it - Jan's birthday again!)

Our first week's riding was to end at Inverness. We set off along the A831 on Thursday following the River Glass. Near Struy a herd of deer were standing in mid-stream. The River Beaully now took over, and we stopped at Cluane to visit a newly opened deer farm park. We walked through tastefully arranged paddocks where rare varieties of sheep, goats and cattle lived. One field had tame animals which we were allowed to stroke. On the steep hillside, herds of deer roamed in large enclosures, and the path took us through their midst.

We ate a moderately priced lunch at the park's cafe (though the venison pie was a little dear!) then resumed our eastward trek.

At Lovat Bridge the River Beaully passed under the road on the final stage of its journey to the sea. Along the A862 we came alongside the salt waters of Beaully Firth. Over the north end of the Caledonian Canal we went, then across the River Ness by a recently opened bridge which wasn't on my map. This confounded my planned route through Inverness town centre, and we only found the Hostel after much searching. Following a well earned nosh, a week's dirty washing went into the tub. And so to bed!

Friday was a day of rest. We looked around the town and took a boat trip along the Caledonian Canal into Loch Ness. On the loch, the Captain allowed all the passengers to have a turn at the wheel. The Hepworths duly did their bit, and were awarded signed certificates of seamanship (or lochmanship!) As we sailed back to Inverness the heavens opened up and rain fell in sheets. The Captain kindly radioed to base for a taxi to meet us, and we returned to the Hostel in style.

Tomorrow we would travel by train to Kyle of Lochalsh for a week on Skye. Read all about it in the next issue of "Riding North".

Paul Hepworth

THE C.T.C. BIRTHDAY RIDES

These are just a few personal jottings from my experiences with the Birthday Rides and should not be taken to be an historical document.

The Rides were started in 1970 with a view to gaining publicity for the 100th birthday of the Club on August 5th 1978. It was, as I remember, hoped to attract 100 cyclists to Harrogate for the Centenary Birthday Rides.

The first two Rides were based on CTC Headquarters at Godalming when some 50 members took part.

1972 saw the Rides based at Loughborough and 1973 at Bath.

My first involvement was 1974 when the Suffolk D.A. hosted the Rides at Ipswich. It was still a fairly low key event and I was able to book into the local Youth Hostel on the Saturday night without pre-booking. Now the nearest Hostel to the Rides is block-booked over 12 months in advance.

By this time the Rides had split into 'A' and 'B' groups, and this catered quite successfully for the then record number of just over 100 riders. Like many rides since then my other recollection, apart from the warm welcome, is rain.

The formula for the evenings had also been set with walk-about, slide shows and a Birthday Dinner. I think the dances followed a year or two later.

In 1975 there was a very large increase in the numbers attending. Whether it was the area of Shrewsbury, the very hot summer or just the word getting round about the good time to be had I do not know, but that year there were three rides each day and increased evening entertainment.

1976 saw the good weather continuing and yet another increase in numbers, which, considering the hilly and relatively unknown area around Alnwick, showed just how popular these Rides were becoming. If my memory serves me right there were now 4 different daily rides and this has been continued ever since.

1977 saw the Rides based on Salisbury.

1978 the North Yorkshire D.A. hosted the Rides at Harrogate to celebrate the Club's 100th birthday, blessed with the largest attendance and a lot of rain. This was meant to be the final Birthday Rides year, but so many had enjoyed

them over the years they just had to continue.

Family commitments and poverty kept me away from the Rides for the next few years when Ludlow, Melrose, Chippenham, Chester and Norwich were used. I nearly made Leicester in 1984 when 800 registered for the week, and can only regret missing this as all reports given indicate that this was one of the best organised to date.

A slight dip in numbers in 1985 when the Kent D.A. hosted the Rides at a very wet Tunbridge Wells.

Numbers climbed to 900 in 1986 when the Rides were based at Warwick University in Coventry. Mixed weather greeted me for my return to the Rides, but this time I was not alone. My 8 year old stoker, Charlotte, accompanied me. We had by this time been out on several all day club runs with the Easyrider group of the York Section. The plan was to try two full days on the 'C' rides, with part rides to start at lunch on the first day and to finish at morning coffee on our last day. Not being too sure how Charlotte would cope, no evening events were planned. I need not have worried, I managed to obtain tickets for the slide show, which was an easy task to sit and watch, and if I grabbed the odd forty winks during the show, no-one would notice. The Barn Dance was going to be a different ball game! Those tablets which are supposed to fortify the over 40's did not have the desired effect, and at 10.30 I had to persuade my partner to call it a day. I had managed to get out of several of the more complicated dances by volunteering to look after the door while the door person took to the floor with Charlotte, and that is how we came to be friends with Sharon of the East Warwickshire D.A.

August 1987, and Haddington was the place to be. Just 20 miles south-east of Edinburgh if you were not sure where to find it. A new cycling area for me. We planned a longer stay this year, but this got cut back a little due to work commitments at the last moment. We joined the Sunday run at tea after BR had conveyed us to Edinburgh. The £3 reservation fee for the tandem was not begrudged too much. The evening saw us being conducted round the town (pop 8,000) by several knowledgeable locals.

We had progressed to the 'B' rides by this time, and the 60 miles were just right for time allowed and undulations that abounded around every corner.

We had a very warm welcome at the Bed and Breakfast, and the Lothian D.A. put themselves out to find something to occupy us for all the time we were there. Superb scenery was there for the taking; three meal stops arranged each day, and just a little rain to make us feel at home.

We went north, south, east and west of Haddington, all on quiet roads and tracks. Evening entertainment was plentiful and varied, and several events sold out in advance. We sampled a different entertainment every evening:

Sunday - a talk and conducted tour of the town.

Monday - a Scottish musical evening showed the talents of the various musical societies to the best,

Tuesday - a fully booked Barn Dance. Considering how much energy is used in the day, it never ceases to amaze me how so many cyclists can hurl themselves into 3 or 4 hours non-stop activity so late in the day. I made the excuse that my daughter needed her sleep when the clock struck 11 pm.

Wednesday was the Dinner, which we opted out of and settled for the Disco. Similar excuses were made at this event - for me this time!

Two more days and nights were still to unfold but pressures at home forced us to return on the Thursday afternoon.

So in 1988 it is the turn of the North Yorkshire D.A. to host the Rides for a second time. After much discussion Ryedale (Malton and Norton) was chosen as the best centre as against Helmsley. This was to be my chance to put something back in return for all the enjoyment I have got out of the Rides so far.

After a shaky start things suddenly took off and meetings have been held at approximately two monthly intervals since January 1986. When you realise the task involved you can perhaps appreciate the reason for the hesitant start. It is not just about taking out a few cyclists on a day or two riding, but providing a weeks holiday for possibly 1,000 people - a task most travel agents would not wish to entertain or for that matter be capable of.

The first few meetings had a wealth of ideas, suggestions and disappointments, but slowly an overall picture emerged. The organising committee numbers a dozen or so - no one person has a specific job but volunteers to do whatever he or she feels most suited for.

At the time of writing (September 1987) the 24 rides have been selected; 72 meal stops almost tied up (3 stops each ride); 18 evening entertainments booked (6 nights, 3 events per night).

Accommodation is still a problem. We have booked the Youth Hostel which will cater for 80. We have arranged for light-weight camping at the Youth Centre and some 150 are expected to make use of this. Even more will be in caravans and frame tents nearby on a school playing field. Eden Camp, the restored prisoner-of-war camp, will be home (?) to another 150 or so. A few more will stay at recognized hotels and guest houses. That still leaves us to find 300 beds. But like everything else it will be resolved long before July 31st 1988.

So if you are an old Birthday Rides campaigner or thinking of making this your first you will be made most welcome.

Peter Gray

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WELCOME BACK TO BART'S

Ken Piggin of Leisure Books (adjacent to the Odeon Cinema) tells us that, following pressure from retailers, Bartholemew National Maps are now to be re-issued, following earlier notification of their withdrawal. The format will change, but the scale remains as before. Less popular maps will be sold as "double-sided" versions.

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ADDITIONS TO CATERING LIST

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| KNARESBOROUGH | - CosyCafe, Market Place |
| SUMMERBRIDGE | - Patricia's Pantry |

THE NORTH YORKSHIRE D.A. MEDAL SCHEME

The D.A's Medal Scheme was started in 1979, to encourage CTC members in North Yorkshire to participate in club events, especially Standard Rides (pre-determined course and distance in set times). Successful completion of each qualifying ride entitles the member to a certificate, and three certificates during the year earns a medal, on the following scale:

- 1st year - bronze medal
- 2nd year - silver medal
- 3rd year - gilt medal
- 4th year - shield
- 5th year - bar and ribbon
- 6th year - gilt medallion
- 7th and subsequent years - year bar for ribbon.

Since the scheme was introduced, over 700 certificates and over 100 medals have been awarded, and additional events have been regarded as qualifying events. The annual GHS Memorial Rides in April are the only qualifying event which is not organised by the CTC, and Audax events qualify provided they are organised by the NYDA. In 1986, it was decided to include the local heat of the BCTC, any NYDA member completing the course could count this as one of the minimum of three qualifying events.

In 1987, members had 15 events to choose from, starting with a 100 km (62 miles for those of us who refuse to join the Common Market) in 6 hours on 12th April. This was very popular, with 46 riders participating, their enthusiasm being rewarded by a beautiful Spring day.

Two weeks later, the "GHS" enjoyed a warm day for a change (the last three or four years have seen indifferent weather for this event) and 23 NYDA members completed distances of 65, 80 or 100 miles.

On 10th May, the local heat of the BCTC attracted 16 riders (10 from NYDA) and again the weather was kind.

A week later Fate intervened for the 100 miles in 8 hours ride. Seventeen started in heavy rain, on a cold grey day, which tempted them to linger too long in the warm haven of cafes, so that a wrong turning in the afternoon which cost the group precious minutes to retrace, led to a desperate race for home, and almost half the field failed to meet the deadline.

On 7th June, 130 miles in 12 hours presented an opportunity for the unsuccessful 100-milers to redeem themselves, but none was tempted, for it was another discouraging day for weather, dull and cool, though the four riders who took the plunge kept together throughout and had an enjoyable success.

The John Hessle Special is what some of us call the 24 hour event, for John has organised it every year. This year he chose 220 miles and a dry night and day towards the end of June. Of the eleven who started, all completed the course in time. (A report of this event can be found elsewhere in the magazine.)

The untimed Rough Stuff event in early September attracted 39 entrants (some of whom are alleged to have vowed "never again") and 37 of them completed the course. Rain set in after lunch, and the afternoon section (which involved "portage" here and there) would probably have been enjoyed more if wet suits had been worn.

The final event of 1987, on 4th October, was over a 50 mile course, and for the first time in the DA's history, entrants were allowed to choose, at the start, whether to ride it in 4 hours or 4½. Another wet Sunday, all the more galling after a dry week and a glorious Saturday, confined the field to 17, twelve of them chose the shorter time, though all finished within their limit despite a rash of punctures. (Two younger riders just scraping in by the odd second or two.)

Awards will be presented at our annual Social Evening on Saturday, 27th February, at St Sampson's Centre Annexe, Church Street, York. Tickets will be £4 each as last year, including buffet supper provided by Ian and Sandra Brownlie, who catered for us so well in 1987. Members and their friends will be welcome, but don't delay booking your place, as numbers are limited and a record number of members have earned awards this year.

OFFICIALS OF THE
NORTH YORKSHIRE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

President:	Norman Bottomley
Vice Presidents:	Arnold E.Elsegood, Walter Rich, Bill Marshall, Ron Healey
Hon.Secretary:	Mike Haseltine, 145 Greenshaw Drive, Haxby, York, YO3 8DG
Hon Treasurer:	Robert Boyd, Bywaters, Mill Lane, Pannal
Hon. Rights Officer:	Ron Healey, 6 Howard Drive, York.

Section Secretaries:

Ryedale	-	Mo Lake	-	Tel: Nth Grimston 324
York	-	Wendy Bowen		

The D.A. Committee would be pleased to hear from any member who may be prepared to play an active role in the formation of C.T.C. Sections in any other parts of the D.A. area, notably Harrogate, Richmond, Scarborough or Skipton. Please contact the D.A. Secretary initially.