

EXILES GAZETTE

No. 11.

MARCH, 1944.

OUR indefatigable Mrs. Rhead (Doris Craig to you Old-timers) has finally succumbed to pressure of work and housekeeping and has handed the seals of office to Mr. Bert Martin, who is now our Hon. Social Secretary.

We are indeed more than sorry to lose the official services of Mrs. Rhead; there is no need to remind you of all the good work and years of enthusiastic service she has devoted to the Club, in the pre-war era of happy cycling. We know we are expressing the sincere wishes of the whole membership when we say "Thank you, Doris, for all you've done for the club."

Mr. Bert Martin, one-time secretary of the Notts and Derby C.C. brings the experience of years of touring, club-riding and club administration, to the council table of the D.A.; also, he is employed on the "Derby Telegraph," so—well, you can see for yourselves!

In our last issue we promised to say something about the club's New Year Party held at Mrs. Kirk's, Whatstandwell—on January 1. The feed was scheduled to start at 21.00 hrs., but small groups of wind-blown, and winded (!) cyclists began to infiltrate into Whatstandwell around 8 p.m.

Incidentally there was a hell-of-a-gale blowing down the Derwent Valley that night, so it was quite understandable if the aforesaid winded cyclists sheltered in the Derwent Arms before tackling the fierce little slope over the canal up to Mrs. K's. By 9 p.m. 40 people had assembled in the long room. The "U" of tables laid out round the room with a fire at the open end made quite a pleasant spectacle.

After your humble editor and ex-soldier Johnson (C.) had appeared in the room (well, we'd only been toasting fellow exiles—not individually, of course!) the command to "fall to" was given, and 40 hungry cyclists enthusiastically obeyed.

Naturally, no one expected an elaborate meal, but Mrs. K. did us quite well with pressed beef, spam, beetroot, celery, cheese cakes, etc., and gallons of tea. At the end of the meal (Don was still eating, of course) I, as the only exile lucky enough to be present, said the few words everyone expects on these occasions, and, of course, fellow exiles were most certainly not forgotten.

After the tables and chairs had been cleared away, Mr. David Bateman treated us to an interesting film show. A travel film showing Peak beauty spots (includ-

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ing the Fish Pond!) and one showing a little of the private lives of the stars—film—was enjoyed by everyone. Next, ex-soldier Cyril proved that his army career hadn't impaired his memory, at special request, gave us several of his monologues—Albert and the Lion, etc.—you know Cyril. Anyway, Cyril's act went down as well as ever with both old and new numbers. After this, Gypsy Donald Rose - Lee - Pogson amused himself and us, by telling the fortunes, from cards, of several of us. We hope Don is not too skilled in this forecasting business, or else the recent glut of weddings in the club will be followed by an epidemic of divorces!

The fun now waxed a little more boisterously, several varieties of musical chairs being attempted but had to be abandoned as the furniture wilted under the blitzkrieg! A short spell of the old-fashioned "turn plate" provided a safer vent for the skill and cunning of the aforesaid exuberant cyclists. The fun was maintained in various forms until 02.00 hours, when the great sort out of ironmongery began. Eventually everyone did manage to find their own machine, and in happy groups Derby D.A. dispersed along the routes leading home.

Speaking for ourselves, the blind home was not the least enjoyable episode of the evening. Dry, empty roads, a star-lit night, a fast tandem, wind behind and one's wife as crew—what more would you?—we did!

And now a few words about the A.G.M. This was held at the Outdoor Clubs' Centre, Derby, at 14.30 hours on Sunday, January 30th. Thirty-

four members attended, all three sections being well represented. Geoff. Rogerson was elected chairman, guiding the meeting with his usual quiet efficiency. The regular routine followed; the minutes were read and passed, the hon. secretary read her report, which, considering the times in which we live, presented a satisfying and encouraging picture of club activities over the past year.

Ted Benton as hon. secretary of the Derby and Alfreton Section, presented his report, followed by that of Don Pogson as D.A. treasurer. Don revealed that the D.A. is comfortably holding its own financially. Next came the elections: Mr. Jeffreys, Derby D.A.'s G.O.M., was unanimously re-elected President, as were vice-presidents J. W. Hinds, Ted Benton and your editor.

Now came an interruption in the even tenor of the disposal of business. The retiring hon. secretary did not seek re-election this year. She explained that she had made her decision with reluctance, but now that the D.A. was as strong as in peace time, with the resulting peacetime quantity of work, she thought it would be in the interest of the D.A. if someone with more spare time and opportunity took over the reins of office.

After some discussion Mrs. Ingledew, wife of an old D.A. stalwart, Harry Ingledew (now serving with the R.E.M.E.) gallantly offered her services as hon. secretary for 1944. Mrs. Ingledew has recently demonstrated her capabilities by running, largely by her own efforts, the Burton-on-Trent section. In wishing

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her every success in her new responsibilities we rest assured that she will continue the good work of her predecessor in "maintaining" the club until the wanderers all return.

After the election of committee members the transfer of territory from South Staffs D.A. was formally ratified. This extends the D.A.'s jurisdiction over Burton-on-Trent and district.

"Any other business" produced the usual crop of ideas and suggestions, among which were—an increase of social activity and more frequent inter-section runs.

This interesting and stimulating meeting closed at 5.15 p.m. On behalf of the Exiles we sincerely thank the retired executive for their work and devotion to the Club in our unavoidable absence, and also express our confidence in the new officers that they will carry on the good work.

And now for a little more personal news.

We are afraid that the first note is not so good. We have just received the bare announcement that Bert Brown, an old D.A. member, has been posted as taken prisoner from Leros. At the moment of going to press, that is the sum total of our information, but will give what gen we can concerning Bert in our next number.

The list of Exiles has been further lengthened by the addition of two more volunteers to the Forces—Jack Wain, of Sutton-in-Ashfield, and Ernest Braener, of Burton-on-Trent. If the select company increases any more Derby D.A. will soon be

claiming representation on the the Imperial General Staff!

The longest letter we have received this month from the old regulars is from David Cross. He positively makes our mouth water with a detailed description of the 14 days leave he spent in Jerusalem and district—particularly the Christmas dinner! Nice work, David. Christmas Eve was spent attending a Carol Service together with a huge crowd of people, in the Shepherds' Fields at Bethlehem, and in visiting the Manger. During his stay in the district David also visited the site of the Crucifixion.

Reading of such adventures almost makes us wish we were overseas too, until we read another line which says, "A lot of time was spent just lounging and dreaming of home." May those dreams be quickly realised by everyone.

Another long letter comes from Jim Cole. He writes quite cheerfully, saying that the mail service has greatly improved recently. We are glad of that, Jim!

Jim is feeling quite fit and well as a result of early morn-P.T. and cross country running. The scenery in his present location is magnificent, "almost better than England," which from an Exile is praise indeed. Jim says it positively cries aloud for cycle and camera. In his spare time he has been learning French from a phrase book, and progressed remarkably—until he tried his skill on the French. He says they didn't even know their own language! He now admits he will have to make a fresh start with Basic English! Good luck, Jim, and

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what about trying a spot of German as a relaxation?

Eric Atkin is back in North-umberland again after chasing all over the country. Back again to wind, rain and moorland—mud-larking. Before returning to base Eric spent a pleasant ten days in Whitby, and now as he and his pals contemplate the 8½ miles which separates them from the nearest bar and barmaid, that ten days seems like heaven!

Cheer up, Eric, it still rains in Derby tha' knows. Harry Forman writes to us again from his old R.A.F. station at Newton, Notts. He is as fit as usual, but casually mentions an accident in the Lakes last year in which his cape was torn to ribbons—we trust that neither you or the Dawes suffered more than loss of dignity, Harry.

The only other letter we have is from John Inkpen, Corporal Inkpen, R.A.O.C. is an

old Century Club and Metropolitan D.A. member, stationed in Derby. He has been able to ride with the D.A. occasionally in the past, but is now robbed of that pleasure, as he only has week-days off duty.

As another cyclist exile John sends New Year Greetings to all Derby D.A. members, home and overseas. Thanks, John, we wish you the best of luck, too.

That is all for now, folks, but don't forget to send us a line when you can. We are all interested in each other these days, so let us try and keep the comradely spirit alive in the old D.A.

Derbyshire is just the same, and waiting for you.

G. S. F.

P.S.—Letters and copy should still be forwarded to—Mrs. D. Fletcher, 170, Wordsworth-avenue, Sinfen, Derby.



CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB—DERBY D.A.

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No 12,

JUNE. 1944

THE present state of expectancy and air of approaching climax prevailing at home and abroad (and which may fully explode before this script acquires the dignity of print) is probably the reason for the lack of contributions this month to the august columns of this copy of the "Gazette."

Owing to the pressure of the same events our own military career is much more hectic than of late, so if this particular issue does not achieve the length, interest and literary brilliance (!) of our previous numbers we rely on the goodwill and understanding of our fellow exiles in making our apologies and excuses.

We have had word from David and Raymond Cross, Eric Atkin and Jack Hinds, and a spot of nostalgia from Ted Benton. The editorial staff (both of 'em) were recently most fortunate in wangling a leave spent tandeming in Somerset and Devon, so, if time and space permit, we may include a few notes thereon for the benefit of exiles who may sometimes wonder what touring is like in this, the 5th

year of the war.

Writing on February 25, Raymond Cross tells us he spent a most enjoyable Christmas with "bags of stuff to eat and drink." Raymond, of course, is still in India; he goes on to say that the temperature is beginning to rise again and that he has traded his great-coat for a pair of shorts, and at times would like to get rid of them too. Judging from the cheery tone of his letter Raymond is still the wide-smiling lad we knew on club-runs three or four years ago. He expresses his good wishes to his fellow exiles and hopes to meet them all next Christmas—at home!

Brother David writes again from the Middle East. He tells us that when not nursing aeroplanes he is busy rehearsing the camp repertory company. They have already presented successfully a murder play and are now preparing that well known piece of J. B. Priestley "Journey's End." We hope that you realise, David, that on your return when club dinners are possible again, we shall expect something extraordinary from you in the way of after-dinner speeches, in view of all the oratorical training you are receiving out there! We are glad to know that you are able in some degree to combat the evils of boredom inherent in Service life by your theatrical activi-

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ties. We wish you luck and every success in the future.

Also from the Middle East comes the news that our old friend George Clapton, now a member of a docks operating company of the R.E.s, has joined the Alexandria section of the "Buckshee Wheelers." Nice work George, may you have many enjoyable runs with your new club. Your ability on rough stuff should prove useful now, George. We still think of you tackling the ford at Washgates way back in 1939—happy days those! We hope it won't be too long before you can give us another exhibition, but don't forget the spare pair of socks!

Eric Atkin sends us the tale of excitement and adventure we have come to expect from him. He begins this month rather thrillingly with—"It happened in the time of the snows—"and goes on to relate a saga of grit and endurance (and discomfort) a civilian would hardly think possible in this civilised land. He talks of snow every day for five weeks, of a tank broken down in the halling wastes of Northumbria, of five days without food (except what could be "acquired" unofficially!) and of sleeping rough through all this time—what might be called "soldiering in the raw." Through it all Eric sounds a cheerful note and views it all quite patiently and philosophically as just being part of the system. We congratulate you, Eric, on your survival, but also hope the play doesn't become too rough in your part of the world. We thank you for your kind regards and extend them with pleasure to all our other home-servers.

We have an indirect line from Frank Potter. He is now ground staff R.A.F. somewhere in Hants. We understand that although Frank volunteered for Air Crew duties he is grounded for a little while at least. Don't forget, Frank, that we would all welcome a few lines from you telling us how you are doing these days.

Speaking of the R.A.F.—Jack Hinds is no longer demobilised in Darlington but is knobbling A.C. 2s in Norwich. He didn't like the idea of leaving Darlington one bit after being there for nearly two years, but the R.A.F. officers and N.C.O.s threw a grand farewell party in his honour and showed their appreciation of his hard work in an unmistakable manner. Jack says the party lasted till 2 a.m. and that he went home sober, but personally I think the last part is just propaganda! His new area of operations should provide plenty of material for Jack's passion for ecclesiastical architecture in its cathedral and the stately churches of the county and adjacent broadlands. We also remember that he was interested in birds. Are there any nightingales round Norwich, Jack? Sorry! All the best, lad, don't work too hard.

And last, but not least, is news from the home-town. Corporal John Inkpen, of London, who had joined us on several of our club runs, has been presented with a baby girl—Valerie. His wife and child are both doing very well. John's only worry is that owing to the present military emergency he cannot get home to see the new member of his household. We hope for your

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sake John that the present situation soon changes for the better. Meanwhile, please accept our congratulations.

As space is running short, we find that we cannot tell you all about our recent tour in Somerset and Devon, but will limit ourselves to a few notes on the acquiring thereof. The preliminary procedure now necessary to ensure a trouble-free holiday is now slightly more complicated than in the happy-go-lucky days of the 30's. First the worrying and subtle stratagems one must employ to synchronise one's leave with that of one's wife—no mean feat, this! Then a week's pay is mortgaged by the postal expense incurred in seeking accommodation in advance. Incidentally, it is now almost impossible to obtain

digs by the casual "knock-at-the-door" principle of the aforesaid 30's. It is most essential to "centre tour" or book in advance if the holiday is not to be spoilt by the constant search for digs at the end of each day. Having obtained sufficient offers of accommodation a further fortnight's pay is absorbed by the deposits necessary to confirm these tentative bookings. All that remains then, before the holiday actually begins, is to pray fervently every night that the Army Council will not cancel your leave at the last moment. Thus is a tour planned in this year of grace, 1944. Fortunately for us, all our plans worked out as good plans should and we enjoyed yet another carefree leave in the lovely English countryside.



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CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB—DERBY D.A.

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No. 13

AUGUST. 1944

We are sorry you had to wait so long for No 12 but the delay was caused by circumstances quite beyond our control. If you remember there was a bit of a "do" on the 6th of June—a few of the boys started a new style "Tour de France," and in the preceding weeks of preparation even Derby D.A. Gazette lost its priority somewhat. Instead of composing these sparkling columns the editorial staff's literary bent was bent still further in translating good American into better English while shepherding Shermans and other useful knick-knacks into columns Jerry would understand, and apart from that, the printer-bloke was absent from duty for a fortnight, which held up publication for a little while longer—such are our apologies Gentlemen. We hope you will kindly accept them—thanking you!

At the moment of writing—D Day plus 20, we believe, there are no D.A. members riding in the "Tour," but we shall know more certainly as the helpers and marshals in Normandy become completely organised.

We have a small batch of

letters from our regular correspondents, including one from Jack Hinds, which in view of its general interest we shall use as this month's special feature. We hope you won't mind, Jack?

We haven't had a direct line from Jim Cole this month, but we understand from friend Ted that Jim has been seeing a spot of high (explosive) life in the Anzio beachhead. Of course, now that Jim and Alexander have administered such a thrashing to Kesselring and have chased him up the length of Italy, we don't know quite whether Jim is viewing the Alps with the eye of an expert low-gear tendemist or whether he's swotting up classical architecture from Musso's balcony in Rome! Perhaps you would write and tell us, Jim?

Several interesting air-letters have arrived from the brothers Cross since we last went to press. David continues well and fairly happy, but he remarks that the brief mention of the editorial holiday in our last issue made him exceedingly home-sick. Sorry, David, but let us hope it won't be too long now before you can put into execution your vow of rolling like a dog in the first green field you see on coming home! David has recently become a member of the Buckshee Wheelers. He has been unable to attend a

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run yet, but has been a thrilled spectator of a 50 kilo massed start race. He's also been to several mid-week feeds, which means about 40 one-time cyclists all eating, drinking and reminiscing as heartily and as vociferously as only real cyclists can. His unit's ambitious project of presenting "Journey's End" came to a dramatic end when most of the cast were posted away, but in spite of that David, we still hold you to that after-dinner speech!

Brother Raymond's address is still c/o R.A.F., India, an India which Ray says is not all it is cracked up to be. Against such disabilities as a soaring temperature, lack of roads and scarcity of bikes, Ray has managed to scrounge an iron of sorts—"at least the wheels go round when really pushed and the brakes work occasionally"—and gets around exploring the local district whenever he can. On a recent leave he was thrilled by a sight of the majestic Himalayas, including Everest himself—"a truly wonderful sight." Ray has suffered a mild attack of 'flu recently, but is quite well again now. He, like David, is looking forward intensely to the end of the war and a return to home and real cycling. Meanwhile he offers his thanks for the "E.G." and his best wishes to all D.A. members and to his pre-war pals in particular.

We've heard nothing of George Clapton for some time, but we have faith in the old saying that "No news is good news." We assume that he is still in Egypt getting browner and browner and perhaps a little "browned off" too?

Never mind, lad, you may be home soon.

Meanwhile the oid D.A. is still alive and kicking! Turn-outs on each of the Sunday runs, and there are three now, you remember, are averaging a dozen or more. It is grand to find 30—40 club mates at the lunch-place on an inter-section event, almost as good as pre-war days, and what a contrast to the dark winter of 1940 when we had difficulty in raising a half dozen! The weather here this summer has not helped us on our long runs, but some of us have managed to knock up a few "centuries." You exiles will need some training when you all come back. We'll have to start with "doddles" and gradually work up!

And now a special item—
pause for fanfare!

We are proud to present Derby D.A. C.T.C. cycling and radio stars—Mrs. G. S. Fletcher, ex-hon. sec. and co-editor of the "E.G.," and Mr. Jeffreys, the club president. Yes really. They were on the air for a few minutes in the Home Flash feature of the Forces Programme on Wednesday and Friday, June 28-30. Derbyshire was the subject of the Home Flash that week. Mrs. Fletcher and Mr. Jeffreys talked for a few minutes with Phillip Wade, the compère, about their favourite cycling districts, Mr. Jeffreys choosing the west—Radbourne to Uttoxeter, while Mrs. Fletcher preferred the dales—Dovedale, the Manifold Valley and Miller's Dale. Mention was also made of two of our favourite tea-places, Mrs. Higton's, at Tissington, and Mrs.

Kirk's, at Whatstandwell. We are sure that these names must revive many pleasant memories for old members.

The voices of both our commentators came through clearly and distinctly, and gave at least one listener a thrill while hearing the Club and its stamping ground being boosted as they deserved. We hope the majority of our exiles heard the broadcast and enjoyed it as much as we did.

After nearly three years' service in England, Jack Hinds has been posted abroad—to the Azores, adding yet one more name to our growing list of members overseas. The regimentation and discipline of the R.A.F. Police have obviously not impaired the running of Rotavia's pen. We print below extracts from his first letter from Mid-Atlantic, which we think will be of interest to exiles in other foreign parts.

He begins:—"It is not such a bad spot really (the Azores) though a trifle warm to a Peaklander, but it is quite interesting to poke one's nose, even a perspiring nose, into strange places. In case you have forgotten your geography I will remind you that the Azores are a group of islands about the middle of the N. Atlantic and belong to Portugal. It is not so unbearably hot as the true tropics, nor so dry as the deserts, and, of course, it is a long way from

the war, if that is any advantage, which I doubt! There is not any black-out or rationing, and fruit is fairly plentiful, such as bananas, lemons and pineapples. Pineapples cost about 2s. The standard of living of the peasantry is very low indeed. They work long, hard days for sums which seem fantastically small to us. The inhabitants of these islands are intensely devout Roman Catholics and they take their religion very seriously. They are exceedingly keen on processions with the regalia and the panoply of ceremony. The people are a friendly folk and seem to hit it off with the British very well. There are occasional bull-fights, and they have a cinema in the principal town and port. A very interesting custom is observed at this cinema. Apart from the recurring intervals in the programme while the reel is re-wound on the single projector, they have a half-time break of 15 minutes during which all the patrons go out to the local wineshop! When the performance is about to be resumed the commissionaire goes along to the wineshop, rounds up his clients, bringing them back to the show again.

"The island I'm on is called Terciera, the largest of the group of nine. It is very mountainous, the highest point being well over 3,000 feet. There's no C.T.C. here! In

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fact I should think cycling would be impossible, at least to be pleasurable. Roads are few and in the most primitive condition, rough stony and inches deep in dust, proof of the volcanic nature of the islands. There is a lot that is new and strange to me, naturally, but I hope to get gradually "genned up" on the locality in general."

Jack regrets not taking his camera with him as photography is practically unrestricted and the whole group of islands are highly photographic. He reports that the mail service is quite good, all mail being handled by the air authorities. It takes on an average nine days inward and just a little longer outward, due to the inevitable delay in the censorship.

Thanks, Jack, for a very interesting letter. We wish you every success in your new appointment.

May we state again that the idea behind the "E.G." is to provide a means of contact between exiled members of the D.A. and the folks still at home, and although it is not

an elaborate effort we like to think it does a little towards maintaining a continual fellowship among exiled or home-based members in or out of the Forces. To do this we must have copy, so we appeal to all the membership to send in your news, views and gossip, and let us, and through us your pals, know where you are and what you are doing in between your day-dreams of where your first tour is going to be when the happy days of peace return once again.

May that re-union dinner be not too far distant.

So-long Pals,

G. S. F.

We have received a very interesting letter from T. Benton. It is with real regret that we cannot publish same owing to the modest proportions of our "E. G.", dictated by shortage of paper, labour, etc., and to the lengthy nature of the letter.

Sorry, Ted, I am sure the Exiles would have enjoyed reading your intended contribution as much as we did.



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 No. 14 OCTOBER, 1944.

Hello, Folks! Here we are again with more "News from the Universe"—almost. There is rather more than usual this time, too, speaking Editorially. We are delighted with this spate of news from fellow wanderers, but speaking personally, we found it a helluva job to compose the flood of copy into printed form. No, it didn't arrive unprintable in the way you are thinking!).

We are becoming almost ashamed of beginning this Gazette with an apology, so we will say no more than to remind you that the E.G. is written up W.O.A.S. and you overseas wallahs at least, will know what that means at times. As much as we enjoy writing up the E.G. and reading the letters you send in, we sincerely hope there won't be need for many more issues—unless for home consumption, when we can all read the "D.A. Gazette" by our own firesides. May that happy time be not too far distant for us all. Amen!

Meanwhile, here is the Gen for this month:—

Jack Hinds is probably our most regular correspondent. He writes again from the Azores, where he seems to be enjoying himself mightily. Jack is now living under canvas in the heart of the country, and in his letter speculates on the pleasures of a

camping holiday after the war, saying that he is certainly having a good training in the arts thereof just now. He adds: "Shorts are the wear here—with open-necked shirts. In fact, quite the 'on tour' feeling prevails, except that one has'n't got certain other of the usual attributes of holiday touring, such, for instance, as a good lightweight, Barts Half Inches, and the Handbook. At the risk of offending our inveterate camping friends (if any) may we gently remind "Rotavia" that camping in the sub-tropical Azores with all the amenities kindly laid on by a benevolent R.A.F.—and "camping" with a lightweight tent in English summer weather provided by the Lake District—are two very different projects. Still, no doubt tha'll be prepared to find out for thes'en lad? Good luck to you, Jack, in all your camping, anyway.

We are more than pleased to hear again from one of our oldest Exiles—George Clapton. George has spent two months in hospital in Egypt, but at the time of writing he was hoping to be out on his feet again pretty quickly. He has been able to contact the Mariut Wheelers, but although the usual exigencies have prevented him attending any runs as yet, George has spent several very pleasant Sunday evenings at their weekly club

gatherings, where members meet to yarn and talk over their peace-time tours and exploits. We can imagine the nature of those yarns . . .

"Where two or three cyclists are gathered together . . . !"

All the one-time cyclists who could attend, thoroughly enjoyed a thrilling massed start race staged near Alex. on July 9th. George tells us that the race was exceedingly tough, every lap included two hills and several "S" bends, and was for a distance of thirty-five miles. In spite of the unusual conditions and strong Egyptian field, boys from England almost swept the prize board. He writes very enthusiastically about this massed start business, those of us who remember George's proclivity for hills and rough stuff in the good old days, will have to grasp our 'bars firmer still when George returns to the pack again. The only bike he has been able to scrounge up to now is a dreadnought, minus pump, tools, or brakes, so his wanderings have been rather restricted, but when he has managed to "acquire" a decent mount, George intends to thoroughly explore the surrounding country.

George sends his good wishes to all his old pals, and says how much he is looking forward to being with them again—which goes for us all, to you, George.

Raymond Cross also sends news of a cycling club from India. The club was formed apparently by an army sergeant, on the lines of the well known Buckshee Wheelers of Egypt. Ray has now obtained a good bike, and has become a member of the new

club. When, as Ray puts it, "the lousy Monsoon Season is over, and the knee deep mud dries up," they hope to begin their expeditions into the surrounding country. In his billet are men from Derby, Nottingham, Ilkeston, and Long Eaton, so he is able to swap yarns and tales of old days and home districts.

We are pleased to hear of you getting a decent bike at last, Ray. Keep cultivating that big smile of yours and it won't be long before we shall be reminiscing together again "up the road" somewhere in good old Derbyshire.

Yet another member has joined the "Buckshee Wheelers" in the Middle East— young Dick Taylor, who is now an Air Gunner. He has been on several club runs and seems to be enjoying himself quite well though he misses his weekly "Cycling." Never mind lad, think of the grand time you'll have reading all the back numbers when you come home!

Another letter has just come in from our original Exile Herbert Arnold this time from Italy. After Herbert's long spell amidst the sandy wastes of the Middle East he has found the Italian skies and countryside a profound change—and not all that he was led to expect—excepting the Senorinors! Herbert infers that Italy is quite attractive viewed in the distance, but on closer acquaintance it smells rather badly, and the dirt is too noticeable. He's had a week's leave recently, but quickly found that he couldn't go far, as it was impossible to get a meal away from the Army. Jerry had thoroughly cleaned up the

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country on his trek to the North. What he couldn't carry away he had destroyed. He goes on to say: "At present we are in some marvellous country, blue mountains towering up into the sky with wooded valleys stretching far below. One would hardly think there was a war on except that every now and again a shell screams overhead to make yet another hole in the Italian countryside." He says there are a few good bikes about, but he is not much interested in them as he has no time for pleasure! Herbert ends cheerfully with a hope that he will be home again shortly, and sends his regards to the old D.A.

We have yet another member moved to Italy—David Cross, also late M.E.F. After stagnating so long in one place David feels he really is on the way home now—via Italy. He also writes very appreciatively of the wonderful scenery, saying it explains why Italy has produced so many famous artists. He continues: "The roads are truly atrocious, and put even rough-stuffing Blighty in the shade! Valuing my spine I haven't done any cycling yet." On his travels David has seen Taranto, Bari, and Naples, the latter being quite nice, but he confesses he personally was rather disappointed in it. In his opinion the surrounding country flatters it, with Vesuvius in the background; when he saw it the pot wasn't boiling. David promises that he will have plenty of snaps to show and tales to spin when he returns. The whole of David's letter is most interesting but lack of space prevents us quoting as much of it as

we would like. Sorry, David. As always, David wishes the Club every success, and the membership plenty of good cycling.

In our last Gazette we wrote that we thought none of our members were fighting in France, but we have since had a letter from Eric Atkin telling us he is now across the Channel. Eric is not particularly thrilled with the parts of France he has seen as yet. He writes very forcibly that "it stinks," and writes longingly of the fresh open air of Derbyshire and of the joys of a houseboat on the Trent. Eric remarks rather wryly that he is spending on an average about 10 francs a week, and there is just nothing to spend money on, and that the cash he is saving will help to keep him when this job is finished! He ends on a more cheerful note by saying, "Still, with all the good news pouring in maybe we shall be home next year. I hope so, as I've had enough wandering, and long for the Sunday runs which now seem so far away." Keep smiling, Eric, me lad, we shall all be home soon (we hope) and we'll all enjoy our grouses together while you spend your money on the dinner.

Harry Forman sends us a further line, this time from an address in Yorkshire. He is lucky in having a broadminded C.O. who permits his personnel to wear civvy clothes for "recreational" cycling. Naturally, Harry is taking full advantage of this. He is situated about 25 miles north of York, and about the same distance from Thirsk on the Scarborough road—a good centre for exploring the North Riding. We

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wish you good riding, Harry.

We are glad to receive the first letter direct from Frank Potter. We gather that Frank is proceeding quite normally with his Service career in spite of his initial difficulty in getting in. His present address is R.A.F. Station, Longparish, Andover. You will be interested to know Frank, that the male staff of the editorial staff know Longparish particularly well, as we moved in on Military Police duties on the day the place opened way back in November, 1942. Nature really was raw in those first few weeks, but after we were organised we spent some most enjoyable hours up in the backwoods. The station is probably quite "super" by now? Let us know how you get on, Frank, and thanks for your good wishes for the Club. The old D.A. is still progressing favourably.

Mat Martin, of Long Eaton, and Jack Jay, of Duffield (?), both D.A. members, though some of you older Exiles may not know them, have recently been on leave. Mat is now in the overseas contingent of the N.F.S. and expects to be drafted to France very soon. Perhaps you will let us know how you get on Mat? Jack Jay is now almost a fully-fledged Air Navigator. He has completed his training in Canada and has now returned to England before going on Ops. He liked Canada well enough but is glad to be back in England, as he says, their

cooking is terrible (he didn't use that word!) and the drinks far too expensive. He has some amusing yarns—of "Zombies," which is the name of some drink reputed to be pretty powerful, of riots in the streets of Montreal, and of Zootsuiters—a mixed collection!

Jack Wain, who is in the Royal Corps of Signals, has also had a week's leave, the first since he was called up—in January this year. He spent the Sunday with his old pals of "B" runs section. We send you our best wishes, Jack, hoping that your next leave will come round more quickly.

And that is all from Home and Overseas this time, folks. Thank you one and all.

We would like to write a page or two about the present activities of the boys and girls carrying on the old D.A. at home, but unfortunately time and space (and the Orderly Room Sergeant) won't permit, but everyone can rest assured that when they return again to Civvy Street they will find Derby D.A. as strong and virile as ever. We are speaking without the book and are open to correction by "The Old Guard," but doesn't the D.A. come of age next year? If so, how grand it would be if we were all at home and we held the Reunion Dinner, Annual Dinner, and Coming of Age Party, all in one big Jamboree?—a thought with which to warm oneself on the 'stag' just before the dawn. We'll leave it at that, shall we?

Cheerio! G. S. F.