

Some Notes about the  
Anerley B.C.

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about the Anerley B.C.

*To all those who did,  
As to those that now do,  
And those who in the future will,  
Love and Work for the Anerley  
This Little Book is Dedicated.*

G. H. SMITH.

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AT THE "CROWN," SELSEY, WHITSUN TOUR IN EARLY NINETIES.

*Back Row from Left:* BRIANT, W. A. VOSS, E. J. HOUSDEN, GEO. GUBBINS, TOM FEAYER, GEO. RUSTON, JEFFERIES, F. C. VOSS, FEAYER, JHR., W. R. MATTHEWS, S. I. EDGE, FIELDING.

*Front Row:* J. G. H. BROWNE front and S. F. EDGE back of Olympia tandem, C. S. DAVENPORT, HAROLD J. RUSTON, F. W. BAILY, G. H. SMITH, A. W. BROOKES, KELBURNE E. EDGE on "Kinetic" cushions, H. SHEARWOOD on front and A. E. EDGE on back of Olympia tandem.

*Photo by P. H. Mathee, a Member.*

## The Atmosphere of Early Days

BEFORE actually starting to tell the well-worth-telling story of the Anerley Bicycle Club, we will endeavour to charm back memories of the condition of things in general, from a cycling point of view, at the time (1881) that Anerley men first ventured forth as a Club, and for some years after that date. The whole position of affairs for a cyclist, was in those days so utterly different from what it is now, that without this little preliminary digression the grit and enthusiasm of the fathers of the Club could not be even guessed at by any member whose riding experiences do not exceed a quarter of a century, and the atmosphere of the early days would not again be breathed, even in imagination.

Two types of machines were in use, the ordinary high wheel bicycle and the tricycle. The ordinary was very nearly standard, the variations been mainly the names of the makers, and the size of the large wheel, which of course was controlled by the length of the rider's legs.

Tricycles, on the contrary, had a considerable range of variety of pattern, such as front, rear and side steering, single, tandem, and side by side, known—ironically perhaps—as "sociables," for anything more liable to generate unsociable feelings than two hot and tired cyclists trying to get a little pace out of these crushing masses of heavy tubing and wheels, would be hard to find. It must not be thought that the tricycle was confined to old gentlemen or safety first youths; the type was extensively used by many of the champions of the day, sometimes exclusively, sometimes change and change about with the ordinary, although the art of riding both was quite a separate and widely different attainment.

All the machines had solid tyres, and, as time went on, the tendency was to fit smaller and smaller tyres on the theory, probably erroneous, that it made for speed. So small did these tyres eventually become that their nick-name, "bootlaces" was really quite appropriate.



The root idea of these solid tyres, that their mission in the scheme of things was to reduce vibration to machine and rider was never fully grasped by the tyres themselves; they thought it was their real job to come unstuck from the cement in the rim, come off, jam in forks, and generally make things lively for the rider. The remedy, frequently resorted to, was to soften the cement by the application of red hot metal and tie the straying rubber on with string. One of the many results of the advent of the Dunlop was the marked slump that followed in the kitchen poker trade.

The roads over which these early machines were somewhat laboriously propelled, bore little resemblance to modern highways, either as regards surface, nature and extent of traffic, or the type of individual commonly met journeying over them. The surface was sometimes macadam, nearly always so in the larger towns, whilst in the southern counties it was either sandy gravel, or chalk. In summer every road became very dusty if a wind blew, and if the dry weather was at all prolonged the sand roads became terribly loose and cut up, indeed we have known the Brighton road to be impassable for cycles beyond Purley, from this cause. In wet weather the macadam, and to a less degree, the chalk, became very slippery and accounted for many croppers, whilst the sand would be lifted up by the splash of the water into the pedal and other bearings; any chain driven machine suffered intensely, the block chains simply sucking in the grit until they became so gorged with it that they were literally incapable of bending and little short of bars of solid metal.

No danger boards existed in the times of which we now write, no special maps were published giving details such as cyclists, particularly in the days of entirely inadequate brakes, wished to know; the bold wheelman travelling along any road for the first time was practically on an uncharted sea and too often discovered a hill was dangerous by the smart of assorted bruises and the still greater bitterness of the sight of a wrecked machine. Then the loneliness of those roads. It is past all belief to those who never cycled over them and only know the whirl of traffic that congests the highways to-day, and even penetrates in diluted form into the lanes.

Perfect quiet reigned out in the country, miles would be covered without meeting a vehicle, and those that were met were mostly farmers' waggons slowly drawn by heavy horses,

their brass ornaments pleasantly jingling, a treble to the even bass of the blows from their ponderous hoofs. But this ideal picture, from a cyclist's point of view, had a very ugly frame to it, that took much from the general effect; the hand of nearly every other user of the highway was against him, from the tramp who shouted his curses to the village policeman who itched to bring him in the meshes of the law. Horsey people slashed at him with their whips, small boys hurled stones or tried to thrust sticks between the spokes, the very dogs joined in the fun, seized and hung on to the revolving calves, charged tricycles head on with disastrous results to all concerned, including the dog, and even the fox hounds were liable to hunt him. The writer once had a whole pack in full cry after him and only escaped a nasty mauling by dismounting and standing quite still until the huntsmen arrived and flogged the hounds off.

The wayside hotels and inns that now look so smart and prosperous were then, mostly, in the last stages of decay, the larger ones partly shut up, the fare, in the south generally indifferent, but in the North generous and very cheap. Depressed as they were for want of custom they too frequently gave no welcome to the cyclist but treated him as a foreign and probably dangerous person; often and often have we been refused food and shelter on the patently false plea that they were full up. All this unfriendly attitude naturally tended to draw all cyclists together, and is the real foundation of that brotherhood of the wheel that exists, in an attenuated form, to this day. If a cyclist, or party of cyclists, met others of the clan journeying in the opposite direction they would dismount, exchange information about the roads, examine each others machines, and behave much on the lines of two explorers in the wilds who made a chance meeting. If a cyclist overtook another riding in the same direction he did not sprint past as became the fashion later, but rode beside him and conversed. In this way early clubs came into being, recruits were gained, and we can recall that kind fate brought us into the Anerley fold exactly by this procedure.

Having thus briefly but very truly told the real nature and character of the world into which the Anerley B.C. was born in 1881, we will endeavour to tell something of the story of the Club with like conscientious veracity.



## About Runs and Tours and Many Things.

*"I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue hills are,  
But a man can have the sun for friend, and for his guide a star ;  
And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is heard,  
For the rivers call, and the road calls, and oh ! the call of a bird !"*

GERALD GOULD.

THE Anerley B.C. is nothing if not unique, and therefore it is not surprising that although in its 50th year of continuous activity, its whole history can be clearly traced back to its embryo days. It sprang from a Hoop Club formed by a few young boys who resided in Anerley. They used to meet together on Saturday afternoons and run their iron hoops in company, the party usually numbering about eight—through the surrounding districts, special long distance expeditions extending as far as Croydon.

The boys grew larger, as boys will, went to Dulwich College, gradually acquired new or second-hand ordinary bicycles of primitive design, and then some bright genius of the group of friends, said, "Why not an Anerley Bicycle Club?"

So early in the year 1881 a meeting was called at the residence of Mr. Wm. Ruston in Anerley Park, to put the whole matter in due trim. This Mr. Ruston was the Uncle of our Harold J. Ruston, and he was evidently a very worthy member of the family, true to type, for he encouraged the project, in fact really started it, and became the first President of the Anerley B.C., his son Wm. Ruston, Jnr., being about the first member, later to be followed by the younger son, George.

The first Captain, then elected, was H. S. Hughes, who afterwards relapsed into horse riding and became proprietor of a very horsey paper that still exists. W. Seymour was the Bugler; no really respectable Club, in those days, would have thought of starting on a Club run without their bugler in line. The Hon. Sec. was H. McKinlay, a wonderfully fast pedaler

on the ordinary, very strong and very bold, in fact a dare-devil. We recall his jumping out of a first floor window in one of his mad moods. McKinlay later became Captain. The post of Hon. Treasurer was taken, with parental wisdom, by the President. There was one Vice-President, a Mr. F. L. Blake, but the only why and wherefore of this that we can discover was the fact that this gentleman had once been Mayor of Birkenhead. The little Club, destined to become so large and to be known far beyond the confines of its original locality, was thus well and truly launched. A badge was designed by Vaughton, really a monogram of A.B.C., but it was not very long before that was discarded in favour of a shield, which at that time was a more or less original design, but ultimately it became so universal that the present plain "A" was adopted.

The Club Runs of these pioneers started every Saturday from the Robin Hood, the inn that still is practically the same to-day, standing at the junction of the Anerley and Croydon Roads. The rides were not at first very lengthy and it was only once a month that they roamed so far afield as to have tea out, the earliest tea destinations being Cudham, Godstone and Merstham. It must be remembered they were all still school boys, of a period when parental ideas on the important pocket money question were much less developed than they are now, and also, places where teas would be served to cyclists did not bloom on every roadside, and that dubious collection of establishments labelled "Cyclists' Rest" had not even been dreamt of.

Amongst the very earliest members, in addition to those mentioned, were Frank Young, T. D. McMeakin, A. J. Stallard, S. F. Edge, Harold J. Ruston, who is dated 1884 in Handbook but believes it should be a year or two before that, and so do we—Percy Sanderson, H. Shearwood, H. W. Bartleet, Alf. Nixon, P. Runciman, Fred. Voss, E. W. Housden, G. H. Smith, Fred. Grover, Murray James and G. E. Osmond.

Such were the young men who ventured forth on their high bicycles or massive tricycles to explore the surrounding country and experience those peculiarities of the highways that we have attempted to picture to the modern rider.

When we write "explore" we use the word strictly in its dictionary sense, for on these early runs they really were exploring, they were adventuring into what was to them the



absolutely unknown. Every bend in the road was full of pleasant speculation as to what was round the corner; sometimes it revealed a long steep hill, and whether up or down was equally engrossing either of muscle or nervous tension. As Harold Ruston has said, it was the uncertainty as to the state of the roads and the certainty of some of the riders having headers that made each run an adventure and a great novelty. Then the pleasant experience of finding some really nice place for tea, where one was made welcome, although a cyclist.

One of the very earliest runs was to Merstham, quite a long run for those times, and there "The Feathers" was discovered; not quite the same "Feathers" as the speedy passers through Merstham now see, but a homely little inn on the same spot.

"The Feathers" took them in and fed them well and after, round a roaring fire, they talked that talk of machines and sprints and coppers that cyclists still chat, only the cropper section is much rarer. But whilst these pleasant hours passed the mud ruts outside were being turned by frost into iron rails, all but impossible to ride with the small diameter tyres, and most of the way back to Croydon had to be walked. One of the party came on horseback, this will give an idea of the moderate speed, but he fared no better than the others on return, the horse finding difficulty on the ice. Such an incident never discouraged an Anerley man! whatever the weather the run was carried through. On one early occasion, recalled by S. F. Edge, the run was to the "Salt Box," Cudham, and when he, McKinlay, Shearwood, Stanner and one or two others, names forgotten, turned up at the Robin Hood, the snow beyond the streets was found to be so deep as to make cycling impossible. Discard the run? return home to the fireside? No, perish the craven thought! they walked it. Now that was some walk under such conditions.

The tone to the Anerley Club Run was well and truly set and it has never withered; the run to day is just as faithfully carried out and is just as enjoyable, not perhaps so much of a struggle and adventure, but having other joys to compensate.

We will give a few samples of runs after the Club has got into its full stride and members are no longer school boys, but they can only be samples; when it is realised that the runs and tours to date actually carried out by the Club must be at least 2,500 the review of the whole must obviously be sketchy in the extreme.

A very favourite destination for a great many years was the "Clayton Arms," Godstone. The date of the first run there we cannot be sure of, but we have a record of one on March 17th, 1888, and that the hills were snow covered. In those days the "Clayton Arms" was run by Churchill, a fine specimen of mine host, old and white haired, yet straight backed, bright eyed and active. He dressed in rich brown velveteen and had a grand manner as well as appearance; one felt when there as if one were the guest of the Squire at some ancestral hall. The customs of the house supported this delusion, for in a room on the ground floor, close to the entrance to the fine old house that has cheered the traveller on his way since the days of Richard II., there was kept all day and every day a wonderful assortment of cold dishes that the caller could walk straight to, without even announcing his arrival, and carve to his taste and eat till satisfied, the cool light ale of the house being included in the moderate price and drawn in accord with the thirst of the guest. Such an ideal arrangement naturally appealed strongly to cyclists, who have always been efficient at table. In the large timbered room upstairs, which, when we first visited the "Clayton" was used once a week for the local Magistrate's Court, how many merry Anerley gatherings have taken place! We think the first Boxing Day run was held there, that is to say the first run on that holiday when the Club dined on the road. This was in 1888 and the fact that 13 sat down had not the slightest damping effect on anyone's spirits, indeed they rose above par when, in accord with the good old custom, the Captain stood a bowl of steaming punch.

There came one day to the "Clayton," out of the blue, a man who put up for the night and gave the name of Smith. Next day he announced to Churchill, in the most decisive terms, that he was going to stay there for ever, and he did, so far as he could control "for ever." He became a part of the "Clayton Arms" for years, until his rather sudden death. He cooked splendidly, played the organ in church at times, was very good with the violin, erected quaint summer houses in the garden, painted birds and flowers on the mirrors and the panels,—some of that work, very faded, still remains—and, to crown all, was excellent in conversation. Where he came from, what was really his name, no one ever knew, but he became a real friend to many of the Anerley in the pleasant days when



it was the custom to make up little parties to ride to Godstone on Sunday afternoons to tea, and after hold an impromptu concert, semi-sacred in character, members singing and dear old Brookes with his spectacles working steadily away all the evening at the piano, mysterious Smith delighting us all with his violin, his artistic playing at times taking a wistful turn that brought a strange quiet for awhile.

The first run of the Old Boys' Section was to the "Clayton Arms" in 1905. This Old Boys' Section, we might here explain, was a rather happy thought that germinated into action that year, to bring again on to the roll of membership as many as possible of those who had been active in the Club in former years but had from time to time dropped out. The annual sub. to this Section was ultimately fixed at 5s. per annum, which included the *Gazette*. It has proved a most happy success and done much for the Club. Every three years a special run for the Old and New Boys is arranged and is largely attended, the ninth re-union being in 1929, when the whole party were the guests of then President S. F. Edge, the trip being to Weybridge from Kingston by steamer.

This first gathering of the Old 'Uns on October 7th, 1905, was not less a mighty and enjoyable assemblage than any of the series. No less than 83 were at the tea, S. F. Edge in the Chair, and Captain H. H. Hollands in the Vice-Chair, the company including a wonderful crowd of world and British record breakers. H. W. Bartleet rode down on an ordinary, as also did a visitor from the Brixton Ramblers, Percy Nix, who dropped down Godstone Hill legs over the handle bar, a sight that several of the younger onlookers had never seen before. Nix was a fine sportsman and a very good man at a "24." It was on this occasion that S. F. Edge suggested the Old Boy's Cup and started the list of Old Boy subscribers with a handsome donation. The Cup is raced for annually and forms a happy link between the "Has Beens" and the present cracks of the Club.

Another place on the same road that became much associated with Anerley runs was the "Rose and Crown," Riddlesdown, then a very small but well kept up roadside inn with one large room built on. In the early days it was a convenient distance to be used as a regular meeting place on Sunday morning spins and thus the members got to know the genial host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Sacker. They were well advanced in years,

he rather sparse, which was fortunate, for she was not, and the space behind the bar very limited. But it did one good to see her beaming ruddy face, when, after skilful manoeuvring she had managed to turn round in the confined space and secure the desired decanter, without knocking any glasses over by collision with her outer suburbs, and poured out the measure with a sort of motherly pride and enjoyment, as if she was serving some long lost son rather than a mere casual, begrimed cyclist. Thus we grew to like the place and its people, and when winter runs were instituted this became the first house used for the purpose, in fact the Anerley took the house over every Saturday evening for eight winters in all, not quite consecutively. Exactly when these Riddlesdown runs started we are not sure. The earliest definite record that can be traced was October 13th, 1888, when E. W. Housden won a Club 10 miles handicap.

It must read very strange to modern members, these runs for such short distances, and races over mere 10 miles of roads, but the circumstances of the machines and the highways must be kept in mind or an entirely wrong perspective of the situation will confuse the picture. To ride home from Riddlesdown on a dark winter's night, with ruts, mire, heaps of metal for machines, and strips of rubber for tyres, was quite far enough for most of us.

A few figures will give an idea how intensely popular these runs were. On October 26th, 1889, the attendance was 50. On November 1st, 1890, 29; December 6th, 35 and on 13th 40, whilst in 1891, at a closing summer run to the "Rose and Crown" on October 31st, no less than 85 sat down to tea. Thirty-five members congregated at the Anerley Vestry Hall and under the command of Capt. F. W. Baily cycled to Riddlesdown together, several other members joining in *en route*. In those days it was the custom to ride in a mob, handle-bar very often over-lapping handle-bar, the small amount of other traffic allowing of this, and to see 40 or 50 young fellows swinging along in one mass on a great variety of machines, very seldom bringing each other over, was a pretty sight and a testimony to the control they had over their rather awkward mounts. The 85 were not entirely Anerley men, a few visitors, such as C. P. Sisley, then Editor of *Cycling*, Jackson the Catford Hon. Sec., C. W. Nettleton, the gentleman of the ordinary, and a Tooting B.C. man or two; indeed it became a custom for



cyclists to drop in on these Anerley gatherings and not a few new members were thus gained. One great thing, there was plenty of room, and it was wanted, for after tea the ring was cleared and all sorts of sports and fun were indulged in, boxing, cock-fighting, wrestling, and on this particular occasion a once very useful member, A. R. Smith, gained the proud title of Anerley B.C. Champion Hopper and Staircase Sprinter, a most strenuous competition that he happily still survives. It was not all so furious, musical talent, some of it of a really high order, then abounded in the Club and a most enjoyable concert was given by such sweet singers as C. H. Letts, B. Tyrrell, and J. Purdie.

At times the Yoicks Walking Club from Croydon would join us at Riddlesdown and they had a melodious membership. At the closing winter run of 1896 they turned up 14 strong and sang merrily to our Anerley 25. The last run to Riddlesdown that we have a record of was in the Autumn of 1897, when 60 turned up. Those were really very jolly winter days. In the winters of 1893-4 the runs were to "The Joliffe Arms," Merstham. This was not the present building of that name but a much older one in the hollow at the back. The first run there was on November 4th, 1893, and as it is recorded that the members went by road and came home by water, the inference is there was some rain. The second run was less trying and 27 mustered. The "Joliffe" did its best for us and there are no complaints, but the large room and the Roman games in the Caterham Valley were missed.

At this period an exhaustless subject for conversation was tyres. All sorts of weird things in tyres, striving to avoid both the vibration of the solid and the real fear of puncture on the early pneumatics, were being tried by members, and their good and bad faults were debated for hours. We are not quite sure of it but have a strong tendency to believe that the first cushion tyre, known as the "Kinetic" was ridden by member K. E. Edge on our Easter tour, 1890. It is a little strange, but nevertheless a fact, that one could ride on a solid for years and not be conscious of any discomfort, but once you rode a pneumatic or cushion for a few weeks, it was absolute agony to go any distance on a solid afterwards. The writer remembers such an experience with a solid tyred machine that he had regarded as the pink of luxury; returning to it after a fortnight on air, he could not stand it, but had to walk the whole intended

way. The Club poet must have noticed something similar when he wrote—

*"Great drops of sweat from his head did fall,  
His cheeks were decidedly florid,  
His pace, at best, was a wretched crawl,  
He wobbled something horrid.  
'What's up old chap?' said his clubmates all,  
As they marked his wrinkled forehead,  
He gave a smile as bitter as gall  
And feebly growled out, 'Solid.'"*

"The Cricketers," Addington is another of those old inns that have worked their way deep into Anerley memories, because they gave generous welcome when so many others were chill or positively abusive. "The Cricketers" does not look very old or very important, but parts must be old, for the family that own it and live there to this day have cared for the wayfarer through Addington for several centuries. A very excellent family, judging from the specimens we used to meet there from 1889 and onwards, and right excellent meals they gave us. They also had preserved the ancient art of making good punch, as the Club run first discovered on March 2nd, 1889, when that famous pusher of the three wheeler, Alf. Nixon, stood us a bowl, a most excellent brew. It was not an unusual thing on special occasions, such as a birthday, or Christmas, for someone to call for a bowl of punch to honour the event. We live now in less convivial days, some will say better days, and it may be so, but we cannot recall any harm coming to any Anerley man from a glass or two of punch, whilst, on the other hand, what friendly feelings, what real wit has mingled with the aromatic steam of the bowl, what memories linger yet! To see the portly form of Captain Fred. Baily presiding, ladle in hand, over one of these concoctions, to observe his benign smile as he lovingly filled each glass for the company, to hear him give the toast, "Success to the Anerley," was worth riding many a hard mile for, was a memory to bring some genial warmth to many a cold hour in life.

It was another occasion at the "Cricketers," when there was a little evening dinner, but no punch, to entertain a member, that on the return home one of our most respected and quiet members for some reason that was never disclosed, formed the strong opinion that the drinking fountain that used to stand



at the junction of the Addiscombe and Woodside Roads, and may be there still, was drunk. He would insist on calling a halt and giving the fountain a long and elevating address on the evil of its alleged condition, and appeals for reform. Besides the Anerley party no one was there to enjoy the diverting episode except a stray dog, who appeared to resent the aspersions on the fountain, from which he doubtless often drank, and this intelligent animal circled round and round the orator the whole time, barking furiously. After the address, of which the fountain took no notice, our member resumed the journey and was then perfectly normal, nor did he, throughout, let a suspicion of a smile escape him.

The winter runs from 1907 to 1910 were to "Ye Olde Fox" on Coulsdon Common, a small house, but the parties had become smaller. Since then the "Warwick," Redhill, has been the most popular resort after the summer, and there is good accommodation, including billiards. The old musical evenings, however, seem to have died out. Is it wireless, gramophones or what that makes it so difficult now to find a self-contained amusement party?

Amongst the very regular Club runners of the eighties and early nineties, were Bartleet, Briant, Baily, Burroughs, Housden, A. E. Edge, K. E. Edge, Davenport, Dunn (still running), Ruston, Thomas, Voss, Ward, Morgan and G. H. Smith.

Popular destinations for the summer runs at the end of the nineteenth and start of twentieth centuries, were "Glyn Arms," Ewell; "Grapes" (no longer there), Reigate; "George and Dragon," Westerham; "Wheatsheaf," Dorking; "Chequers," Horley; "George and Dragon," Ightham; "White Horse," Horley; and "White Hart," Betchingley.

We went twice to the "White Hart," Reigate, on both occasions as guests of a princely President, R. H. Fry. The first of these was on May 28th, 1892, when the President presided over a party of 70, at a dinner that vied with the feasts one reads of in the Tudor period, but very rarely encounters in modern real life. It was splendidly cooked and served, dish followed dish, the birds being piled up one on the other on big dishes, mountains of brown tenderness, and as for the wine, the champagne, Rhine wines, and claret, they simply flowed in one perennial stream from the start to the finish. It was a right merry occasion in a fine old house with a beautiful garden, where we grouped for a photo before dinner. It was

10 p.m. when the feast was over, and then all had to ride home or further out for the night, and all did it without mishap; wonderful chaps these Anerley men. Taken all in all, that run was unique amongst the many.

The runs to-day naturally go further afield, to the "Rose and Crown," Sevenoaks, Wotton Hatch, "The Albany," Crawley, Shere, Edenbridge, Ripley and so on; more mileage is covered, longer time spent on the road, but there is still time enough for those chats that all true cyclists love to have with cyclists. The runs are what the active members want and enjoy, they are carried out summer and winter with absolute regularity, not a blank. Attendance may be reduced on occasions by bad weather, but Captain Kirby, or his deputy is there and they go through with it whatever the distance, with a very faithful following.

Of late years there has grown up a charming custom amongst some of the older members of inviting the whole Club to tea on a Saturday run. The writer first started it by his strawberry run to "The Plough," an old low pitched inn with one large modern room, situated in a side road in the Dormans Land district. It is still a most restful retired spot, and Miss Glover is a master hand at putting on a tea to rejoice the heart of any cyclist, such heaps of fresh strawberries, broad dishes of real cream in addition to all the usual solid fare. Dormans has been discontinued except for one revival by the 1928-29 President. He, the President, has entertained large Anerley run parties at "Gallops," in Sussex, and gave the Club a change from the road for the last two years by a river trip to Weybridge, a most enjoyable and very largely attended voyage.

But truth forces us to say, and in saying it we know we shall hurt no one's feelings, that the invitation run that the members most absolutely enjoy is that to the private home of the very old and much loved member, H. J. Ruston. There is a homeliness about this visit that is experienced on no other run of the year, the comfortable house, the attention of Mrs. Ruston and family, just as keen on Anerley as the head of the household, the lovely garden to wander in and play gentle sports, it is all the best side of English home life, and the Club is given free run to it for the afternoon. The first of this delightful series to Woking was on June 4th, 1921, and every year since has been a repetition of the first delightful experience.



No wonder the Club Run, the least exciting part of Club life perhaps, is yet the part that sinks deepest into our souls, so that members, such as Macey, settled in Africa, writes for the handbook, *in order in fancy he may attend each Club run.*

We have spoken of comfortable resorts, but there were other types, too many of them, in the earlier years of the Club.

In 1891 the Club ran to Dorking one Saturday and put up at a smart looking house. The Captain informed them he thought there would be about 25 to tea. The exact number was 23, but the landlord demanded payment for 25. This the Club resented, paid for 23, and went to get their machines out. They found the yard gate locked and the key was refused until they paid for two more teas. A deputation then went to the Police Station, but the Inspector was not interested and said, "Tram home and summons the landlord." With great difficulty, some of the machines being heavy tricycles, the machines were lifted over the top of the high gate. That was the sort of treatment cyclists had to put up with now and then.

Then the rural police waged an absolute war against the innocent club runner, being abetted in this unsporting conduct by the local horsey magistrates. In April, 1891, two members were wheeling their machines in the gutter whilst walking on the path in Epsom town when a constable came up and marched them off to the Police Station, charging them first with riding on the path and then with wheeling on the path.

At the Station one culprit, Kemp, noticed the constable smelt strongly of liquor, charged him, at a venture, with being drunk, whereupon the man turned round and charged Kemp with being drunk. This was too much even for the Inspector, and the criminals were released and the constable subsequently lost four days' pay. It was rare, however, for the cyclists to come off best. In one day in 1897, 80 cyclists were fined at Reigate for alleged offences, two of the batch were Anerley, and one of those two, Edwardson, was fined again the same week with costs 23s. each time. One required a little capital to be a cyclist in those weird days. The most awful offence was to let your lamp go out. Remember this was at a time when it was no offence to take a horse drawn vehicle out at night with no light at all, and it was done wholesale. The Club was returning in a body one night along the Brighton road when a mounted constable challenged a member whose lamp would

not burn. He was, for that reason, riding in the middle of the mob, so was no danger to other road users.

The challenge was ignored, whereupon the constable galloped his horse towards Croydon. At Purley we discovered his move, for he had pulled up under a lamp the better to see the lightless one. The main body rode on, leaving the wanted man behind. After getting well beyond the constable, some returned taking a lamp off one of the machines with them. The man left behind was thus fixed up and rode boldly past the enemy, wishing him "Good Night." We give these instances, trivial in themselves, as illustrations of a temper and outlook that was continually exhibited.

A very keen observer of men and things, Mr. Edmund Dangerfield, Proprietor of *Cycling*, once remarked that it was a peculiar thing about the Anerley, they did not seem to join as individuals but as whole families. There was much truth in that; at one period the Young family had five members, the Edges four, the Hortons, Letts, Rustons and Smiths, three each, whilst the braces of two were too numerous to mention; except we will just name the brothers G. L. and O. J. Hopkins, keen clubmen, who left in 1906 for the wilds of Canada, where they subsequently started a little town and induced the Government to provide a post office and call the place Anerley, so we are on the map in two places. This family party character doubtless assisted towards the success of not only the runs but also the tours. For the Club has never ceased to be keen on touring, nor has it ever lacked those who had a real appreciation of the country in all its moods, scenery in all its varied appeals.

A very hardy annual in the tour department was the joint run with the Stanley Club. Instituted in 1885 these runs have never lapsed, except in the war years, and the attendance has had on both sides, a wonderful continuity, although by 1920 there was only one present, C. A. Riminton, who had taken part in the 1885 tour. One of the happiest of these Stanley runs was to the "Albion Hotel," Worthing, in 1901, when 17 of that Club and 28 Anerley men made Worthing bright and merry. The "Albion" was for long a most popular resort of the Club, and was for some time the country headquarters, and trips there, extensions of the Club run, were frequent in the summer. They use to collar a very fine Sparkling Moselle, and after the 52 miles from Anerley on a warm and



dusty afternoon and evening, a half bottle of it, served in a nice clean tankard, went down remarkably well. The "Norfolk Arms," Arundel, was another favourite for these joint expeditions. It was on the run there on May 1st, 1920, that S. G. Sherwood, better known as "Spon" Sherwood, added substantially to his already considerable reputation as a spontaneous speaker, by giving an entirely unexpected and unprepared oration of great length, much wisdom, and the most convulsing humour that those present had ever heard, or were ever likely to hear again. Alas, no shorthand reporter was present, or else this historic effort would have been here reproduced, and our little booklet secured immortality.

Now and then the Stanley cum Anerley brothers ventured North together, a very pleasing experience being the run to St. Neots in 1921, when we stayed at the cosy "New Inn," so called because it is the oldest in the town. It is a good ride to St. Neots for Southerners, and in the evening carvers "Tubby" Briggs of the Stanley, and "Curly" Clarke of ours, were overworked. The ride home next day was superb, a fierce wind at the back all the way. The following records the impressions of the moment, jotted down in an inn at Welwyn during a halt on this ride.

#### The Song of the Wind.

*I am the wind, Nor Nor West,  
Icy cold is my breath,  
And I'm shrieking and howling and doing my best,  
Along the North Road to drive home to their nest,  
Anerley, Stanley, cyclers of the best,  
I'm pushing them home.*

*I'm the wind of the leaden sky,  
The colourless fen and dull dyke.  
The few scattered elms bend and sigh,  
The wavelets on Ivel and Ouse leap high.  
It's London-bound cyclists alone who are spry,  
For I'm pushing them home.*

*I'm the wind that will buffet and dishevel  
All that contest me.  
The poor fool of a crank-treading devil  
That defies me cross a Bedfordshire level,  
I'll "knacker," and just simply revel  
In pushing him further from home.*

*I'm the wind that shrinkens the map,  
Levels the hills  
From St. Neots "New Inn" and its tap,  
Past Eaton Socon, through Girtford they scrap,  
Biggleswade, with gentle Ivel half asleep in its lap,  
I'm pushing them home.*

*I'm the wind that is King of the Fen,  
Both blessed and reviled  
By succeeding generations of speedy wheel-men,  
But to the hillocks of Herts my dominions extend,  
So through Hitchin and Welwyn and yet further I wend,  
Still pushing them home.*

Whilst still up North we might mention that our first expedition there was during Easter, 1889. We had been credibly informed by one Edge, who had already ventured to those parts, that the land abounded in level roads with ideal surfaces; that cycling there was more a matter of sitting on a saddle and viewing the scenery than any noticeable exercise; that hotel keepers kept anxious watch at their doors until a party of cyclists came along, when they fell on their knees and implored them to enter, and having got you inside they regaled you generously with the best of the land, slept you in luxurious beds and when they tearfully parted with you next day, the bill presented was so small that one felt a delicacy in paying it.

As regards the fare and the bills the report was not untruthful, we lived extraordinarily well at the "George," Buckden, for a very few shillings a day, but all the rest was a terrible disillusion. We struggled to Norman's Cross, Peterboro', Kimbolton, Biggleswade, but whatever the direction the wind howled in our faces, the rain obscured the scene, the dull grey clouds forbade the slightest ray of warmth, whilst the alleged perfect and level roads seemed to bristle with young mountains directly the old North Road was left, and as for the surface, it was a heart breaking morass concealing rocks. At Oundle the gale blew Harold Ruston's Facile over and hopelessly damaged it. He smiled for the first time that tour and promptly went home by train. It was the only entirely disastrous tour we know of in 49 years, and it has kept us South.

The "Crown" at Alton became a favourite headquarters for our Easter tours. It was in 1890 we first went there, a



party of 22. There is nothing very attractive in Alton itself, but it is surrounded with a variety of quiet Hampshire country, very pleasant and restful, whilst those with antique and historic tastes have Winchester within reach per cycle. The Surrey B.C. also liked the place and used to put up at "The Swan." They always made us extremely welcome in the evening and Alton would not have been quite the same if we had not found them there.

The Alton tours probably have the record so far as consistently big numerical support goes, and they were certainly amongst the most truly merry.

It was on one of the Alton expeditions that the famous equestrian incident took place. Leaving the "Crown" one morning for our day excursion, the Letts brothers elected to hire horses and have a change from cycling. They could easily do this being well used to the four legged machine. The idea fired the bold heart of another regular tour supporter, W. H. M. Burgess, and he also hired a quad,—we mean a quadruped, mounted with some difficulty and started off from the yard. Before the cycling contingent got away the "Kipper" returned without explanations. It was soon obvious to all, that it was the horse that had returned bearing the unwilling "Kipper" with him. The ostler began to lead the protesting steed to the street again, when W. R. Matthews, one of the most unselfish and gentle members we have ever had, implored him to desist, fearing a catastrophe. However, by dint of some resounding smacks by the ostler on the horse's rear wheel, the "Kipper" got well away, sharing possibly some of the anxiety that the cyclists who started to follow him, felt.

The lunch place was to be the Royal Huts, Hindhead, and there we duly found all the horsemen, but the "Kipper" entirely enveloped in bandages. Matthews nearly fainted and for a moment we were all taken in, the thing was so well staged, and it was a relief to find it was all a hoax and no untoward dismount had taken place.

Next year, unfortunately, a real tragedy was associated with the Alton tour. On the Easter Monday a member, De Loecker, was coming down alone to meet the Club and when passing the stone wall that surrounds Earl Lovelace's park at Effingham, his machine is supposed to have broken in two as he was sprinting down the hill, and he was thrown violently against the wall and killed. No one saw the accident, and although the Club

rode over the very spot later in the day, they were spared knowledge of the sad affair until the tour was over. This is the only fatal accident in the records of 49 years of a very active Club's life.

Another very delightful series of Easter tours is associated with "The Mitre," Oxford. "The Mitre" may now be a little above cycle clubs but in 1893 and the subsequent years we went there, they were very glad to have us and served us royally. For one thing we nearly filled the hotel up and the few ordinary visitors were a hopeless minority, but enjoyed watching the fun go on. Strenuous boating trips were a feature, and two boats raced so exhaustingly that Ernest Osmond declared he was too baked to walk on landing and was brought to the "Mitre" in a hansom. It was the early days of Dunlops and the frequent bursts were a bit of a trial. The repair of an early Dunlop was as serious an operation as mending a human limb, and took longer. For further details enquire of the "Kipper."

We cannot state precisely when Selsey was discovered but there is extant a record of a Whitsun tour there in 1892 written by that prince of run and tour chroniclers W. R. Matthews (Mat), that tells of pleasant days at the "Crown," much bathing by day and night, and a moon—"that seemed to countenance the Anerley tour in the plenitude of her glory. Picture a lovely night with the peculiar freshness from recent rains, the salt breath of the sea mingling with the fragrant hawthorn, the sea pouring out its unresting music in louder strains as you approach. What is the magic of the ocean—"The rapture of the lovely shore"—that Byron speaks of? As your eyes wander over the extreme confines of the visible universe you feel a sort of sorrowful enchantment that you cannot explain. String letters together, form words and arrange them as please, but the plumb line of words will not reach these depths."

Many were the Anerley journeys to Selsey both as Club tours, personal groups, and even on occasions in course of 12 hour medal hunts.

We will endeavour to briefly reconstruct one of these Selsey Whitsun tours. The party would usually number about 20, in the group published it is 23, and under the careful charge of Captain Baily, get away from Anerley Vestry Hall about four. Pushing on steadily the mixed crowd of machines would



make a halt at Terry's at Crawley, not "The Albany" of later years, but an old-fashioned cottage on the opposite side of the Brighton road, near Crawley church. It was the very first cyclists' resort in Crawley, and Terry grew up with the cycling movement and loved it, and cyclists learnt to love him. He had the typical Britishers love of sport, and never a race or record attempt but Terry was somewhere on the road, and doing something useful. His eyes never ceased to twinkle with humour, even if things were a bit trying, as instanced one August Bank Holiday, when his very aged father who lived with him came downstairs in the morning in his usual perfect health and said—"Terry my boy, I am going to Brighton to-day to die."

This was very awkward with the holiday rush of business just starting. "Oh, don't die to-day father," said Terry the younger, "we shall be *so* busy." "Terry my boy," replied the ancient parent, kindly but firmly, "I am going to Brighton to-day to die." And the distracted Terry had to take him by train, leave him with a married daughter, and get back to Crawley as quick as holiday trains would permit him. The old boy did not die that day after all, so he need not have been in such a hurry, embarrassing the business, but strangely enough, a few mornings after he was found in a sleep that he never woke from. Leaving the genial Terry and his inexhaustible anecdotes, the Club is off to Horsham, and then away to the "Swan" at Pulborough for tea. A short time on the bridge over the Arun watching the sleek red Sussex cattle knee deep in the rich pasture by the slow river, that the fishes love; tea is digested and the travellers are ready for the stiff climb up Bury, rarely ridden, and then the glorious drop through forest-like scenery outside Arundel Park, down towards the levels of Chichester, its spire a mark to steer to.

From there it is only 9 miles more in the dark to Selsey, sometimes very bad going, and beware the bridge over the canal with its dangerous cart-wheel guides. At Selsey there used to be only the choice of "The Crown" or the "Fisherman's Joy," both in their time have done the Club well and at both we have found the Selsey Bill a very moderate one; particularly in view of the huge dishes of baby lobsters that always graced the dinner table, and no one has learnt what a lobster can really be unless he has had two or three babies of the clan at a sitting. Now, of course there is a big hotel

on the front, boarding houses, bungalows galore, and we dare say a cinema, but 30 years ago Selsey was an undiluted straggling village inhabited by lobster fishermen, and it may be a smuggler or two; a place for a real holiday.

On the Whit Monday the custom was to ride over to Chichester, lunch at the "Black Horse," and those that cared for it attended the cycle race meeting in the Priory Park. This was a very pleasant meeting on a grass track, well organised by the able Secretary of the Chichester C.C., T. S. Adcock, a great friend of the Anerley and ever willing helper to our 12 hour medal hunters. Fred. Baily of ours was judge and other members had duties at the meeting, which always drew a large local crowd. By the time it was all over, a meal taken, and the long ride home accomplished, most of us felt we had had a pretty full day.

At a conservative estimate the Club in its time must have carried out quite 150 tours in England, in addition Club parties have toured in France under the guidance of Mr. T. R. Marriott, a friend of the Club, who knew a great many things about cycling in France, also in the Black Forest, Ardennes, Rhine districts, Pyrennes and Switzerland. A Club tour in France in 1894 was engineered by H. H. Clarke and he wrote to the British Consul at Dieppe about getting the bicycles through. He was officially informed that if the party would wear the Anerley Club badge all would be well, and no difficulty or delay at the Customs would occur. Great was the power of the Anerley badge then as now.

There is a member still on the books who has toured in every county in England, bar two, in Isle of Wight, Southern Ireland, North Wales, Scotland, a 360 miles run, including a very wild bit from Inverness to Glasgow through the Western Highlands. He was the first bicyclist ever to get through that Western Highland bit, and how it was regarded locally may be judged by the following conversation with the booking clerk at Glasgow Station, when he asked for a bicycle ticket for London.

*Clerk*: "Been record breaking?"

*Anerley Man*: "No."

*Clerk*: "Going for record?"

*Anerley Man*: "No, I have just ridden from Inverness through the Western Highlands."

*Clerk*: "Paid for it?"

*Anerley Man*: "No."



The Clerk said no more but gave a look that conveyed equally clearly—"This man is evidently a lunatic and may be dangerous, best to get rid of him at earliest." The tickets came out promptly and the pigeon-hole shutter closed as further precaution.

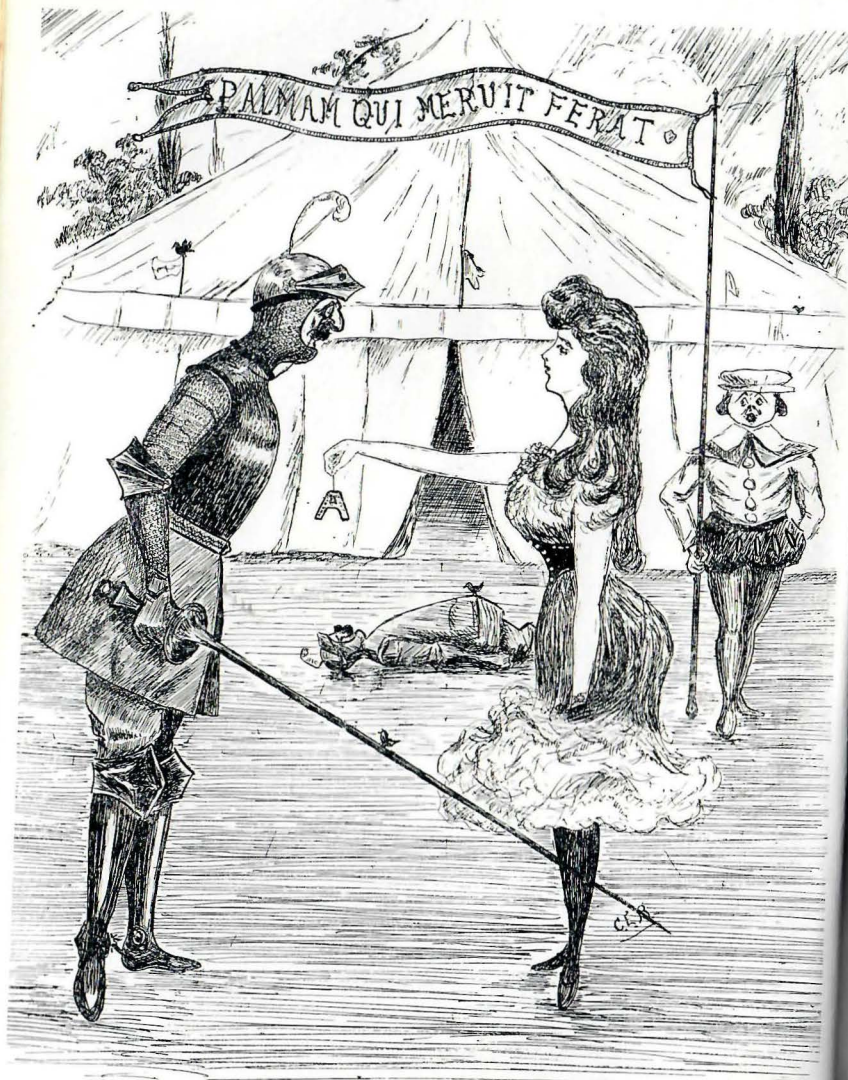
The same member has cycled in Portugal, Greece, Malta, Madeira, Egypt, Ceylon, Southern India, Straits Settlements, Cape Colony, Transvaal, Natal, South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, Hong Kong and Japan. In some of these places he was the first cyclist ever seen. It is very doubtful if any other Club has such a combined touring record as the Anerley.

Still the merry game goes on and touring is to-day as much part of the Club's life as ever. The last one before publication was August, 1929, to Theale, where a large party made headquarters and shared in the fun of the Bath Road "100."

The present members and those whom we hope will shortly join us, can entertain lively expectations of many and many a jolly run and tour in company yet to come, building up a store of memories that will amuse and cheer them when the distant days arrive that they can ride no more; then will they be able to repeat with deep meaning Horace's lines as interpreted by Dryden,

*"Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,  
The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine.  
Not heaven itself upon the past has power;  
But what has been has been, and I have had my hour."*





THE GODDESS OF FAME (modern edition), ACTING UP TO THE CLUB MOTTO,  
PRESENTS THE BADGE OF HONOUR TO LONG DISTANCE CHAMPION.

By "BLOSS."

## Records and Races.

THIS chapter is a glorious one for the Anerley B.C. From 1883 to 1913 first claim Anerley men were either breaking records or winning classical open events with a frequency and distinction that gained for the Club that honourable publicity and regard which still clings to it. The racing men brought great honour to their Club, fired the rank and file with enthusiasm, attracted new members, trained on some of those members to be also speedy winners, and indeed did more to make the Anerley and help it to continue to live than was fully realised at the time of their zenith, or is perhaps quite adequately appreciated to-day.

Since 1913 no great light has shone, the cruel war years destroyed or marred our best, riders after the war were notably slower, and it was not until 1929 that real speed powers seemed at last to be returning to the membership.

The reading of many figures is apt to bore, but to those who love the Anerley the following will be positively refreshing.

### National Cyclists' Union Championships.

S. F. Edge (Tricycle),	
1 mile, Halifax track .....	1888
C. G. Wridgway (Bicycle),	
50 miles .....	1895

### N.C.U. Track Records.

S. F. Edge (Tricycle),	
25 miles, Coventry .....	June, 1888
S. F. Edge (Geared Ordinary),	
64 miles to 100, Herne Hill .....	July, 1892
W. H. M. Burgess and F. Cole (North Road) (Tandem Safety),	
30 to 50 miles inclusive .....	14th Oct., 1893
W. H. M. Burgess and G. E. Osmond (Tandem Safety),	
2, 3 and 4 miles .....	30th Aug., 1893
W. Ellis (Tricycle),	
38 to 100 miles, inclusive .....	1st Oct., 1894
W. Ellis (Tricycle),	
11 to 25 miles and 1 hour .....	18th Oct., 1894



J. A. Poole and A. Hoffman (Bath Road) (Tandem Tricycle), 36 to 210 miles and 2 hours to 12 hours inclusive .....	17th Nov., 1894
This same Hoffman was later metamorphosed into A. Codrington of the Anerley B.C.	
C. G. Wridgway and W. S. Yeoman (Silverdale) (Tandem Tricycle), 24 to 35 miles .....	17th Nov., 1894
C. G. Wridgway (Tricycle), 27 to 100 miles and 2, 3 and 4 hours.....	6th July, 1895
J. B. Cooke and W. S. Yeoman (Silverdale) (Tandem Safety), 19 to 24 miles, 26 to 100 miles, and 1, 2, 3 and 4 hours .....	6th July, 1895
H. H. Clarke, P. J. Litchfield and F. J. Little (Triplet), 1 to 100 miles, 1, 2, 3, and 4 hours.....	6th July, 1895
C. G. Wridgway (Tricycle) 3 to 50 miles .....	31st Aug., 1895
C. G. Wridgway (Tricycle), 49 and 50 miles .....	7th Sept., 1895
R. A. Marples (Safety), 1 mile .....	1895
C. B. Lawes (Safety), Flying Mile .....	1898
G. A. Olley (Unpaced Safety), $\frac{3}{4}$ and 1 mile .....	15th Sept., 1900
G. A. Olley (Paced Safety), 160 to 270 miles, 7 to 12 hours .....	5th Aug., 1901
G. A. Olley (Paced Safety), 110-150 miles, 4, 5, and 6 hours .....	4th Aug., 1902
G. A. Olley (Bicycle, Motor Paced), 1-25 miles, 1 mile flying start .....	28th May, 1903
G. A. Olley (Bicycle, Motor Paced), 26-35 miles and 1 hour .....	6th June, 1903
G. L. Hopkins and O. J. Hopkins (Tandem Safety), 51 to 61 miles and 2 hours .....	29th Aug., 1903
G. L. Hopkins and O. J. Hopkins (Tandem Safety), 51 to 100 miles, 2 and 3 hours.....	20th Aug., 1904
H. W. Buck (Bicycle Unpaced), $\frac{1}{4}$ mile .....	16th Aug., 1907

B. H. Hogan (Tricycle Paced), 11 to 25 miles and 1 hour.....	25th June, 1909
B. H. Hogan (Tricycle, Unpaced), $\frac{1}{4}$ , $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile .....	2nd Aug., 1909
B. H. Hogan (Tricycle, Paced), 40 to 100 miles, 2, 3 and 4 hours ....	11th Sept., 1909
These records still stand.	
B. H. Hogan (Tricycle, Unpaced), $\frac{1}{4}$ , $\frac{1}{2}$ , $\frac{3}{4}$ and 1 mile .....	18th Sept., 1909
H. W. Bartleet and B. H. Hogan (Tandem Tricycle, Unpaced) $\frac{1}{2}$ , $\frac{3}{4}$ and 1 mile .....	29th June, 1911
B. H. Hogan (Tricycle, Unpaced), $\frac{1}{4}$ mile .....	22nd July, 1911
B. H. Hogan (Tricycle, Paced), 2 miles .....	26th July, 1913
B. H. Hogan (Tricycle, Unpaced), Flying start, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile .....	26th July, 1913

It will thus be seen that whilst we can only claim two N.C.U. Championships there are nineteen Anerley men who between them have had 1,014 records on the N.C.U. books. The frequency of the tricycle amongst them is quite appropriate for the three wheeler had its votaries for most of the years.

The record of the membership is not less striking when we leave the track of the N.C.U. for the corresponding accepted authority of all classic road events, the Road Records Association.

#### 50 miles, Tandem Bicycle, Solid Tyres.

J. G. H. Browne and W. M. Crosbie (North Road) 2h. 42m. 3s. ....	1890
<b>50 miles, Bicycle.</b>	
J. W. Stocks .....	2h. 1m. 8s. .... 1895
<b>100 miles, Bicycle.</b>	
S. F. Edge .....	5h. 24m. 57s. .... 1893
<b>100 miles, Tandem Bicycle.</b>	
J. G. H. Browne and W. M. Crosbie (North Road) 6h. 25m. 39s. ....	1890
W. H. M. Burgess and F. Cole (not A.B.C.) 5h. 30m. 32s. ....	1893
W. Stocks and M. A. Holbein (North Road) 4h. 46m. 18s. ....	1895



**100 miles, Tandem Tricycle.**

S. F. Edge and G. L. Morris (Poly.) .....	6h. 57m. 32s. ....	1887
S. F. Edge and J. E. L. Bates	5h. 30m. 31s. ....	1890

This road record by two Anerley men stood 34 years and then was only beaten by 5 minutes.

**1,000 miles Bicycle.**

G. A. Olley .....	4 days 9h. 3m. ....	1907
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**12 hours, Tricycle.**

E. J. Steel .....	190½ miles .....	1894
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**12 hours, Tandem Bicycle.**

J. W. Stocks and M. A. Holbein (North Road) ..	221 miles .....	1895
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**London to York, Bicycle.**

S. F. Edge .....	12h. 49m. ....	1892
Edge rode a geared ordinary.		

**London to Liverpool, Bicycle.**

E. J. Steel .....	12h. 29m. ....	1895
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**London to Edinburgh, Bicycle.**

G. A. Olley .....	27h. 10m. ....	1904
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**Land's End to John O'Groats, Bicycle.**

G. A. Olley .....	3 days 20h. 15m. ....	1905
G. A. Olley .....	3 days 5h. 20m. ....	1908

**London to Bath and Back, Bicycle.**

C. G. Wridgway .....	14h. 22m. 57s. ....	1893
C. G. Wridgway .....	12h. 55m. 14s. ....	1894

**London to Brighton and Back, Bicycle.**

S. F. Edge (cushion tyre) ..	7h. 2m. 50s. ....	1890
S. F. Edge .....	6h. 51m. 7s. ....	1892
S. F. Edge .....	5h. 52m. 30s. ....	1893
C. G. Wridgway .....	5h. 35m. 32s. ....	1894
C. G. Wridgway .....	5h. 22m. 33s. ....	1896
E. J. Steel (unpaced) ....	6h. 23m. 55s. ....	1898

It will be observed that the above record became a regular Anerley habit.

**London to Portsmouth and Back, Bicycle.**

G. A. Olley .....	8h. 31m. 48s. ....	1899
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In all 25 classic road records divided amongst eight Anerley men.

The above classic events far from cover all the meritorious performances of the members mentioned and we cannot refrain from giving other examples of their prowess. For instance, the late President, S. F. Edge, won the Catford Open Hill Climb up Westerham in 1887, his perfect ankle action being ideal for this sort of thing. In 1888 he won the North Road Club's Open "100" against 45 competitors, including Holbein; it was over 8 mins. before the second man followed him in. He won the same race again in 1889. In 1891 he dead-heated with Walsh, a very fine rider of the ordinary, in an open 12 hours run by the Catford on the North Road, their distance being 166 miles. In 1893 Edge won the Bath Road open "100," the same occasion making world's record for the century, our man Wridgway being only 10 sec. behind for second place, his first "100" in competition. Edge was a fine road rider, particularly at 100 miles.

To turn to Olley, he made the Southern unpaced 100 miles road record 5 hrs. 44 mins. 7 secs. in 1901, and the same year won the Dibble Shield, 12 hours path, with 277 miles, and the Carwardine Cup open path "100," run by the Anerley, his time being 3 hrs. 46 mins. 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> secs. In 1902 he put the Southern 12 hour mileage up to 193 miles and again won the Dibble Shield, this time for 6 hours on the path, 151 miles 1,705 yards. The Carwardine Cup, run in 1902 as a "100" on the path, again fell to him in 3 hrs. 48 mins. 31<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> secs.

In 1903 and again in 1904 he held the Southern Roads "50" records, his 1904 time, 2 hrs. 17 mins. 39 secs., standing for eight years. Other little activities of Olley in 1904 were, Southern road record 100 miles, 5-26-18, and 12 hours, 202 miles; North Road 24 hours, 344 miles; a rare good man was Olley, we have never had a better. Ever-popular Hogan (Beefy) was best as a tricyclist, although his first cycling years were spent on a safety. He started work with his tricycle in 1909 by winning the handicap in the Catford Open Road "50," his time 2-48-13 being only 1 sec. slower than the then Southern record. This race was the first in which the entries numbered over 100. He won the Anerley Club "100" in 1909 on a safety, over the S.R.R.A. course, worthy of mention as his time, 6 hrs. 10 mins. was 7 mins. better than the then Southern record. He races no more but his heart is in it as much as ever



The first open road event the Anerley ever ran was a 100 miles in 1889. It was engineered by K. E. Edge and a world of trouble it gave him. It was, we believe, the first open road race for bicycles ever run South of the Thames. Incidentally, the course had to be discovered and measured. It was from Earlswood Common to Povey Cross, Woodhatch, Crawley, Horsham, Dorking and Horsham again, Broadwater and back to Earlswood, quite an energetic course. C. A. Smith, Bath Road, won, being timed by A. J. Wilson, 7 hrs. 37 mins. 10 secs. Teddy Hale a good second, having lost on the final sprint. The next time it was attempted to run this race it was proclaimed by the N.C.U. because the date was announced in *Bicycling News*, without the Club's authority. It was never run again.

The Anerley open invitation 12 hours has, on the contrary, had a very happy history, far too long of course to properly deal with here, but the cycling papers have done it full justice.

This 12 hours, that has now become a classic, was first organised for the Club in 1911 by F. S. Burgess (Sardine), and a huge job it was. The running of this race always entails a lot of work and some anxiety to the noble soul who undertakes to manage it, but whatever his experiences they do not quite touch those of the man who had to organise every detail of the first of the series.

The winners and distances for the Anerley Open 12 hours on South roads are as follows:—

1911	.....	F. H. Grubb	.....	220½	miles
1912	.....	H. G. Cook	.....	209¾	„
1913	.....	W. A. George	.....	216	„
(Interval here for the war).					
1919	.....	C. F. Davey	.....	209	„
1920	.....	M. G. Selbach	.....	208¾	„
1921	.....	M. G. Selbach	.....	214½	„
1922	.....	M. G. Selbach	.....	217¾	„
1923	.....	J. E. Holdsworth	.....	211½	„
1924	.....	F. W. Southall	.....	217¼	„
1925	.....	H. Fowler	.....	212¾	„
1926	.....	C. Marshall	.....	220¾	„
1927	.....	C. Marshall	.....	227¾	„
1928	.....	C. Marshall	.....	227¾	„
1929	.....	C. Marshall	.....	224¼	„

The race has become an annual beano for the Vegetarian C.C., they provided the winner in 1911, 1919 and 1926-1929, six times out of 14, and have top score, 227¾. In 1926 the Anerley won the team race run in connection with this "12," their men scoring A. D. M. Webb, 204¾; W. H. J. Howard, 201½; and W. R. H. Moon, 199¾.

In the quite early days of the Club, we ran for some few years a joint track meeting with the East Dulwich C.C., a nice set of fellows with a real live wire of an Hon. Secretary in O'Connor. The first meetings were on grass but in June 13th, 1891, the meeting was held on the new Herne Hill track and was a great success. The first race was a 2 miles handicap won by G. E. Osmond from scratch. We mention this because we believe that Osmond was thus the first man to win a race on this track. The Anerley won the team race against our friends of the E. Dulwich; they nearly always did. On June 11th, 1892, the very famous American racing man, A. A. Zimmerman, won from scratch the 2 miles open handicap at our joint meeting at Herne Hill.

We think we are in order in mentioning here that H. M. Ellis on September 21st, 1922, put up a British Amateur Record at Herne Hill under U.C.I. regulations, riding, behind motor pacing, in an hour the remarkable distance of 36 miles 683 yards. Why we put it this way is because Ellis left the Anerley for another Club, but we believe he was still on the roll when he did this ride.

Although the Club has had some notable performers on the track, and, as will be seen later, was for some years most prominently associated with the best track of its day, its heart has always mainly been in road events, both its own and others. It therefore naturally follows it has been involved in those burning problems that from time to time have stirred the road racing world into activity and even acrimony. As long ago as 1891 the question of giving medals for 12 hour rides accomplished on a Sunday was hotly debated, whilst no one was so boldly outrageous at that time to even hint at a club race on that day. For long the opponents carried the day, and it was not until 1924 that the change was made, the Anerley, for once, being about the last Club to fall into line, instead of showing others the way. The alteration in public opinion and the growing road congestion, both influenced the Committee. In 1892 it was even advocated to drop road racing altogether;



for one thing police persecution was making things difficult. Like wise men, a compromise was arrived at, the short distance events being taken to the path, never to return to the road, whilst the longer distances remained on the highway. A trouble in Southern road events that about this time became acute was the practice of using what was known as the Frying Pan at Woodhatch by several clubs on the same day, finishing on many occasions at the same time, same spot, *but in opposite directions*. The chaos that ensued may be faintly imagined. Yet there was no existing machinery to stop it.

A little group, consisting of Jimmy Blair of the Catford, G. H. Smith of the Anerley, White of the Tooting B.C., and Keen of the Red Hill Wanderers, got together and formed, or caused to be formed, the Southern Road Riding Association. They were soon reinforced by Fred Baily, who came on as delegate from the Chichester C.C., and other good men who had the true interest of the sport at heart.

With the loyal help of all the Clubs, the overcrowding of courses soon ceased, fresh courses discovered and measured, the use of them arranged for in advance, records were properly timed and checked, and in fact the orderly arrangement of all road events down South became, and has remained, as satisfactory as in the North. The first race the Anerley ever ran over a S.R.R.A. course was a "25" on June 3rd, 1893; they still race over these courses although the riders are probably quite unaware of it. The S.R.R.A. in course of time ceased, but the present S.R.R.A. to which the Club is affiliated, rose from its ashes.

Later, another trouble bothered the road racer, the clashing of dates of important open road events. Again the Anerley was in the van in straightening out the situation, this time due to a brain wave of a brainy member, H. W. Bartleet (Sammy). Acting on his suggestion and under his active guidance, the Anerley called a meeting of Clubs, promoting open road events, at the Olympia Cycle Show of 1919. A scheme to avoid these regrettable clashes was evolved and has functioned smoothly ever since.

The very first 12 hours race on the track that was ever run anywhere was an Anerley Club event, thought of and worked up by H. H. Clarke, who had the hard luck to be kept away from starting by business. It was run on the old original Crystal Palace track that few of the present members can have

ever seen. It was a small track, no banking, and cinder surface. Later, a much larger and more up to date track was made at the Palace; more of this hereafter. Eight started and all obtained medals, five gold and three silver, so the Club was not making money, as well as history, that day. W. H. M. Burgess won with a score of 192 miles 1,500 yards, W. J. Kemp a good second a mile behind; he went to pieces in the last 20 mins. Pacemakers were allowed and one of them, Geo. Lacey Hillier, was so favourably impressed with this 12 hour venture that he caused the open Anchor Shield race to be contested in this way at Herne Hill the following October, and it was won by an Anerley man, Wridgway.

Whilst ours was the first 12 hours track race the first man known to attempt 12 hours on the track was "Sammy" Bartleet, who took his ordinary on the long lone trail over the same track, in 1889, when he did 135 miles unpaced, retiring at 10 hrs. 20 mins.

It is of course impossible to more than hint at the Club's road races in this little volume, they must total some 200 or more, but for the most part their thrills, where they live at all can only be in the memories of those that took part in them. They had their importance to the Club, were the talk and interest of their day, as are the keenly contested races now, when better times are done not only by the winners but by the whole field. Still, there was a Club "50" run on June 9th, 1894, over a measured S.R.R.A. course and timed by official time-keepers, that might be cited as a good sample of Club road events. Seventeen started, C. G. Wridgway on scratch, Burgess, A. W. Horton and Gomme on 3 mins. mark, limit having 32 mins.

Pacing, as always then, was allowed and consisted chiefly of tandems. At half distance mark the whole of the scratch and 3 mins. batch came up in a mob in 1 hr. 10½ mins., the pacing tandems hanging on desperately instead of being in front. It was a grand finish between Wridgway and Horton, a long sprint on a clear straight road only ending at the post by Wridgway just crossing first. Burgess was third. Wridgway not only won but broke two records, the world's out and home "50" by 1 min. 58 sec., and the Southern Roads by 9 mins. 36 secs., the latter having previously been held by Horton. A. W. Dunn who started with 25 mins., was sixth in 3 hrs. 11 mins. We mention Dunn because 35 years after-



wards he is still one of the most consistent supporters of Club runs that we have.

The S.R.R.A. had a trophy presented by the President of the Association, Mr. Roberts, a weekly illustrated paper proprietor. It was called the Roberts Shield for a 50 miles race on the road and Championship of the South. Its first winner was Platt Betts, his name first coming into prominence on that occasion. In 1894 and 1895 it went to the Anerley per Wridgway, and in 1896 it was taken on to the Palace track but could not escape Anerley clutches, Ellis winning in 1 hr. 51 mins. 15 secs. Our old friends of the East Dulwich sent a competitor, J. B. Cooke, who probably became superstitious afterwards; his number was 13, the winner passed him in the 13th lap, he fell in the 13th lap short of a 100, at 13 minutes short of the hour.

In 1895 one of the outstanding events of the Club's history happened, the gigantic silver Carwardine Cup valued 300 guineas, was presented by Mr. Vice-President Carwardine. The first contest for it was an open 24 hours on Putney track on June 21st and 22nd, 1895. It was a great success for the Club, a good gate was frantically enthusiastic and after a splendid determined race C. C. Fontaine won the right to have his name first on the trophy. Next year, 1896, the race was transformed into a century and run off at Herne Hill on July 4th, Frost, a Bath Roader, winning. He ultimately won for the third time in 1900, and took final possession of the mountain of silver. His time for the 100 on the last occasion was 3 hrs. 46 mins. 56<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub> secs. timed by the official N.C.U. time-keeper and our member, Pem Coleman, Olley of ours being second, 2 mins. behind. He had a nasty fall in the race.

To replace the lost cup Mr. Carwardine gave a smaller but gold one and in the first and second race for this in 1901-1902 our G. A. Olley proved the winner, and in 1902 we also provided the second man, F. A. Daymond, who had been third the year before.

The 1902 win was on Whit Monday, and "Dagonet" in *The Referee*, said, "of course he won, was it not Bank-Olley-Day?" In 1896 Fred. Baily, was appointed Superintendent of the new track at the Crystal Palace, then just opened. This was our introduction to some years of prominence in track racing matters.

The following year, 1897, we became the Ground Club of the Crystal Palace track, with W. Mitson, Racing Hon. Secretary.

Our first open meeting was in June, same year, when a tandem race was run for the first time, one of ours, A. Farrell, sharing the third prize in the final with Le Gry of the De Laune C.C. The best thrill was the 10 miles scratch, a finely ridden race won by Burnand of the Catford. All the officials, except the umpires, and the judge Dr. Turner, were A.B.C. men, and there was a fine gate.

Under the intensive push of Mitson, the Anerley kept the C.P. track lively for the next 10 years. There was Club racing every Thursday evening in the season and frequent open meetings. In 1899 the Palace Board of Directors presented the Club with the Dibble Shield. This had previously been known as the Anchor Shield, the Dibble family of course for very many years presided over the "Anchor" at Ripley. The race, an open 12 hours, was run on the 9th September, 1899, and was a great success from a sporting point of view, but the gate was rather poor. It was won by E. S. Montgomery of the North Surrey with 267 miles. Only one Anerley man ran, J. H. Gladding, who was fifth with 241 miles. A little incident in the race was the chalking on the board the result of the Dreyfus case in France. This well-known case aroused intense interest and feeling both in France and England. When the result was seen to be against Dreyfus the crowds gave a tremendous groan which the self-conscious competitors thought was meant for them, and all put in a frantic effort.

Mitson was married in 1901 and members presented him with a piano as a mark of appreciation of his wonderful work as Racing Hon. Secretary.

In June, 1906, in conjunction with *Cycling*, a very big meeting was held at the C.P., the gate being estimated at 30,000. This was followed by a grand concert in the Palace, the whole orchestra, the main floor and the galleries being crowded. All who heard this vast assembly sing "Land of Hope and Glory," not so hackneyed then, are hardly likely to forget it. Much, much more, might be written about the Club's close association with the cycle racing of its age, both path and road, but perhaps enough has been said to bring home to those who did not know, and to remind those that did, that the Anerley has done its bit in the past as it does now, and will do greater yet.



## The War Years, 1914-1918.

FINAL preparations were being made for the usual Anerley 12 Hours Invitation Open, when the war started. From that moment all the normal routine of the Club's life ceased, certainly until 1919, and indeed, even to-day, 11 years after, one cannot say that as yet quite everything is as once it was.

But the Club never ceased to function, runs were carried out, fortnightly where they could not be weekly, and to take the place of the *Gazette* news letters were sent out by the President to every member serving who could be reached. These letters were much enjoyed, there are recipients who still refer to them, to them they were little rays of sunlight on a dark landscape. Our men, as they joined up, were distributed over half the globe. One of the first to go was C. G. Blake, 25th County of London, to India; Long Maton to East Africa; E. A. Spring, then Hon. Secretary, to France. W. P. Harmsworth, detained in this country for scientific work of national importance, took on the Secretarial duties, and eventually almost all the other official appointments as well. M. W. Calder was Captain when the war started and for some time turned out at every run. Sent with his regiment to France in 1916, he wrote from the front to suggest his resignation as Captain, but the Club would not hear of it and S. K. Aldous acted as his deputy until he also was called away to the R.N.V.R.

Calder, writing from the front line to our war years President, G. H. Smith, thus describes a relief party to a small force of British that had penetrated to the enemy lines and dug themselves in there.

"I suppose it would have taken about 15 minutes to walk straight over, but it took us 5 hours to effect that relief. The Huns had the wind up badly and kept star shells continually in the air. This meant that it was only occasionally we could move forward. Then there was the difficulty of reaching the exact place in the Hun line held by our men. Our guide got rather uncertain of exactly where we were, so we had to lie



M. W. CALDER.

Captain of Anerley B.C. 1913-1917. Killed in action, Vimy Ridge, May 3rd, 1917, whilst serving in the Honourable Artillery Company.

ONE OF THE BEST.

*"Crowned with the wreath that never perisheth,  
And diadem of honourable death."*



down for 1½ hours without being able to speak while he and our officer crawled up and located the spot. This was eventually successfully accomplished, but it was a very trying time, with a machine gun coughing out lead every time the Verey lights showed us up. When we got into the post our officer decided that we should try and push further down the trench, so we amused ourselves for an hour or so bombing Fritz. We had, however, to withdraw to our original position as machine gun fire prevent us from consolidating. Next night we tried again and completely succeeded in driving everyone out and capturing the whole trench, giving us access to a sunken road that led into the town that was our objective. We were relieved and the town was captured early next morning with very few casualties. Everyone was pleased with our work and we were congratulated by the General."

It cannot have been very long after this gallant little affair that our Captain was killed. As we wrote at the time when announcing our great loss to the members—"The Anerley have been happy in their Captains, but to put it temperately and simply no previous holder of the office has been more enthusiastic and efficient, more of a sportsman and a gentleman, nor more esteemed and loved by every member fortunate to meet him, than M. W. Calder, who died on May 3rd, 1917, a soldier in the Honourable Artillery Company, one of the best Captains we can ever hope to have."

Reading those sentences again nearly 13 years afterwards, when the first rush of grief has mellowed into quiet memory, one honestly feels not one word too much was said, the wear of years has only polished the gold more brightly.

Mr. Calder, Senior, who also lost also another son in action, presented to the Club the Calder Shield in memory of our Captain. It is and will remain one of our most precious treasures.

Other members we lost in action were C. A. Say, W. N. Belham and Polehampton, whilst one of our then most speedy men, H. E. V. Brookes, died as result of exposure in 1918, and Dick Horton after the war. Several were wounded, "Beefy," taking over a year to recover. Possibly others were killed, but in the confusion of the times news came on halting wing.

Hall was a Lt.-Colonel, "Sandow" Norman an officer in Salonica, "Beefy" a Lieutenant, "Bloss" Bailey an instructor



in Canada, Wells the R.F.A., Harmsworth's younger brother, H. B., a flying man, Andrews in the Oxford Hussars, whilst Hale became a war prisoner. How many of the Club did their bit we do not know, but these figures are definite; at the Old Boy's Run to Redhill in September, 1917, letters and messages were read from no less than 37 members then serving in the Army or Navy. And a very useful lot they were, we stay-at-homes may be quite sure of that. One good thing emerged from these sad war years, the starting of the Junior Section.

## Festivities and Customs.

*"God rest ye merrie gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay."*

THE annual Club dinner has always been a festivity and has now become a custom that will only die with the Club. An acknowledged expert on the subject once assured the writer, with a conviction that could not be doubted, that there was no bad beer. He was willing to admit that some beer was not as good as other beers, but that any beer was bad was unthinkable. We will make a similar claim for the Anerley annual dinners and we do so, not solely through a natural bias and enthusiasm, but we have strong circumstantial evidence in the regularity with which the same guests accept the invitation, appear and see the function through year after year, greatly to our delight and incidentally helping to insure success. A shining example is Mr. H. H. Morris of the Brixton Ramblers. We have requested him to let us know, with a view of publication on this page the total attendances he has scored, but his modesty forbids and we can only make a rough guess of 30. It is pleasant to be able to add that he looks fit for many more and we trust he will add to his laurels.

The earlier dinners were at the Bridge House Hotel, Southwark end of London Bridge. It really was an hotel in these days, a very solid, dull, early Victorian specimen of a London hotel, and even Mark Tapley would have allowed some credit in being jolly in spite of such a mausoleum-like setting. We only went there because it suited our President, Mr. R. H. Fry; he did so much for us we could not do less for him. With Fry in the Chair the dinner would have gone with a swing anywhere, he really enjoyed being with us and we to have him; he not only made a perfect chairman and ruler of the feast, but he invariably paid for all the wines, cigars, waiters' tips, most of the valuable prizes distributed, and wound up by asking to be allowed to give no less good prizes for the following season. We had this wonderful experience for 15 years. In 1892 we moved to Anderton's, Fleet Street, even Mr. Fry having begun to feel chill nearer the river. In 1893 we happily discovered the Holborn Restaurant and that famous establishment gave us



a warm welcome for several following years, but later we have imbued the spirit of the times and become more restless, changing the scene of the festivity but retaining its essentials. In 1929 the dinner was as successful as ever, this time at Frascati's. That well known writer on cycling subjects, the late H. J. Swindley, wrote thus in *The Cyclist* of 17th January, 1894, anent the Anerley dinner he had just attended.

"What is it that constitutes the *esprit de corps* in a cycling club? Is it the possession of a generous and sporting President in addition to the sportsmanlike feeling of the majority of the members sown and fostered by the knowledge that at their supreme head there is a more than ornamental official always ready to be interested in all the Club undertakes? Is that the secret of the fellowly accord of the Anerley B.C., so charmingly and so graciously evinced at their annual dinner?

Whatever the cause there was a thoroughness, a go, and a swing about this particular festivity which we often find lacking in older or more prominent associations."

Very nice of Swindley, all the more so as it was and is perfectly true.

It will be news to some and a startling reminder to others, that in 1899 the dinner was held at the Crystal Palace, when Fry held his gentle sway over the 100 present. It was long a custom at these functions to make a collection for the Sandwichmen's Christmas Feed, that was annually organised by our Vice-President F. P. Low, to give a good meal and wonderful entertainment once a year to a deplorable body of men who once roamed the gutters of London streets for a pittance; a cruel spectacle happily no longer seen, at least not in its old abject tragedy.

We need only describe one of our dinners out of the jolly host, and select that of 1920, not because there is anything abnormal about it, but because it was reported at the time not quite in the normal way, as follows.

*There are events, as each wise reader knows,  
Of too supreme import for common workday prose,  
And one of these, before I any further go,  
I boldly claim to be, our Dinner at the Monico.  
It gave us, one and all, such a right glorious time,  
That if poetry cannot chronicle, at least must jingling rhyme.  
To start with the apartment was all that such should be,  
Bright, lofty, tastefully ornate, cool, but from chill draughts free,*

*The menu, too, was one to appeal to junior or elder,  
And joyed the palate all way through, from huitres to Melba.  
Then the wine—ah! yes, the wine, here let us do a linger,  
To justly sing its due of praise demands an apter singer.  
For memory still repeats the thrill begot of its aroma,  
And mark you, not the merely "still," but the bubbling, winking  
foamer.*

*Oh, generous, soft, limpid broth, that gurgles forth from bottle,  
As red or white you give delight, by pint, or quart, or pottle.  
You thaw the rigid, cheer the down, the Veteran's youth renew;  
Wit ventures out as you with kindness the atmosphere imbue.  
But stay, or else it may be deemed we mainly eat and drink,  
When we assemble to enjoy, 'twould be a most mistaken think  
The jolly boys of A.B.C., they love a merry song,  
They love a chat, they love a speech, provided not too long.  
They like to hear sweet harmony and they had it in the glee,  
The Ludgate Singers sang to them, soft and low, like summer sea.  
They love to see a pretty face, and hear a rich note boom,  
And they had it both when the room was graced by charming Alice  
Coombe.*

*Lord, how they laughed at little Pat, with her roguish clever fallah,  
And called her back when she sailed away in the "Good Ship Hickey  
Doolah."*

*Nor did this the stage exhaust, for we had plenty more  
In musical Miss Bertram, Garson and David Openshaw.  
A right royal entertainment, and we've to thank for that,  
The very happy father of the very clever Pat.  
But what are entertainers without an audience keen?  
Much like a gaudy Maypole without dancers on the green,  
It is the crowds that make the streets entertaining places,  
It's not the knockers on the doors, but just plain human faces,  
And so it was on this most notably auspicious occasion,  
When President Burgess received a justly earned ovation,  
As he beamed upon a gathering close on ninety strong  
(A record due to Maton, I mean the shorter one, not Long).  
Looking just as well and jolly as some of we old chaps  
Remember him thirty years before, a bit further round, perhaps,  
And as he gazed about the room and pledged his toasting friends,  
He felt for any ups and downs, fate now had made amends;  
He saw some men who used to scorch when he could do the same,  
"Sammy" and Brookes and Harold Ruston, of Secretarial fame,  
"Rimmy" and "Curly," "Pa" and Dunn, the two Letts and Moon;*



*Brother "Sardine," Mitson and Young, who used to sing the  
"Whistling Coon."*

*Bartrop the quiet and "Sandow" Norman the strong,  
Were others he spotted 'midst the joyous throng.  
Then he turned to the youngsters, the hope of the Club  
Aldous, who seemed to take a prize for each bob in his sub.,  
Just leaving a few for H. Harmsworth, the air flyer,  
So as not to arouse his brother's, our Secretary's, ire.  
Collins, Young Dunn, Hardiman and a host of fine fellows,  
Who will score for us yet if they develop their bellows.  
Then there were our Visitors, several lots,  
Including a contingent come special from Notts.  
Bath Roaders, North Roaders, and Ramblers from Brix.,  
Other Clubs represented, at least five or six.  
All most welcome, but the Visitor we must honour yield,  
Was Selbach, the annexer of our 12 hour Shield.  
Then the speeches, what oratory, with what flattering grace,  
Friend Stancer eulogizes the whole Anerley race.  
In reply, at what length good old Sherwood did gloat  
At our failures, with a dry humour that affected his throat.  
Then our V.P., Percy Low, that legal master of diction,  
Gave "The Visitors" in a way that secured their conviction  
That the best of all ways to do yourself fine  
Was to wire a "Yes" when the Anerley ask you to dine.  
After Marks of the Stanley had becomingly replied,  
Several others were invited to ditto, and did so, beside  
That good old sport, Dixon, most genuine of men,  
On whom sits lightly his three score years and ten.  
Anon, Mr. Editor "Beefy" gives G. H. the wink,  
'Twas time our worthy Chairman's very good health to drink.  
So we heard of his old records and equestrian exercise,  
Of his readiness to help the Club, whatever may arise;  
Of his kindness to the needy, of his motor pioneering,  
Till we "Jolly Good Fellowed" him and let go a roar of cheering.  
And so the evening ended, as even good things will,  
And the man who didn't enjoy himself is being searched for still.*

Other forms our festivities have taken are dances that for a time were very popular, but the rather unsociable character modern dances and dancers have assumed would probably make it difficult to recapture the family party warmth and go of the Club dances of the nineties, such as the one at the Clarence Hall, Anerley, on 26th January, 1893, when 87 members

and their lady friends tripped the night hours away with Capt. Fred. Baily as M.C., marching up and down the middle, beaming good nature that infected the whole bright throng.

Billiards and card competitions have from time to time been indulged in with other clubs, generally to the discomfiture of the home team. The Brixton Ramblers have been particularly friendly in connection with these gentle sports and we have frequently had the good fortune to be their guests at their club rooms.

Concerts, Lantern Shows, Home Trainer Competitions, these were held mostly in our own Club rooms and of these we will now write.

The first Club House belongs to the very early days. It was an unsuitable and uncomfortable building at the back of the "Robin Hood," Anerley. It really had only one good feature, an ex-coach-house that gave room for boxing. A few of the members, led on as usual by S. F. Edge, subscribed to pay the fee of a professional boxing instructor. He was a very active man with both his fists and his feet. The writer recalls that it was suggested he should subscribe, and as an inducement to that end was given a free trial round. The Professor promised not to "it the gent 'ard," and thus encouraged, a start was made. It was a short round, for what the Professor described as "a little tap on the boko" had such an effect that we concluded if we got all that for nothing it would be sheer folly and extravagance to pay to have any more.

From these sanguinary scenes we moved to a smaller but more comfortable building in Ridsdale Road, Anerley, since pulled down to make room for houses. We were there for several years and it was the scene of many a very jolly evening. The place was burgled three times, one occasion two men were caught and convicted. It was at this Club House that in 1891 two members volunteered to give a demonstration of the simplicity of repair of the original stuck on Dunlop, then just coming into fashion in the Club. They gallantly struggled with the ghastly thing for three hours, then packed it up in brown paper to take to the makers next day.

We had a Home Trainer at this place. Some of our later members may not know what a Home Trainer is, or was. Briefly it is a bicycle saddle mounted over a fly wheel, to which cranks and pedals are attached. Seated in the saddle and grasping the fixed handle-bar, the competitor goes all out,



a dial registering the imaginary mileage he has covered in a given time. It is an extremely exhausting form of exercise, none the less so in a hot and smoke filled room. One has had to have been in a race on this instrument of torture to fully appreciate the enormity of "Sammy" Bartleet's suggestion that 12 hours and six days competitions should be held upon it. The debates, the arguments in Ridsdale Road were great; we should have become a tribe of orators. As someone wrote at the time, "Is it eloquence you want me darlint, then just drop into the Club House when S. F. Edge is holding forth on the geared ordinary. It is not so much what he says as the lively way he says it. One staggers home after some three hours of his overpowering vehemence, his cutting sarcasm, his ever-ready answers to every possible argument or criticism, with a rather mixed notion perhaps of what he has exactly been saying, but a firm conviction that if you want a machine to go like the wind without any effort on your part, to ride up sides of houses or down chalk pits without danger, you must buy a geared ordinary."

Our good old consistent member Bartrop gave several entertaining lantern shows at this Club House.

Our next and last move was in 1899 to the Crystal Palace; where we had a very fine room behind the "Kings and Queens." We had Hot-Pot Club suppers there on occasions, concerts, whist drives and a billiard table. It was by far and away the best premises, but we are not sure it was quite as popular as the crowded little place in Ridsdale Road. Then came the difficult days of the old Palace, and in 1910 our Club House ended.

We believe the Anerley, leader in so many things, was the first Club to have a gazette or magazine of its own. It began in 1888 with a publication laboriously produced by copyograph by the Editor, T. D. McMeakin. He even drew the illustrations and drew them remarkably well. The first issue printed came out in 1890 with G. H. Smith as Editor and it continued in his charge until 1894. This printed series had a very fine heading drawn specially by George Moore, the finest artist of anywhere and any time so far as correct and convincing drawings of cycles and cyclists goes. It depicts the finish of a safety race with A. J. Wilson as judge, an Olympia tandem tricycle with Mrs. Geo. Moore on the front saddle, and a man on a single tricycle, commonly supposed to be S. F. Edge. The Club motto is introduced and the badge of that period, a shield.

This was used on every issue from 1890 until the present smaller page was introduced in 1924. C. K. Clarke was Editor in 1895; C. G. Wridgway, 1896; A. W. Dunn, 1897-1908; H. M. Ellis, 1909-10; S. G. Sherwood, 1911-1913; C. E. Bailey, 1914-15, then a blank for the war, resumed in 1920-1923 by B. H. Hogan, and 1924-1929 by E. A. Spring. It is a fine record of continuous effort, and particularly worthy of comment is the performance of A. W. Dunn who was Editor for over 12 years, as steady a stickler in the Editorial chair as he has been for years and years and still is on the road. Believe us this getting out of the *Gazette* month after month to time is no small tax on busy members, a fact that is not always fully grasped by those who read and enjoy it. The getting of copy is at times more troublesome than it should be, and more than one Editor has often thought the thought that one has put in type, after reading Tom Hood probably, "Alas that months should come so fast and copy come so slow." But if copy came slow it was very excellent when it arrived. There has been real good stuff in our *Gazettes* quite apart from the Club interest, and nowhere have we come across a writer who could treat a plain club run so artistically, so delicately in humour, so picturesque in description, as our own W. R. Matthews.

Some passing notes to close this chapter. The standard dress for members, grey cloth suit and black stockings, was abolished in 1891. Since then various original costume schemes have appeared on Club runs. It may come as a shock to present members to learn that the Club ever had ladies on the membership roll, but they did. In 1898 Mrs. E. Boxer of Hookwood was elected; her son, A. E. Boxer, was our Social Hon. Secretary, at the time. The only other lapse that we are aware of is the case of Mrs. Moore, wife of a quiet tricycling member. We never saw Mrs. Moore cycle, but Mrs. Boxer could hold her own on the road.

We wonder what is the total amount of money the membership of the Club has spent in all on cycles. It must be a huge sum, one dares not put the guess on paper. In 1893 the Club was particularly well mounted and a rough summary was made of the cost of the new machines brought on the road by the members in the spring, it ran into over £1,000. Of course machines cost more then, we have known as much as £18 being given for a first class *second hand* safety.



## Officers and Others.

WHEN the writer was Editor of the *Gazette* a member wrote and solemnly informed him that he declined to read that publication any longer, because his name was never mentioned in it. If all those Anerley men who are not mentioned in this little booklet take a similar drastic line of action the circulation will be greatly restricted. We have no fears however, for intelligent readers, in other words all present members of the Club, fully realise the limitations of space, and further and even more truly, the vast majority of the great army of Anerley men never worked with the slightest wish or expectation of being mentioned anywhere, their desire was to make the Club go, be respected, to make it and keep it a very desirable thing to belong to, to be good cycling sportsmen, amongst a crowd of such. That being so, it is merely plain justice to say that these unnamed ones have been singularly successful in their plans.

We will mention the Presidents of the Club in the order of their reign. The first was Mr. Wm. Ruston, Senior, already alluded to. He was soon followed by Sir John Blundell Maple, at that time M.P. for the constituency in which Anerley stood. His name should not be forgotten by cyclists, for he backed and was one of the chief fighters for an Act of literally life and death importance to them, the compulsory lighting of all vehicles. Before that act was passed hardly any cart on the road carried any light at night, resulting naturally in terrible cycling accidents. One of ours was very nearly killed on a club run from this cause. He was followed by Mr. H. S. Hughes, an ex-captain, and then by Mr. R. H. Fry, beyond doubt the most outstanding President the Club ever had. He reigned from 1887 till his death in 1902, sixteen years of intensive interest in the Club and an inexhaustible princely generosity that at times was almost too much. His sudden death was a terrible shock; we all felt we had lost a very dear personal friend as well as the chief pillar of the Club.

Sir Charles Lawes-Wittewronge, Bart., was naturally a little handicapped at following such an outstanding figure. He was

an active riding member of the Club and identical with the Charles Lawes mentioned in connection with racing. To a larger public he was known as a famous sculptor. Our old member F. W. Baily, was made President and a Life Member in 1907 and continued for seven years, to be followed in 1914 by G. H. Smith, whose fate it was to see the Club through the war years. In 1920 W. H. M. Burgess relieved guard and was an Active President until 1928, nine years, a term of office only exceeded by Fry. Last year, 1929, S. F. Edge, although having many calls upon his time, accepted the Presidency, some 44 years after joining the Club, but he still cycles almost daily and we should not be surprised if he could even still sprint. He entertained the members royally during the year, giving prizes and was at his post at the dinner.

The Captains include H. S. Hughes, McKinlay, T. D. McMeekin, Fred. W. Baily who resigned in 1890 after eight years of leadership; Frank Farrell, W. Baker, H. Hollands, A. C. Armstrong, F. S. Burgess, Norman, B. H. Hogan, M. W. Calder (see war years), A. K. Aldous, R. G. Maton, S. K. Aldous, and last, but not least, D. E. S. Kirby, who in 1929 completed seven years of very active captaincy, an inveterate Club runner and one who always makes the others hurry in the Club races.

T. D. McMeekin took the Captaincy very seriously and was most active in the Club's interest, working all the time at a strange and great disadvantage, for his father, a very wealthy man, was violently opposed to cycling generally, and our Captain had to work secretly, even hide his ordinary. He had a brother, another keen cyclist, who for the same domestic reason had no machine. The two toured from Norwood to the Isle of Wight with one ordinary between them, one riding on and leaving the machine against a wall or hedge for the other to take a turn at riding when he walked up to it. There was no question about their keenness.

Fred. Baily was a wonderful Captain; he would stand no nonsense, and if annoyed his Irish nature would out and there would be a little storm. But it was only a sharp April hail shower, the sun shone all the brighter immediately after, and his tact, and the real love the members had for him gave but rare opportunity for even these passing outbursts. It was a sight to remember to see him surrounded by a big crowd of hungry, thirsty, jolly Anerley boys, his benign face and lofty brow wreathed in smiles and perspiration, what time he filled



the ever emptying cups, with a half serious, half bantering protest at the amount of his labours.

Notable amongst the Hon. Secretaries have been H. J. Ruston, K. E. Edge, W. H. M. Burgess, C. A. Riminton, A. H. D'Aeth, A. E. Mann, F. S. Burgess, Cecil Bailey, S. G. Sherwood, H. M. Ellis, E. A. Spring and L. G. Leybourne who worked in double harness, W. P. Harmsworth who nursed us all through the war, C. P. Le-Fort, and S. C. Castell who in 1929 completed his sixth year. Both Harold Ruston and Kelburne E. Edge were giants amongst Hon. Secretaries, Harold in particular put in years and years of splendid work both as Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer; at one time, in 1892, he filled both posts. Kelburne was intensely active and full of original schemes. He did very much towards bringing the Club into the lime-light and it was a real loss when he departed for Australia in 1891. It was nearly the 20th century before we had Racing Hon. Secretaries, but they have managed to do a lot of good work since. For samples we give W. Mitson, G. L. Hopkins, F. R. Farrell, H. H. Clarke, F. S. Burgess, S. G. Sherwood, F. Maton, E. A. Spring, A. J. Cooke and for 1929 H. W. Flower.

In the responsible and tiresome office of Hon. Treasurer, Harold Ruston and O. W. Wells have put in the greatest number of years of faithful service, with H. H. Clarke, S. G. Sherwood and Le-Fort helping to fill in the intermediate years; whilst H. Padbury started his term in 1929.

Amongst the host who have not appeared in the officers' list but who have done either notable work for the Club, or brought it honour indirectly, mention might be made of Vice-President F. P. Low who has been very faithful to the Club for almost a life-time, and insisted, he told us, that he should be received as an Anerley B.C. man when he was elected to the Presidency of the Fellowship of Old Timer's for 1929-1930; Vice-President C. G. Syrett, our one and only Hon. Solicitor, who once fought a law case for us and saved a lot of money; W. B. Tanner, the great N.C.U. worker, a Vice-President who often took the Chair at our meetings in the days he felt more juvenile; Charles Sangster once a regular Club runner and after the head of a big cycle manufactory; Harry Evans, the artist; Admiral Hall; Bret Hayden, the popular entertainer; E. J. Housden who still holds the Championship for debate at Committee meetings; J. E. L. Bates, now Dr. Bates, the man who was

never known not to smile, even when wheeling "S.F." about the country; A. W. Brookes; Fon Nixon; Thomas on his trike gamely following on to the runs destination, scorch they never so wildly; and another wonderful old tricyclist, A. E. Edge, "Old Man Edge" as the youths around him used to call him, not that there was much sign of age when the Club run hurried. He was father of all the Edge boys and had spent much of his life in Australia and he died at Sydney in 1924 in his 81st year.

Although he is unfortunately no longer a member we cannot refrain from also mentioning H. W. Bartleet, "Sammy," who in the past has served the Club in many capacities. A man of marked individuality, it might be said with truth that he has devoted his life to the cause of cycling and cyclists. His hobby is to build up a collection of old and historic cycles; he has by far the finest collection in the world and it is secured for posterity, being bequeathed to the City of Coventry, the City Fathers having undertaken to provide a special building for the machines.

Perhaps we have mentioned enough names, perhaps not, but let us give one thought to the unnamed, those many who for various reasons regard office as impossible for themselves, those so ready to help others, provided it can be done without making themselves conspicuous. The men who used to do the lap scoring in the long distance track events; the men who carried out the duties of dressing room stewards; the men who kept the Club rooms in order; the men who used to turn out at all sorts of odd spots and hours to pace competitors on 12 or 24 hours road trials; the men who now get up at too early hours to start or check the morning Club races; the men who go to lonely far-away points to check and turn in our annual 12 hours open, these also serve; their names may not often appear in print but they are indelibly written on the cleanest page of the book of memories of their fellow Anerleyites.

For those who have not long been members we fear the reading of this chapter must have been a severe test of loyalty, something like reading a play that depends mainly on the acting and the scenery, without having seen that play presented on the stage and the lights up. But those who have seen the play, or better still, acted in it, the reading of the book long afterwards is a delight, the name of every character, every stage direction, the order of the scenes, brings back vividly every situation, and



little bits of side play, gags half forgotten, all leap again into living reality, reincarnating glorious moments. Mayhap to some the mere mention of one of these names here recorded, will, in like manner be the spark to set aglow a train of memories well worth rekindling.

## To-Day

*“ Youth now flees on feathered foot  
Faint and fainter sounds the flute,  
Rarer songs of gods ; and still  
Somewhere on the sunny hill,  
Or along the winding stream,  
Through the willows, flits a dream ;  
Flits but shows a smiling face,  
Flees but with so quaint a grace,  
None can choose to stay at home,  
All must follow, all must roam.”*

R. L. STEVENSON.

THE Anerley B.C. is an old Club ; this, 1930, is its fiftieth year ; in 1931 we are to celebrate the Club's Jubilee, Indeed, we only know of four or her cycling clubs in the world actually alive and to some extent active, that rival us for the same length of years of honourable activity.

They are the Pickwick B.C., Stanley C.C., Brixton Ramblers who beat us by one year, and the Boston B.C. of U.S.A. There may be others but if there are they are keeping very quiet.

What we mainly glory in, however, is not in being so old, but in being still so young. For evidence on this point of youthful vitality witness the increasing size of the entries for the Club races, the all round betterment of the times clocked ; the increase in the distance of the Club runs that are carried out every Saturday with unfailing regularity ; look at the great majority of the men who attend these runs, men in the prime of their young manhood, and reflect that these very same men are actually in control of the Club to-day, are its officers, leaders, thinkers and doers.

We desire to bring this point right home to those who may read this little book but are not yet members of the Club, and therefore not fully acquainted with the prevailing character of the membership of to-day. Obviously when running, however lightly, over the events of nearly 50 years the major portion



of the pages must perforce speak of men of what now seem dimly distant days ; of doings and customs, some of which are right out of touch with modern ideas and practice, and whilst we offer no excuse nor apology for endeavouring to sketch a phase in cycling club life that has passed under the last bridge out into the broad estuary of memory over which the mist is already spreading thickly, yet it would be a pity and most misleading if the resultant was an impression that the Anerley is a " has been," a rather wonderful and interesting specimen of that ilk, but still a " has been." The plain unvarnished fact is that never was the Anerley a more out and out cycling Club than it is in this year of grace, 1930 ; the bicycle is the thing, excursions into side lines of exercise or amusement are extremely rare ; the average annual mileage figures of the active membership must be exceptionally high.

The Club is not unmindful of its responsibility to the Sport as a whole, it feels it is called upon to do something to keep the interest in cycling alive in the Nation, to encourage the youth who " now flees on feathered foot," although not with an Anerley badge in his scanty outfit. Therefore it annually carries out the open 12 hours on Southern roads, a race that has become a classic, that has created a wonderful new series of figures for the South and which it is as difficult to win to-day, and as glorious a thing to win as any other road 12 hours run anywhere by any organisation. This race, like all such events, calls for an immense amount of expert supervision and pre-arrangement. The whole work before and on the day is carried out almost entirely by Anerley B.C. members, a far flung army of checkers, feeders, runners up, etc., a failure in duty on the part of any one of whom would in all probability lead to a disaster to the event ; yet year by year passes and all goes well, the critics have no material, the singers of praise lift their voices lustily. The race, besides much work and no little anxiety, costs each year a useful sum of money to run, and in a sense the Club itself has no return for all its labour and expenditure, except the proud thought that it is doing something for the sport of cycling as a whole, and doing it very well.

It also supports by membership all the recognised bodies formed for the protection, guidance and comfort of cyclists that flourish, or any way continue to exist, in this Kingdom. F. E. Brown, B. H. Hogan and D. E. S. Kirby are the delegates

for the Club this year to the National Cyclists Union, and the first two named are also the delegates to the Road Records Association and Southern Road Records Association. The delegates for the Southern Counties Cycling Union are F. E. Brown and H. W. Flower ; for the West London Cycling Association, F. E. Brown, S. C. Castell and D. E. S. Kirby, whilst B. H. Hogan cares for the Club's interest in the main and every one else's in general, on the Road Racing Council.

The President for 1930 is H. H. Clarke who is now in his forty-third year of membership. Those years rest lightly upon him and he has never ceased to be an active worker for the Club and comes at length to the well deserved honour of the Presidency with all the present activities of the Club at his finger ends, knowing and known to the active membership of the day, a charming and valued link between past and present. The Past Presidents, in the order of their reign, were as follows :—

WM. RUSTON.

SIR JOHN BLUNDELL MAPLE.

H. S. HUGHES.

R. H. FRY.

SIR CHARLES LAWES-WITTEWRONGE.

F. W. BAILY.

G. H. SMITH.

W. H. M. BURGESS.

S. F. EDGE.

The leading officers of the Club this year are D. E. S. Kirby, Captain ; Financial Hon. Secretary, H. Padbury ; Racing Hon. Secretary, F. E. Brown ; Editor of *Gazette* and Reporting Hon. Secretary, R. Edgar ; Hon. Solicitor, C. G. Syrett ; Hon. Auditor, O. W. Wells ; whilst last, but very far from least the

*General Hon. Secretary,*

S. C. CASTELL,

13, Muriel Terrace,

Sumner Road, Croydon,

to whom all enquiries as to membership, gifts of cups and trophies to the Club, and general correspondence should be addressed.

The " feathered foot " members of the Anerley, by the way, have quite a nice selection of events and prizes to struggle for in friendly rivalry amongst themselves every season. In



addition to the numerous prizes for Club races, medals for 25, 50 and 100 miles times; London to Brighton and back and 12 and 24 hours rides on the road; a long list of distances and times on the path, and a gold medal for he who wins a N.C.U. Championship or breaks a recognised record on road or path, there are the following Perpetual Challenge Trophies, etc., open to First-claim Members only:—

OLD BOYS' CUP.—For Road Championship on points scored in the Road Jaunts.

R. H. FRY MEMORIAL TROPHY.—For fastest time in "Fry's 100."

LAWES CUP.—For fastest time in 50 miles Handicap.

CALDER TROPHY.—For longest distance in Club "12."

EDGE CUP.—Presented by S. F. Edge, for fastest time in London to Brighton and Back Handicap.

S. F. EDGE NOVICES CUP.—Presented by S. F. Edge, for competition by new members.

We suggest, with absolute conviction, that the Anerley B.C. is well worthy of serious consideration by any cyclist living say within six miles of the Crystal Palace who is seeking to join a club, whether he be endowed with speed or prefers to jog along in congenial companionship on the pleasant club runs. The Club has room for a certain number of new members who are keen cyclists, and the Hon. Secretary would be glad to hear from such at his address as just given. He would invite such correspondent to accompany the Club as a visitor on a run or two, in order that he can form an opinion as to whether he would like the members he meets, and equally if the members like him; such foregathering nearly always results in an application for membership and an election that starts a happy association lasting for years, ended, not unfrequently, only with death.

Here endeth our chronicle and comments; some other hand must later tell the tale of the next 50 years of Anerley B.C. doings. They may be more remarkable, more illumed with honours, more sensational, but imagination fails to picture another 50 years of more happy comradeship, more fun, more health, better and truer friends.