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Recruiting for the Army Cyclist Corps : how our vast army is being raised.

No. 1239. Vol. XLVIII.

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8th OCTOBER, 1914.

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CYCLING



CYCLE TRADE WAR.

The Fight for Supremacy in Neutral Markets. Some Striking Figures. British Bicycles the Best.

The attack upon Germany's trade is developing with the same determination and vigour as that upon her military and naval forces, and the cycle industry will necessarily take an important part in the operations, because hitherto our principal enemy in the present war has also been our great rival in the cycle export trade.

An interesting compilation of statistics issued by the Government shows that Austria's foreign trade in bicycles is negligible. During the whole of 1913 that country only exported complete machines, finished frames and parts to the value of £4700, whereas the British total was £2,067,200 for the same year, while Germany's figures for 1912 were £1,335,500, the 1913 statistics not being available.

The official comment on the relative positions of England and Germany, so far as complete bicycles are concerned, is that the United Kingdom absolutely dominates the Indian, South African, Australian, and Japanese markets, and holds a strong position in the French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Argentine markets. On the other hand, Germany has hitherto had the major portion of the trade in complete cycles in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, the Netherlands, Russia, and Chile, while in Roumania Germany had the monopoly of the market.

The Home Market.

Naturally, the whole of Germany's trade with the United Kingdom will be captured, but this is relatively small, for the British cycle industry has been in an unassailable position in the home market ever since the American invasion of the 'nineties. We only receive complete cycles to the value of £50 from Germany in a year, while parts amount to £64,250 and tyres to £43,200, making a total of only £107,500. Even to such a small country as Denmark Germany sells nearly twice as much.

Indeed, Denmark is a field well worth cultivating by the British manufacturer. A French Consular report says:—"Denmark, being a level country and possessing excellent roads, is the home par excellence of cycling. Both men and women are enthusiastic cyclists in town and country, and in Copenhagen all the main thoroughfares have special tracks reserved for them. Statistics go to prove that there is one bicycle to every five inhabitants in the capital. The demand, however, is still increasing. Apart from the small but increasing local production, almost all the bicycles in use are imported from Germany."

As a matter of fact, this country holds an advantage of 50 per cent. over Germany's tyre trade with Denmark, but loses on complete machines and parts. We are, of course, under a slight geographical disadvantage in this market, as in the Netherlands, but business enterprise should counterbalance this.

Russia is another market that should be favourable towards British bicycles in the future, although the heavy im-

port duty of £5 per machine militates against the trade in complete bicycles. In the latter category Germany has hitherto held the advantage over the United Kingdom, but Russia makes heavier purchases of British parts and tyres.

It is natural that Germany should dominate the markets which lie at her door, but it is interesting to notice that elsewhere she has been unable to cope with British enterprise and workmanship. In Japan, for instance, during the eight years from 1904 to 1911 inclusive the number of bicycles sold by this country rose from 1377 to 19,704, while those supplied by Germany sank from 1553 to the negligible total of 11.

A Striking Decline.

Even America's contribution dropped during the same period from 11,654 to 565—a striking indication of our eastern ally's support of British trade. A Consular report states that the reasons given by cycle dealers in Japan for this remarkable change are that American manufacturers, having at first to a large extent captured the Japanese market, were at no pains to improve on the quality of their early exports, while English-made bicycles were recognized by

Japanese buyers to be superior to American bicycles in appearance and finish and in strength and durability; further, that the sale of English bicycles was encouraged by energetic advertisement and helped by a considerate attitude towards Japanese methods of business and the needs of the Japanese market.

Of course, our trade rivalry with the United States is of the friendliest character, but the lessons to be learnt therefrom will be useful in the relentless war which is to be waged upon Germany's world commerce.

British Quality.

"German manufacturers," says the Consular report, "are working hard to increase the sale of their goods in Japan; but their share of the total market is as yet inconsiderable, and German-made parts are not likely to take the place, in the Japanese market, of British-made parts as long as the solid quality of the latter is maintained. As in the case of complete bicycles, Japanese dealers set much store by quality and durability in the case of the parts they purchase."

That, in a nutshell, represents the British line of attack. In the cycle trade we lead the world, and by the high quality of our products we must maintain our supremacy in the markets already won, and defeat the German wherever he can claim a present advantage. There is nearly £1,000,000 a year to be picked up in Colonial and neutral markets by destroying Germany's cycle trade, and this is the country to do it.



A CYCLIST-SCOUT PATROL.

The Boy Scout movement is proving its value in the present crisis, and the spirit of the boy cyclists who undertake such duties as the guarding of telegraph wires, railway bridges, etc., is an excellent tribute to their training.

The Work of the Soldier-Cyclist.

IN this war, says one who has been in the thick of the fighting, "hundreds—even thousands—of men have been killed without setting eyes on the troops opposed to them. It is not a war of men; it is a war of machines"—of automatic death-dealers in the shape of the "mitrailleuse and the "soixante-quinze."

In the fighting lines undoubtedly this is generally true, but it must not be forgotten that there are continually happening "affairs of outposts," miniature battles between scouting parties and rival bands of cavalry or infantry which have become detached from their regiments. In these affairs all the conditions and circumstances of former warfare are reproduced and the old ardour of conflict is revived.

The soldier-cyclists of each side have had a great share in these incidental affairs. Their work has been full of adventure and peril, their exploits more stirring than any that fiction has hitherto anticipated. When they have joined issue with the enemy it has generally been at close quarters, under conditions which have ensured "a short fight and a

merry one." If there be any of the old glamour and romance left in modern warfare the cyclist scouts are having more than their share of it.

To our own men the ubiquitous Uhlan guarantees that each mission they undertake shall be full of risk and incident, with the odds often against a successful issue. Yet we know that such missions are undertaken with zeal, and carried through with remarkable efficiency. When the war is over the tales our cyclist warriors have to tell will be amongst the most inspiring in the annals of

This Stupendous Conflict.

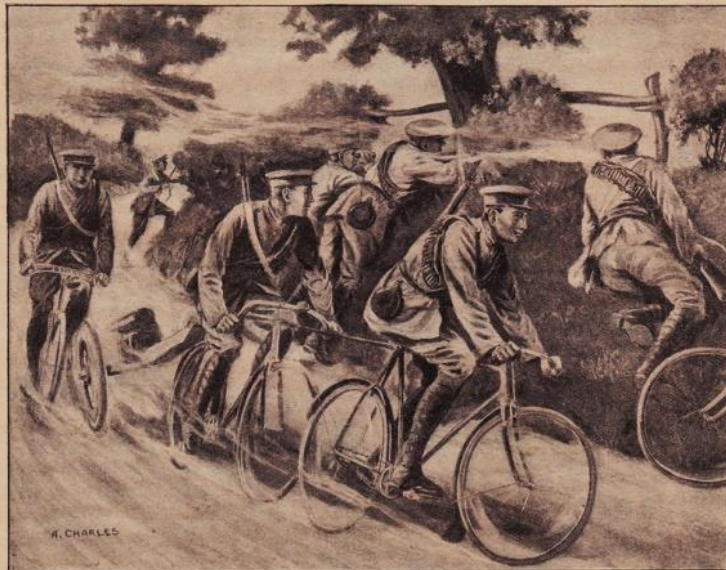
The reasons of the success of the soldier-cyclist are not far to seek. In the first place it must be realized that his mount, unlike that of the cavalryman, is silent in progress. This gives him an enormous advantage over his noisy foe, whose horse betrays his presence even when galloping over grass-land. In short, the cyclist can hear and not be heard. He can approach speedily and noiselessly, and without warning can attack the enemy, who, all unconscious of his presence, often falls an easy prey.

* THE WORLD

But silence is by no means the cyclist's sole advantage. He has a good turn of speed, which is a factor useful alike in attack and retreat. A cyclist in warfare is really a mounted infantryman, and, generally speaking, he is superior in point of speed to the heavily-accoutred cavalryman, while, of course, the ordinary infantryman is snail-like by comparison. Should his attack fail for the time being, or receive an unexpected or momentary check, the cyclist can easily best a retreat, and by a circuitous route come upon his foe again at another point, where, perhaps, he is least expected. Thus he can be said to possess to a marked degree the power to "cut and come again," which faculty is

Eminently Useful in War.

Again, the ability to take cover often spells the difference between victory and defeat, and here the cyclist scores distinctly. He has but to lay his mount down flat upon the ground and it is practically invisible. The horse-soldier, on



BRINGING UP THE MACHINE GUN.

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OF WHEELS. *

the other hand, has not this advantage, his mount's great bulk rendering him conspicuous from a considerable distance in open country. Mobility, however, is the cyclist's chief virtue, for he can come silently and speedily upon the foe, deliver a sudden attack, and almost before the enemy is aware of his presence he can decamp with equal promptitude and silence. Thus he can successfully wage guerrilla warfare, while exposing himself but little to any retaliation from the troops upon whom he happens to bestow his

Wasp-like Attentions,

while should he, by mischance, be caught in the open and have to flee for his life, he will offer a difficult target to the enemy, for, crouched low over his handlebars, he can raise a very useful gallop at a pinch, whether upon main road, by-way, or field path.

Thus, it is easy to see that, as an actual fighting unit, the soldier-cyclist has seriously to be reckoned.

Pleasure Riding in the Rain.

AT first sight an enjoyable ride in rain may appear, to the average person, an impossibility. That a great amount of real, solid enjoyment may be gleaned under weeping skies and upon rain-soddened roads is quite a fact however. The whole secret is to take matters easily and not attempt to force the pace, or great discomfort will result. The reason is not far to seek. In the first place, ponchos or capes are, of necessity, badly-ventilated articles of apparel, and not only prevent the outside air from having access to the rider's body, but also prevent

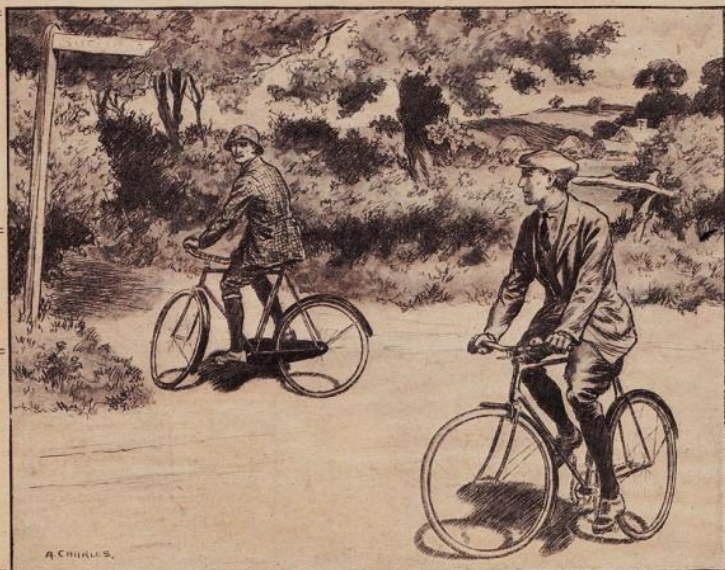
His Natural Body Heat

from escaping. The result is, if the pace be not quite easy, that the cyclist perspires very much and gets into an unpleasantly moist condition, very probably catching cold.

It is always the pace that kills, and in cycling no whit less than in other modes of locomotion. There is another factor to be considered, which is quite calculated to destroy any chance of enjoyment during a wet ride, and that factor is mud. Of course, it is obvious that, to

be caught on muddy roads while riding a mud-guardless machine is too horrible to contemplate. But even with a fully-mud-guarded mount it is possible to get freely bespattered unless the pace is kept down, and a rider who goes "all out" on rain-soaked roads will present, to put it mildly, a somewhat speckled appearance about the nether garments when he reaches home. The reason is that his pace forces him into the zone of the flying mud-spray before it has time to fall to earth, and, consequently, it falls on his breeches, stockings, and shoes. If, however, he will be content with a lowly mileage per hour, he will avoid the two great factors which go towards the complete marring of a ride in the rain.

A poncho should, of course, be of full size, reaching nearly to the wheel in front and well below the saddle at the back. A scanty cape is quite useless, as it merely serves to conduct the water to the knees. Leggings are rather conducive to perspiration, and in the opinion of many practical cyclists are not necessary so long as the poncho falls well over the handlebar, thus forming a protective canopy over the knees.



PRACTISING "ZIG-ZAGS" IN THE LANES.



The perils of ambulance work in war time: a stray bullet finds its billet.



CYCLIST AND MARKSMAN.



MILITARY

CYCLING



TIPS FOR CYCLIST SNIPERS.

By
"THE ADJUTANT."

SCOOTS are the eyes of an army. Snipers are both the eyes and the lungs of an army. In the ordinary open encircling operations on a wide scale, scouts should very rarely fire. But in the long-drawn trench warfare at close quarters the scout must be a sniper as well. The cyclist scout in particular must remember that even though he may be ordered never to fire a shot, he will be a favourite target for the enemy's snipers and that he will have a better chance for his life if he knows all there is to know of the latter's little dodges. Again, the very best possible protection for a sniper's bullet is a bullet that gets him first!

Cunning counts for more than courage in successful sniping. He who snipes and runs away will live to snipe another day. All is fair in love and sniping. The cyclist enjoys the obvious advantage of being able to change position rapidly when sniping—a very important consideration in the baffling of an enemy—and, when sniped at on the road, he can also play the dickens with the hidden sharpshooter's morals and marksmanship by breaking speed records, or by a clever variation of pace, or by constantly swerving from one side of the road to the other. Here a "good eye for country" may often foil the sniper. That is, a cyclist scout should get to know the value of various kinds of country as cover or concealment. He should know instinctively whether he is safe on a road or whether it is wise for him to hurry his pace. He should learn to know to what extent hedges, trees, or gradients hide him from the line of the enemy's position.

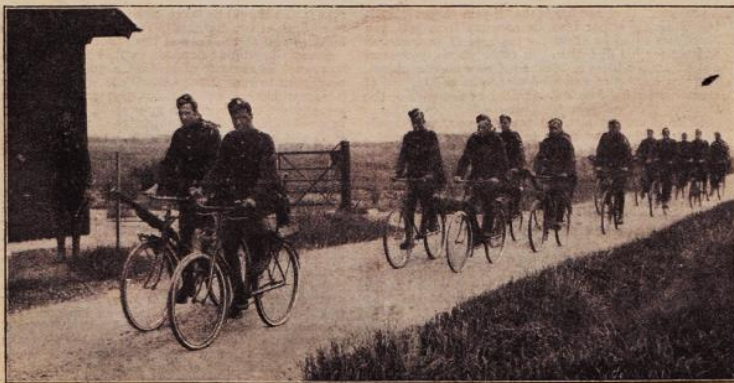
A man with an "eye for country" generally knows this by instinct, and almost anyone when scouting in

a strange country can find out all he wishes to know from a good map. Here is where a knowledge of map-reading comes in useful and particularly that section of it which deals with "visibility." This is simply the art of knowing whether the position you hold or the road you are cycling over is visible from any part of the position of the enemy. This makes an interesting study, as very often a despatch rider on a road will consider himself concealed from view by knolls, fences, or hedges, when all the time he is plainly visible to the enemy's patrols on a height from which a view of the road can be obtained, despite those knolls, fences, or hedges. Again, before taking up a position for sniping on a hill, be sure that it is not overlooked (or "commanded") by another, and that there is no spur of the hill from which

You Might be Sniped

on your flank. On the other hand, you may sometimes cycle in perfect safety on a road immediately beneath a long, convex hill—that is, a hill that bulges outwards, as it were, because if an enemy were even encamped on the top of that position, he would not have a clear field of vision to the bottom.

But beware of the vicinity of a concave hill—that is, one that seems to fall inwards—if an enemy is located there, for from the summit there will probably be uninterrupted visibility to the ground level. Do not too implicitly trust your maps in a strange country, however, for even the best of maps often leave small but important features unrepresented. For example, a concave hill that is occupied by the enemy may have at its foot a slight ridge or a belt of scrub that will afford ample cover for a solitary cyclist scout. In



Mobility and Efficiency: a detachment of the Army Cyclist Corps.

Military Cycling (contd.).

short, let your map be an aid to, but by no means a substitute for, a personal study of the country.

Sniping at a moving target demands a high degree of marksmanship, particularly if the target is moving in a dual direction as, for example, an aeroplane moving both away from you and in an oblique direction upwards, or a cavalryman or cyclist moving obliquely across your front and up a rise at the same time. Now, it is just this kind of target which is most met with by cyclist scouts and patrols—and this because the scout has to worm himself into all sorts of positions for observation, particularly on the flanks of a moving enemy. (In ordinary warfare, however, and this specially refers to trench warfare, you will very rarely be required to fire at a target so difficult to hit as that mentioned, simply because if your dispositions are well made, your enemy will have no chance of coming at you except straight to your front.) Here we have yet another reason why the scout must be highly-skilled as a sniper. He must endeavour to bring his man down without disclosing his own position.

When firing at a crossing target, take an aim on the object first of all, and, at the same time as you steady yourself to fire, make your aim keep pace with, but a little in advance of, the moving object. What distance your aim should be in advance of the object will depend on your own judgment entirely, and this judgment must be based on the object's rate of movement, range, the atmosphere, the direction and volume of the wind. You have thus as fine a study in brainy shooting as can possibly be devised, and it is a safe general rule never to fire at all unless you are absolutely sure of your man. For it is very hard to hit a single man moving obliquely across your front at more than 300 yds. range or a single horseman beyond 500 yds. And a futile shot has the disadvantage of betraying your presence. If, however, you have good reason to know that

You are Safe from Observation

and pursuit, you may chance a "sighting shot" or two, to give you a clue to your range from the spurt of dust.

One point to remember is that if your target is moving obliquely either towards or away from you, you must aim so as to allow for his rate of progress as well as for his direction. In other words, you must not only aim a little in advance of your moving object, but you must also make allowance in the matter of elevation for his constant increase or decrease of the distance between you.

If he is coming straight towards you, you simply aim your rifle up or down to increase or reduce elevation, according to your individual judgment. If you have been surprised or are meeting a charge, you will have no time to alter sights—unless the enemy is a goodly distance away—and hence the importance of very careful practice in aiming up or down. In these circumstances you will not go far wrong if you direct your aim at a point not more than 3 ft. above or below the six o'clock line—according to whether your human target is running away from or coming towards you. Aiming up or down will usually answer the purpose for any distance up to 200 yds., but for any distance in excess of that it is best to alter the sights.

Finally, you may have to snipe at a target crossing your front at right angles. A good rough rule for this is to aim about the breadth of a man in front of an enemy walking at a distance of 100 yds., and a horse-length in advance of a horseman trotting at 200 yds. distance. If you want it stated more precisely, note this: For any distance up to 500 yds., take aim about

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Speedmen in khaki. In this group, (snapped on the East Coast, will be noticed C. A. Stevens, Patrician C.C. (standing) and E. E. George, Anerley B.C. (seated on left).

1 ft. per 100 yds. in front of a single man walking, or 2 ft. if he is doubling; 3 ft. per 100 yds. if it is a single horseman trotting, and 4 ft. if galloping.

Obviously, much that has been said applies also to firing at aircraft—a duty our cyclists may often be called on to perform owing to their rôle as coastal patrols. Too great a measure of success cannot be hoped for here, firstly, owing to an aeroplane's or airship's dual direction (forwards and upwards or forwards and downwards), and, secondly, because the fabric of an aeroplane's wings can be riddled without bringing it to earth. Again,

Indiscriminate Shooting

may be dangerous to other people in the vicinity, to say nothing of giving the aircraft pilots the very information they may be seeking as to the whereabouts of troops. Consequently, it hardly needs saying that such shooting should never be indulged in, except under a superior's orders. A good, rough rule in this connection is to remember that in firing at aeroplanes aim should be taken on a point about six times the length of the machine in front, and in the case of airships aim at the nose of the envelope.

Success in sniping depends on numerous other factors, such as rapidity of loading, a quick eye for any movement to your front, a sharp ear, muscular agility (for smart changing of position), perfect skill in mounting and dismounting from your cycle, and, among a score of other factors, a knowledge of the influence of wind and light on marksmanship. For example, in a bright light rather more foresight must be taken; in a dull light the tendency is to shoot too high.

Or, take wind: to gauge its strength and direction, note its effect on clouds, trees, bushes, dust, or smoke, or, if possible, manoeuvre your position so that you have it full in your face or straight behind you. In the latter case, your elevation must be slightly less; if the wind is blowing across your front (i.e., at right angles to your position) you must carry your rifle towards the wind, remembering that you will have to make three times the allowance of "aiming-off" for a strong wind (say one at 30 miles an hour) as you would for a mild wind (10 miles an hour or thereabouts), and for oblique winds you may estimate the approximate deflection at half that of the side winds of the same velocity. Any good musketry manual will give you a table of allowances for varying kinds of wind. In the next article I will deal more specifically with the question of practical active service dodges and tips for cyclist snipers.

Cyclists! Your King and Country Need You!

NEW CYCLISTS BATTALION TO BE RAISED AT ONCE—WHO WILL RIDE IN THE RANKS OF THE FAMOUS ESSEX REGIMENT?—UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR KEEN, FIT WHEELMEN—HOW AND WHERE TO JOIN.

VERILY the cyclist is coming into his own in the Army, for additional battalions of the Territorial cyclist corps are springing up like mushrooms, and the total number of wheelmen now enrolled must represent a huge figure. A paragraph in last week's CYCLING announced the formation of yet another (the 3rd) battalion of the Essex Cyclists, which is, of course, a battalion of the famous "Pompadors" (Essex Regiment) of the Regular Army, whose warlike deeds make many pages of glorious history in the building of the Empire.

"Cycling" as Recruiting Sergeant.

A colleague of mine has had a chat with one of the recruiting officers, who asks me to say something of the formation of the 3rd/5th (Cyclists) Battalion of the Essex Regiment, for my previous article—when the 2nd Battalion was raised—was the instrument, I am glad to hear, of considerably facilitating recruiting.

At the present time the 1st Cyclists Battalion (of whom a special section are in France) is undergoing a course of concentrated training; the 2nd is employed on coast-patrol duty—a hazardous and exciting task under present conditions; and the 3rd Battalion will go into training at Colchester, where comfortable billets are ready.

The work upon which they will be engaged, although strenuous, is of a kind to appeal to any open-air sportsman, and the very best of good comradeship prevails among the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men. By the way, unique opportunities for promotion will be presented to men joining the battalion, and I may say that several of the subaltern officers of the Essex Cyclists joined as privates upon the outbreak of war. That is sufficient guarantee that merit is bound to receive recognition. What more can any ambitious youngster want than an opening in a corps like this—and in a war like this?

Many are the stories amusingly illustrating the leveling-up process which proceeds automatically in the disciplined ranks of a battalion. One private with a Public School accent, when hauled over the coals because his boots lacked the superlative degree of polish required by martial law, replied plaintively: "I'm awfully sorry—but I've never tried to clean my own boots before!"

Good Comradeship of the Service.

A recruit of this type is bound to come up against some problems during his early days, but nobody need imagine that his comrades will be lacking in any of those qualities which go to make a good chum. There are, of course, men of all kinds in every corps, but to the recruit it is nothing short of amazing how quickly the new-comer drops into his place and is made to feel at home among strange surroundings. As to their physical fitness, just look at any of these lads in training now, and ask anybody who knew them before they joined to tell you what soldiering has accomplished on the health side of the ledger!

But before you all go rushing off to join, I had better outline the qualifications which recruits must possess. Keen, hard riders are preferred (bicycles are provided

B14

free), and the military age is from 19 to 38—although men with previous service may be accepted up to 42.

Applicants must be thoroughly fit in every respect. Eyesight must be keen (without the aid of glasses), and the minimum chest measurement is 33 ins.

All recruits, by the way, must volunteer for foreign service—and I think I can promise them they all will stand an excellent chance of seeing something worth enlisting for. There is plenty of stern work for cyclists battalions to do as soon as they are trained and ready to do it—so the time to join is now.

Applications for enlistment should be made at the offices of the Motor Union and Automobile Association, Whitcomb Street, Coventry Street, W.C., and Guildhall Yard, E.C., or at the headquarters of the Essex Regiment, Colchester.

From a Volunteer Cyclist Officer.

I have received an interesting critical letter from a "Volunteer Cyclist Officer" regarding my article on the Volunteer Cyclist Training Corps. My correspondent does not agree that battalions should have their own cyclists sections, but strongly advocates the formation of cyclists battalions.

"In my own battalion," he says, "we have a cyclists section. The result is that we march at the front, wheeling our bicycles. Result: Many resignations."

This is a very curious admission. If the officer in command of a cyclists section employs his men in the manner described, then all I can say is he fails to appreciate what a cyclists section is organized for. That a raw section, with all its business to learn in the short time that is available, should be employed wheeling its cycles at the head of a marching column (instead of being out, under its own officer, learning map-reading, signalling, field sketching, the compilation of road reports, and all the wiles and arts of the scout) seems to justify the fears I have expressed in these notes regarding the shortage of qualified instructors. If this happens in a cyclists section, what would be the condition of a cyclists battalion?

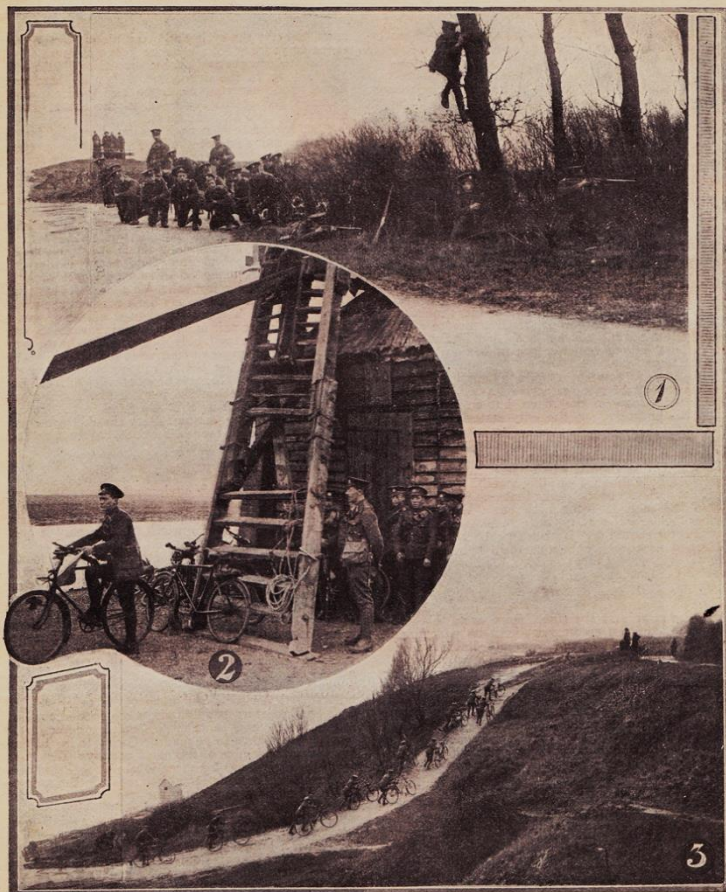
I am afraid "Cyclist Volunteer Officer's" criticism of section organization cannot survive the fact that all combatant units of the Regular Army have their own cyclists, which are organized and trained on lines identical with those I advocated for the guidance of Volunteer officers. With such a model I do not think that we can go far wrong.

My correspondent also objects to my remarks regarding suitable uniform, and says he does not share my interest in the "millinery, etc., department." But I suggest with all good humour that if "Volunteer Cyclist Officer" had covered about 50 miles in hot, ill-ventilated clothing, as I have done, he would soon get interested in the subject which, at present, leaves him cold!

By the way, an inquiry as to my credentials to write upon these subjects certainly deserves an answer. I have worked with British cyclists on a long campaign, and have been on the Continent many times to study the cyclists (and other units) of European armies as military correspondent of the principal journal of the British Army.

THE ADJUTANT.

THE ESSEX CYCLISTS BATTALION GUARDING OUR COAST.



It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the work entrusted to the cyclists in the home defence scheme. The full scope of their duties cannot be disclosed—for obvious reasons—but upon their vigilance and resource much depends. Our photographs show (1) a scene in the special kind of training which the new battalions undergo; (2) a look-out observation post manned by trained cyclists; and (3) a coast patrol at work. A glance at the latter photograph enables one to appreciate the hazardous nature of this work at night when, of course, every light is extinguished and the precipitous paths on the cliffs are difficult to negotiate.

Thrilling Wheel Work Under Fire.

THE EXPERIENCES OF A CYCLE ORDERLY AT THE FRONT.
RELATED BY A LATE MEMBER OF "MOTOR CYCLING" EDITORIAL STAFF.

IT is by a queer freak of fate that I, a keen motorcyclist, who always professed a contempt for "push" bicycles, and hated the physical exercise inseparable from this mode of locomotion, should now be "doing my bit" in the war as a cycle orderly. However, since this work has been thrust upon me by destiny and the sergeant-major, perhaps I may employ an unusual leisure hour to describe my experiences and impressions.

My chief impression now is, strange to say, that, under the present conditions, I infinitely prefer being astride the push-cycle instead of its self-propelling sister. There are a good many different reasons for this *cotte face*. Perhaps the most important is the horror known as the sideslip, often improperly called the skid. The roads in the part of France from which I write are not the famous Routes Nationales, with their miles of straight, tree-bordered, smooth surface. The best roads round here are the Chemins de Landes Communications, and at present these consist of a narrow strip in the centre, in dry weather very bumpy, in wet weather two or three inches deep in mud. On either side of this is a morass of sticky mud anything up to a foot deep, cut up into ruts by transport wagons and big gun limbers, which never seems to get dry.

In places attempts are made, by employing French soldiers past the age for active service and Indians, to remetel some of the roads, but as broken bricks and rubble are about the only materials used, and technical skill and steam rollers are absent, the result is not wonderful. Even when cycling by myself, with the whole road to choose from, I have had a few spills, but the trying time is when overtaking a column of soldiers or transport on the march. I know from past experience in the ranks that one plods along behind the man in front with one's thoughts often thousands of miles away, little recking of frantic bell ringing or shouts of "By the right!" from the rear. Then, the road being often narrow, there is not really room, even when going too deep, to allow a sufficiency for the unfortunate cyclist,

Who Sometimes Wobbles

into the morass at the side. On a cycle this is bad enough, but on a motorcycle, with its wide handlebars, its greater speed and far greater liability to sideslip, the overtaking of a long column would try the nerve of the most expert. When one comes to the transport section one's troubles are increased, for the greater width of the vehicles gives one even less room while the terrible clatter of the unswerving wagons makes it often impossible to attract the driver's notice. Many times I have overtaken such a section steering with one hand and with the other catching hold of the wagons or horses' harness to maintain my balance for an instant before pedalling another few yards and grasping something firm again.

Then another great advantage of the ordinary cycle is that when strapped, "Jack Johnsons" or other souvenirs from our friend the enemy come whizzing overhead, one can tell by the sound if they are likely to burst near one. With a motorcycle, the noise of the exhaust would drown the warning scream which, thank goodness! these abominations give. Also a hasty dismount and a quick scuttle for a friendly wall or even ditch may be the means of saving one's life. These, again, this silence is of immense value when taking messages up to the trenches at night. You can steal along with no light showing and without the watchful sniper being any the wiser, though it is advisable, if time permits, when really in the danger

zone, to leave the cycle and creep along, getting such cover as you can from a ditch, hedge or bank. It is for this reason partly that motorcyclists do not often go right up to the firing line. They do immensely useful work carrying messages and guiding supply columns just at the rear, but in the actual danger zone the cyclist does the most.

With regard to the machines out here, by far the most numerous are of the B.S.A. Service pattern. These are heavy roadsters, specially built for the Army and painted a useful green. They seem to require the minimum amount of attention and give very little trouble. My section has a few machines of another make, with nickelled parts. These have proved satisfactory, but a more serviceable finish is required. We have also some cheap, light machines, which are always a source of trouble, as they are far too light for the bad going and heavy loads. The weight they are expected to carry is enormous. On my machine I have my valise on the rear, this being the same as I carried on my back when in the ranks, and containing a complete change of heavy under-clothing, a spare pair of boots, washing, shaving, rifle-cleaning and sewing tackle, books, etc. On the front carrier is my heavy overcoat wrapped up in a waterproof sheet, and on the handlebar a mess tin and waterproof cape. There is also the rifle, with the butt in a leather socket on the bottom bracket and supported at the stock by a U clip fixed to the steering head. Then on my person I carry the skeleton equipment—that is, belt, braces, bayonet, entrenching tool, haversack and waterbottle.

Besides 120 Rounds of Ball.

The total weight of this equipment is, roughly, 1 cwt. This, by the way, is exactly the same as we carry on our person when marching, so that it is not surprising that an eight or ten-mile march, "full pack," is quite as much as a soldier cares to do in a day.

With proper carriers and sensible straps this load is not difficult to attach, nor does it make the machine very much more difficult to ride. Luckily, hills are practically unknown here, or the labour of pushing a fully-loaded bicycle up a stiff gradient would be about the limit. Of course, we do not carry this full load on every occasion, but only when moving from place to place. A great part of my work consists merely in carrying messages about the village where we are quartered. A cyclist orderly must know the house where every officer and company of his battalion is billeted. Often messages have to be taken to brigade headquarters usually fairly close to the battalion headquarters, and sometimes special comparatively long journeys have to be made. Owing to my having a working knowledge of French, I usually "click" (to use the Army slang) for these jobs. Once I was despatched 25 miles over appalling roads in the rain to fetch post naste—no, not the reserves, only the colonel's chessboard left at his last billet!

The most exciting work, however, is taking messages up to the trenches, for then the whizz-zip! of the sniper's bullet or the scream of the shells adds variety to an otherwise quiet ride, while at night the brilliant light from the rockets sent up from the trenches every now and again illumines the country for a half-mile radius.

Nor is life at headquarters totally devoid of excitement. In one town where I spent ten days we were shelled for several hours each day, and had to retire to dug-outs at night for safety. So any clubman who is tired of social runs, "25's," and such like, can depend upon some "fun" if he should come out here.







Norfolk cyclists on active service in the eastern counties.

CYCLISTS' WAR MEMORIAL

'TO THE LASTING MEMORY OF THOSE CYCLISTS WHO DIED IN THE GREAT WAR

1914 – 1918' is the inscription on the memorial.

After an idea by the late Mr.'Biddy' Bidlake, an executive committee was formed in 1919, and in less than a year £1,200 was raised from cyclists and cycling organisations throughout Britain.

On May 21st 1921 in the radiance of the lowering sun at six o'clock before an estimated assembly of 20,000 cyclists, Lord Birkenhead, the Lord Chancellor unveiled the Memorial. The Green was packed as far as the eye could see, the throng overflowed on both sides of the highway, all traffic ceased, the thousands of visiting cyclists had parked their machines in adjacent meadows. Buglers sounded the last post, afterwards the reverend B. G. Bouchier, who had been a most generous patron of the memorial fund, read a simple dedicatory prayer. Afterwards the school children of the village led the vast throng in the singing of the Doxology to the tune of the Old Hundredth, and with the pronouncement of the Benediction the official proceedings were concluded. There followed an informal laying of wreaths at the foot of the memorial by representatives of the clubs and organisations, including the CTC, NCU and many D.A.'s of the CTC. There was among them a floral decorated racing wheel, from the cycle of one of the unnamed hero's who had fallen.

The key-note of the whole memorial is simplicity, and strength without ornament. The obelisk was built on a concrete base with a concrete column which is thirty feet high, and is faced with Cornish granite.

On the 14th June 1923, His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales visited the memorial whilst on his way to Coventry.

A service has been held every year since the unveiling, with the highest attendance in 1920's and 1930's yet today is still one of the largest gatherings of cyclists in the country.

A bronze plaque was affixed to the memorial in 1963 to commemorate those cyclists who died during World War Two.