An exceedingly pleasant Saturday afternoon and Sunday outing is one that I recommended in these columns last year, to the subsequent delight of a number of my readers. I refer to a trip awheel to Cape May City, returning home by steamer.

The first portion of the journey, as far as Vineland, constitutes in itself a little trip of sufficient length for those whose opportunities or riding capacities are more limited; indeed, even intermediate localities, such as Pitman Grove, have long been the favorite rendezvous of many a club run or quiet ramble.

The route to and out of Gloucester is familiar to readers of our preceding chitchats.

THOSE TOLL-GATE KEEPERS.

Somebody has made the remark that politeness is like an air-bag; there is nothing in it; but, oh my, how it eases the jolts along the road through life!

I am often reminded of this truism when I come across any of those toll-collectors (by virtue of charter-rights more or less clearly established) whom it were offensive to compare for sweetness to antiquated pickle-jars – offensive to the jars, I mean. If so it be that, for the time being, we cyclists have to swallow the toll-tax pill, I would prefer taking mind coated every time, if you please, not “straight.”

Now, the pleasant old man at the Gloucester gate will explain to you, if you are a novice, that it’s only a cent to Browning’s Lane (should you be bound for the White Horse pike) and it’s 2 cents to Westville, or 3 cents to Woodbury (our present destination), unless you propose to come home the same way, and then it’ll only be 5 cents there and back; and on top of all this information, you may get a hearty old “safe home, sir!” if the skies look threatening overhead, which will convince you that all gatekeepers are not pickle-jars.

THE WOODBURY PIKE.

A good, hard pike is this Woodbury pike, with a brand new gravel path just built by the side of it, for your benefit, if you care for it.

In a moment we pass by Browning’s Lane, which we took on our Trip No. 8, and which you may possibly use on your way home if you feel like doing the ramble of exploration I describe further on.

And this is Westville (2 m.). Here take notice of a good road to Thorofare and Paulsboro on R, and a new telford on L which may be entirely completed by the time you read this and will save you one mile of
riding and eight cents in toll between this and Glassboro. If you try it, look out for the old Woodbury
and Crosskeys turnpike, which will cross you about 4 m. ahead and turn L into it as far as the hamlet of
Fairview, a couple of miles farther. You will easily recognize the place, it beats the ubiquitous Five
Points by one. Of the five roads that present themselves to you take the second on R; follow it for a
good seven miles, and it will then curve L into the old direct road from Woodbury to Glassboro.

At the tollgate 3 ½ m. from start, you give up your ticket. That turn L just before the railroad X goes to
Jenningsville, R to Red Bank (not to be confounded, of course, with the Red Bank in Monmouth county
mentioned in last Thursday’s trip).

It seems needless to remind cyclists that they should cross all those railroad tracks at right angles; and
yet what tales those strained or actually disabled wheels could tell!

WOODBURY.

That station on L is North Woodbury, and we are now entering Woodbury, the “bury” (or “town”) of
“Richard Wood,” who settled here in 1684, now a city of some 4000 inhabitants, the capital of
Gloucester county, etc.; the greater the pity that its main thoroughfare (this Broad street, on which we
are now trying to travel) is kept permanently in so disgraceful a condition. May your luck star save you
from striking it in wet weather, or from ever attempting to use the sidewalk on the edge of it. Municipal
authorities are usually the more punctilious anent the rights of private (?) sidewalks in proportion as
they are the more neglectful of the public highway.

If you can do so without too much trouble or danger on this wretched road surface, slack-up opposite
the City Hall (4 ¾ m.) and see the handsome monument erected in front of it to the memory of the
soldiers of the late war.

At the bifurcation ½ m. farther, bear L (R to Clarksboro, Swedesboro, etc.), and another ¾ m. ahead,
divest yourself of 2 cents more for the privilege of rolling this pike, nice and smooth, as far as Mantua.
Right in front of us is quite a hill – no New Jersey rise this; still we climb it easily, as well as the next one,
and then we just glide down to Mantua Creek without pedaling.

MANTUA AND MULLICA.

Italians are no way scarce in New Jersey, yet “Mantua” has nothing to do with them or with the famous
city of that name in Lombardy. It is a corruption of Manto, the name of an Indian tribe. Mantua Creek
appears as “Manto Creek” in Fadden’s map, under the date of 1777, and as “Manto’s Creek” in the map
of “The Seat of War in the Environs of Philadelphia,” drawn by the hydrographer to his never-to-be-
forgotten majesty George III, at the time of the Revolution. Place-names associated with the South of
Europe are not wanting hereabouts, and doubtless “Manto” was gradually changed to “Mantua” on
their model.

On top of this rise (8 m.) opposite Telford Inn, the terminus of Woodbury and Mantua trolley cars, bear
left; the right fork goes to Mullica Hill. “Mullica” tells of another worthy old fellow, whose knowledge of
spelling, English spelling at that, was not on a par with his pluck or power of endurance. There was no
mistaking his first name, “Eric,” but his second was put down as “Molliker,” “Mollica,” “Mullica,” and as such was bestowed on this hill and on the Little Egg Harbor River. He came from the land of Sweden, which supplied this county with many of her hardiest pioneers, and he became a large land-owner in this section in the closing years of the seventeenth century.

I never pass through Mantua without envying the quiet villagers the shade trees that literally overarch their principal street. How do they strike you? And this wood-clad, rolling country just outside the village, how unlike the flat, uninteresting New Jersey that we read of in books.

Two miles out, note a road from Port Royal on L, and a little farther, one to Mullica Hill on R.

BARNSBORO and PITMAN GROVE.

At a distance of two and a half miles we strike Barnsboro. We used to pass by this tollgate with immunity up to a couple of years ago; those were the days when the League of American Wheelmen’s Roadbook described the road from this to Glassboro as barely “ridable,” the journey from Glassboro to Clayton as necessitating “half walking,” and that from Clayton to Franklinville and Malaga “considerable walking.”

Things have changed for the better, as you may see, but have given birth to an evil which has to be righted. It is an absolute wrong that a pneumatic tired bicycle should be charged 5 cents for the use of as many miles (more or less) of this or any other roadway; and the sooner the question is tackled in earnest by whomever it may concern the better for the sake of simple justice.

Just beyond the toll house, at a five-point crossing, L to Sewell Station, 1 m.; R to Richwood, 3 m. and to Jefferson, 3 m.

At the foot of this grand down grade, bear R (L to Bethel, 3 m.).

In less than three miles from Barnsboro, we reach Pitman Grove (at the station our cyclometers register thirteen and one-quarter miles from the start. This little place has grown within the last twenty-five years; its population of 500 or 600 inhabitants gets increased tenfold during the camping season. At the tollgate outside the village we throw away our Barnsboro toll ticket, and we are now free to the end of our trip.

GLASSBORO AND CLAYTON.

One and three-quarter miles from Pitman Grove Station bear to the right. Here we are at Glassboro; at Reeves’ Hotel we have ridden 15 ½ miles.

Some 500 or 600 men, I am told, are employed in the glassworks to which Glassboro owes its name. There were glassworks here at the time of the Revolution, and quite a busy little spot it is at present, the manufacturing interested centred here and in Clayton (some three miles ahead) representing millions of dollars.
By the way, up to last October three years you might have seen here a factory which was said to be the only one of its kind in America; it was a paper bottle factory. It had shut down after a couple years’ existence, and the industry does not seem to have been transplanted elsewhere, at least in this country.

Beware of the several branchings off at the hotel. The continuation of the road that we came by goes to Bridgeton; bear to the left of it, and your course is straight and good to Clayton.

That sign on the gate of a farm “Milk by the glass to wheelmen” is a sign of the times. It is not so very long since farmers were anything but friendly to us.

This other sign “Five dollars fine for riding bicycles on sidewalks” calls forth thoughts of another kind. How would it do to find municipal authorities $5 for every word they spell wrong in their official documents?

At the X by Davis’ Hotel (18 ¾) go straight through.

From this point the road is not quite so good, and the side path will frequently prove our best friend; but, patienza, as our Italian friends say. It has just been voted to make this township road into a county road, all the way through Franklinville and on to Malaga, a good roadbed 12 inches deep, and 12 feet wide. It will soon be as easy to ride to Cape May as to Atlantic City.

POISONOUS “IVY.”

“Creeping where no life is seen
A rare old plant in the ivy green.”

Quite so, but a nasty old plant, and by no means rare, is the so-called poisonous “ivy” with which the typical Jersey roadside abounds; and the same may be said of the swamp sumach frequently found near it. And as long as we still have to hug the sidepath which runs at time unpleasantly close to the woods, it may not be amiss to warn the stranger against the aforesaid plants. Ladies especially should be careful not to allow the ever-forward ivy to caress their hands or cheeks. While some people would seem to be proof against such trifles, a mere touch, or even the emanations from these plants, if sufficient to cause cutaneous poisoning in others.

Nor will it be out of place, perhaps, to throw but a hint to the inexperienced, that in the face of an impending fall along a narrow path by the side of a wood, the cautious rider should jerk himself or herself roadward, rather than be thrown into the softer but far more treacherous bushes.

FRANKLINVILLE.

Twenty-one and one-half miles from start we strike F. A. Crane’s Hotel, at Franklinville. Beware of the crossroads here: -- R to Monroe, 5 m.; straight on to Torchtown, 2 m.; extreme L to Janvier, 4 m., or Williamstown, 6 ½ m.; our road lies between the two last named.

See that creek with a new bridge; it is a branch of the Maurice River, whose course we shall follow right on to Dorchester, when we go to Cape May.
MALAGA.

And what? Have we traveled to rapidly from Mantua in Italy to Malaga in Spain? This is in truth a great country. The American who has toured abroad will be reminded here of the proverbial dryness of the seaport and smuggling harbor called Malaga, on the Mediterranean. He will miss its figs and almonds and sugar factories, but as for grapes, he will find not a few between this and Vineland.

And, by the way, time was when we used to import a million boxes of raisins per year from that same Malaga in Spain; nowadays we use raisins of our own growth; that’s an improvement.

At Malaga Hotel (twenty-five and one-half miles) keep straight on L to Cedar lake or to Williamstown, 9 m.; R to Elmer; beautifully straight and nice all those roads look – on paper).

The next mile and a half to the grounds of the West Jersey Camp-meeting Association were once the worst stretch in these parts. Now the side path that we used to cling to as for grim death is, in many cases, a luxury more than a necessity. Improvements? Why, look at the brand new bridgelet over Burnt Mill Stream (officially styled Manaway Branch Creek).

VINELAND.

And now four and a half miles of ups and down take us to a crossing (31 ¼ m.), which, fortunately for the stranger, is supplied with a sign post and a sign board (for these two don’t always keep together, as some of us know), Bridgeton, the inscription says, lies eleven miles to the right; Millville is five and one-half miles ahead, and Vineland is about a mile to our left.

Coquettish Vineland is thirty-nine years old, not ashamed of her age, either, nor has she any cause to be. You’ll find out the reason why if you keep your ears and eyes open during your stay in the place. Vineland borough reckons 6000 inhabitants, and Vineland tract 12,000 – a venture that Founder Landis may well be proud of. Make the most of it this time, for when we pass by again on our way to Cape May we shall go straight through at the crossing to Millville.

On reaching the center of Vineland you will find you have ridden thirty-two and three-quarters miles from Gloucester Ferry.

VINELAND TO WINSLOW.

I found myself here four weeks ago, immediately after one of those heavy downpours which the month of May treated us to; the opportunity seemed especially favorable to try for some cyclable link between Vineland at the Atlantic City road above Hammonton – a subject on which I had received several inquiries – and I readily seized it, with the following result:

You follow Landis avenue, a truly novel avenue, eastward; the roadway is good; when its normal condition is accidently impaired an excellent sidepath may be relied upon.

Half a mile out we pass the new Jersey Training School on R, then beneath the shade of a long row of maple trees we go on by the State Institution for Feeble-Minded Women, and onward still—did you ever
get over that narrow plank across the open gutter safely? A cyclist should always have his weather eye open; so should a horseman worthy of the name, for that matter.

Keep straight out at that X near a little bridge, 1 ½ m. out, and now be thankful for any kind of riding you may get.

Three and half miles from start, R to Millville, straight on to may’s Landing, 15 m.; Brewster road on L is our road to Buena Vista; the less is said of the “road” the better, but the path is not bad; nor indeed must a depreciate the dear old sand track itself too much; it is quite decent (like Biddy O’Flaherty’s Sunday dress) in patches, here and there.

When we have covered 6 ¼ m. we are joined from L by the Wheat road (which we might have reached via East avenue, Vineland, but without any advantage, I am told), and ¼ mile farther we reach the six-point crossing where Buena Vista Hotel bloometh. Landlord chancellor out to do well here; talk of an oasis in the middle of the Great Sahara!

INTO UNKNOWN SANDS.

A look at the map will show you the respective directions of each of the six roads that meet here. If you ask me how I found out the right one among the six I will answer you (like the Scotch fiddler, who was complimented on his skill) that it was unco’ easy, I had a guid teacher; in this case the local postmaster.

Following his kind directions, I took the road straight in front of the hotel and counted up to 3.

No. 1 was a crossing; R to Pancoastalville, L anywhere among the scrub oaks; I passed on.

No. 2 was another crossing with a signpost, but no board on the post.

No. 3 (almost 2 ½ m. from Buena Vista) was no crossing at all, but a sudden transformation of the road that I had had no difficulty in riding so far, into a mere track bending to the right, sans signpost, sans path, sans anything that might redeem its sandy hopelessness.

This is called Twelfth street, if you please. The Weymouth Agricultural Co. laid out a considerable tract here into streets once upon a time; and poor Twelfth street still lieth here, the shadow of what might have been.

Of the next two miles I walked one, in short sections. Make no mistake, kind reader; I lay no claim whatsoever to any superior skill right here; that I escaped relatively so well was due solely to the previous soaking of the sand; in dry weather I certainly should have walked every foot of those two miles and carried my wheel at that, in preference to dragging it through the sand.

THE SILVER LINING.

At Newtonville hamlet (11 m. from Vineland) things improve, our path reappears, even the road itself gives evidence of spasmodic attempts at gravelling, and at Folsom postoffice (Woolly Field the country folks call it) we strike civilization once more (14 ¼ m.)
Here take care that you turn sharp L (R to Weymouth; straight on to Hammonton) and a fine gravel path awaits, you soon merging into the narrow, yet cyclable, N.J. sidepath.

Look out for a railroad crossing, less than 3 ½ m. from Folsom, with a turn L to Pine Hollow beyond it.

A few yards above this, turn sharp R for Winslow, 1 m. and be not enticed by the sign which tells you that Blue Anchor is 3 ½ m. straight ahead.

The ghost of a village yclept Winslow you will find at the end of a mile as the signpost said; go straight through it (don’t take that turn L to Winslow Inn), across the railroad track and L alongside of it, and in a moment you will find yourself at the corner of the Winslow Junction brickyard on the Atlantic City road described in Trip No. 3 (19 ½ m. from our start in the centre of Vineland).

Turn sharp L, and you have before you the 25-mile ride to Gloucester (via Blue Anchor, Berlin and White Horse) described in said Trip No. 3.

That the connecting link between the Cape May road at Vineland and the Atlantic City road at Winslow Junction can be traveled awheel in a case of emergency, is about the most that can be said under existing conditions. That the ride could be taken with any degree of pleasure is a statement to which I would not on any account append my initials.

A.E.

P.S. – Several request received on Friday morning for information desired for to-day must needs be deferred. The Road Information Bureau is published on Friday only.