IMPERIAL COLLEGE GLIDING CLUB.

Summer Vacation Camp: September 1930.

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Sunday, August 31st.

The van-guard of the Club towed the glider - the Imperial College "Incredible" - from London. Barne's Arrol-Johnson (1926 model) performed the important function of towing Starting from London at 8.35 a.m., we reached Gore Farm at 8. 5 p.m. The journey was uneventful except for half a dozen punctures, one stop when the car ran out of juice, and a slight mishap to the right-hand wheel when turning in to the farm, which caused the said wheel to depart from its original shape by a few inches. However, here we are at last, praise be to God!

Four members - Payne, Barnes, Plumbe, and Keeble came with the glider. At the farm we found Ernst Noeth, a German student of philosophy from Frankfurt. He had arrived at the farm to-day. He is going to share in the activities of the Club during the Camp.

We made the acquaintance of Ralph and Jim Coward, who run the farm, consumed a welcome meal, and so to bed.

Monday, September 1st.

A fine hot day, with practically no wind. Hewson arrived at Camp early this morning - having failed to find the

place last night. Plumbe and Barnes were ordained cooks for the day. The day was spent in "digging ourselves in". The glider was taken off the trailer, quite intact (which is something to be thankful for, considering the load upon the bicycle wheels supporting the trailer). The present state of construction is this: One wing and the tail surfaces are complete except for covering. The other wing is complete except for the leading edge. The aileron are semi-finished. The centre-section struts still have to be streamlined. We hope to have the machine in the air in little over a week.

The horse-shoe-shaped valley adjoining the farm - the lower part of which is called Longcombe Bottom - seems to be an ideal place for gliding and soaring. It is a pity we are not more advanced in experience, for with a moderate S. W. wind one should be able to keep a sailplane in the air for hours.

Tuesday, September 2nd.

Another fine day. Houlder turned up (on bicycle) late last night. Barnes and Ernst were cooks. The following arrangement is made with regard to the cooking. A man serves two days running. On the first day he is assistant cook, or "orderly", and on the following day he becomes "chief cook". In this way he finds out what he has to do, where things are kept, etc., from the man before him, and passes it on to the man coming after him, thus saving some-one the job of showing

the cooks separately their duties.

A little work was done on the glider in the morning, and a part of the afternoon was spent in levelling the farm-yard. This is dubbed "hard labour", but nevertheless is thoroughly enjoyed.

A General Meeting was to be held in the evening. Jackson, who arrived in the afternoon, was the only officer present. We were one short of a quorum (five, excluding officers) and so the meeting did not take place.

This was due to two of the members in Camp having departed to investigate the beer in Fontinell Magna.

Events connected with the arrival of Jackson in Camp caused some amusement. Having neglected to give three days' notice of his intention to visit the Camp - as per Regulations - he was told he must provide his own grub for three days (see Regulations). He arrived in time to do two hours "hard labour" with a pick. Then, borrowing a bicycle, he sped off to Fontinell to buy the necessary food - whilst the rest of the Camp sat down to dinner! Too bad.

Wednesday, September 3rd.

A fine sunny, but not quite so warm, owing to a fresh wind. The day was spent in construction work. Everyone - except Ernst and Keeble, who were cooks - put in an hour's "hard labour" before dinner.

The order of the day is as follows: Cooks rise at 6 o'clock, and everyone else at 7. Breakfast is at 7.30 sharp (more or less, according to (a) the cooks, and (b) the weather), cold lunch is prepared for 12.30 or thereabouts as previously determined, hot dinner at 7.30, and bed (officially) at 9.30. At present we are spending the morning and afternoon in construction, in an effort to get the glider finished, but we have the evenings free. The evenings are drawing in, and after we have eaten and washed up, we just about have time for a walk in the dark, or a sing-song round the camp-fire.

Ralph's boy-scouts came up this evening, and we indulged in a "spud-fight", followed by a walk on the hills, and then a short sing-song round the fire.

Thursday, September 4th.

The weather continues fine and sunny, but there is a moderate E. wind, and signs of thunder. Keeble and Moulder were cooks.

Friday, September 5th.

Fine weather, but cloudy, no rain however. Still we continue working on the glider. The biggest job in hand is streamlining the fuselage struts. Moulder and Jackson did the cooking.

Saturday, September 6th.

Dull and colder, with some rain. Jackson left in

the morning. Dempster came in the afternoon and Kibblewhite in the evening. Hewson and - until he left - Jackson did the cooking.

Sunday, September 7th.

A day of rest. Kibblewhite departed in the morning. An excursion party of five members went to Swanage in the Arrol. Weather mainly fine, with a strong westerly wind and a few showers.

Monday, September 8th.

A fine warm day with slight westerly wind. Hewson and Ernst did the cooking. Three members, namely Barnes, Plumbe, and Keeble, spent the morning helping the threshing, and the rest got back to the glider. We managed to borrow a sewing machine - treadle type - from a neighbouring farmer, Mr. Bowden. Dempster revealed a surprising knowledge of this piece of mechanism, and started sewing together strips of fabric for the covering. Keeble is getting very adept at streamlining.

Tuesday, September 9th.

Rolf Gardiner came to Gore late last night, and met the Club at breakfast this morning.

It rained nearly all day, but we continued rigging the glider inside the barn, and did two hours' "hard labour"

before dinner.

Plumbe and Barnes were cooks. Willis turned up in the afternoon.

Wednesday, September 10th.

Fine, but cloudy, with little wind. Barnes and Keeble cooked. Ralph's scouts came up to Gore again, and we had a sing-song - led by Rolf Gardiner - around the camp fire

Thursday, September 11th.

A fine day. Rolf Gardiner left Gore in the morning. Heath turned up by car. Keeble and Houlder were cooks. In the evening the whole population of the farm went to the "pictures" in Shaftesbury in the two cars.

Friday, September 12th.

Fine, but cloudy. Dempster left in the morning. We put on the wings of the glider and the main bracing. Houlder and Willis tried their hands at cooking, and put so much salt in the stew - as well as burning it - that even the pigs refused it. We dined off "macaroni cheese" prepared by Hewson.

Saturday, September 13th.

Rained practically all day. One small pig found dead, - we suspect the stew.

Very dark inside the barn and so not much work

could be done.

Captain Hill, with Mrs. Hill and her cousin (Ltd. Cdr. Lowry) visited us in the afternoon. The Captain seemed very pleased with the machine, and his advice was much appreciated. Mrs. Hill, a very charming lady, showed us a special lockstitch for covering the wings, as used on the trailing edge of the Captain's first Pterodactyl.
The visitors stayed to tea, and were given a rousing send-off.

Willis and Heath cooked.

Sunday, September 14th.

Rained most of the day. Two car parties were made up. Barnes brought his father and brother back to dinner. Heath and Ernst were official cooks, helped considerably by Houlder and Hewson.

The members at present in Camp are:- Payne, Barnes, Plumbe, Keeble, Heath, Willis, Houlder and Hewson.

Monday, September 15th.

The day commenced with a rat-hunt, in which we killed 27 of the vermin, and let about a dozen escape. We note with regret that members enjoyed slaughtering the poor dumb beasts.

A fine sunny day, with a strong west wind. Keeble left at 7.30 a.m. Jackson returned this afternoon. Hewson and Ernst cooked.

Construction continues. The C. G. was tested and appears to be some six inches too far back, so we set

about moving the seat and stick forward.

Tuesday, September 16th.

Very bad weather - drizzling rain, and fog. Nevertheless, we started covering the wings in the barn, and worked well on into the evening. Willis left Camp in the morning. Hewson and Jackson did the cooking.

Wednesday, September 17th.

Another filthy day - it started pouring with rain in the morning and continued all day. Damp everywhere, fog in the afternoon, and a gale at night. Up to now Barnes and Plumbe, Payne, and Hewson and Houlder have been sleeping in tents, but they have now been abandoned. The stack of straw in the barn has been found to make a comfortable bed! Plumbe and Jackson did the cooking, and the rest continued covering wings, etc., as well as the bad light would permit.

Thursday, September 18th.

Heath left the Camp about mid-day. Plumbe and Barnes cooked. At last the glider is ready to fly! We assembled the machine in the evening. Everything seems O.K. except that the aileron controls seem jerky. It has been a fine day, with a strong west wind, and showers threatening.

Friday, September 19th.

A very eventful day. Rain and a terrific wind in the morning, with apparently no prospect of being able to fly.

But it cleared up surprisingly in the middle of the morning. Jackson left about 11 o'clock, leaving five members in Camp - Payne, Barnes, Plumbe, Houlder and Hewson. The morning was spen in improving the aileron control.

About one o'clock Payne prospected the fields between the upper road and the valley. The wind was from S.S. W. and about 20 m.p.h. at this time. Although rather rough, it was considered possible to try out the machine, without danger. Accordingly it was arranged to take out the glider after lunch.

The centre structure and wings were carried out separately. The wind had meanwhile increased, and the machine was assembled with some difficulty between 3 o'clock and 4.15. The handling party consisted of the five members of the Club, Ernst Noeth, Ralph and Jim Coward, and the farm lad, Roy. About 4.15 the glider was rigged, and was towed along to the middle of the three fields on the windward side of the road, Whilst the glider was being towed and subsequently, Hewson was in the seat, but was not strapped on.

Whilst placing the catapult rope in position, one wing tip was left unattended, and the nose was held by the weight of the man in the seat only. This was insufficient. A gust lifted the front of the machine, at the same time blowing the whole machine backwards. The machine turned a backward somersault, and Hewson fell on to the ground, then it blew over again, and was then seized and held.

Hewson was not badly hurt. He retained consciousness. A lady spectator on a horse telephoned for a doctor. The casualty was taken home in the Carrol, and the doctor arrived almost immediately. The damage was cut on the head, several bruises, and a slight concussion. The man was put to bed in the farmhouse.

The damage to the glider was confined chiefly to the right wing, which was broken about 5 feet from the root, and the centre structure, which was badly broken. The machine was taken back to the barn.

Tombs turned up in the evening. Barnes and Houlder were officially cooks, helped by nearly everyone.

It was agreed to break up the Camp on Monday, as it was not possible that the machine could be repaired before the end of the month.

Saturday, September 20th.

We took turns to sit up with Hewson last night. He slept pretty well, and seemed all right this morning, as he kept asking for his trousers. He was allowed to get up after the doctor had called again.

Houlder and Ernst did the cooking.

The day was spent in various ways, and we started clearing up for departing.

Sunday, September 21st.

Tombs left in the morning. We spent the morning

in tying up the glider to the roof of the barn. Ernst and Hewson cooked.

Captain and Mrs. Hill and family came in the afternoon. They were grieved to hear about the accident. The Captain does not think it very bad, and only the sort of thing to be expected. The whole Camp turned out to help the visitors pick blackberries. They left about 6.30. Their visit was enjoyed by everyone.

Monday, September 22nd.

The Camp broke up this morning at about 9 o'clock. Barnes, Plumbe, Hewson, and Payne left in the Arrol, and Houlder a la bicyclette.