A DIARY OF
THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE GLIDING CLUB'S ANNUAL CAMP
SEPTEMBER 1931.

A Diary Of The Imperial College Gliding Club Camp. September 1931.

MONDAY AUGUST 31st.

All the goods were finally collected at Robin's Works and everything was ready for the next day. Hewson and Freidrich arrived at nine-oaclock, they seemed to think that the mere 300yds from the station were somehow stretched out a bit. However they went to bed in the back of a lorry, and Robin and Keeble went up to Robin's house; here unfortunately, the radiator started leaking badly again, and they were up till after midnight, trying to stop the leak with all sorts of weird concoctions.

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1st.

We rose at dawn, and alas, found that the radiator put Niagara to shame; we finally stuffed the leak with several cakes of soap, and sallied forth at 6.15 a.m. with the trailer behind us. Hewson, Robin and Friedrich, rode in the car, whilst Keeble rode behind on his motor bike, to collect the bits that fell off. Every half hour the radiator was refuelled, and the party refuelled themselves on ham sandwhiches. The water can was filled from two rivers, and a garage, & the water liberally distributed from Streatham to Gore Farm. We picked up Sir Gilbert Walker at Shaftesbury, and with Hewson as lookout on top of the luggage in the dickey, started on the last lap to the farm. The car conked out on Spread-Eagle, but with the aid of 4 man power, we raced a snail to the top, and arrived at Gore behind a load of meal, at 12.45 pm. We were immediately libelled by Ralph, who, remembering last year, ~~didxnot~~ said that he was not expecting us until midnight. However we made ourselves at home, and remembering Rule 4, sent a man to get food for the party.

The trip had been uneventful except for the radiator trouble,

and we had been very lucky in not having any rain.

Payne arrived at 3.0 p.m. on his push-bike ,having ridden from Southampton that day.

We amused ourselves in the afternoon,by digging pits all over the place,and generally turning things upside down. Dinner was at 8.30 p.m.,and in the aggument that followed,it was apparent that the rigid economists had a very stout following ,whilst Ramsey Mac: could only raise a vote or two.

We went to bed about 11.0 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 2nd.

It rained nearly all the morning,but we continued to get the camp into order. In the afternoon it cleared up,and we went out searching for a gliding site. Adorjan arrived at Semley about 6 p.m. and was fetched in the car.

THURSDAY 3rd.

The morning dawned rainy,but it cleared up,so we took the R.F.D. down to Littlecombe Bottom ,where we had several flights. We stopped for lunch,and then continued until 5.0 p.m. when the R.H. aileron horn was broken. Tne glider was pegged out for the night,the aileron being removed for repairs.

During the evening ,the dancers from Ashmore did some folk-dancing in the barn.

FRIDAY 4th.

More rain,so we cut firewood until breakfast. The weather cleared up afterwards and we were able to go out gliding in Littlecoombe Bottom again. Barnes arrived on his "Pipsqueak " just in time for flying; he had travelled from Southampton,with his Primus tied on the front wheel,and a complete camping outfit parked about the bike.

We stopped flying for lunch, and then continued in the afternoon until the glider was flown against the trolley (alias Self-Made Man) according to Carold, both articles being bent in the process; no real damage was done however,

SATURDAY 5th

There was a high wind from the south-west, and so we decided to start from the top of Sutton Hill, we had obtained permission the night before, to use the ground. We rigged the machine, had lunch, and then launched Eugen ; he pulled the stick slightly on starting and losing speed had to turn down wind, to land he had to turn into wind and in doing this he had to avoid a fence, this upset his calculations causing him to land with a little drift, the skid was a little bit damaged and so we packed up the glider and went back to the farm to do the repairs.

SUNDAY 6th

A really fine day again; everybody took things easily. After breakfast Sir Gilbert took us out and gave us lessons in the use of his beautifully made boomerang; some people were good , others weren't. Stephens arrived with very good judgement just in time for lunch, he had travelled from Brighton that morning.

In the evening, work was continued on the skid, and the estimated half-hour to finish, turned into five, the three tired constructors retired to bed at 3.45 a.m. on Monday morning.

MONDAY 7th.

Another topping day; we arose late. The club was split into two, and some harvested and some glided. Payne flew the R.F.D. down from the top of Little Coombe in a fast flight of 41 secs. A little gliding was obtained in the morning, and after lunch, as there was a

very small launching crew,(Eugen had hurt his knee) autolaunching was tried.The first attempt broke the rope,as the release didn't,the rope pilling itself into the back of the car,much to Robin's astonishment. Gliding was continued until the petrol ran out.

The harvesters carted tons of wheat,and only one load fell overboard,although others had a good try.

After dinner,Sir Gilbert gave us a most interesting talk on layer clouds,and gave us the results of some of his students latest experiments (June),which entirely alter the meteorologists theories on layer clouds and their formation.

TUESDAY 8th

The day dawned fine. To our great regret Sir Gilbert Walker had to leave us,and a party went to Shaftesbury to see him off.

During the afternoon we again divided,Payne helping with the harvesting,and the rest of us going gliding in Long coombe Bottom. We continued with auto-launching ,but the club is going to acquire a petrol lorry and a water cart before we start auto-launching in earnest.

WEDNESDAY 9th

Fine again; we went to Sutton Hill again and had several glides from the top,we found, that inspite of the car ,it was very hard work pulling the glider up the hill. "A" licences were obtained by Hewson and Robin. Keeble made an attempt to get his "B" Licence but he failed by three seconds,as the "S"bends were somewhat overdone. The days events were terminated by the breaking of the L.H. Aileron horn -- not the new one.

Pat and Margaret arrived in time for dinner.

In the evening we sat in in front of the fire,and sang

rounds very merrily,largely owing to the fact that Hewson had been celebrating his succesful flight.

THURSDAY 10th

The weather was again good; after repairing the aileron kingpost,we refitted the aileron and Adorjan flew the glider to the bottom of Sutton Hill,obtaining a 45 sec flight. We then had slides and flips in the bottom. Carold was in form this afternoon,and demanded that:- The Left-Hand Screw should run for the Bush-Complex,--- they did their best.

FRIDAY 11th

Another hot day.

Flying was off Sutton Hill as before. We found that with a single wire for hauling ,the glider moved up the hill at a truly phenomenal pace, and therefore two pulleys were obtained from Shaftesbury enabling us to double the wire. We now lounge up the hill. Payne obtained one of his qualifying flights for his "B",and Barnes in obtaining his "A", gave us a grand demonstration of the falling leaf. Hewson then had his remarkable flight; he got into a L.H. bank on the R.H. side of the valley ,crossed over to the other side and had a vertical bank 6ft above the side of the hill,he then turned back again and going towards the middle of the cup,flew through the top of a hedge and landed on the hillside.The fuselage was broken,and the tail-booms bent ,but considering the thrill we received,the cost of the repairs was cheap. Directly after this great show,Adorjan had to leave for London,so we packed the glider up and went back to the farm.

SATURDAY 12th.

We got up at 6.0 a.m. and found the morning rainy and

misty,we had breakfast early and got away by 8.30 a.m. for Lee-On-Solent Barnes was on Rosie,Stephens and Keeble on their motor-bikes and all the others in the car;except Becker,who was at Balfour Gardiner's. Tichfield hove in sight on the starboard bows and we drew moored alongside the quay to have a rest.Barnes decided to turn his ship homewards,but the other mariners ~~xfixxxrefuxxixing~~,carried on to Lee-On-Solent,where they refuelled.As the Schneider Race was postponed,we turned back,Stephens and Keeble,travelling by Salisbury got back at 3.20p.m. Barnes at 4.0 p.m. and the rest hours later.They had been 80 miles on the way back and had seen Winchester and Lord knows where else. The orderlies found that Pat had done the handsome ,and scrubbed the potatoes,and washed up,other orderlies have since gone green with envy.

SUNDAY 13th

Sunday is theoretically a day of rest,but a good deal of the morning was spent in cleaning out the Dormitory. The weather was fine. After lunch,Ralph read us some letters in an endeavour to drive into our heads,his view of the Simpler Life.

We played Rounders during the afternoon,on the downs,our cross-country run in the car on the way there ,somehow seemed to upset the shepherd there,who invoked the higher authorities to attack these town dwellers.

MONDAY 14th.

The weather was not so good. We received a telegram from from Adorjan,asking us to phone him in London ; we called him up at 2.0 p.m. and got through quickly. There was bad news for us,R.F.D. were unable to provide us with a new fuselage and could only supply tail booms,therefore we had to get materials for the repairs locally and do our best.WE therefore returned to Gore and made out a full list

of the things required.

Miss Barthelx,Carold,and Becker returned about midday.

TUESDAY 15th.

Another good day though it started with mist;a party went out in the morning before breakfast x riding the horses,some of them got lost in the mist,not entirely by accident it is belived. (One of the girls was with them!!)

After breakfast a party went into Gillingham to get the materials for the repair of the glider;on the way back we went up Zig-Zag Hill,. Adorjan arrived at Semley at 1.28 p.m. and was met with the car,on the run back petrol ran out,but by dint of freewheeling a mile or two,the car got withinx a few yards of a garage.The afternoon saw a good deal of work done on the glider.In the evening,Pat was escorted to Mere.

WEDNESDAY 16th.

Nice weather. After breakfast,Miss Barthel was taken to Fontmell to catch a bus,the car ran out of petrol on the drive and Keeble towed it with his motor bike,in a rather erratic manner,to the top of Fomtmell Hill.Miss Barthel caught her bus alright,but Robin lost THE BOOK!!!!!!!!!! Woe is me. (This was the book in which all accounts of money lent for petrol, was kept.)

About 9.30 a.m.,Stephens left for Brighton going by Mere xx apparently to deposit Pat's shoes;Later-much-later the car took Ralph,Mrs Cowadd and Eugen to Mere,and arriving at 12.30 found that Stephens had only just departed!!!!

During the day the work on the glider progressed well, and Hewson and his navvies,knocked spots off the drive. Captain Hill (G.T.R. visited us about dinner time,with his family.

THURSDAY 17th.

Rain all day. The car took Miss Jackson home and ~~[illegible]~~ fetched Margaret from Mere. Fontmell-Magna was completely inverted in the search for the BOOK.

The fuselage was put together, and the wings mended but not doped. Ralph and a party had dinner ~~[illegible]~~ at Balfour Gardiner's. As the dormitary was cold, we had a fire up there and went to bed in the warm.

FRIDAY 18th.

Good weather. We were repairing the glider all day. Mr Lewitt and his family, arrived during lunch, to pay us a call, they were unlucky not to see any flying; after visiting our sites they set off for London. The glider was nearly finished by the evening. The Folk Dancers were up again after dinner.

SATURDAY 19th.

The glider was rigged first thing, and then dismantled and put on the trailer ready for the afternoon. After lunch we went to Sutton Hill, and after rigging ~~[illegible]~~ the glider, Adorjan had a test flight he then had his spectacular series of slides and skids, starting above the top fence and finishing half way down one of the steepest bits which he could find. Keeble then succesfully attempted his flight for his "B", landing in a field of turnips at the end of the valley. During the afternoon we received a telegram from the Rector, saying that he was coming to visit us on Sunday, those who had engagements at Mere, walked about gnashing their teeth whilst the infidels laughed loud and long. Adorjans telegram caused questions.

SUNDAY 20th.

Wonderful weather. In the morning we took it easy and brushed our hair and put on clean shirts ready for the Rector.

The Rector arrived at 1.0 p.m. having travelled from Oxford.

We started gliding from the very top of the hill, Payne making a succesful attempt to get his "B". Adorjan then tried for one of his 45 sec qualifying flights, but got onto the R.H. side of the valley and greatly pleased the multitude by Shooting up the hedge and the swath-turner, in fine stile; his time was 41secs or so. Robin then also made an unsuccesful attempt at a qualifying flight; the down wind was too much for them.

The Rector decided that he would like to try his hand at the stick again, and so he was given some short hops at the bottom of the hill; the glider was then hauled to the top of the hill and the Rector went off for his "A" flight. He followed the contour very closely and roared down the hil at 45 m.p.h., he flattened out at the bottom and made a long level flight down the valley, time 46 secs. A jolly good flight. When the event was over a group went over to Mere, whilst the remaining men entertained the Rector until he left about 8.0 p.m.

MONDAY 21st.

Nice weather. Adorjan had a telegram by post recalling him to London, he was therefore taken to Semley. When Robin returned, we took the car to Coombe Bottom, and after eating our lunch had a few hand lauhches . This was too much like hard work, so auto-launching was tried, this was a great improvement and a good number of flights were made. Carold had to leave us at 4p.m. as he was going to Bristol to finish up his holiday. A fix landing wire was broken during the afternoon but it delayed us very little as it was easy to replace. John Henry seemed to find Mere attractive again this evening.

TUESDAY 22nd.

The wind was still the same, down the valley, so Robin,

Stephens,Hebden,and Keeble,started auto-launching in the bottom of the valley; as the wind was down the valley,the air was very bumpy and landings were often rather heavy. We soon found that the front of the skid was developing a crack just in front of the kingpost, this was due to faulty screwing of the supports during the repairs. After the lunch,we repaired the crack by putting angle across on both sides of the skid. We had one flight after the repair,and then discovered that an aileron pulley had pulled out,so we packed up the glider and went back to the farm.

WEDNESDAY 23rd.

There was a stong N.E. wind which made flying in Coombe bottom impossible,so when Payne had repaired the aileron pulley,we went out and searched for a site facing the wind. Win Green seemed ideal so we went down and saw Mr Finlay,who was extreemly decent,and told us to get busy. After lunch,we took the glider out rigged it and had two flights,the old R.F.D. made quite a good attempt to soar,and besides giving the pilots a tantalising taste of soaring,astonished the members of the Dorset Club whose R.F.D. flies like a brick owing to strengthening devices fitted.Several members of the Dorset club turned up during the evening and visited our various sites,they were very interested and wished that they could get over to fly on them.They stayed and had dinner with us,and helped us wash up;they only broke one jug.

THURSDAY 24th.

The wind had dropped ,to 6 or 7 M.P.H. and so Robin went off for a "B" qualifying flight.Whilst the car was taking some of the party down the hill to lunch,the back axle sheared,this stopped all flying for the day,as there were not enough men to handle the glider.

The car was towed into Shaftesbury and repaired by the evening. Becker left us at three-o-clock, he was going to another farm somewhere in England.

Captain Hill arrived during dinner and had something to eat with us, when we had finished, a lot of us packed in his car and went and visited Win Green, he thought that it was fine. The Folk-Dancers were up at the farm during the evening and Captain Hill was very interested.

FRIDAY 25th

The glider had been picketed in the valley for the night, and thence we took it up the slope at the side of the hill, where we a few training hops. When the wind had dropped, Hebden took off from the top of the hill and qualified fo his "A". as there were plenty of "natives" watching, we asked them to give us a hand and we got the glider to the foot of the hill in record time, on the way up we broke a landing wire, as there was a large ant-hill in the way. Stephens and Eugen had a motor-bike smash on the way from Mere at 11.30 p.m. rather bending things in the process, a passing motorist took them to a doctors in Gilling ham who patched them up, and then the motorist brought them right back to Gore, where they arrived about 1.0 a.m.

~~Saturday~~

SATURDAY 26th.

Stephens and Eugen seemed rather sore, so Stephens walked to Mere to remove some of the stiffness and to look at the remains of his bike, he also had some other business there.

When the glider had been repaired, we went to Win Green again, Captain Hill turned up with masses of bananas for us, and was just in time to see Robin Qualify for his "B". Keeble then had a launch

and missing his turn at the top of the hill,made a straight flight down . During the day we wrecked some of the ant-hills which threatened to damage the plane when it was towed up the hill.

Alice left the camp .

SUNDAY 27th.

The wind had dropped so there was no gliding;we packed the R.F.D. on the field ,and then went back and packed up the rest of the goods and chattels ,we also cleared up the camp.

MONDAY 28th.

Hebden started off at 6.0 a.m. after his alarum had gone at 4.30 . Breakfast was at 8.0,;the car and trailer got off at 10.0. on board there were,Hewson,Robin,Eugen and Stephens,Stephens had received a letter about a quarter of an hour before telling him to return at once,he therefore packed his pyjamas and a toothbrush and went in the car.

Payne and Keeble stayed behind and cleared up the camp; they went to look at Hambledon Hill as a place for soaring ,it seems quite a good place to call in at on a cross-country flight.After lunch they went to Mere,apparently to look at the hill there,which would make a very good place for soaring, the two visitors somehow got delayed at Mere,and had an exciting time getting back through Shaston without lights.

The car and trailer got back to town on record time,there were no mishaps and they arrived ~~there~~ at Hanwell in 4 hours , average speed 25 m.p.h. ,after dropping Hewson at his door they met Adorjan at the Union ~~x~~ and deposited the trailer at the Guilds.

Altogether a jolly good camp,and only ~~x~~ 6 days with rain.