

8 March, 1896

I walked over to fetch a chap called Bagshaw at Minster. I met him at the last two meets but one. In a window I saw a stuffed roller. Mr Wright came down and gave us a parrot.

10 March,

I rode Ailsa into Minster and again saw the roller. About 11 the whole ground seemed covered by a blanket of mist, rising in clouds from the sodden earth and cutting off the view save for the tips of the trees.



I saw a stonechat

11 March,

Played golf with Mr Wain.¹

13 March, boxed up for Tickham Hounds, meeting at Eastling –

.....Just before I left I rode to the place where the fox had gone to earth, with a Mr Benson (who I had made an acquaintance: he was a friend of Mr Collard) and he asked the men to show him (the fox) to me, which they did by opening the bag a little.....

14 March, did two grafts.

15 March,

Mr Bagshaw came over and Pids gave him a greyhound.² He stopped to lunch.

¹ This was Louis Wain the famous car artist, who worked for the Illustrated London News and was helped though a difficult period in his life by Collingwood's father William Ingram the proprietor of the ILN. Louis Wain lived in Westgate at this time.

²Pids was the family nickname for William Ingram.

19 March, foxhunting with the Tickham Hounds, met at the kennels.

.....Reynard doubled back after going a hundred yards, than away to the next wood where he rested for a bit but was routed out – on past Eastling and the other side of Newnham. By half past twelve we killed. Poor Fox! His tongue lolled out and the blood dripped slowly from his nose as the master brought him by the tail to an orchard hard by.

So stiff was he that the master stood him up; it was more than the hounds could bear, this lifelike image seemingly ready to fly at their throats. So, as the master (Mr Rigden) and the whip gave a “Tally Hoo!! Tally Ho!!” they rushed at him, tearing at his lifeless flesh ferociously.

What a sight it was! In an orchard: the fruit buds bulging out fast and the grass as green as it can only be in an English spring, the master and the whip stood in their scarlet coats surrounded by a large pack of hounds with tongues out: in the master’s hand was the lifeless body of the fox. Behind, in a little homestead gaped some peasants and in the field outside were the steaming horses of the hunters.....

21 March,

Bruce and Bertie came back from Oxford.¹

30 March,

Left this morning for Torquay, As the shadows draw long on the green meadows we ran into Devon, the fields as green as green dotted with primroses etc. How pretty it is. The soil is redder.

31 March,

Torquay is a very handsome place. The town is constructed on three hills, each of which is dotted all over with houses. A harbour which contains but small boats is well protected.



Went a trip on the yacht in the afternoon, a little past Berry Head.²

¹Collingwood’s brothers, both older than him.

²William Ingram’s yacht, *The Osprey*.

1 April,

Went fishing but caught nothing.

2 April,

Went for a bicycle ride to Teignmouth. In the afternoon I fished and caught 3 pollock.

3 April,

Went for a row which took us round Shag Rock.¹ Shag Rock is an isolated ragged, rock, situated, I should say, about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the mainland of Devon. Grass grows on the more fertile portion, being the slope on the north side, but a few other patches here and there can be seen. One other plant only seems to thrive there, the name of which I am not acquainted with. The dimensions of this little rocky island are, as near as I can guess, about a quarter of an acre.

The first bird that met my eye as I approached was a black one. Now by the name “Shag” you would naturally think it to be one of those birds, but by after events it proved to be a raven.

There he sat on the topmost pinnacle of the island, and as he literally threw himself down with the hoarse croak peculiar to the raven there could no longer be any doubt as to his identity.



Only the sharpest eye can notice the tiny (comparatively) rock pipit as he hops about amongst the small tufts of grass exactly the colour of the stone on which he is perched. His lively little note echoes over the rock, enlivening the dreary place wonderfully. Presently another joins him and in another moment they both disappear round the other side. These were all I noticed then, but I expect sea birds visit it frequently enough for I saw them in the immediate neighbourhood.

4 April,

This morning I started for a ride (on a bicycle) for Becky Falls. I passed Bovey Tracy as well as Newton Abbot; the whole way is supposed to be 18 miles. The road was hilly in the extreme, but the “Falls” repaid me for my trouble. Down moss-covered rocks a sweet mountain stream fell and the sun shone in little blotches on the moss

¹In fact Thatcher Rock; he corrects himself later.

through the newly budding trees. The stream was situated in a wood and, being spring, was at its best. Primroses were in full bloom.

5 April,

Went on the yacht in the afternoon.

6 April,

Went today to see the Torquay Races (1st day). One horse fell and broke its neck; several others fell but no harm done. It is the first proper race I have seen.

7 April,

Today I went to see the races again. Our horse Down Quilt won.¹ Bruce went back to Westgate.

8 April,

Went this morning to see a place called Kent's Cavern. It is a wonderful place: bears, tigers and three kinds of elephant have been found there. Went a bicycle ride in the afternoon.

9 April,

This morning we took train for Dartmouth, the Foresters being of the party. By 11.30 we were on our way, a pilot on board. We had not gone a quarter of a mile before we saw the "Nerine", the old yacht in which we went to Corsica.

How pretty is the Dart! Wooded hills run straight down to the water's edge where a stately heron wades. Streams, among the primroses, gurgle and splash on their route to join their larger relation.

A very curious incident happened. A pair of crows flapped up from the shore with something furry in one of their mouths. On our yelling to them they dropped it and on landing we found it to be a small rabbit, still living. Some of its flesh was torn from its back.

¹The racehorse trainer Arthur Sebright wrote in *A Glance into the Past* (1922), 'In the winter Sir William Ingram, who was then at Torquay, told me that he would like to win the Ladies' Plate at the local steeplechases. I accordingly sold him "Down Quilt" and won for him the race.'

On our return journey from Totnes, I noticed a little grebe and coot: I expect they had a nest.

10 April,

Drive with Min¹ and Pids who called on the Hares.

11 April,

The wind blows fairly hard. At twenty to eight Bertie comes and calls me, saying that it blew too hard. But in about ten minutes I was up and dressed and decided to go. So at 8.25 we were tucked in a little dogcart – our horses had gone on by train. The wind blew strongly from the NNW sending volumes of dust, from the dry roads, whirling into the air, and our eyes too for the matter of fact. Some way past Newton we met a caravan of elephants, camels etc, which made the dust unbearable.

Bovey is 14 miles from Torquay and the meet was six miles further on at a place called Heytree; the latter part of the journey we rode. Of course no-one could expect a good scent on such a day and no-one was deceived. A fox was found, or supposed to be, and ran out some way on the moors. Oh how windy it was up on the moorland hills, enough to blow you out of the saddle. At about half past one we left them, three miles the other side of the meeting place.

At Becky Falls we asked for lunch, but the people could only give eggs, the offer of which we accepted and what good eggs they were. Only 1/-6d was charged for both of us for four eggs, a large plate and bread and butter, tea and good milk (for a wonder), as well as having our horses put up.

The pack was the South Devon Foxhounds, as I afterwards found out.

17 April,

In the afternoon I went a bicycle ride to Berry Pomeroy Castle (9 miles distant) with Bertie.

18 April,

Went out on the yacht and dropped Bertie at Dawlish from whence he went home, having had his things sent on.

¹Min (Minima) was Collingwood's mother.

19 April,

In the morning I landed at what I thought at first was called Shag Rock, but have found it to be called Thatcher Rock. I got some plants there.

21 April,

Left Torquay by the 11.5 train and got to London by 4.30.

22 April,

Went in the afternoon to see Olympia.

23 April,

Went a bicycle ride to Brentford.

24 April,

Bruce came up from Westgate.

25 April,

This morning I rode up on my bicycle to Uncle Charles' place Elstead, Surrey. It is about 35 miles from 65 Cromwell Rd. About a mile from the house is a common called Royal Common, many birds build there (I went last year to the same place). In the afternoon, we, Billy and I,¹ went there but were not very successful, finding an old long-tailed tit's nest and a coal tit that built in the same place as last year.

26 April,



More successful in bird-nesting, I finding one long-tailed tit's (with eggs), one pheasants, one moorhens. Billy, one long-tailed tit's. Lewis and Dilly are here.

¹'Billy' is thought to be Randolph Ingram (1883-1900), son of Collingwood's uncle Charles. Randolph died at Ventnor, Isle of Wight. Ventnor was a resort for sufferers from tuberculosis, suggesting that Randolph had this disease.

27 April,

In the afternoon we all went to a bicycle paper-chase, Lewis and a gardener being hares.¹ A quarter of an hour's start was allowed. Mr Broadbent (their tutor) left a little behind me but before long I stopped to look at a nest and he passed me.

The next thing I met was the second hare and turning the corner saw Lewis and Mr B. together. I yelled to them, but instead of stopping away they went. Mr B. had turned hare. Mile after mile passed before I caught them up.

28 April

Billy and I went out on Puttenham Common. I found a brood of young plovers. They were but two or three days old, sweet little creatures, all fluff. The white patches at the back of their heads showed me their whereabouts.



29 April,

We all bicycled back to London – worse luck!

30 April,

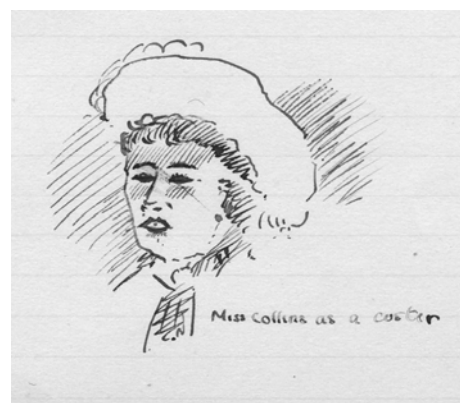
I went to the Zoo. Both my shrikes I gave last year (hand reared) were quite well and both males.

1 May,

Nothing much save that I went to the Aquarium.

2 May,

Went to a matinée of the 'The New Barmaid' at the Avenue. It was rather good.²



3 May,

I came down to Westgate, have a little sore throat.

¹Lewis Ingram (1880-1949) was a son of Collingwood's uncle Charles.

²The sketch is of Lottie Collins, star of The New Barmaid..