

Edwardian Rambles

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Edwardian Rambles portrays Henry Atty's talent as an artist and observer of the countryside and towns he visited in his leisure time, cycling alone or with his wife and friends, during the first years of the 20th century. His talent would have gone unnoticed if this pictorial journal had not been unearthed from the back of a wardrobe. Readers of this evocative, wonderfully illustrated book can delight in a craftsman's superb work with paintbrush and pencil, his knowledgeable asides about the historical and literary connections of the area, his visual and written descriptions of the flora and fauna, churches, public houses, and so much more along the way. One of his longest cycle rides, about 25 miles from his home, was to Chester, a city he depicts with well-informed artistry.

However, it is not necessary to know this part of north-west England to be transported back to those years just before WW1, into a world which now seems far in the past and a time when it was still safe, and a pleasure, to have an exhilarating and enlightening day out on two wheels, only rarely needing to cope with, as Atty puts it, 'the dust of passing motor cars'.

Each page is individually illustrated and handwritten, and the occasional minor errors in spelling add to the charm and immediacy of what was produced with no intention of reaching a wide readership. Henry Atty would almost certainly be astonished and, we think, delighted, to see his work available for all to enjoy.

Readership: Although those who live in, or have associations with, the areas featured will be automatically attracted, we feel this unique book will also be enjoyed by those interested in the countryside, the Edwardian era, cycling, and well illustrated or unusual books. Edwardian Rambles has also attracted local and national media attention.

About the author:

Henry Josiah Atty, a printer by trade, lived quietly with his wife, Maggie, a talented seamstress, in a tiny terraced house in Warrington from 1900 until his death in 1961. Painting was his relaxation. He never sold his work but gave it away and this manuscript was a present to Jack Leech (Pop), the Warrington Guardian's first photographer. It is now the property of his grand-daughter.

CHESTER.

It was the first Saturday in September and a glorious afternoon when I left home for an afternoon's spin with no definite destination with the exception of getting somewhere in the vicinity of Delemere Forest. The roads from Warrington to Cuddington were in excellent condition but nothing very striking from a scenic standpoint, though fairly pretty in places, consequently I had an opportunity to resolve on a destination, which resulted in Chester via the forest. I liked Cuddington: it being one of those pretty, clean and neat little villages that associate themselves with the city man's ideal of rural serenity. From Cuddington to Norley was undoubtedly pretty and interesting country but I had to confess to a feeling of disappointment at not coming in contact with the notorious forest. It was not till reaching the Abbey Arms that my wishes were gratified as I seemed to suddenly come to the fringe of the forest. For about half a mile it was positively fascinating, leafy dells, woodland paths through bracken and underwood, giving the incentive to numerable

DELAMERE

TARVIN

DUNHAM HILL

FRODSHAM