



A Norman peasant woman, with wooden shoes, short black socks, and ample apron billowing in the wind

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realises that the last phrase merely represents humanity's over-weening self-congratulation and mendacity. Pavé on the other hand is a peculiarly French atrocity. Bill Massey's boots endured it. Invasion trucks can take it. But a landing-party on seven-foot tandems would be stonkered from the start. One thing only is worse than pavé blocks—the occasional absence of one, especially when, in some speed-limitless French street, you notice it first with your seat. We got through Picardy with our wheels still mainly circular—but there was one morning when a farmboy in sabots passed us or was repassed by us no less than nine times. Many direct highways are to-day tar—and potholes. Many side-lanes are still unsurfaced. But the saddest scene I, as a cyclist, have ever seen was roadmen replacing a pavé section of the Paris-Caen road — with pavé.

We Have Been Here Before

British invasions are nothing new to Normandy. For two centuries the British Crown ruled more of France than the King in Paris, and for another they fought to retain or to regain it. Earlier still had landed Rolf the Ganger (so called because he must walk everywhere, his legs being too long for a Norse pony) whose tiny bridgehead at Rouen expanded into the Norman (Northman) Duchy which provided conquerors for Sicily, England, and Jerusalem. But most significant of all assaults probably was that of Edward III and the Black Prince in 1236. Chased from Cherbourg to Abbeville by a course that zigzagged all through Normandy and almost to Paris, their tiny army of 1500 English and 500 Welsh turned at bay on the immense feudal host pursuing them on what is now a poppy-sprinkled plateau near Crecy. In the ensuing battle the French lost more knights alone than there were Englishmen of all ranks present. The common man, thanks to self-reliant discipline and to the fire-power of that new epoch-ending invention the Welsh long-bow, had humbled Chivalry to the dust. He got little from it. Let us trust he gets more for his sacrifices in this region to-day.



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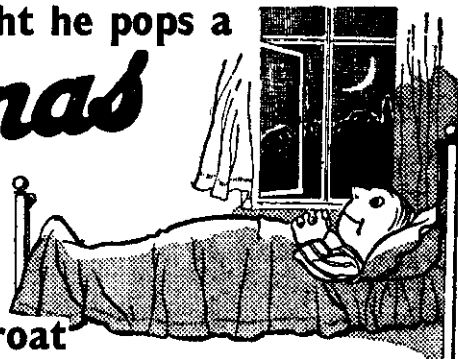
NAME.....

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Last thing at night he pops a

Pulmonas

pastille into his
mouth, easing
night cough and
soothing sore throat



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