

This file is designed for bilingual French-English readers. It contains all the original text of the *Hidden Depths* stereo cards, in its original language, either French or English as the case may be.

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Comment ce goût m'est il venu ? Pas tout seul, bien sûr, et d'abord comme un jeu : je suis donc un petit garçon dont le père fait déjà de la photo ; il possède un appareil gros comme un hippopotame, monté sur un énorme pied de bois ; il se cache sous un voile noir pour mettre au point, puis il me soulève et je vois l'image dans le verre dépoli, très belle, à l'envers... On croirait que c'est de la magie, presque, tellement ça semble extraordinaire de pouvoir attraper les paysages, les gens, une foule de détails... même les grandes personnes n'y sont habituées : les journaux ne sont encore illustrés que par des dessins, et ma grand-mère trouve diaboliques ces images que représentent des personnes vivantes. Alors pensez si ça doit être encore plus fantastique et mystérieux pour un petit garçon !

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W. Lartigue

1 Jacques Lartigue et sa famille**Paris Bois de Boulogne 1903**

Taken from a book written by Lartigue for children *Mon livre de photographie* Flammarion 1977.

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This photograph appears in virtually every book about Lartigue, as it's one of the very first showing him holding a camera. It was taken by Jacques' father in the Bois de Boulogne. To Jacques' right we see his elder brother Maurice (nicknamed Zissou), and on his left his mother and grandmother.

It is of course a double exposure, as can be seen from the phantom riders on the left, and what appears to be a low edging fence in the left foreground. Luckily the second scene was underexposed and so is hardly visible, but it looks like a shot of a cavalry parade, presumably taken elsewhere in the Bois.

Normally the photograph is cropped to just the three foreground figures when printed, to hide the ghosting from the second exposure, but I think it has an added charm in its complete form. Jacques and Zissou very quickly saw the artistic possibilities of this double exposure 'problem', see 6: *Zissou as a ghost*.

2 Jacques et Zissou pilotes de course**Paris 1903**

Paris • 1902

Ils ont parlé des automobiles et la barbe noire de Nononcle Marcel s'agitait autant que la barbe blanche de Monsieur Galbrun : « Il paraît, disait-il, que certains automobiles dépassent la vitesse d'un cheval au galop ! ? ? Oh, pas longtemps, mais quand même ! Mieux : on assure que l'une d'elles a pu atteindre la vitesse de 60km à l'heure ! Et savez-vous ce qu'on a pu constater ? On s'est aperçu qu'à cette vitesse-là l'engin peut passer sur les chiens sans les écraser ! Du reste, la pression de l'air est si forte qu'il va falloir inventer un masque spécial, comme celui des scaphandriers. »

The devil-may-care racing drivers in the photograph are Jacques' brother Maurice, nicknamed Zissou, behind the wheel, and Jacques as the riding mechanic. I can't identify the car, but it belonged to a friend of Jacques' father, and was distinguished by its patented Ducasble puncture-proof tyres. Apparently, each of the little balls was a separate air container, so that should one be punctured, the others could continue unaffected. Jacques does not say how they were inflated, nor what the effect on the ride of the car might be, but it probably wasn't a great concern given the state of the roads at the time.

Note that all French vehicles of the period, including this one, were right hand drive, although the French had for long driven on the right hand side of the road. Presumably this helped the driver avoid ditches (a particular danger in the event of a puncture), and allowed him to step down onto the pavement rather than into the middle of the road. There were still very few motorised vehicles around, so overtaking was not the problem it has since become, hence being close to the centre-line of the road was a low priority. Not until after World War II did left hand drive become universal amongst French automobile manufacturers.

3 Premier vol de Gabriel Voisin sur le planeur Archdeacon**Berck 3rd April 1904***Berck • Pâques 1904*

Tout à coup, au loin, je vois des petites choses noires sur les dunes. Papa dit : « Ça y est, ils font leurs expériences ! » En m'approchant, je vois que les choses noires sont des gens réunis sur une dune et entourant un grand cerf-volant blanc, un peu transparent. Nononcle Raymond explique : la machine volante, c'est une « aéroplane », le « planeur d'Archdeacon », et l'espèce de jeune bonhomme qui est dessus, à plat ventre sur les bouts de bois recouverts de toile, est un inventeur.

[...] On attend de nouveau. C'est long. Et puis, aussi vite, tout recommence : l'inventeur se met à plat ventre, les gens s'écartent, un Monsieur court, et... voilà que tout à coup le Monsieur à plat ventre s'envole ! Il est très haut, à trois ou quatre mètres du sol peut-être, et il redescend le long de la dune, presque jusqu'en bas, avant de retomber par terre.

Zissou hurle : « Mais il fallait le prendre en photographie pendant qu'il était en l'air ! » Bien sur qu'il fallait le prendre, et je l'ai pris. Ce n'était vraiment pas difficile.

The flight captured in this photograph is of great historical importance, as it was the first recorded flight of a human being over French soil. The aviator in question was Gabriel Voisin, the 'aeroplane' was a glider rather than a powered machine, and his flight lasted all of 25 metres (about 30 yards). It's obvious from Jacques' awed tone, however, that this was something verging on the miraculous for him, and helped to spark a lifelong interest in aviation.

A surprisingly long time had elapsed since Sir George Cayley's first demonstration of a man-carrying glider in 1853, but thereafter, progress in flight was remarkably rapid and the French were in the vanguard. Santos Dumont made the first powered flight to take place in Europe over Paris in October 1906, and in 1907 Louis Blériot built and flew the world's first powered monoplane. See also 13: *Farman seaplane*, 24: *Roland Garros in a Blériot 50HP*, 43: *Alberto Santos Dumont*, and 60: *Caudron G3*.

4 Bichonnade s'envole !**Paris 40 rue Cortambert 1905***Paris • 1900*

Moi, si j'aime donner un surnom à quelqu'un, c'est signe que je l'aime. Plus je l'aime, plus le surnom vient vite dans ma tête. Les autres : les « Monsieur » ou « Madame », je ne m'en occupe pas.

Paris • Mars 1902

Quand Maman dit : « Les petits Van Weers vont venir », je sais qu'elle parle de Raymond, que j'ai baptisé « Oléo », de Madeleine, que j'ai baptisée « Bichonnade », et de Marthe que j'appelle « Bouboute ».

As the two quotations imply, Jacques had a great fondness for nicknames. By the age of six, at the time of the first quotation, all his family and close friends already had one, and as each character is introduced in his memoirs another is added. When young, Jacques was known by his family as 'Coco' but presumably it must have fallen into disuse as he grew older, because this is the nickname he chose for his second wife, Marcelle Paolucci.

Jacques comments elsewhere that the name Bichonnade came from 'the soft little cushion called a "Bichon" used to dress the nap on a bowler hat'. The French verb 'bichonner' also means to dress up. We may conclude that Madeleine was a sleek creature even by his elevated standards.

5 La première tentative d'envol de Zissou**Rouzat 1905***Paris • 17 février 1912*

A Saint Louis, en Amérique, le capitaine Berry se laisse tomber d'un aéroplane et gagne le sol en parachute !!! C'est vraiment extraordinaire !... J'ai lu ça dans un journal ; c'est probablement vrai !!

Mon livre de photographie Flammarion 1977

Mon frère Zissou et moi nous complétons à merveille : il adore jouer les acrobates et moi, j'aime saisir les choses en l'air, arrêter le mouvement sur le vif, prendre au piège l'instant fugace : un jeu passionnant si on le fait bien.

The parachute was first postulated by Leonardo da Vinci in the 15th century. He imagined a pyramidal cloth structure 5.5 metres (18 feet) square, with cloth panels to hold the air, and there is evidence from modern reconstructions that this would have worked. A parachute made to Leonardo's design made a successful descent from about 3,000m (10,000 feet), with only one significant modification, the addition of a hole at the top to dampen side-to-side oscillations. Although around the same size as a modern parachute when expanded, the Leonardo design was a lot less convenient to use, being completely rigid and weighing nearly 90 kg (200 lb)—not ideal with an ejector seat.

Despite various claims for parachute jumps, the first person to use one repeatedly in front of witnesses was André Garnerin. In 1797, he jumped from more than 600m (2,000 feet), landing in the Parc Monceau, where apparently a plaque honouring the event can still be found. In 1802 in England he made an exhibition jump from an altitude of 2,500m (8,000 feet) with a parachute approximately 7 metres (23 feet) in diameter.

So had he checked the scientific literature, Zissou would have known perfectly well that his umbrella would have no significant effect. But that would have ruined the photograph. See also 11: *View from the Eiffel Tower*.

6 Zissou en fantôme**Chatel-Guyon Villa "Les Maronniers" Juillet 1905***Paris • 1902*

L'année dernière, en ouvrant le bouchon de mon appareil de photographie, et en courant vite me placer devant celui-ci, j'avais pu prendre une photographie avec moi dessus ; mais j'étais transparent. Aujourd'hui, je me suis demandé si, en employant le même système, je ne pourrais pas faire des photographies de fantômes transparents, comme ceux des histoires écoutées hier soir à table.

Je dis donc à Zissou de s'envelopper d'un drap. Puis il vient se placer devant l'objectif. J'ouvre le bouchon. Je le referme. Zissou s'en va et je rouvre le bouchon, sans lui sur l'image. J'espère bien avoir une belle photographie de fantôme.

This photograph is a double exposure—each shot exposed on the same plate for half the normal time with the 'ghost' only present on one of the two resultant overlaid photographs. It's an astonishingly sophisticated idea for an 11 year old boy to have originated, and beautifully executed.

In fact, while we can be certain that Jacques made the photograph, there is some doubt about who originated the idea, he or Zissou (his elder brother Maurice). In his original notebooks, Jacques credits the idea to Zissou, but by the time he came to write his memoirs, it seems to have migrated to Jacques himself. I doubt there's anything sinister in this—presumably they discussed the transparent figures on the earlier photographs, and mutually came up with a means to exploit the technique. See also 1: *Jacques Lartigue and family*.

7 La Coupe Gordon Bennett**Circuit d'Auvergne 5 juillet 1905***Chatel-Guyon • Juillet 1905*

Soudain, près de Volvic, on aperçoit des gens, debout ou assis dans l'herbe autour d'une route moins blanche que les autres : celle du circuit. Elle est clôturée de barrières et on a mis de loin en loin, comme par-dessus une rivière, des petits ponts de bois appelés « passerelles », pour que les spectateurs puissent traverser sans forcer les automobile de course à ralentir. Autour de nous, il y a maintenant beaucoup de monde, posé là par petits paquets.

This is one of a series of photographs taken at the last Gordon Bennett Cup in 1905 on the Auvergne Circuit. There were teams from England, France, Germany, Italy, Austria and the USA, and 80,000 spectators turned up to see the race. It consisted of 4 laps of the 137km circuit, and for the second time in a row it was won by the French driver Théry in a Brasier 96HP running on Michelin tyres, in a time of 7h 2m 43s. The photograph shows Werner in a Mercedes, who completed the race at an average speed of 68kph.

James Gordon Bennett was the proprietor of the New York Herald, an adventurer and Francophile, who sponsored the cup to promote international competition, primarily between Europe and the USA. In 1905 the French AC, dissatisfied with the limitation of three cars per country in the Gordon Bennett rules, started their own race, the Grand Prix, so in reaction, the following year he switched his sponsorship to a balloon race which continues to the present day.

Gordon Bennett was a remarkable man, whose eccentric behaviour has led to his name being used today as an exclamation of astonishment. Many stories are told about his oddities. For example he often used to spend the weekends in Trouville, travelling by train. When the French railways threatened to stop the service because it had insufficient passengers, he volunteered to pay the costs of keeping it running, an offer they were pleased to accept. His attitude towards his employees was cavalier to say the least—he fired his music critic because his hair was too long, and once asked one of his editors to book a restaurant table; when the unfortunate asked what it was for he was told it was for his own farewell party.

8 Portrait de Robert Haguet**Paris La chambre de J H Lartigue Janvier 1906***Paris • 15 janvier 1926*

Hier j'avais vu l'annonce d'un nouveau projecteur portable. Aujourd'hui, je l'ai acheté. Je vais pouvoir faire des photos n'importe où. Alors, pourquoi ne pas faire le portrait des gens chez eux ?... Et le leur vendre ?

Faire de mes photos un « métier », cela serait le moyen enfin trouvé de ne pas prostituer ma peinture, de lui éviter le fatal chiqué nécessaire pour gagner vite pas mal d'argent. Et puis la photographie professionnelle me guérirait peut-être de cette manie de tout photographier... Manie qui est une faiblesse.

Given Jacques' very approximate viewfinder, a simple wire-frame affair centrally placed on the camera, he would have found it rather difficult to be certain about the precise framing of his photograph. The result is that in the wardrobe mirror, on the left hand image only, can be seen what appears to be a reflection of his head, neck, and right shoulder, wearing a dark jacket with an Eton collar. This disappears completely from the right hand image.

It could be just another curious artefact of parallax—a careless mistake on Jacques' part—but one has to wonder why he took the photograph directly facing the mirror—a sly joke at his cousin's expense, or did he simply forget? Given his fondness for games with reflected images (see for example 97: *Bibi and Dani at the window*) I tend to believe he knew it would happen, and was hoping to make a double portrait.

Incidentally the static, full-frontal portrait style of this photograph is relatively uncommon in Lartigue's early oeuvre, where action and informality are pre-eminent.

9 Dépassement d'un bob**Rouzat 1911***Mon livre de photographie Flammarion 1977*

Parfois je monte comme passager avec mon cousin, pour saisir des moments de la course. Mon appareil allemand de reporter à obturateur de plaques tire au 1/1000e de seconde, ce qui permet d'obtenir les clichés très nets. Quand nous dépassons un concurrent, je me retourne, et *clac !* je l'attrape au vol.

Paris • 19 décembre 1911

Au stand des accessoires de Monsieur Mauve : des photos de moi ! Prise l'été dernier, de nos 'bobs', à Rouzat. C'est quand même drôle de voir les gens que vous ne connaissez pas s'arrêter pour regarder vos photos !

The soapbox carts known as 'bobs' (short for bobsleighs—an early piece of Franglais) were a passion for Jacques and Zissou for a number of years. There was a fantastic variety, all designed by the family and friends, and examples are shown in Jacques' photographs with 2 and 4 wheels, with 1, 2 or 3 occupants, and there's at least one with a rear-facing brakeman.

They started with fixed wheel bikes, removing the pedals to allow them to roll freely. Zissou however was unhappy with the stability, so he then designed a four-wheeled bob, which was constructed by a local bicycle builder. From this, Jacques, dissatisfied with the fragile bicycle wheels of these bobs, designed another using smaller and more robust aeroplane wheels. Unfortunately these had too much rolling resistance for his taste, so the next step was to remove a pair and construct a two-wheeled bob, thus coming full circle.

With its small wheels, a drag brake on either side, and steered with a foot-mounted rudder bar, it must have been desperately unstable and would have required immense bravery to drive at any speed above a walking pace. There's a wonderful collection of photographs of the ensuing accidents.

See also 34: *Simone on the two-wheeled bob.*

10 Autoportrait**1912***Paris • 19 février 1914*

10 heures et demi : Oléo arrive et m'apprend à me raser. Il m'a donné son tout nouveau rasoir américain « Gillette », avec lequel on se coupe plus comme avec celui de Grand-père, qu'il fallait si bien savoir manier. D'abord il faut faire mousser le savon avec un blaireau en forme de gros pinceau très large and très doux. Il faut tourner, tourner, à l'endroit de la barbe (future) : menton et moitié des joues. Plus Oléo tourne et plus la mousse blanche devient épaisse, jusqu'à ce que je ressemble au Père Noël. Après le savonnage, on se caresse avec le petit rasoir bien réglé. Quand j'aurai de la barbe, elle sera bien coupée, si ras que je serai aussi lisse que maintenant.

There are many self-portraits amongst the stereos, although it's not always clear which were true self-portraits, taken with a self-timer, and which were taken at his request by one of his companions. Lartigue seemed impervious to this difference and only sporadically noted who actually pressed the shutter.

At the time of the portrait Jacques would have been eighteen years old. He was clearly a very late developer—the quotation from two years later shows that he was still not shaving at the age of twenty. It is hardly surprising that when he went for his medical examination in that year, after receiving his conscription papers, he was rejected as 'not fully developed'. At the time he measured 178.5 cm and weighed just 58kg (5' 10", 128lbs); his third wife, Florette, later said that he remained the same weight throughout his life.

11 Vue depuis la tour Eiffel**Paris 1912***Paris • 4 février 1912*

Ce matin, à la tour Eiffel, un inventeur, Monsieur Reichelt, tailleur, se jette de la première plate-forme avec un costume parachute de son invention. Il tombe directement et se tue. Je n'y étais pas. Quel dommage pour mes photographies !

Paris • 8 février 1912

Au nouveau cinéma « Pathé », boulevard des Italiens, *Les ruses de Nick Winter*, *L'affaire du collier de la Reine* (trente-cinq minutes), et surtout la chute de Reichelt. Film sensationnel ! On le voit, il parle, et tout à coup *pouff* ! il tombe comme une pierre.

Jacques made these entries in his diary two weeks after visiting the Eiffel tower with his friend Louis Ferrand, where they threw paper aeroplanes from the second platform. He recorded that the planes took two minutes to reach the ground, somewhat longer than the unfortunate Herr Reichelt, a poverty-stricken Austrian who clearly had never bothered testing his tiny bat-wing cape from a more modest height or with a less fragile cargo. Compare Jacques' callous comments with those in 60: *Caudron G3*.

Franz Reichelt was the first self-inflicted death from the tower, although a workman had accidentally fallen during construction, allegedly showing off to his girlfriend after hours. Since then, it has aided an average of more than three suicides a year, mostly by jumping, others by hanging. The public platforms are now enclosed with plexiglass screens, severely limiting the downwards possibilities, so the suicide rate has fallen precipitately in recent years.

The Eiffel Tower opened in 1889 and has three viewing platforms, at 58 metres, 116 metres and 276 metres. This photograph was taken from the third platform; the second is the thin white band circling the narrowest part of the tower, and the first is the band below that, with the walkways hidden from sight by canopies. On the second platform, the small black dots on the left are visitors, no doubt admiring the view and the fresh air, ignorant of the tragedy to come.

12 Plitt lançant le chien Tupy**Paris 24 mars 1912***Paris • 17 octobre 1912*

Monsieur Folletête, c'est le secretaire de Papa. Je l'ai baptisé « Plitt » parce qu'il est mon ami et même mon compagnon en beaucoup de choses. Il est plutôt étiré en hauteur et ses doigts : plus en forme d'allumettes que de saucisses lui ressemblent. 1,80 m pour un homme c'est grand. De lui, que mesure 1,82, on dit : « Il est un peu hors nature. »

1.82m is just a little under 6 feet tall, which would be completely unexceptional by modern Western European standards. Mme Folletête was almost as tall, so it's hardly surprising that Jacques' mother commented that people stared at them in the street.

The only trace I've been able to find of 'Plitt', Jacques' nickname for M Folletête, is its definition in the Oxford English Dictionary as 'A three-thonged whip loaded with lead, formerly used for flogging in Russia'. This entry also includes the following citation from the Encyclopædia Britannica of 1885: 'There is another flagellator, called the plete, a whip of twisted hide, retained at a few of the most distant Siberian prisons'. One can just about imagine that Jacques came across this definition in the Encyclopædia Britannica and the phrase '...retained at [...] distant Siberian prisons' struck him as a highly appropriate comment on Folletête's role as his chaperone.

Folletête's real name is almost as strange as his nickname: its literal translation is 'Crazyhead'—an unlikely name for the secretary to a man who was said to be the eighth richest in France. In Switzerland, Folletête's country of birth, the name appears to be relatively common, putting the lie, perhaps, to the national stereotype?

Throwing the dog (in this case Plitt's own dog Tupy), seems to have been quite a regular family pastime—there are several stereos showing the poor animals being hurled apparently immense distances, usually over water. Most entrancing for me in this image is the expression of doomed resignation on poor Tupy's face.

13 L'hydravion Farman de Renaux**Meeting de Monaco 6 avril 1912***Paris • 19 décembre 1912*

Dans le Salon d'Aviation, on a installé une petite salle de cinéma, au premier étage. On ne paie rien pour entrer et... la salle est presque vide ! Pourtant il y a des choses formidables : une promenade en ballon dirigeable, les essais du « Canard Voisin » sur la Seine, l'hydro-aéro « Curtiss » essayant de s'envoler en partant de l'eau (le « Canard Voisin » aussi s'envole de l'eau, mais il est traîné par un canot automobile) ; un film pris à la semaine de Joanesthal, où l'on voit cinq avions en même temps : deux en l'air et trois par terre.

One year earlier, in 1911, a Farman aeroplane piloted by Renaux had achieved fame by carrying pilot and passenger the 340km from Paris to the summit of the Puy de Dôme to win a prize of 100,000 francs. The greatest challenge of this flight was not the distance, nor the altitude of up to 2000m (6,700 feet), nor even the navigation, often difficult at a time of imprecise maps, but rather the difficulty of landing on the narrow rocky outcrop at the summit of the Puy de Dôme. The runway was less than 50m long, and a few metres too far meant either falling off the edge of the plateau or ending up amongst rocks. Both attempts on the prize in the previous year had left their pilots in hospital.

It's hard now to grasp the scale of the achievement. In 1908, the Daily Mail had offered the enormous sum of £10,000 for the first person to fly from London to Manchester within 24 hours. The Star mocked the Mail, assuming that they were offering a prize which could never be won: 'Our own offer of £10,000,000 to the flying machine of any description whatsoever that flies five miles from London and back to the point of departure still holds good. One offer is as safe as the other.'

The competition at this Monaco meeting for hydroplanes was won by the Belgian Fischer, also in a Farman, with Renaux coming second. The engineers had only just managed to overcome the problem of spray sent up by the floats during takeoff damaging the aeroplanes' propellers. Water also tended to enter the engines' carburettors, causing misfires, and preventing the planes reaching takeoff speed.

14 Vol de pigeons**Monaco 1912***Rouzat • 28 septembre 1920*

J'aime rester immobile sous les arbres dans le silence qui s'assombrit, les oreilles et les yeux tendus, jusqu'à l'arrivée des oiseaux. Tombant du ciel comme des masses, dans un incroyable vacarme d'ailes, de feuilles et de cris, ils secouent les arbres de tout leur poids et je les écoute jacasser chacun dans leur langue avant de s'endormir.

Lartigue would probably have counted this photograph as a failure, but tastes change, and for me the pigeon-faced man (who I suspect is Zissou, delegated to scatter the flock on Jacques' cue) adds a rather surreal effect to an otherwise banal photograph. I was amused to find that one photograph (unfortunately not a stereo so not shown in this collection) which Jacques chose as an example of his failures (*Mon livre de photographie*, P17) has since come to be regarded as an exemplary Lartigue image, warranting a full-page spread in one of the standard reference works on Lartigue (*Jacques Henri Lartigue Photographe*, P5). So, out of a collection of around 100,000 photographs, this particular one has been selected twice—to demonstrate polar opposites...

This photograph is included here primarily because it's an example of one of the classic stereo shots—the flock of birds in flight—whose effect at its best can be quite startling. The remarkable illusion that the birds are suspended stationary in the air brings to mind Damien Hirst's famous shark. His piece is entitled (perhaps the best thing about it) *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*; I feel that this photograph could well be renamed *The Physical Impossibility of Flight in the Mind of Someone Earthbound*.

Rouzat • Été 1908

Assis à côté d'Yves, ce que j'attends avec le plus d'impatience, c'est d'apercevoir au loin devant nous, sur la route, le nuage blanc d'une autre automobile. Alors, Yves me lance un petit clin d'œil, se grosses joues se gonflent... et la chasse commence ! Chronomètre en main, je guette les bornes dans l'herbe en bordure de la route, et le moment de battre notre record (76 km à l'heure entre deux bornes). L'auto saute sur les bosses, le nuage se rapproche, la merveilleuse odeur de la poussière pique l'intérieur du nez, et l'instant passionnant arrive, où l'on va rattraper l'adversaire ! et où en plein nuage de poussière, aveuglés, à demi-asphyxiés, il faut lutter et rouler vite, plus vite, plus qu'on ne le peut, pendant que Zissou tournique la manivelle de la nouvelle trompe, un peu bizarre et métallique, appelée « klaxon » ! Il faut arriver à obliger l'autre automobile à nous laisser le passage en se serrant sur sa droite. Ce qui n'est pas toujours facile, car elle essaye, elle aussi, d'aller de plus en plus vite, et même de zigzaguer pour nous empêcher de passer. C'est alors que je commence à la bombarder avec mes boulettes en papier contenant un petit pétard, qui éclate au premier contact (en temps ordinaire, je ne m'en sers que pour contre-attaquer les chiens et les empêcher de se précipiter sous les roues de l'auto).

What a stunningly evocative picture! Assuming they're driving on the right, Lartigue is in the front left passenger seat, and they've just passed the other car. It must have been very close to the scenario he describes in the quotation, except being four years later it was probably even faster than 76kph (50mph). This may not sound very daring, but in a heavy open car, on a bumpy gravel road, with the possibility of a puncture at any moment...

In 1912, there were still very few cars on the road. Production in France for that year (ignoring imports and exports) was around 15,000 automobiles, and given that mass production had only really existed for 10 years, there were probably less than 100,000 motorised vehicles on French roads in total. With over 100,000kms of drivable roads, it must have been uncommon to see a fellow motorist outside the cities, and one can imagine the great excitement as they tore through bucolic villages at these terrifying speeds.

16 **Mary Lancret dans le Bois de Boulogne**

Paris 1912

Paris • 22 avril 1916

Zissou, dans sa voiture, arrive avec Mary Lancret – celle de mes photographies de jolies femmes d'avant la guerre, au Bois. Peut-être ma préférée. Celle que je connais si bien de vue, depuis si longtemps ! Elle est là devant moi ! C'est la première fois que je la vois immobile et de tout près !... « Bonjour monsieur. » Elle me parle, d'une voix qui chante un peu, très douce et caressante.

Mary Lancret was one of the earliest of Lartigue's long series of young ladies photographed in the Bois de Boulogne. He first took her photograph (the one shown here) in 1912, when he was eighteen years old and obviously somewhat in awe of her beauty and reputation. By the time of the comment in 1916, he was a very much more experienced young man, and soon afterwards embarked on a passionate affair with Mademoiselle Lancret which was to last until the end of 1917.

At the start of the affair, Mary was the mistress of his then best friend, Jean Dary, and neither Mary nor Jacques seems to have had much compunction about ending the previous relationship. Over the course of four years, he had made a smooth and seamless transition from trembling innocent to hardened roué.

17 Jeune femme se promenant dans le Bois**Paris Bois de Boulogne 1912***Paris • 29 mai 1910*

Car, aux Acacias, il y a trois allées : celle des voitures, celle des cavaliers, et le petit chemin des piétons, sous les arbres, appelé « Sentier de la Vertu ».

C'est là que je suis à l'affût, assis sur une chaise en fer, mon appareil bien réglé. Distance : de 4 à 5 mètres ; vitesse : fente du rideau 4mm ; diaphragme : cela dépendra de quel côté elle arrivera. Je sais très bien juger la distance à vue de nez. Ce qui est moins facile, c'est qu'elle ait juste un pied en avant, au moment de la mise au point correcte (c'est ce qu'il y a de plus amusant à calculer)...

The pictures of the young women walking in the Bois de Boulogne are one of the best-known of Jacques' subjects. There are probably hundreds of them, and they reflect his passionate and lifelong interest in fashion, and presumably also the fascination of a rather shy young man for these glamorous, worldly creatures.

In 1910, he wrote, of a lost photographic opportunity:

Elle avance, elle approche, et plus elle approche, plus elle est jolie. Elle a du rouge sur les lèvres, sans être sur une scène de théâtre. Elle a un grand manchon et une si jolie figure sous son grand chapeau que le regret de la photo manquée commence à rôder en moi. C'est même autre chose qu'un regret : quelque chose qui me rend un peu malade... comme une espèce de chagrin dont on ne peut pas se consoler.

The image overleaf demonstrates the perfect timing Jacques talks about in the extract from his journal—exactly in focus just as the front foot falls—although I imagine he would have preferred a less disapproving glance. The two figures in the forefront are almost certainly accidental, and so, when printed, the image is invariably cropped tight to the central figure. A pity, because this version is much better.

18 Couple flânant dans le Bois**Paris 1912***Paris • 1905*

Zissou, lui, je ne crois pas que ça l'ennuie d'avoir grandi. Peut-être même au contraire, car il n'est pas effrayé comme moi par les jolies promeneuses du Bois. Il est beaucoup plus coquet que moi (ce n'est pas difficile). Pour aller au Bois, il met des guêtres beiges par-dessus ses souliers fabriqués sur mesure par le bottier de la rue des Petits-Champs, et déjà il est habillé en vrai jeune homme par le tailleur Warehouse, près des Champs-Élysées. Au Bois, il n'y va pas avec moi. Je le vois de loin, avec sa petite canne en jonc, qui est très légère et ne sert à rien. Depuis un an ou deux, au printemps, il met un chapeau canotier, mais jamais avant le jour du « Grand Prix de Longchamp ». En hiver, c'est un chapeau melon fabriqué par Gelot, place Vendôme.

I have little to add to this photograph. I like the man's face, and remain amazed that the photo has never been reproduced before. Curiously, I hadn't quite realised how elegant he was until I read Lartigue's description of his older brother Zissou given overleaf. Then I noticed how lightweight his cane, how smart his tie, how starched his collar, how neat his shoelaces (no spats unfortunately) and pointed his boots, how jaunty his boater. And so belatedly I understood that I was looking at a real dandy...

19 Passants dans le Bois**Paris Bois de Boulogne 1912***Paris • 19 décembre 1911*

Au « Vendredi de Fémina » : conférence de Lucie Delarue-Mardrus. Un peu exploratrice, femme du docteur Mardrus qui a traduit *Les Mille et Une Nuits*. Elle parle des pays lointains. Plus d'un mois pour aller de l'autre côté de la terre !... Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, c'est la seule qui ose dire que les femmes ont raison de se farder (!). Elle raconte que les Orientales se teignent les cheveux en roux et se mettent du noir aux yeux, sans que personne y voie de mal. Et si, un jour, en France, sans être sur une scène de théâtre, les femmes osaient se farder pour sortir dans la rue ?...

The 'Femina' mentioned in the quotation was an illustrated ladies fashion magazine founded in 1900, and published twice-monthly. It was presumably in the forefront of the burgeoning feminist movement, as Lucie Delarue-Mardrus was a well-known feminist author and poet, however the Friday conferences were probably intended as much to entertain as to educate—Jacques records one in 1912 at which there were dancers, and songs from Yvonne Printemps. In Britain at that time the suffragettes were busy chaining themselves to railings, and by their efforts achieved universal suffrage in 1928; this was not to reach France until 1944.

It is usually presumed that Lartigue was a naïve photographer whose great images were taken in ignorance of the photographic world outside his privileged bubble. In fact, although he may not have studied photographic theory he was from a young age a sophisticated reader of magazines such as *Femina*, which were increasingly illustrated with photographs. It should be remembered that his father was a publisher, editor and newspaper correspondent, and would certainly have had many of the popular magazines of the day around the house. He was himself a subscriber to *L'auto*, and in 1907, when he was only fourteen years old, he wrote that a reporter from the magazine *La vie au grand air* was one of his best friends and helped him fabricate a press card so he could take photographs of the aeroplanes at Billancourt and Issy-les-Moulineaux. While he may have been self-taught he was certainly not isolated.

The photograph overleaf delights for its wealth of detail—the suspicious look from the veiled woman, the little dog the young lady is carrying under her arm, the pensive expression on the face of the bearded man in the background, the horse riders, the walking stick projecting just far enough to catch the shins of unwary passers-by. And Jacques has again captured his prey at the precise moment her best foot is forward.

20 Mannequins à Auteuil**Paris Auteuil 28 juin 1912***Paris • Courses d'Auteuil • 30 mars 1911*

Aux courses, ce n'est pas comme au Bois : « les femmes à photographier », les plus jolies et les plus excentriques, son pour la plupart ce qu'on appelle des « mannequins », c'est-à-dire des femmes plus pomponnées encore que les autres, choisies pour venir montrer, au milieu de la foule du « Pesage », des robes spécialement belles ou des chapeaux mirobolants faits par les grands couturiers ou les modistes. Une « jeune fille mannequin », c'est quelqu'un de spécial à qui les autres dames ne disent pas bonjour, qui sourit gentiment au lieu de se fâcher quand je la vise dans mon appareil, et se promène partout sans jamais s'occuper des chevaux.

The quotation marks used by Jacques indicate that the term 'mannequin' was a relatively recent coinage—it was certainly around this time that it came to Britain, as the first citation in the OED with this meaning is from 1902. The interest these girls are receiving is therefore presumably not only because of their beauty, but also their novelty.

It seems that top hats and boaters (depending on the season) were de rigueur at Auteuil, with bowler hats being just about acceptable, so the trilby-hatted man may well have felt rather uncomfortable—like wearing a flat cap to Royal Ascot.

21 Femme à la porte d'une hutte de paille

Paris • 2 mai 1926

A trente kilomètres de Paris j'ai vu aujourd'hui des paysans et c'était comme si j'avais été transporté dans un igloo d'Esquimaux.

A cause d'un orage nous nous étions réfugiés dans une ferme. Près d'un feu, dans la puanteur, l'homme était ivre. La femme et son petit, accroupis, attendaient dans un coin, mêlés aux objets de leur existence, couleur boîte à ordures. Ils n'attendaient pas que l'orage passe... car avant l'orage ils étaient déjà là. Ils n'attendaient rien ou plutôt ils attendaient tout. Ils attendent encore aujourd'hui que les quarante ou soixante ans qui les séparent de la mort soient passés...

Je suis un humain. Eux aussi sont des humains, et pourtant il me semble que leur donner mon petit carnet de rendez-vous en leur demandant de me remplacer pendant quelques jours serait plus insensé que de demander à un hippopotame de venir faire le chien savant au cirque.

Looking at this building evidently made of straw packed with mud, it seems unthinkable that it should be a house, and yet it has a window, and a chimney, which means a fire, and flowers in pots outside, even what looks like a bird cage outside, so one is obliged to believe that it's a home for the handsome woman holding her kitten in the doorway.

There's no information on the occasion of the photograph, but it clearly bears no relation to the text, which was written fourteen years later. However Lartigue must have been describing a very similar house, and both demonstrate that the life Gillian Tindall describes in her book *Celestine, Voices from a French Village* of rural peasants with few possessions and no comforts persisted until nearly the middle of the century. Could the contrast with Lartigue's glittering life in Paris and the South of France be any greater?

22 Plitt se penchant à la fenêtre du train

1912

Paris • 17 octobre 1912

[Plitt] n'est pas trop foncé, comme tant de Messieurs sérieux ; il tire plutôt sur l'orange, avec une moustache et des cheveux couleur d'écureuil. Il aime bien la nouvelle façon de couper les moustaches : sans pointes, rapetissées, ne pendant ni se relevant – pareilles à une brosse à ongles posée au-dessus de la bouche. Je crois qu'il n'est pas fâché que Papa lui dise souvent de s'occuper de moi, plutôt que de faire le secrétaire au bureau. Avec son petit stéréoscope « Vérascope Richard », il fait des photos depuis longtemps et il est très content de m'accompagner un peu partout; au Bois, à Issy-les-Moulineaux. Mais ce que je trouve bizarre et qui m'agace un peu, c'est qu'il essaie toujours de prendre la même photo que moi.

This is one of a pair of pictures. The other, used as the frontispiece of the accompanying booklet, is of Jacques in an identical pose, presumably taken by Plitt (Jacques' nickname for his father's secretary M Folletête). The second is the same format as the first, so was probably taken by Plitt with Jacques' camera at his request rather than with the Vérascope Richard (which uses smaller plates); it's therefore not an example of the bizarre behaviour of which Jacques so understandably disapproves.

I've often wondered what happened to Plitt's photographs. Lying around in an attic somewhere, waiting for an eager photographic historian to dig them out?

See also 12: *Plitt throwing the dog Tupy*.

On a more technical note, this is another photograph with great depth of field, which, while it ensures a striking effect, requires that the images be heavily trimmed to bring them into correct stereo ie both of equal size and with the near point lying just behind the frame. Not only does this leave a very wide gap between the images, but unfortunately also removes a reflection of Plitt in one of the train windows of which I am sure Lartigue would have been aware.

23 Louis s'envole en ZYX 24**Rouzat 1912***Rouzat • 29 juillet 1911*

Tout à coup, le vent se lève. Il ne pleut toujours pas. Le vent redouble ! Papa dit : « Ce n'est pas un orage, c'est une bourrasque »... Quel vent ! C'est celui que nous attendions depuis plusieurs jours pour les essais du planeur.

Les grands peupliers de la pelouse sont tout décoiffés : ils ont l'air de vouloir tomber en avant. Tout est bousculé dans le grand sifflement. Zissou, avec son anémomètre, constate un vent de 26 mètres à la seconde. Il crie : « Vite, sortons un aéro ! »... Papa crie : « Non ! Le vent est trop fort ! »... Maman n'est pas là pour s'effrayer. Raison de plus pour sortir un aéro.

Zissou made many flying machines of various sorts—his designs were all named ZYX (a short form of his nickname) with version numbers up to 24. The earliest ZYXs were models, then later came kites and balloons, culminating in gliders such as the ZYX 24 shown here. He never attempted to make a powered aeroplane, although he did attach a propeller to one of the bobs, perhaps as a first step towards flight, but this failed because the motor proved unreliable.

Jacques also built aeroplanes and kites, but his ambitions were less elevated than Zissou's and he seems to have stuck to models. His fascination with the idea of flight persisted however, and there are many photographs of aeroplanes and their pilots. See also 13: *Farman seaplane*, 39: *Zissou and his new glider*, 59: *Dirigible over the beach at Deauville*, and 60: *Caudron G3*, for just a small selection.

24 Roland Garros dans un Blériot 50CV**Vichy 15 septembre 1912***Paris • Avril 1909*

Hier, un aéroplane est passé au-dessus de moi ! juste au-dessus de moi ! J'ai vu d'en dessous l'homme vivant assis sur son siège, jambes écartées... Et soudain quelque chose de mystérieux s'est produit dans ma tête... un peu comme un vertige à l'envers ! C'était comme si j'avais vu passer cet homme avec d'autres yeux que les miens, *avec les siens* ! ? ! ? Je l'ai regardé s'éloigner, toujours en l'air. Son moteur faisait un bruit résonnant empli d'air.

Roland Garros was a French aviation pioneer, who recorded a number of important milestones in powered flight—he set world altitude records, first at 3,900m (12,800 feet), and later at 5,600m (18,400 feet); made the first crossing of the Mediterranean Sea; and won the first French air grand prix, the only competitor to complete the race in terrible weather. He later fought as a pilot in World War I, developing the first-ever mechanism for firing a machine gun through a propeller. He was shot down and killed in 1918 just before the end of the war. His name is now best known for the French national tennis stadium named after him; although he had no direct connection with the game, ten years after his death, when the new stadium was built to provide a home for the Davis Cup, his godfather, Emile Lesieur, then president of the stadium, insisted that it should carry the name of this national hero.

The aeroplane was constructed by Louis Blériot, who made the first aerial crossing of the English Channel in 1909. The 35km flight took only thirty minutes but this gives no idea of how hazardous flying still was. Blériot's aeroplane had a tiny Anzani engine which, though reliable by the standards of the day, sprayed its pilot with hot oil, and his maximum altitude was 60m below the cliffs, so he had to find a gap to land safely—he couldn't land on the beach as it was too narrow for a runway. During the passage he was blown off course, and, lacking navigation instruments, only managed to find his route again by following fishing boats which he presumed were heading in the direction of Dover and the gap he so desperately needed. He landed badly, damaging his propeller, but was uninjured and went on to use the prize money offered by The Daily Mail to found his aeroplane manufacturing business.

25 Course motocycliste**Près de Blois 1912***Pont de l'Arche • 1900*

Moi, je ne fais pas de bicyclette, je fais de la sélerette. Sur le trottoir tout autour de la cour, je roule en faisant de grands pas de géant. Et ce matin, tout à coup, j'ai lâché les pieds ! J'ai roulé tout seul, comme si je m'envolais ! C'était merveilleux, je vais recommencer et parcourir bientôt de longues distances en équilibre sur les roues, à toute vitesse. Je pourrai emmener ma sélerette sur les routes et rouler partout. Ce sera comme si mon jardin était grand comme la Terre entière !

Little is known about this photograph. There is another better-known image of a racing motorcyclist taken in Orléans during the Paris–Tours motorcycle race in September 1912, and several others taken around Blois, so it seems likely that this also belongs to that series. The race seems to have disappeared from the historical record; certainly I've been unable to find any other trace of it.

The distinctive motorcycle is a 1912 2¾HP Douglas model J. It's a light touring bike which originally sold for £47 and which needed only minor modifications to have a real chance of race victory. This one has had the front valences, rear mudguard, luggage rack, and leather tool boxes all removed and the saddle lowered, no doubt in the search for low weight and aerodynamic efficiency. The rider in the photograph is unidentified and one can only hope that his obvious determination brought the success it deserved.

This British motorcycle had enjoyed great success since its introduction in 1907—in the 1912 Isle of Man Junior Tourist Trophy Douglases took four of the top ten places, including first and second, with the winner completing the race in 3h 46m 59s at an average speed of 39.65mph (63.8kph). There is still a very active Douglas Owners Club—my request for help in identifying the bike received responses within days from France, the USA, and the Netherlands.

The photograph uses a device that occurs relatively frequently in Lartigue's stereo work—the foreground figure lending perspective to the scene. A very similar example, although in my opinion slightly less successful, is *17: Young woman walking in the Bois*, and *3: Gabriel Voisin's first flight* also has this structure.

26 Papa et M. Folletête**St Moritz 1913***Chamonix • 14 janvier 1914*

Les gens que je vois ressemblent à ceux de l'année dernière à Saint-Moritz, mais ils sont moins nombreux et moins bariolés. Ils ont l'air content. Ils ont des figures bien rouges, avec un peu de fumée qui sort de la bouche. Moi, ce que je regarde, c'est le ciel : transparent comme du cristal ! Il n'y a pas de soleil parce qu'il est caché derrière une montagne, mais on sait qu'il est là.

This photograph is one of a pair—the other, taken in close-up, I think is even better, but sadly one of the two images has a large blurred patch which cannot be corrected. Both photographs, however, remain magical. They were taken on Lartigue's first winter holiday, and he was so intoxicated with it that thereafter he returned to the snow every winter he could.

St Moritz was one of the earliest centres for winter sports, with the first visitors arriving in 1864. They were initially mostly English and American tourists who introduced the sports one by one—tobogganing, initially on the snow-covered roads then later on the famous Cresta run; alpine skiing (without the use of lifts!); and ice skating and ski-joring on the frozen lakes. By the time of this photograph, the winter sports industry was well-established, and even the fashionable French such as Lartigue were occasionally to be seen on the slopes.

The following year he went to Chamonix for the first time. This resort had been opened up by the arrival of the railway line in 1901, and had its first big season in 1906–1907. It seems to have become Lartigue's favourite winter resort, as he returned several times in subsequent years.

27 Empreinte d'un homme dans la neige

1913

Megève • Mars 1932

Rita est une drôle de fille. Grands cheveux au vent, petites joues roses ruisselantes de neige, elle se lance comme un étourneau sur n'importe quel parcours, bien qu'elle sache à peine skier. Elle tombe comme une poupée désarticulée, se relève, retombe et repart sur les pentes les plus rapides. Elle ressemble à une hirondelle fraîchement sortie du nid qui apprend à voler.

This is a lovely stereo, in which sometimes the figure seems to project rather than recede. Even more remarkable however, as anyone who's ever tried it will recognise, is the level of detail in the impression—even the creases of his sweater have been retained. And there is a definite appearance of a face, so it must have been done by someone dropping face first into the snow, but doesn't it seem that the face is looking out at you?

It is one of very few photographs in this set taken from a positive rather than from the negative, which is missing, presumably lost or broken in its earlier life. The glass plates used to take the photographs (and also to make the positives) are only around 1mm thick, so very fragile; the miracle is that they've survived as well as they have.

The Rita of the quotation is no more identified than here, but she also sounds like fun (see 37: *Yvonne Bourgeois skating*) so I thought deserved a mention.

28 Course de skijoering

St Moritz 1913

Chamonix • 21 janvier 1914

Un des deux opérateurs Gaumont est chargé des nouveaux films de cinéma-color, mais on sait bien que ça ne donnera pas grand-chose – moins bien que mes plaques autochromes, pour lesquelles, malheureusement, il faut faire de la pose, ce qui empêche de se servir de ce procédé pour le cinéma. J'en ai apporté, et pendant que les opérateurs préparent leurs appareils j'ai le temps de faire poser tout le monde ; je me sers de mon pied en bois. Les opérateurs commencent à nous prendre à skis, en skijoering. Il paraît que ça amusera beaucoup les spectateurs des salles de Paris, qui ne se doutent pas du tout comment c'est ici (moi non plus, avant d'aller à Saint-Moritz l'année dernière, je ne m'en doutais pas).

Ski-joring originated in Scandinavia, where reindeer were used to tow skiers over long distances. After an initial period of success when winter sports first became fashionable, it faded from view, but recently seems to be undergoing a renaissance, mainly in North America but also in France.

The sport now takes two main forms. The first is a type of cross-country touring, in which one or two dogs tow either a skier or a person standing on a small sled; several US ski resorts have marked trails designed for this purpose. The second, which sounds rather more exciting, is a competitive sport in which the skier is towed by a horse and rider. Having a rider solves the problem of steering, which, judging by Lartigue's photograph, was not easy for the skier alone. In this version, the competitors are towed around a course littered with jumps and obstacles, rather like a show-jumping course. Its proponents are trying to have it introduced as an Olympic sport, but without success so far.

29 Simone et Charles faisant du patin à glace**St Moritz 3 février 1913***Paris • 20 février 1913*

Simone est une grande patineuse. Quand nous tournons ensemble, mon bras autour de sa taille, je n'ai plus besoin de me rétrécir dans la peur de tomber. Depuis qu'elle a été seconde du championnat de France « couples », avec Sabouret, tout le monde la connaît et la regarde patiner. Surtout, que, parmi les jeunes filles, elle est une des très jolies.

It's often been commented what an amazingly accurate visual memory Lartigue had. From the very beginning he formed the habit of quickly sketching in his notebooks every shot he took, to help him organise his prints when he later came to paste them in his albums. Reproduced here is a page from one of the notebooks, showing the sequence of photographs he took of the two skaters, Simone Roussel and Charles Sabouret. The third image from the right is clearly this shot, and Jacques has captured every line perfectly.

Simone Roussel recurs repeatedly in Jacques' photographs of this period; for other examples see also 30: *Simone with Lily and Zett* and 34: *Simone on the two-wheeled bob*.

30 Simone avec Lily et Zett**Paris 2 avril 1913***St Moritz • 25 janvier 1913*

Arrivée des Roussel. Simone est la plus jolie des jolies jeunes filles de Saint-Moritz, et on a beau avoir joué ensemble et s'être aimés d'une amitié de bébé, on a du mal à s'imaginer que cette Simone d'ici, c'est la petite Simone de mes jeux de petit garçon. Elle me regarde avec des yeux si gentils, si « je ne sais pas comment », que j'y pense en m'endormant, en me réveillant, et même bien éveillé !

The photograph is of Simone Roussel, one of Lartigue's second cousins, and a recurrent figure in both the photographs and his autobiography of his early life. She's first mentioned in the entry for March 1902, when Jacques was 8 years old, and he comments that he loved her because she knew 'how to play without talking'. His crush persisted until around 1914, when he transferred his affections to Germaine Bourgeois, but they remained in touch until her death some seventy years later.

Virtually all of Lartigue's œuvre, in particular the early photographs, documented his immediate family and friends, and one of its great pleasures is the constant reappearance of places and people, so that one has the sense of being immersed in a vast extended family. As we examine his life, so we also glimpse fragments of Simone's—her tomboy games, the perfume she wore when young, the ice skating championships, her marriage to Sabouret, her 75th birthday celebration—like a vast family saga novel, but for once taken from real life, and illustrated by a genius.

Apart from its place in the Lartigue saga, the pleasure for me in this photograph lies in the two dogs, looming forward out of their ruffled collars like a pair of hungry giant caterpillars.

See also 29: *Simone and Charles skating*, 31: *The acrobats rehearse*, 34: *Simone on the two-wheeled bob*, 38: *Sight-seers on snow-covered bridge*, and 40: *The Acrobats*.

31 La répétition des acrobates**Paris Fôret de Marly 1 mai 1913***Paris • 1 mai 1913*

Aussitôt après le déjeuner, on tourne et je fais recommencer à Simone et Golo leurs acrobaties (celles que nous avons répétées hier), avec d'autres en plus. Le maximum possible, car aujourd'hui, même si elles se font mal, ça n'aura plus d'importance : ce sera pris dans mon film... Je tourne la manivelle. Je prends des photos. Je retourne la manivelle.

Pour l'enlèvement des deux acrobates par le romanichel, il faut recommencer la scène trois fois...

In 1913, Lartigue began making his own film, a romantic comedy named *The Bandit and the Fairy Amélie*. Prior to this, he had primarily filmed himself and his friends at play—the bobs at Rouzat, the skiing holidays, ice skating—and a few sporting events, but these had all proven popular and a few pieces had even sold to the newsreel companies for public distribution.

So he embarked on something a little more ambitious, as usual roping in friends and family to take part. Only parts of the film now survive, so I know little more about the plot than is summarised in the quotation, but it also had a grotto and a dashing hero, and clearly made no attempt to break cinematic new ground. Simone Roussel and her friend Golo (doing the handstand) played the two acrobats.

See also 30: *Simone with Lily and Zett*, and 40: *The Acrobats*.

32 Dario Resta dans une Sunbeam**Amiens Circuit de Picardie 12 juillet 1913***Le Treport • 25 juin 1912*

La première automobile arrive là-bas, d'abord dans une courbe, puis c'est la ligne droite. Elle passe devant nous à toute vitesse, c'est formidable ! La seconde arrive. C'est Boillot sur Peugeot. Je la photographie (180 à l'heure) en pivotant un peu sur moi-même pour la conserver dans mon viseur. C'est la première fois que je fais ça !

See also 7: *Coupe Gordon Bennett*. Unlike that photograph, in this case the quotation and the image do not match—the quotation is from 1913, the year after the photograph, which shows Dario Resta in a Sunbeam racing in the French Grand Prix. He eventually placed 6th in a time of 8h 21m 38.4secs.

This is the only stereo I felt it was better to crop than to show whole, done to hide a massive change in tonality across the bottom of both images, probably caused by faulty development. Correcting such faults in stereo is much harder than in mono, since even minute tonal differences are perceived by the eye as an area of ambiguous depth, which can be very disturbing to view.

The effect of leaning trees and tyres is a result of the panning (moving the camera to follow the action) that Jacques describes. It happens because the moving focal plane shutter exposes only a horizontal slit of the film at any one time. The direction of movement of the shutter (upwards or downwards) can be determined by looking at a stationary vertical object such as a tree. For example, with a dropping shutter, and assuming a pan from left to right, the base of the tree will be exposed later than the top of the tree, so it will appear later on the film, and thus the tree will appear to be leaning to the right. Except that the optical system of the camera inverts the whole image, which reverses the rule. The lean of the car depends on its speed relative to the speed the camera is panning.

So we can assume that Lartigue's camera had a focal plane shutter which dropped vertically downwards. QED.

33 Papa faisant la grimace**Rouzat Août 1913***Paris • 1900*

Papa, c'est Papa ! Il a une barbe très douce, comme celle d'un chien qu'on aime bien. Son binocle, qu'il met pour lire, est attaché à un grand ruban qui pend devant son gilet. Dans un gousset du gilet, il y a une très grosse montre, toujours bien à l'heure, avec une jolie petite cloche qui dit l'heure et qu'il approche tout près de mon oreille quand je suis de mauvaise humeur (on dit : « Jacques est grincheux »). Papa n'est pas coquet. Il est même le contraire et se moque un peu des gens coquets : la raie bien droite de cousin Paul ou les grandes manchettes empesées de Nononcle Van Weers. Papa est très propre ; quand il rentre du bureau, vite il se lave les mains et même la figure, et se frotte à l'eau de Lubin pour que cela ne me dégoûte pas de l'embrasser.

Lartigue's father, Henri, was a remarkable man. He was born in 1853 in Madrid, and at seventeen left home to join the navy. In 1889, he married Marie Haguët; two of his sisters married Haguët brothers, so the families were obviously very closely entwined.

His career was astonishingly multi-faceted. He was Director-General of the Franco-Algerian Railway Company; a director of the French national savings bank; the founder of the newspaper *Le Soir* and chief editor for the magazine *L'Express* (both of which remain amongst France's best-selling journals); and an overseas correspondent for a number of foreign newspapers. It was said that at one point he was the eighth richest man in France. Jacques relates that this paragon of managerial efficiency liked to fill his spare time by constructing dolls' houses and running the small-scale railway he had had built in his garden.

In 1914 he was shot three times, apparently by a madman with no rational motive. Two of the bullets were removed; the third, which was lodged too close to his heart to disturb, remained until his death in 1953 at the age of 94.

34 Simone sur le bob à deux roues**Rouzat 1913***Mon livre de photographie Flammarion 1977*

Dans notre propriété de Rouzat, il y a une descente qui fait bien cinq kilomètres : une excellente piste pour nos courses. Les machines dévalent à toute allure, et je me poste toujours au bon endroit : au virage le plus dangereux. Les bolides y soulèvent des nuées de poussière, et les pilotes ont avantage à se cramponner au volant et à le manier avec adresse, sinon gare à la chute ! N'est-ce pas, cousine Simone, on a beau être championne de patinage, habile et légère !

From Lartigue's Memoirs Volume 1, 1902

Le dimanche, c'est une sorte de presque jeune fille, très, très jolie, intimidante, que j'aime sans le dire. En semaine, c'est ma seule amie, puisque je déteste les autres petits garçons de mon âge (prétentieux et ennuyeux) et que Marcelle Manceron triche en jouant au croquet (tant pis pour ses yeux bleus !) Donc, il reste Simone.

Simone, je l'aime bien, parce qu'elle sait jouer *sans parler*.

This was the start of Lartigue's love affair with Simone Roussel. It appears to have been purely platonic, based on their childhood friendship. She is omnipresent in Lartigue's life until around the age of twenty, when he began to embark on less spiritual relationships. See also 29: *Simone and Charles skating*, 30: *Simone with Lily and Zett*, 31: *The acrobats rehearse*, and 40: *The Acrobats*.

35 L'aéro-traîneau de Lesseps**Chamonix Janvier 1914***Chamonix • 16 janvier 1914*

Tout à coup, en face de nous, là-bas, de Lesseps arrive sur son traîneau. J'ai d'abord entendu un bruit de moteur d'aéroplane, puis j'ai vu s'avancer au loin le traîneau, pareil à une automobile déguisée en corps d'aéroplane. Il avance, il avance et s'arrête près de nous. Je fais plusieurs photographies et le prends en cinéma, en marche et à l'arrêt.

[...]Et me voilà sur le traîneau ! On met le moteur en marche, et *flouff* !... J'ai la figure gelée par le vent de l'hélice. Le moteur tourne de plus en plus vite et, tout d'un coup, nous partons ! Le vent est si glacé que je ne sais plus trop où j'en suis. Nous allons jusqu'aux Bossons. C'est épatant : nous faisons du soixante-dix à l'heure !

This photograph was taken under Lartigue's instruction by M Folletête (nicknamed 'Plitt'), secretary to his father. The driver was Bertrand de Lesseps, son of the famous engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps, builder of the Suez Canal. The latter had just been the subject of a huge scandal in France, when his company, established to finance and construct the Panama Canal, went bankrupt amid tales of incompetence and fraud. Ferdinand was tried, found guilty and sentenced to prison, but never served his time and it's now generally accepted that he was at worst financially negligent.

His son Bertrand was also an interesting character, being a passionate devotee of alchemy who was fully committed to the quest for the Philosopher's Stone that would transmute base metals into gold. It's not recorded whether he ever found it, but in the meanwhile he took on the less ambitious task of constructing a propeller-driven sleigh. Aviation was all the rage at the time, and it seems to have become an aim to add a propeller to every feasible form of transport, including boats, balloons and one of Zissou's wheeled bobs. Jacques obviously thought it a palpable hit.

36 L'équipe victorieuse de luge**Chamonix 1914***Chamonix • 18 janvier 1914*

12h 30 : Fin de la course. On annonce le résultat au porte-voix : c'est Berg le vainqueur, avec Zanphiresco et Maréchal comme équipiers et le gros et lourd Dr André au frein. Ils ont de ce fait gagné la première manche de la « Coupe du président de la République »

Chamonix • 27 janvier 1914

8 heures et demi : Au « Cinérama » avec Bichonnade. Des films un peu bébêtes, suivis des « Actualités Pathé ». Et tout à coup mon bout de film de Berg et de son équipe sur leur bob ! C'est court ! Ça ne me fera beaucoup de 5 F ; mais c'est formidable de penser que je regarde quelque chose fait par moi...

The team consisted of, left to right: Berg (pilot), Dr André (brakeman), Zanphiresco and Maréchal (crewmen).

The world's first bobsleigh club was founded in St Moritz in 1897, and the sport spread quickly throughout Europe. The Fédération internationale de bobsleigh et de tobogganing (FIBT) was founded in Paris in 1923 to formalise the rules, and the following year a four-man race took place at the first Winter Olympics in Chamonix. The men's skeleton appeared in the next Games in St Moritz, and the two-man bob in 1932 at Lake Placid. This has remained the format ever since.

Despite the fierce appearance of the crew in the photograph, and the key role France played in the genesis of the sport, the bobsleigh is a winter sport in which France has never achieved Olympic success.

37 Yvonne Bourgeois faisant du patin à glace**Chamonix 1914***Paris • 20 février 1913*

Une chose m’amuse beaucoup plus que de faire « le gracieux » en exécutant des figures : la vitesse. On se lance, on démarre, on avance de plus en plus vite en se faulant à travers les gens... avant de se retrouver très souvent sur le dos et de glisser, jambes en l’air, jusqu’à la balustrade, non sans avoir fait tomber en passant un ou deux patineurs.

This is Yvonne Bourgeois, the youngest of the four Bourgeois sisters, nicknamed ‘Poison’ by her siblings « ...parce qu’elle est trop remuante et un peu agaçante pour les grands » according to Jacques. She went on to be a successful tennis player, playing in the first round of the world championships in 1921, and winning the French Doubles championship in 1924.

Poison sounds like good fun, so it’s a pity that she makes only a single fleeting reappearance in Jacques’ memoirs, in 1975, accompanied by her sister Madeleine, in a nostalgic lament for time past:

Arrivant en même temps que nous, Madeleine de Rauch et Yvonne. De Rauch, quand il vivait encore, c’était le « Didi » de mon Journal 1913, Yvonne c’était « Poison », Madeleine c’était la Madeleine qui se promenait dans mon cœur en 1914 et qui y est encore blottie dans un minuscule recoin... Comment cette charmante vieille dame de soixante-dix-huit ans, un peu grosse, un peu trop « chic » avec ses colliers de perles, pleine de gentillesse et de souvenirs d’amis communs a-t-elle le pouvoir d’y enfoncer un petit cure-dent, dans ce cœur. Tout à coup, par quel stratagème cette élégante dame du monde que mes yeux regardent comme une inconnue arrive-t-elle, quand elle rit, à ressusciter un morceau de ma petite Madeleine de dix-sept ans, chérie comme une prairie au lever du jour ?

38 Touristes sur un pont enneigé**Chamonix 1914***Chamonix • 14 janvier 1914*

Après le déjeuner à l’hôtel, nous partons en excursion à skis. Francis et Germaine sont devant. J’essaye de les suivre sans trop m’emberlificoter dans mes skis ; si je ne suis pas rassuré ou que j’ai mal aux pieds ou froid aux mains, personne ne le sait. On sort de la ville dans un grand paysage de montagne, avec des montées, des descentes, des arbres, des branches, de petites barrières, des maisons de paysans sombres et marron foncé sur tout ce blanc. Et voilà un petit bois dont chaque arbre est enveloppé de neige ! Chaque branche est recouverte ! C’est plus merveilleux que de la dentelle. Ah, si j’avais pu emporter mon appareil ! Mais aujourd’hui, avec mes bâtons et ma façon de tomber, c’aurait été trop difficile.

The people on the bridge are unidentified, but judging by their appearance and remarks in Lartigue’s journal for the period, they are probably Simone Roussel and Francis Piguéron with his wife Germaine (née Bourgeois). The two girls were Jacques’ first crushes. Simone he had known since his childhood, and he at one point gives the impression that the two of them were regarded as a couple, with the prospect even of marriage in view.

This faded in 1914 when he became infatuated with Germaine Bourgeois. He reports in his memoirs: « Germaine, aujourd’hui je le devine, c’est à cause d’elle qu’au Palais de glace je vais tout le temps m’asseoir à leur table. C’est à cause d’elle que je suis si content d’aller faire du ski aujourd’hui. C’est à cause d’elle que j’aime moins (ou que je n’aime même plus du tout) Simone. » *O tempora! O mores!*

Rouzat • 1906

Mon grand frère, Zissou, lui, ne rêve pas. Il calcule, invente, et commence à s'entraîner à quitter le sol. Ce qu'il veut, depuis qu'il a vu les essais de Monsieur Voisin à Berck, c'est en faire autant. Il veut fabriquer une machine volante. L'atelier en construction est installé dans l'ancien cuvage. Aidé de Pirou (le vrai menuisier de Gimeaux), il fixe ses bois, scie, cloue, tortille des fils de fer et coud ses grandes bandes de draps de lit, chipées dans l'armoire de la lingerie. Et quand l'aéroplane est presque terminé, tout le monde (valet de chambre, chauffeur, femmes de chambre, fille de cuisine, fermier), vient aider au montage.

Mais ici, comme il n'y a pas de dune, il va tâcher de faire comme Monsieur Chanute en Amérique : se mettre dans la machine volante en restant debout, courir contre le vent, s'élever et planer comme une mouette. Il paraît qu'Octave Chanute a pu quitter le sol et s'élever à plus de deux mètres de hauteur ! ?

It's not clear which model of ZYX this is—there's no mention in the published memoirs of any glider later than 1910, when ZYX 24 (see 23: *Louis flies in ZYX 24*) appears to have been built and destroyed. This glider, while in the style of ZYX 24 looks a more sophisticated design, with an undercarriage and controllable wing surfaces rather than the simple hang glider style weight shift of earlier ZYXs. There is no evidence that Zissou managed to persuade any of his constructions into the air for more than a second or two.

It seems a great shame that Sir George Cayley did not publish until 1910 the results of his trials of over 50 years earlier. He had at that time already derived a practicable theory of flight, and demonstrated it at work. He comments in his paper *On Aerial Navigation*: 'But to a certain extent the air has already been made navigable; and no one, who has seen the steadiness with which weights to the amount of ten stone [65.5kg] (including four stone, the weight of the machine) hover in the air, can doubt of the ultimate accomplishment of this object.' Zissou was trying, and failing, like many others, to repeat the forgotten successes of half a century earlier.

Paris • 28 avril 1913

Dîner chez les Roussel avec Jean Baldoni, leur cousin, pour discuter de mon idée de tourner un film-comédie avec lui, Simone et Golo que je prendrai avec mon gros appareil de cinéma. Jean Baldoni, qui n'est pas seulement peintre, mais qui joue aussi des petits rôles de comédie au « Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier », me sera très utile dans le rôle du « Père Baldoni », père de deux acrobates de cirque que joueront Simone et Golo.

See also 31: *The acrobats rehearse*. This page from Lartigue's journal showing a drawing of the shoot illustrates important facets of his character. The journal entries nearly always commented on the weather—it was one of the reasons he began them—and it was almost invariably B (beau), TB (très beau), or TTB (très, très beau).

In this case his further description of « très beau temps le matin, pluie et orageux dans l'après-midi » is supported by small sketches, as though there might be some doubt about the quality of the rain or shine. The thunder is accompanied by the comment « J'ai encore un peu mal au ventre – pas encore de bain ! »

It vividly illustrates Lartigue's discipline—not only the summary weather report, but also a note and a sketch; not only the drawing of the scene from the film, but also which scene it was, the number of takes, the number of metres of film shot, and the identities of every participant. How many other amateurs do likewise?

Incidentally, the 'Old Dovecote Theatre' was rebuilt and reopened in October 1913 under the direction of Jacques Copeau, who led an important avant garde movement in French theatre away from naturalism and towards the abstract. It is still running today, but as an arm of the Comédie Française it has become part of the Establishment that Copeau once fought.

41 Bateau de pêche au coucher de soleil**1914***Dieppe • 19 juin 1920*

Un trou de beau temps est arrivé au-devant de nous pour laisser le soleil nous éblouir et se coucher dans un cristal vert d'eau. Les torrents de pluie ont cessé. Nous sommes dans une cuvette de beau temps si étrangement merveilleux que le soleil a l'air de faire l'école buissonnière en oubliant de se coucher. Il est le point d'un i sur son reflet. Si je peignais ces couleurs, ce serait un affreux chromo. Seulement, la magnificence du ciel et de la mer n'a que faire d'une interprétation terrestre.

This picture is a real rarity in Lartigue's stereos—there are no human beings, no action, and only the memory of sunshine, all near-ubiquitous elements in his work.

Towards the end of his life he produced a series of large-scale pastoral landscapes, quite different from his earlier work, and not at all what we've come to expect from him. Sadly they've not yet been published, but with an archive of 100,000 images, of which only a few thousand have ever been on public view, there remains a gold mine for future generations to explore.

42 Petit bateau sur mer agitée**Arcachon Novembre 1914***Bordeaux • 31 octobre – 1 novembre 1914*

7H. Nous arrivons à Bordeaux (hôtel Métropole). Je me lave – 7¾ din. (Papi, Mamie, ZYX, gdma). Je vais dans la ville av. ZYX et aussi av. Papi, Mamie et le frère de M Laroze). Les rues sont très animées et sauf la présence de beaucoup de soldats, des autos avec des croix d'hopitaux et des marchands de journaux, on ne se croirait pas en guerre. 10^h½ C.

Comme hier.

La Turquie a commencé la guerre contre la Russie (sans même lui avoir déclarée !) (sans importance pour nous).

Neither in his photographs nor printed journals does Lartigue linger on the effects of the war. Other writers have commented on his seeming isolation, and to an extent this is true. Having been rejected for military service, he was left with little choice but to get on with his life, and given his opportunities, means, and natural inclination, it's hardly surprising that he did so. This photograph was taken at Arcachon, the resort town for Bordeaux, and shows that there was still pleasure to be had despite the horrors of war.

There was also grief, however, even from the beginning. His best friend at the time, Raymond van Weers (Oléo, see 10: *Self-portrait*), had survived only six weeks from his call-up, and Robert Ferrand, his childhood companion from Pont de l'Arche, was soon to follow. The final entry in his journal for October 1914, just 3 months after the outbreak of war, is a list of famous men who had been killed or wounded at the front—it contains 26 names.

43 Alberto Santos-Dumont**Arcachon 30 novembre 1914***Les photographies de J-H Lartigue. Un album de famille de la Belle Epoque Edita 1966*

Le 12 novembre 1906, quand Santos Dumont bat, à Bagatelle [Bois de Boulogne], sur son biplan 14bis, le record européen de durée en vol, il ne parcourt que 220 mètres et ne demeure en l'air que 21 secondes. Ce riche Brésilien qui préfère aux aventures de la pampa celles qu'il connaît avec les plus jolies femmes de Paris – c'est un habitué de « chez Maxim's » et du « Café de Paris » – est avide de conquêtes plus difficiles et plus exaltantes : il n'est jamais aussi heureux que lorsqu'il s'installe aux commandes d'un aérostat ou d'un aéroplane de sa conception.

My working title for this photograph was 'Sad little man being rowed' which gives an idea of why it appealed to me so much. Even now this ill-assorted couple apparently heading off into an endless sea retain an oddly surreal quality that is much more apparent in 3D. Only when I learned Lartigue's own title did the true story emerge. In fact this 'sad little man' was Alberto Santos Dumont, a wealthy Brazilian sugar planter, who some argue was the greatest of the early aviation pioneers.

He began with balloons, and between 1898 and 1905 built and flew eleven dirigibles, one of them winning the Deutsch prize (see 59: *Dirigible over the beach at Deauville*). Celebrating his victory at Maxim's that evening, he commented to his friend Louis Cartier that when he was flying it was hard to extricate and read his pocket watch. Cartier took the hint and developed the first ever wristwatch, which Santos Dumont wore thereafter.

By 1906 he had graduated to powered flying machines, and the flight Lartigue describes took place in October of that year. Although the Wrights had already flown by that time, their Flyer had to take off on rails (often with the help of a weight-driven catapult) and even so needed at least a 20mph headwind before it would fly; Santos Dumont took off and landed under his own power, arguably an even more important milestone.

He later returned to Brazil, suffering from multiple sclerosis, and in 1932 took his own life, said to be in despair at the use of aviation to wage war.

44 Janine Dupuis dans le Pic-Pic de son père**La Baule 1915***La Baule • 19 avril 1915*

Depuis avant-hier, il y a quelque chose de nouveau, qui m'amuse et qui essaie de me consoler d'être là : je peins de petits tableaux à l'huile. L'aquarelle, la gouache, le pastel, ça me connaît depuis l'enfance : l'huile : non. Avec Jacques Dupuis, j'avais acheté une petite boîte de peinture pour aller « faire des paysages » aux alentours de La Baule. A cause de mon idiotie de rougeole, je ne m'en étais pas servi. Et soudain, avant-hier, dans mon lit, j'ai eu l'idée d'essayer, et ça m'amuse vraiment. Au lieu de tout gâcher, comme avec l'aquarelle quand on veut réparer une bêtise ou ajouter une idée, on repeint dessus et ça va. Surtout, ça fait plus « nourrissant à l'œil ».

The pensive little girl in this picture is Janine Dupuis, the daughter of Jacques and Mamie Dupuis. Lartigue was obviously close at this period to both Jacques and Mamie, saying of him that he was 'always so droll, intelligent and fanciful' and that she was, 'always so kind. From her voice alone you can tell that she's really lovely.' Later, in 1950, he recounted a rather sad tale about them:

Il y a des pensées intérieures qui supportent mal le grand jour de l'extérieur. En voilà un exemple. Jacques Dupuis était mon ami. De dix ans plus âgé que moi. Intelligent. Affectueux. C'est lui qui m'a appris à conduire. Sur sa voiture de course, il m'enseignait les trucs des coureurs d'alors. Sur ma « Bébé-Peugeot », il me faisait faire toutes sortes d'acrobaties. Sur sa fameuse « Pic-Pic », je l'accompagnais lors de ses records de vitesse. Nous devions un jour partir ensemble pour le record Genève-Paris. Sa femme voulut me remplacer. Le lendemain, j'appris par téléphone qu'il s'était tué à cause d'un pavé dissimulé sous la neige.

45 Petite fille dans les vagues**La Baule 1915***Ambleteuse • 1897*

Malgré mes souliers du train, qui me gênent pour courir dans l'eau, je vais vite, vite, voir la plage. Maman appelle ça « le bon air » ; ce n'est pas du tout que de l'air, cette chose qui vous engourdit, qui vous fait rire, qui emporte vos yeux très loin et vous remplit les oreilles du merveilleux « rien du tout » de l'année dernière...

The photogenic Louise Brooks look-alike in this lovely stereo is not identified, although she looks very like Janine Dupuis (see 44: *Janine Dupuis in her father's Pic-Pic*). Lartigue seems to have been completely nonchalant about getting sand and water in his camera—there's a whole series of 'heads on the water' (see 89: *Yvonne Printemps*) obviously taken with the camera poised only centimetres above the sea.

La Baule, where the photograph was taken, is a resort on the Brittany coast, about which my old Rough Guide comments rather unkindly 'This is Brittany's most upmarket pocket—an imposing, monied landscape where the dunes are no longer bonded together with scrub and pines, but with massive apartment buildings and luxury hotels.' It began development as a seaside resort around 1890, opened its casino in 1904, and by the time of this photograph had already cemented its reputation as a comfortable refuge for well-to-do Parisians.

46 Autoportrait avec automobile et uniforme**1915***Paris • 6 mai 1916*

Je suis un « engagé volontaire » : drôle de titre sur ma petite personne. Et pas si facile à décrocher qu'on le croit ! Pour la guerre, de deux choses l'une : ou l'on vous prend de force si « le major » vous accepte, ou l'on vous refuse, aussi presque de force, s'il vous a refusé.

Ce moyen d'être accepté, c'était de m'engager avec mon automobile. Résultat : me voici bon pour le service au volant de ma merveilleuse « Pic-Pic » grise (16 HP sans soupape), presque de course, et qui, dans Paris, au milieu des petits taxis, à l'air d'un lévrier dans un troupeau de moutons.

Autre résultat : demain, je m'habillerai en uniforme.

There was only one episode of Lartigue's entire World War I experience that he felt worth recounting:

1916, 11 septembre. Moi qui voulais un service militaire « vraiment guerre »!... Ce matin, je l'ai eu. Mais ce n'était pas du tout celui dont je rêve. Ce que je voudrais, c'est faire du 100 à l'heure sur les routes de la guerre, c'est monter en avion, c'est... Et ce que j'ai eu, ce matin, n'était pas du tout ça et était même le contraire...

Donc, je vais chercher le docteur Wimberg à l'Institut Pasteur. De là, je le conduis à l'hôpital Balzac. J'attends, j'attends... et on me donne une espèce de paquet : la jambe coupée d'un pauvre blessé, enveloppée dans un journal. Sous prétexte que je conduis vite, on me demande de la porter à l'Institut Pasteur, pour savoir s'il faut couper plus haut. Je prends le paquet mal enveloppé, je regarde le moins possible, mais ce que je vois n'est pas du tout « couleur jambe » ; c'est plutôt un peu vert et mauve... Je le pose dans ma voiture et me voilà parti. Je baisse le pare-brise pour que l'air me désétourdisse, et si je ne m'évanouis pas, c'est parce que je pense que si un agent voulait me dresser une contravention pour excès de vitesse, je pourrais lui en exhiber la raison.

47 Suzanne Lenglen jouant un coup droit**Nice 1915***Nice • 25 octobre 1915*

Avant de jouer des parties, elle doit, tous les jours, pendant trois quarts d'heure, faire des balles, étudier ses coups : balles longues à renvoyer en se plaçant loin derrière la ligne de fond, coups droits, revers, balles courtes, volées, smashes, etc. On sent combien Papa Lenglen serait heureux de transformer sa fille en mécanique. Maman Lenglen, elle, avec ses yeux en boule et son sourire de vraie maman, voudrait bien que, de temps en temps, Suzanne puisse jouer pour s'amuser. Mais Suzanne veut devenir championne du monde et passe des demi-heures à faire tomber ses balles dans de carrés bien précis tracés sur le sol.

Suzanne Lenglen was arguably the greatest female tennis player ever, and revolutionised the game of women's tennis. Her athleticism, precision of play, short (above the calf) skirts, and her habit of wearing make-up while playing, all combined to make her a sensation wherever she played.

At the age of 15 she became ladies world champion on clay, and went on to win 81 singles titles (seven without the loss of a game!), 73 doubles and 8 mixed, including 2 Olympic golds in 1920. At Wimbledon she won 15 titles, including 6 singles titles, of which 5 were in successive years, 1920 to 1925. Had she not turned professional it seems certain that she would have won many more championships.

Her 1927 professional tour of the USA, the first ever in tennis, was not the success she had hoped for. She easily won all 38 of her demonstration matches against the American player Mary K Brown, and it seems the American public was not overly keen to see such one-sided matches, particularly when the American player was invariably the loser.

She died in July 1938 after the sudden onset of leukæmia, aged just 39.

48 Skijoering dans le Bois**Paris Bois de Boulogne février 1916***Paris • Bois de Saint-Cloud • 2 janvier 1914*

Le froid continue. Un peu de neige cette nuit. Quelle joie si l'on pouvait recommencer à faire du ski dans les bois de Saint-Cloud comme l'autre jour ? Je téléphone à Pigueron. Ça va ! Très content de mon idée. Nous irons cet après-midi avec lui, Germaine et toute la famille Bourgeois. Papa Bourgeois ne viendra pas. Lui, on ne le voit jamais. C'est le célèbre fabricant des gouaches et des tubes de peinture à l'huile dont je me sers depuis si longtemps.

It's not recorded who took this photograph, although it looks like Lartigue in the car, and another image in the same series shows the car empty, so possibly it was taken with a self-timer or with the help of a passer-by.

Jacques remarks that to get the proper length for a ski, one should stretch one's arm into the air, and the skis should reach to the tips of the fingers. For him, this would have made them around 225cm, or 7' 5" long. They would have had no sidecut (curvature in plan), no camber (curvature in elevation), wooden edges and been connected to his feet only at the toe of the boot. In other words they would have been, by modern standards, almost unskiable.

Modern downhill skis are now rarely longer than 180cm and have sidecut, camber and flex characteristics which positively assist turning. The cross-country skis that are the nearest modern equivalent to Lartigue's, are, if anything, even more varied and complex than the downhill skis, with significant variations in shape, size and materials. Even they, however, do not reach more than 200cm in length.

49 Arbres dans la neige**1916***Chamonix • 18 janvier 1914*

10 h 45 : Départ. Bonne idée : j'ai loué un mulet avec un traîneau pour mon cinéma. Nous montons jusqu'à la piste de bob. J'installe le cinéma au virage des Chauderons. Mais là-bas, un peu plus loin, il y a des arbres tellement extraordinaires et merveilleux, avec leurs branches enveloppées de givre, que j'oublie un peu la course de bobs pour aller faire des photos. Tous est en neige; le soleil est sorti au-dessus de la montagne et tout brille, étincelle, éblouit. C'est un extraordinaire pays des fées.

When asked by the Donation Lartigue to choose my favourite photograph by Lartigue, I ended up with a shortlist of five or six images, of which this, perhaps surprisingly, was one. Seen in two dimensions it's an attractive if unexceptional photograph, but in stereo, it changes dramatically, the illusion of depth bringing the tree branch towards the viewer in a completely unexpected fashion. It is almost impossible to read this photograph accurately in 2D—try it by looking at one of the images on its own—and it's a salutary reminder that, if the camera 'cannot lie', neither can it tell the whole truth.

I also like it because of its brave composition, with over fifty percent of the frame being blank white snow. When you realise this it immediately becomes obvious that the bottom half of the photograph gains immeasurably in interest from the vignetting that darkens the left and right margins. Again, it's instructive to contemplate the 'truth' this simple photograph tells.

50 Skieur à terre sur des marches**Paris 1916***Paris • 25 octobre 1916*

Nouveau jeu avec Jean Dary. Avec ma voiture aux ailes renforcées (et déjà passablement bosselées), dites « ailes de guerre », il s'agit, sans lanterne, ni phare ni rien du tout, dans le Bois de Boulogne désert et plongé dans le noir à cause des Zeppelins, de ne jamais s'arrêter, même quand on ne devine plus le bord de la route. Jean appelle ça : « le grand frisson ». Quelquefois, ça va; quelquefois aussi, on rebondit sur des bosses, ou on entre dans un fourré. Le jeu doit continuer jusqu'au boum du premier arbre. Heureusement, mon auto est sans pare-brise !

Lartigue obviously regarded the whole of Paris as his private playground. This photograph was taken as far as I can tell (it's not documented) in Versailles, which Louis XIV converted from a hunting lodge to the largest palace in Europe, with magnificent formal gardens. I wonder what the reaction would be if one were to turn up there with a pair of skis on a snowy day in the 21st century? The Bastille? Even more likely if you tried driving without lights in the Bois de Boulogne.

The fallen skier appears to be Lartigue himself, so this may be another example of a photograph taken by someone else (in this case one would guess Francis Pigueron, his usual companion on these jaunts) being appropriated as part of the Lartigue oeuvre.

51 Plongeur à l'horizontale

1916

Rouzat • 15 juillet 1923

Nouvelle coutume : le matin sans m'habiller pardessus mon petit caleçon de bain, je cours vers la piscine encore dans une demi-pénombre. L'eau figée, encore endormie de la veille au soir est transformée en miroir. Elle dort encore... Et soudain, d'un coup, je la réveille en plongeant dedans... Et si je la réveille, c'est en tout cas bien réciproque.

There are probably half-a-dozen good photographs by Lartigue of divers in mid-flight. Every one is of better quality technically than this, but none manages to soar in quite the same way. What a wonderful photo for those of us who dream of flying, and how it comes alive in stereo!

It reminds me inescapably of Yves Klein's photograph *Leap into the Void* (see <http://www.tate.org.uk/space/spaceart.htm>), but of course predates it by over forty years. It would be nice to think that Klein had been influenced by this photograph, but given Lartigue's relative anonymity at the time, it seems to be impossible. Just a shared dream, which requires neither acquaintance nor propinquity.

52 Marthe Chenal avec Thao

Villers Août 1916

Paris • 19 décembre 1916

Dire « Chenal », en ce moment, tout le monde sait ce que ça signifie : c'est la plus grande cantatrice et la plus belle actrice du monde (celle qu'on a choisie pour être la « marseillaise » de la guerre. Mais à Paris, on sait aussi que c'est la plus excentrique et la plus coquette des femmes. Est-ce pour toutes ces raisons que j'ai décidé de la choisir?... Et que je veux que ce soit elle... elle la première?... ma première maitresse !

Lartigue continued his attempt on his own virtue by telling Mlle Chenal that he intended to lose his virginity to her, to which she replied, unsurprisingly « Non, non et non ! Tant que vous n'aurez pas eu une amie, jamais, jamais !.. » He reported this exchange on the 19th December 1915 and not until the 13th May 1916 was he able to say « Et ça augmentait, ça augmentait, ça devenait quelque chose qui effaçait tout le reste, même la terre, même ma vie en ce moment... »

Mlle Chenal did not report whether the earth also moved for her, but it seems unlikely. In May 1916, at thirty-four, she was thirteen years older than Lartigue, and an experienced woman of the world, equally renowned for her fine soprano voice and her wayward habits. There's a fine description in *Le théâtre indiscret* of a dinner party hosted by her in a Chinese restaurant in 1924 during which she seemed to think calling the fire brigade might be the only way of pumping enough wine to keep her company amused.

Towards the end of 1916, Lartigue reported another 'deflowering'—his first ever flight in an aeroplane—in almost as breathless a style as his affair with Chenal. It was in a Sopwith 1A3, then a state-of-the-art fighter plane brought to France for demonstration to the French Air Force, and flown on this occasion by the renowned test pilot Bertin. His friend Jean Dary was moved to comment « Tu peux te vanter de t'offrir des dépuçelages de luxe ! »

53 Raymond Duncan dansant**1917***Paris • 3 mai 1926*

Dans la foule des hommes noirs, tristes et astiqués, un individu en blanc : Raymond Duncan, frère d'Isadora, avec son espèce de costume de Christ, ses pieds nus et ses conceptions saines qui semblent révolutionnaires, stupides ou folles, peut-être simplement parce qu'elles sont trop simples ?

While Isadora Duncan remains an iconic figure in the world of dance, her brother Raymond, hardly less influential during his lifetime, has been largely forgotten by posterity. He shared her fascination with Greek antiquity, using the figures found in Greek sculpture and painting as the basis for not merely a style of dance but also an entire way of life.

He established a dance studio in Paris, and a commune in Nice that later moved back to Paris. His followers were expected to wear at all times the Greek costume seen in the photograph, although on colder days the children could add a fur coat for more protection. During the war it is said that he saved hundreds of Jewish children from the Nazis, dressing them all identically and claiming that he was an American Mormon and they were all his children by various of the wives also to be found on the premises.

It's hard, seeing this and the other photographs in the series, to escape the conclusion that he was entirely batty, but as he seems to have done far more good than harm, perhaps Jacques was right and his ideas were just too simple?

54 Petites filles dans un pré**1917***Courbevoie • 1896*

Le parc de Courbevoie est une contrée sans limite... Du reste, une « limite », je ne sais pas ce que c'est. J'adore la Terre, les brins d'herbe, les petites bêtes qui me regardent, le silence qui me parle... L'adoration, c'est cela !... celle que je ne saurai plus jamais fabriquer. La Terre sent bon, elle sent merveilleux, et j'ai bien envie d'en manger sans le dire à Maman.

This is a type of image that works very well in stereo. It is very similar to and has the same defining stereo principle as 91: *Dani in long grass*—lots of verticals to help define the depth planes.

The text is taken from Lartigue's memoirs, which are based on his journals. But the journals only began in 1911, so everything before that was written from memory, which was presumably fairly limited for 1896 when he would have been only two years old. It's one of the problems of his memoirs that the boundary lines between daily diary, short-term recollection, fond memory, and pure fiction are, to say the least, blurred. Given the lack of secondary sources his life remains, far more than most, his own creation.

55 La promenade de Whisky**Sèvres Novembre 1917***La traversée du siècle Editions Bordas*

Kiki Gwynne est l'une des nouvelles promeneuses du Bois, et sa mère, américaine apparenté à la famille Vanderbilt, possède un petit lion, Whisky, qui est la mascotte de l'escadrille américaine La Fayette. A la fin de la guerre, le lionceau devenu grand et ayant dévoré le chien de la maison, a été contraint de prendre sa retraite à la ménagerie du Jardin des Plantes. En attendant, Jacques ne tarde pas à faire la connaissance de Kiki, à en tomber un peu amoureux et à promener le petit fauve sur la place Vendôme.

The La Fayette squadron was a group of American volunteer pilots, who fought in French uniforms until December 1917, when, with the USA's entry into the war, they became the USA 103rd Pursuit Squadron. The emblem of the squadron was the head of a Sioux, and its mascot a lion.

Not wishing to do things by halves, they had a pair of lion cubs as mascots, Whisky, a male, and Soda, a female. It is said that when they first acquired Whisky, one of the pilots volunteered to fetch him from the Gare de l'Est in Paris. Naturally, he put the 'big dog' on a leash, bought a ticket for him, and took him on board the train.

When the conductor asked doubtfully what the animal was, the pilot replied that he was an African dog. Poor Whisky, understandably insulted, gave a loud roar and unsheathed his claws. 'It's a lion!' screamed the conductor, running from the cabin, accompanied by several female passengers who only a few moments earlier had been patting the nice friendly doggy.

56 Gaby Deslys et Zissou**Paris Casino de Paris Février 1918***Paris • 2 février 1912*

Ensuite Le Bossu et La Vie de Bohème ; et surtout, pour la première fois à Paris, la fameuse et merveilleuse Gaby Deslys et son danseur Harry Pilcer. Ils arrivent d'Amérique avec une musique nouvelle et très extraordinaire, appelée « Jazz-Band », jouée par des nègres ! Ensuite, Vilbert et Denis d'Inès jouent un fragment du Bourgeois Gentilhomme. Mais, après Gaby Deslys, ça fait démodé.

Gaby Deslys was born Marie-Elsie-Gabrielle Caire in Marseille in 1881. She debuted in Paris in 1902 and quickly became a sensation as a singer and dancer. She played in all the music halls of Paris, including the Folies Bergère, and toured in both England and the USA. In one show in which she topped the bill in New York, *Vera Violetta*, secondary roles were played for a time by Al Jolson and Mae West.

Defending her against accusations of impropriety levelled on account of her skimpy clothing, the author Rebecca West wrote in 1913 'When she crossed the Palace stage she turned the audience's thoughts to May mornings, and ices and money enough to go where you like.'

It doesn't sound as though that was where Cecil Beaton's thoughts turned—he wrote '...something about Gaby Deslys' whole esculent appearance called to mind a basket of fruit, real or imitation ... her breasts were round, with unpointed nipples... Her silky hair was dyed a greenish marzipan gold, possibly like Dorian Gray's, but more like that of a child in a perambulator. ... her hat, resembling airplane propellers or a Brancusi bird... These huge constructions of gauze were rampant with the ubiquitous feathers of tropical birds, parrots or flamingos. She was, in short, a human aviary.'

57 Championnats de France de patin à glace**Chamonix Janvier 1919***Paris • 16 mars 1914*

Au Palais de Glace ce sont mes débuts dans une vraie partie de hockey. En attendant la partie, il faut essayer de faire, non pas des figures, mais bonne figure, c'est-à-dire laisser ses jambes remuer assez doucement tout en filant assez vite, et en croisant les pas comme font les champions de vitesse – ainsi pendant plusieurs tours, chacun tenant sa grande crosse un peu comme le chasseur son fusil.

The skater on the left appears to be Albert Heide, the one on the right I've not identified. I know nothing about them, but from Lartigue's title and based on other photographs he took at these championships, they are both at least putative champions. Why then do these great athletes of their time seem faintly ridiculous now? It's obviously to do with style and proportion, although which is the more important it's hard to say.

Looking at the two figures, one has the impression that their heads are disproportionately large, which, since heads don't vary in size as much as bodies, leads us to think that their bodies are small. This is probably true—it is estimated that over the last 150 years people in the industrialized nations have increased in height by an average of around 10cms (4 inches), and certainly athletes have grown much larger and stronger. The increase in height, however, has now levelled off, with the average height for US men having stayed at around 1.78m (5' 10") for the last 40 years. Humanity seems unlikely to develop into a race of giants.

See also 40: *The Acrobats*.

58 Bibi et moi aux Bains Deligny**Paris Bains Deligny Juin 1919***Paris • 27 octobre 1911*

Après la fête, plusieurs spectateurs vont se baigner à leur tour. Et parmi eux, ceux qu'on regarde le plus aujourd'hui : Archdeacon (celui du planeur de Voisin à Berck en 1904, celui du fameux « prix Archdeacon » gagné par Farmann en 1908, celui des ballons dirigeables) et Emilienne d'Alençon. Elle, tout le monde sait que c'est la Reine des Cocottes de Paris. Dans l'eau, on dirait des grosses poupées en celluloïd trop blanches. Comme ils ne savent pas nager, ils font beaucoup de petits mouvements désordonnés très rapides et très inutiles.

The Deligny Baths was the first swimming-pool in Paris, founded in 1786 by Barthelemy Turquin. His son-in-law, the swimming teacher Deligny, rebuilt the baths at the beginning of the 19th century, and gave them his own name. Partly supported on wooden pilings and partly floating on a barge 100 metres long, they were located on the Seine near the Quai d'Orsay.

It was a luxurious structure, with 340 changing rooms on two floors, six private salons rented yearly, seven public rooms, and twelve rooms reserved for schools and groups. There was even an apartment reserved for members of the royal family, as well as a café, restaurant, shops, massage rooms, and so on.

The water used in the pools was taken directly from the Seine, which, Eugène Briffault observed in 1844, was « Sale, trouble, souvent fétide et malsaine; elle avait déjà roulé les immondices de la grande ville.». Only in 1919 (the year of the photograph) were the first filters installed, so perhaps Jacques and Bibi were there celebrating this great step forward for public health.

Instants de ma vie Editions du Chêne 1970

Beaucoup de gens ne comprennent pas pourquoi on s'acharne à vouloir voler avec des « plus lourds que l'air » quand depuis de nombreuses années déjà des aéronautes s'envolent en ballons gonflés au gaz. Surtout que depuis quelque temps on fabrique des ballons dirigeables avec lesquels on n'est plus esclave du hasard ou de la direction des vents en se promenant dans les airs.

Un dirigeable n'est pas rond comme un « ballon libre ». Il est souvent énorme et de forme allongée, un peu comme un cigare, avec, accrochée sous l'enveloppe, une nacelle munie d'une hélice aérienne et d'un gouvernail, qui permettent de le conduire comme un bateau. Il sera, disent les soldats, l'arme suprême contre l'ennemi en temps de guerre.

The modern era of ballooning began in France in 1783, when the Montgolfier brothers built a small hot air balloon which rose to 2,000 metres (6,500 feet). Later the same year, the first free balloon flight carrying people was made over Paris, and on 1st December Jacques Charles flew more than 50km in his balloon filled with the newly-discovered lighter-than-air gas, hydrogen. It was some 70 years later, in 1852, before another Frenchman, Henri Giffard, built and flew the first successful powered airship.

In 1902, the Brazilian Alberto Santos Dumont won the Deutsch prize of 50,000 francs for a flight in his dirigible Number 5. He needed just under 30 minutes to take off from the park at Saint Cloud on the outskirts of Paris, fly around the Eiffel Tower, and land again at the same spot, thus proving that a controlled balloon flight was possible.

Balloons and airships played an important part in World War I, and it has been estimated that by the end of the war, more than 1,000 had seen action, mainly for reconnaissance purposes but also dropping bombs on targets that included London.

Paris • 2 janvier 1911

Le « Caudron », un « Voisin » et le « Chassany » roulent et s'envolent (!) presque ensemble. Je fais une photo de trois avions ensemble en l'air ! C'est vraiment un record ! Tout de suite après, un « Blériot » tombe de 20 mètres d' hauteur ! C'est toujours pareil : l'hélice touche le sol avant les roues, et l'aéro, tête la première, fait la culbute en avant, en envoyant bondir l'aviateur hors du fuselage comme un poupon en caoutchouc... Décidément, aujourd'hui, c'est un jour merveilleux : il tombe assez près de moi pour la photo ! Un élève de Blériot tombe aussi, mais moins bien, trop loin, et sans être projeté hors du fuselage.

This aeroplane, which appears to be made of string and sealing wax, is actually an example of one of the most successful aircraft of its period—the Caudron G3. It was built by the Caudron brothers, René and Gaston, and from its first appearance in May 1914 over 2,450 examples were built in France. A further 233 were built in Great Britain for the Royal Flying Corps, and one is on display in the aviation museum at Hendon.

A number of exploits were performed using these planes—in January 1919, the French ace Jules Védrines landed one on the roof of the Galeries Lafayette department store in the heart of Paris. A more dramatic flight (if not landing) took place on 1st April 1921, when Adrienne Bolland flew a G3 across the Andes from Tamarindos, in Argentina, to Santiago de Chile, reaching an altitude of over 4,000m (13,000 feet). It is said that the French ambassador to Chile declined to welcome her on her arrival in Santiago, believing the idea of a flight across the Andes (by a woman!) to be so preposterous it had to be an April Fool's joke.

61 Changement de pneu

1919

Rouzat • Été 1908

Quand nous venons de Paris à Vichy (plus jamais on ne prend le train), avec les nouveaux pneus Michelin il arrive que nous ne crevions que deux ou trois fois. Mais quelquefois aussi beaucoup plus. C'est pour ça que, sur les itinéraires ben faits comme ceux de Papa, il faut toujours prévoir un retard qui va de deux à cinq heures pour une randonnée de 400 kilomètres. Du reste, il n'y a pas beaucoup d'autres automobilistes que nous pour faire de pareilles randonnées en une journée !

From left to right we see Papa, Mama, Jacques, Yves the chauffeur, and Zissou (Jacques' brother Maurice). Presumably the photograph was taken by Bibi and appears to have irritated all of them—perhaps not the best time to ask for a smile?

When Jacques wrote the text accompanying this photograph in 1908, the spare tyre, ready-inflated on its rim, had just been introduced, and that is what he is holding. Prior to that they would have had to change the tyre in the way one still changes a bicycle tyre, inflating it afterwards. The removable spare wheel arrived in 1913, so it's perhaps surprising that the Lartigues were not using them at the time the photograph was taken six years later. Presumably there was still a careful trade-off to be made between the frequency of puncture and the weight and expense of the spare wheels.

Note that Jacques, ever the dandy, is wearing gloves.

62 Maurice Bompard

Yport Août 1919

Paris • 17 décembre 1919

Avoir pour témoins des personnages très éminents ou célèbres, cela veut dire aussi avoir pour témoins des gens un peu rabougris.

Deux témoins par personne, cela fait quatre pour nous deux : Monsieur Manceuvrier, savant et professeur à la Sorbonne; Maurice Bompard, qui me donne toujours des conseils en peinture avec l'air de vouloir m'apprendre à mettre un pantalon au lieu de me promener en culotte de costume de bain : le Dr Richardière, professeur très connu, très chiffonné, mais néanmoins rose foncé sous ses chevaux blancs; et Albert Carré, parrain de Bibi, très célèbre directeur de l'Opéra-Comique et mari de Marguerite Carré, la cantatrice, plus jolie que grande chanteuse.

Maurice Bompard (1857–1936) was a friend of the Lartigue family, and his name crops up several times in the memoirs. In the quotation, he is acting as a witness at Jacques' first marriage, to Bibi Messenger. He was a member of the French school of Orientalist painters, but although he painted many North African subjects, his most frequent subject was Venice. He also produced a number of landscapes of Northern France, and presumably he was working on one of these in the photograph.

The Orientalist school had its origins in the 18th century, with the first exploration of North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. The paintings were initially rather conventional, but served to introduce the area and its lifestyle to the West, where they became deeply fashionable. Thomas Cook began tours of Egypt in 1868, and such voyages, combined with colonisation by Britain and France in the area, helped to stoke interest.

By the time of this photograph, the fashion had changed to impressionism, to cubism, and to a more formal aesthetic influenced by Japanese and Chinese art, so by then Bompard would have seemed a rather dusty, conventional academic painter.

Berck • Pâques 1904

Quand la mer est basse et que le sable est rose et bleu ciel, j'accompagne Papa pour faire le « chiffonnier de la mer ». On se met pieds nus et on part, dans l'immense désert laissé à découvert par la mer. C'est tout plat et vide, mais, de temps en temps, on peut découvrir un trésor : un coquillage rare, une herbe marine rose et verte, une seiche blanche pour la cage des oiseaux, une plume d'oiseau de mer et même un crabe vivant. Sous mes pieds nus, la plage avance, comme un immense tapis à la fois dur et très doux, et je me sens libre comme une hirondelle.

If Papa looks tired, it's not surprising—five years earlier, in February 1914, he had been shot three times at close range, and was very lucky to survive. Surgeons removed two of the bullets (one having touched the carotid artery), but the third was lodged too close to his heart to operate, and so M Lartigue carried it with him to his death over thirty years later.

Trips to the seaside were to form an important part of Jacques' life, and a high proportion of his photographs were taken there. Family holidays were passed at the sedate resorts of Berck and Ambleteuse on the North coast of France, and La Baule on the Atlantic coast, but while Jacques returned to them throughout his life, from his teenage years onwards he spent ever more time on the French Riviera. Towns such as Nice and Cannes provided not merely the usual opportunities for the young playboy he became, but also the light and colour that as a photographer and painter he always loved.

Beausoleil • Septembre 1947

Le quartier, ici, est presque un village. Des gamins en chemise ou sans chemise, des tout petits, des petits, des moyens, certainement bien légers pour pouvoir courir sur des pieds nus si fragiles...

C'est un quartier communiste, empli de radios, d'affiches et de regards suspicieux pour tout ce qui voudrait s'évader de l'organisation rationnelle des choses humaines. Une rue particulièrement grouillante. En plein milieu, une fille un peu moins petite que les enfants qui gigotent autour d'elle, dont elle est le chef de jeu. Pas en chemise, mais en jolie petite robe à fleurs, avec laquelle elle s'est mise à plat ventre par terre, sur une plaque d'égout, l'oreille collée au trou... « Qu'est-ce que tu fais ? »... « J'écoute les fées... »

Et comme c'est elle le chef, dix minutes après, tout le monde est à plat ventre.

When drawing up the shortlist of images for this book, I selected eight of children other than Lartigue's son Dani. In every single case, I realised afterwards, Jacques had lowered his camera to the child's eye level or below, even when there were adults also in the scene, and this image is absolutely typical. This freedom in placing the camera is very common in his work particularly in his early period. He was especially fond of placing the camera on or close to the ground, although this is partly for practical reasons—it is after all the universal tripod.

On the other hand, it was very rare for him to shoot with the camera not horizontal, either left to right or front to back—leaning verticals are almost nonexistent in his work (84: *The family on a balcony* being the exception that proves the rule). Modern amateur photographers using 'point-and-shoot' cameras seem almost oblivious to this effect. One can speculate about the reasons, but it seems likely that our more chaotic visual environment (MTV videos spring to mind) has eroded the urge to rectitude.

65 Lune de miel à l'hôtel des Alpes

Chamonix Janvier 1920

Paris • 4 février 1920

Retour à Paris. Je retrouve ma chambre. Je vais classer mes photos, puis je monterai peindre dans son cabinet de toilette, pendant qu'elle se maquillera ou qu'elle me lira le roman dont j'attends la suite.

Dans son bain, ses cheveux tirés lui donnent l'air d'une toute petite fille. J'entre souvent la retrouver dans l'eau chaude.

Jacques was very fond of these games of reflection—see also 97: *Bibi and Dani at the window*, for instance. An earlier example is 8: *Portrait of Robert Haguet*, where it's not clear if the reflection was deliberate or accidental. Further examples can be seen on the website of the Donation Lartigue, www.lartigue.org, which has a selection of his pictures under the heading 'Reflections'.

Bibi was Lartigue's first wife, Madeleine Messenger, the daughter of André Messenger, a very successful composer and conductor, who was for several years musical director of Covent Garden in London. Her mother was English, and apparently they and her old American nanny, who still accompanied her, spoke English together. Jacques and Bibi first met in May 1918, and thereafter she became by far the most frequent subject of his photographs.

66 Bibi pendant notre lune de miel

Chamonix Janvier 1920

Chamonix • Janvier 1920

« Voyage de noces » : quel vilain nom pour une escapade d'amour ! « Marié » : le mot continue à me donner presque autant envie de rire que si l'on m'affublait du titre d'« Académicien » ou de « Président de la République » !

[...]

Janvier toujours. Cette année je suis presque uniquement spectateur et, miracle de l'amour, j'arrive à être heureux sans avoir besoin d'activité ! Je découvre les joies insoupçonnées d'être gourmand et paresseux sans aucun remords, tant mon bonheur me semble complet et digne d'accaparer ma vie à lui seul.

When asked by the Donation Lartigue to choose my favourite of all the stereos for their website, I lingered for a long time over five or six different images, but finally opted for this one. It remains a favourite, and I can't do better than repeat the reasons I gave them. Firstly, it's a wonderful intimate photo with an interesting subject and a strong composition dominated by the low camera angle. Then, it's wonderfully simple—a pretty girl, natural lighting, a very basic camera, and an offbeat location.

Finally, and most of all, I like it because it works so well as a stereo. The very best stereos draw you into the scene, so that it appears to wrap round you, and in the process you enter into a relationship with the subject that just doesn't happen with a flat 2D image. I still feel almost like an intruder looking at this photograph, and that's an astonishing achievement on the part of the photographer.

67 Fumeurs dans un chalet de montagne

Chamonix Janvier 1920

St Moritz • 21 janvier 1913

Pour être comme tout le monde, j'ai vite mis mon chandail orange (les gens à la mode appellent cette couleur « tango »), un bonnet noir à pompon « tango » aussi, mon pantalon de chasse et mes gros souliers, qui malheureusement prennent l'eau. Chez Ochs on vend des souliers de montagne à semelle à clous, et aussi des souliers de ski en cuir très solide, avec une tête bien à eux.

The subjects of the photograph are identified by Lartigue as Francis Pigueron (French ice skating champion), Garon (unknown apart from his surname), Didi de Rauch (skater and captain of the French ice hockey team), Charavel (probably the impressionist painter Paul Charavel), and Rico Broadwater (Jacques' friend from his youth). A well-assorted set obviously not worried about the effects of smoking, passive or otherwise.

Although never a smoker himself, the subject of smoking seems to have had a certain fascination for Lartigue. In 1980 he produced a small book called *Les femmes aux cigarettes*, based on photographs he took in the twenties of minor French starlets, each holding or smoking a cigarette. Neither images nor production are of the highest quality, but Jacques freely admits that at least part of his reason for taking the series was to make the acquaintance of his subjects.

68 Quaglia, champion de France de vitesse sur patins

Chamonix Janvier 1920

St Moritz • 10 février 1913

Je me disais hier : « A ski, ni tourner ni m'arrêter. » Résultat : parti content de moi, ayant réussi à prendre même une vraie vitesse, aujourd'hui je descendais, je descendais, en essayant de penser à tout à la fois, forçant mes bras et mes jambes à m'obéir, jusqu'au moment où j'aperçus un énorme tas de fumier qui me regardait venir d'un air paisible et goguenard. « Ni tourner ni m'arrêter... » Et *toc !* m'y voilà !

At this time, Lartigue was moving in élite sporting circles. Amongst friends and acquaintances, many of them shown in these photographs, were Suzanne Lenglen, world tennis champion; Norman Ross, Olympic swimming champion; Francis Pigueron, French national figure skating champion; Didi de Rauch, captain of the French ice hockey team; Simone and Charles Sabouret, French pairs skating champions; and Georges Carpentier, world light heavyweight boxing champion.

Lartigue was not merely a spectator however, he also participated in all these sports, and at least in tennis did so at the highest level. This is all the more surprising when we recall that in 1914, he was rejected for military service on the basis that he was 'not fully developed'! He was, however, a lifelong early riser, starting each day with a calisthenic routine he had worked out for himself based on a Swedish system known as the 'Muller Method', which, unlike French techniques of the period, had the great virtue of needing no equipment.

69 Course de luge

1920

Chamonix • 18 janvier 1914

Tous à la patinoire. J'y vais à pied à cause de mon cinéma, que Plitt m'aide à porter. Le public emplit les tribunes. J'installe le cinéma tout au bord de la piste. On me dit que je risque de recevoir le palet, ou même un joueur. Ça m'est bien égal : j'aurai pris mon film avant. C'est le championnat de France : l'équipe du Club des patineurs de Paris contre l'équipe de Chamonix. Je les vois foncer sur moi, mais je connais leurs virages, leurs tête-à-queue, leur façon d'éviter les obstacles. Je prends des films de tout près. Je sais que ce sera peut-être flou, tant pis ! Finalement les Parisiens gagnent, 13 à 0. Ensuite ils viennent tous poser devant mon cinéma.

The text has nothing to do with the picture, except that they both have ice in them, but I couldn't find anything more appropriate. The description is of the French ice hockey championship, and the players in the Parisian team (from the CPP – Club de Patineurs de Paris) were all his friends. Jacques even played with them from time to time, and although it's not evident from the description, he was in very august sporting company here.

Up to the First World War the CPP was the only hockey club in Paris, and its team won the first seven French championships, from 1904 to 1914. Unfortunately, when it came to the Olympic Games, the French, like all the other European teams, were completely outclassed by the North Americans who played a much faster and more aggressive game. Canada and the USA took all but one of the first 8 Olympic gold and silver medals, the sole exception going to Sweden.

Jacques managed to sell some of his film of the ice hockey championships to the Pathé news film service, for the modest sum of five francs per metre. He remarked later that it wasn't the money that excited him but the idea that he would be able to go to the cinema and see his own film on the news report.

70 Bibi dans un champ de pâquerettes

1920

Montigny • Juin 1921

J'accoste près d'un champ plein de grandes marguerites blanches, dont Lolo et Bibi feront encore un bouquet. Pourquoi tous ces bouquets ? Parce qu'elles sont jolies avec des fleurs dans les bras ? Ou parce qu'elles sont atteintes, sans le savoir, de la même maladie que moi : vouloir capter la beauté, moi avec mes photographies, elles en cueillant des fleurs qui faneront en route.

Another photo which it's almost impossible to read accurately in 2D, and which is therefore all the more surprising in stereo. Lartigue said time and time again that when he took a photograph, what he really wanted to capture was an entire experience—depth, colour, sound, movement, scent—everything which served to make a particular moment unique. Modern technology has already given us an easy means of recording colour, sound and movement, and it seems inevitable that depth will be added sooner or later.

When this happens will we look back on current blockbuster films and think them as flat and limited as we now find the silent black and white films of the early 20th century? Will Lartigue be seen again as an unsung hero of early photography for his pioneering use of stereo?

Lartigue's Riviera Flammarion 1997

Cap d'Antibes • 16 mai 1921

En bas du parc, près de la mer, le pavillon d'Eden Roc est toujours là, endormi dans son luxe, et j'y peins, mon chevalet installé sur le gros tapis rose recouvert de journaux.

Lorsque Bibi est arrivée et que le soleil est haut dans le ciel, nous nous déshabillons dans les lavabos du pavillon et descendons parmi les rochers pour entrer dans la grande limpidité qui donnerait le vertige si l'on ne savait pas nager, et où nous sommes merveilleusement seuls, Bibi – avec sa figure de petite fille fardée, son parfum, son envie d'amour qui efface tout (même le « petit ballon ») – et moi.

Jacques was struggling with the framing here, and ending with ever so slightly diverging verticals as a result. It doesn't detract from the calm serenity of the image. This photograph is not as well-known as the autochrome images taken at the same time but is in some respects superior, in particular it is more luminous, giving a peaceful almost heavenly feel to the image.

I was amused to find that on the website for the Hotel du Cap-Eden Roc (the one in France—there is of course another in Miami), amongst the extensive list of celebrity guests Lartigue doesn't even rate a mention. It's probable that he would prefer it that way, he was always a dreadful snob. In his first reference to the Hotel in his memoirs, he complains about the old guests and how awful they were, so he's hardly likely to want to be remembered as one of them.

The comment in the text about a 'little balloon' refers to their son Dani, who was born three months after this journal entry.

Paris • 6 janvier 1919

Je viens de me disputer (poliment, mais sûrement) avec sa mère, Madame Messenger, qui ressemble à la fois à Louis XV, pour la franfreluche, et à Napoléon 1er, pour l'autorité et la petite taille (en plus large). Comment lui faire entrer dans la tête que je ne veux pas du tout épouser Bibi? Que si Bibi est ma jeune fille préférée, et même plus, je ne me vois pas du tout déguisé en « mari » !... Elle, ma femme ! Pour toute la vie ! Ah ! faut-il que son amour soit fort, pour me faire entrer une telle pensée dans la tête, même le temps d'un éclair !...

Despite his protestations, Jacques was married to Bibi before the end of the year. The marriage was, so far as one can tell, a happy one, although it ended ten years later in 1929 when he discovered that Bibi had been unfaithful to him. Although obviously upset, he seems not to have borne any grudge against her, for they remained friends until the end of her life.

I once had a brief conversation with the great French photographer Frank Horvat during an exhibition of photographs taken for his book *1999 A Daily Report*. I asked him why all the photographs (taken as a matter of principle with a point-and-shoot 35mm) were in landscape rather than portrait format. He wittily replied that he preferred the horizontals (a French double entendre whose meaning should be clear), but when, with Anglo-Saxon brutality, I persisted, he added that since our eyes are on a horizontal line that was obviously how we saw the world.

His other work demonstrates that he does his visual flexibility a great disservice in saying this, but his words made me think. Horizontal eyes are universal among binocular animals, and I assume that it's an evolutionary adaptation to a world of running predators and upright trees and grasses. We even have specialised neurons that are sensitive to horizontal disparities between the two eyes. These mechanisms mean that we perceive the depth of vertical objects much better than horizontal ones, which at least partly explains why images with strong verticals such as this and *91: Dani in long grass* work so well in 3D.

It would be an interesting experiment to construct a helmet with miniature periscopes which moved the eyes into an apparently vertical orientation...

73 Bibi avec parasol et enfant

1920

Juan-les-Pins • 20 avril 1930

Le matin, je descends seul dans le jardin pour peindre... Une petite jarre de fleurs, l'ombre d'un parasol : je choisis n'importe quel sujet puisque tout reflète le soleil. En sortant de l'hôtel, j'ai l'impression d'entrer dans un bain de printemps : sa lumière, sa tiédeur, le murmure confus des insectes, la musique des oiseaux ou celle du silence m'enveloppent, me tranquillisent, illuminent mon inconscient. Alors, je peins avec mon énorme plaisir secret de faire n'importe quoi, n'importe comment, en tête à tête avec un morceau de paradis qui me chuchote ses confidences.

There are surely many 'better', prettier, more interesting photographs in the Lartigue archive than this one, but it's here because I like the little girl and her unfortunate expression; she reminds me of what an ex-girlfriend once said about one of her young relations—'She's fat, and ugly, and not very clever, but she's a nice girl and I like her'. The little girl is not identified, but is probably Bibi's niece, Dédée. See also 54: *Little girls in meadow* for a more sympathetic portrait of what is probably the same child.

There's a delicacy about the photograph that also appeals—it has been created from almost nothing, and retains a sort of lightness and transparency—not so much a Cartier-Bresson 'decisive moment' as a Lartigue 'fugitive instant'. This lightness of touch is one of the most endearing and enduring of Lartigue's characteristics as a photographer.

The parasol is a frequent motif in Lartigue's work. A functional necessity to a photographer who liked to spend as much time as possible in the sun, he also made good use of their strong graphic qualities and obviously appreciated the way they softened the harsh southern sun. The modern photographer has a camera with automatic fill-in flash; Lartigue had to use rather more ingenious methods.

74 Bibi observant les laveuses

1920

Paris • Octobre 1907

Le travail, ce n'est pas forcément toujours assommant. Ce qui est ennuyeux, c'est la chambre enfermée dans laquelle on le fait, et surtout, surtout : le temps qu'il vous prend ! Oui, le travail est un voleur de temps !

Lartigue has protested that he was not such a frivolous dilettante as he has been painted, but his stereos would not support his claim. In them, the ordinary man and woman are seen only fleetingly in crowd scenes, or in a tiny number of examples such as this, as 'local colour' for a holiday snapshot. Bibi and her companions appear to us as brilliant white summery butterflies fluttering gaily past the worker ants, black and industrious, labouring under a burning sun.

Apart from the sociological questions it raises, the picture also provokes a number of practical questions in my mind. Is this a commercial laundry, or just a gathering place for village women? If it's a laundry, how is the work allocated amongst the women? How do they do their washing in winter? Is there an indoor version of this scene? How is the washing dried? In summer on outside lines no doubt, but in winter?

75 Joueur de tennis s'apprêtant à faire un smash

Rouzat Août 1920

Paris • 24 février 1914

Je sens qu'aujourd'hui Didi est sûr de moi et que cela le rend sûr de soi. Je n'ai plus peur de moi, et alors se réveille subitement dans ma tête une espèce de lutin invincible. Nous menons 5/3. Les applaudissements m'aident. Finalement, pour notre premier championnat, Didi et moi nous n'aurons été battus que par 10/8 dans ce dernier set, face à des champions que je regardais comme un petit paysan regarde passer le roi dans son carrosse...

Lartigue took many stereos of tennis players, but unfortunately most of them are entirely without interest—one or more tiny figures stranded in a distant corner of a vast tennis court. When scanning the stereos, I remember saying to myself, 'Not another tennis player, please', or 'Not another skater, please'. He was obviously deeply interested in these sports, as both spectator and player, and did not allow the lack of a telephoto lens to inhibit his photography. Where necessary, he would enlarge and crop to give him the image he was looking for, but this was not practicable for images to be viewed in stereo.

Interestingly the player in this shot is almost certainly Jacques himself, so it may have been taken by Bibi on his behalf. He's clearly not playing a game of tennis, since the photographer would have been in the middle of the court, there's no ball, and if there were, he wouldn't have been watching it, so the motive may have been to produce a study for a painting, or of course sheer narcissism. The best of his tennis shots are probably a few he took of Suzanne Lenglen practising (see 47: *Suzanne Lenglen playing a forehand drive*) and an occasional snap such as this in which the moment is captured with his habitual elegant precision (albeit not by him!)

76 Bibi fait la grimace

Etretat Novembre 1920

Paris • 21 mars 1914

Derrière nous, un drôle de bonhomme à barbiche en pointe et monocle. Zissou me dit que c'est Gabriel d'Annunzio, le fameux poète italien, et comme tout le monde bavarde avant l'entrée des grands boxeurs, nous en profitons pour lui parler aussi un peu. Il est très maniéré, assez tordant, pas le genre « homme connu prétentieux », plutôt le genre « Mousquetaire », qui donne envie de rire. Il dit que Georges Carpentier, qui est en passe de devenir le héros des Parisiens, est aussi le sien.

The pious young man (suitably mocked by Bibi Lartigue) is André Doderet, a writer, scenarist and Italian translator. He's nowhere mentioned in Lartigue's memoirs so presumably they were no more than acquaintances. The quotation is chosen on the admittedly tenuous grounds that the bulk of Doderet's output seems to have been translations of Gabriele d'Annunzio's work, and this is the only significant mention of the Italian writer found in the memoirs.

The occasion Jacques is reporting is a heavyweight boxing match between Joe Jeannette and Georges Carpentier. The former was a black fighter who had come to fight in Europe in the hope of obtaining better purses than he could in the still-segregated USA, where he was not allowed to fight the better-paid white boxers. Carpentier was the darling of the French crowds—a truly remarkable fighter with a naturally powerful punch who had his greatest successes as a light heavyweight. On this occasion, Carpentier was unable to overcome a weight difference of 10 kilos (22 lbs) despite his longer reach, and lost on points over 15 rounds.

Cap d'Antibes • Mai 1921

Avoir une automobile, dans ce pays, c'est magique; car il suffit de se dire : « J'ai envie d'être à Cannes... J'ai envie d'être à Monaco... », et l'on part et l'on y est. Quand j'ai essayé de bien travailler toute une grande journée, quand je peux presque me dire que je n'ai gâché aucun rayon de soleil ni aucun « rayon d'amour », c'est une merveilleuse récréation que d'aller à Cannes par l'étroite petite route déserte qui longe la mer, en passant par Golfe-Juan. Une mer immobile qui commence à s'endormir, les yeux encore ouverts sous le soleil couchant.

For me this image and its accompanying quotation recall irresistibly the chorus from Charles Baudelaire's poem *L'invitation au voyage*, from *Les Fleurs du Mal*:

Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme et volupté.

Which translates (minus a little of the poetry) to:

All there is order and beauty,
Richness, calm and sensuality.

Rouzat • Été 1906

Seulement, pour revenir chez nous, au château, il faut remonter la côte de sept kilomètres, qu'on dévale si facilement en partant ! Alors, bien avant d'être en haut, tout le monde descend de la voiture, qui se met à fumer par le bouchon du radiateur, comme une locomotive. Hier, Yves, le chauffeur, a voulu déboucher, pour voir : un grand jet d'eau orange a failli lui brûler le nez !... Les jours où la voiture a pris son élan, il faut tous la pousser dans la côte pour qu'elle ne s'arrête pas complètement... ce qui force à la faire redescendre en arrière pour essayer de prendre davantage d'élan. Yves, ancien coureur de bicyclette, est breton. Il est très malin, il conduit bien et réussit les choses difficiles en souriant : réparer une panne, changer un pneu, et même aider Zissou à faire marcher son planeur.

In the photograph, we see left to right, Yves the chauffeur, Lartigue's mother, his wife Bibi, and his father Henri. Jacques comments several times on Yves' sterling qualities, and they appear to have been as close friends as their positions would allow. He seems not to have been alone in his estimation of Yves, for he writes later « Notre chauffeur, Yves Lecoster, fut durant la guerre le chauffeur attitré du Maréchal Joffre et plus tard du Maréchal Foch. »

The long drive down to the Cote d'Azur on deserted roads in this magnificent automobile must have been a sublime experience. Jacques' fondness for the car and the destination are expressed repeatedly in both word and image and with a little imagination the stereos and accompanying quotations can help us to recreate at least a shadow of his emotions and experiences. After looking at this one, try viewing these stereos in order: 61: *Repairing a puncture*; 15, *Overtaken!*, 79: *The Hispano-Suiza draws a crowd*, 99: *Hispano-Suiza on scaffold bridge*, 77: *Bibi in the Hispano-Suiza*, and 71: *Bibi at Eden Roc*. Sigh...

79 L'Hispano-Suiza attire la foule**Marseille 1921***Cannes • 28 mars 1921*

Sur La Cannebière, foule encore plus drôle et plus houleuse qu'à Grenoble l'autre jour, où certains des badauds attroupés autour de notre automobile et de son « tren-car », chuchotaient, en regardant « Papa Félix » descendre noblement, son grand chapeau de feutre à la main, que c'était le roi d'Espagne Alphonse XIII voyageant incognito dans sa nouvelle et fameuse « Hispano-Suiza ».

Hardly surprising that the Lartigues' Hispano-Suiza created a stir. This magnificent vehicle was said to be only the second of the model built, the first being constructed for Alphonse XIII of Spain who was a great supporter of this luxury marque. The car was introduced at the Paris Auto show in 1919, and M Lartigue finally took possession of his car in 1921, with bodywork constructed for him by the coach-builder Labourdette.

Hispano-Suiza later became a maker of aero engines, and in 1915 its design for a 140 HP V8 water-cooled engine so impressed the French government that they sought manufacturers for 800 units. The engine was far better than anything then available in the US, so The Wright Company (founded by Orville and Wilbur), trying at the time to revive its fortunes, undertook the manufacture of 450 engines under licence. At first they had great difficulty with the advanced technology required, but later went on to build around 10,000 engines based on this design.

Hispano-Suiza still exists but long ago stopped making automobiles; it now specialises in transmission systems for aero engines.

80 Mary âgée de 15 jours**Nice Avril 1921***Paris • 1900*

Ils ont une fille : Marcelle, très frisée et blonde, et aujourd'hui on m'a conduit chez eux pour me montrer un nouveau « petit cousin » qui est « né » : André. Qu'est-ce que c'est : « né »? J'ai vu ce bébé. C'est un petit animal rabougri, vraiment laid, qui ne m'intéresse pas du tout. Je me demande pourquoi on ne le jette pas, puisqu'il est si rabougri. Je préfère mon chat.

The text attached to this photograph bears no relation to the image, since the events differ in date by twenty years, although one might be forgiven for thinking otherwise. The quotation is rather curious, however, since it was written by Lartigue when he was in his seventies, as he prepared the first volume of his autobiography, but with the voice of the little boy he felt himself to be at six years old. This is by no means the earliest of his personas—the quotation accompanying 54: Little girls in meadow gives us, with all seriousness, his thoughts as a two year old.

We're now so used to houses with fitted bathrooms, often several of them, with hot and cold running water, enamelled baths and porcelain basins, that it comes as a shock to see a young child being bathed in an old tin tub such as this. It seems particularly incongruous in what is apparently a well-to-do household with at least two female servants on staff.

81 Sala hilare**1921***Cap d'Antibes • 24 avril 1918*

Salha Madi : je le baptise Sala. Je l'ai connu par Tintin, un jour où, rentrant de la chasse, tous deux étaient venus offrir à Maman un morceau de chevreuil. Autant de différence entre eux qu'entre un carlin à pedigree et beau collier et un boxer un peu bâtard. Mais, avec moi, Sala se transforme en chien de berger. Il est arabe, mais fort comme un Turc. Quand on nous photographie, il se dresse sur la pointe des pieds pour tâcher d'être à la même hauteur que moi. Pour rire, il se transforme en ogre. Ici, invité par Papa, il est mon compagnon de natation dans la petite piscine en pierre en bas du parc, et ensemble nous parlons de nos amours et nous écoutons le rossignol dans le grand parc parfumé par la nuit.

This is one of a group of three portraits of Salha Madi taken at the same time. In all three he has the most enormous grin, and one wonders what the joke might have been. Jacques and Sala remained the closest of friends, spending holidays together in the South of France and exploring the nightlife of Paris until around 1929 after which time, due to force of circumstance, they saw little more of each other.

The next time they were to meet, in 1930, Sala was dying of tuberculosis, with only a few months left to live. Lartigue fumed in his diary « Pourquoi cet étrange médecin « naturiste » grâce auquel on ne fit aucun des traitements prescrits par les autres? Pourquoi ce « pouvoir » qu'on est arrivé à lui faire signer hier, là, sur la table de nuit, écrit d'une écriture pour film mélo ? » This power of attorney seems to have given control of Sala's fortune to his Russian secretary and lover, Olga, leading Jacques to the blackest of speculations.

In reading Lartigue's memoirs, I often found myself wondering 'Whatever happened to so-and-so?' This is one case where I'd rather not have found out.

82 Match de boxe**1921***Paris • 19 mars 1917*

Aujourd'hui, c'est ma cinquième leçon. Je me déshabille au vestiaire, et me voici tapant dans les énormes gants rembourrés de Maigret. « Swing !... Crochet !... Uppercut !... » Il me commande et je remarque ses yeux un peu étonnés et satisfaits de me voir obéir si vite (il ne sait pas que le tennis m'a dégourdi les réflexes).

Tout à coup il me dit : « Bon. Vous allez faire un assaut. »

Jacques continues the story of his boxing match as follows:

J'ai tellement gigoté dans tous les sens que ma tête est vidée de mon trac. Je grimpe au centre du ring, face à un type qui baisse un peu la tête et me regarde par-dessus ses gants. Un jeune poids lourd professionnel. Moi, je suis extra-léger, mais j'ai les bras longs. Nous commençons à sautiller l'un en face de l'autre et je m'efforce de penser à tout ce que Maigret a essayé de m'expliquer : Swing... Uppercut... crochet du gauche... crochet du droit... Ce n'est pas un boxeur que j'ai en face de moi : c'est un mur rembourré. Je tape, je sautille, je reçois un coup sur la joue, j'esquive un peu les coups pas trop rapides, je me foule le pouce... Je suis essoufflé, mais le round a duré deux minutes et on me dit que ça n'est pas mal pour une première fois.

Given the differences in weight and experience, it's clear that the young heavyweight was being very gentle with him. Other photographs showing Lartigue's friends practising amongst themselves lead one to believe that their skill never rose beyond the very strictly amateur.

83 **Enfant jouant dans une mare**

1921

Aix-les-Bains • 14 juillet 1924

Six heures du soir. L'eau du lac. Toutes les joies de Dani sont concentrées dans le fait de jeter une pierre dans l'eau... Comme on s'abîme en grandissant ! Si je pouvais simplifier les miennes à ce niveau !

This is another of my Top Ten of Lartigue's stereos. The little boy is unidentified, but he is not Dani, Lartigue's son, who was born in the same year as the photograph was taken. It's obviously a wonderful image, but so much more complex in stereo, when the depth of the water and the quality of the reflections are clearer. It is noticeable that Lartigue has again dropped to the same level as his subject, not always easy when the subject is immersed in water. See 64: *Little girl with goat*.

In close-up it can be seen that the object of the little boy's attention is one of the leaves he's obviously picked up as it floated by on the surface of the water. And he's wearing a really stylish pair of tartan Bermuda shorts, thus beginning a fashion trend that has continued to this day.

84 **La famille sur le balcon**

1921

Paris • 1901

Grand-mère, je l'ai baptisée « Lilitte » ; mais ça la rend très furieuse. Alors, je l'embrasse en lui disant : « Bonjour, Lilitte », et elle ne peut pas se fâcher. Papa dit que je suis le seul à pouvoir « faire d'elle ce que je veux ». Elle est un peu plus grande que Maman et bien serrée dans son corset. Quand elle dit quelque chose, elle ajoute : « Je le dis et j'ai raison. » Alors !... Elle aime bien me faire la lecture : je lui demande surtout les Aventures de Buffalo Bill ou celles de Nick Carter.

Grand-mère s'appelle Madame Haguët : le nom de jeune fille de Maman. Jeune fille, son nom à elle était : Eugénie Coulon. Elle déteste qu'on l'appelle Eugénie ; alors, quelquefois, je fais semblant de me tromper et je lui dis : « Bonjour, Eugénie. »

The forbidding battle-axe in the foreground of this photograph is the same old lady that Jacques describes here and elsewhere in his memoirs with great tenderness. Behind is his mother, then his cousin Robert (known by Jacques as 'Ubu'; see 90: *Ubu as a weightlifter*), and his wife Bibi.

This is a very unusual photo for Lartigue because the camera is tilted so far off-kilter. The effect to modern eyes is merely dramatic, but to Jacques it was quite probably an unacceptable mistake. (See also 32: *Dario Resta in a Sun-beam* and 14: *Flock of pigeons*). There are lines of both cars and people on the opposite pavement, which implies some significant event they were all involved in, so presumably he was trying to force the two queues and his family into the frame together?

85 Dani et sa nounou**1921***Rouzat • 26 août 1921*

Depuis le 23, j'ai un fils Dani. Il pleure, crie, hurle, de douleur. Quelle mystérieuse torture lui inflige-t-on ? Ce n'est pas une torture ; c'est une abominable farce : il vient de naître et ne s'en console pas. Il pleure depuis huit jours, se tait, recommence. Quand, hier, il a consenti à esquisser un pâle sourire résigné, tout le monde s'est extasié : « Il sourit aux anges ! » Il est certain que ce n'est pas aux hommes que, à sa place, je sourirais.

Lartigue's son, Dani, was born on 23rd August 1921 (the same year as his third wife, Florette). Like his father, Dani seems to have had a happy childhood, and like his father's, it was thoroughly documented in photographs. These were not the only parallels with his father's life, since Dani also became a painter. Their subject matter and styles are also rather similar, both showing a great fondness for the bright sunlight and colours of the South of France.

Like Jacques, Dani has also had a second career, in his case becoming a well-known entomologist, specialising in butterflies. In 1993 he donated his collection of butterflies to create a museum in St Tropez. Subsequently extended, the museum now contains over 25,000 specimens, including every known French diurnal butterfly, as well as a number of his and his father's paintings and souvenirs. It is open to the public and is well worth a visit should you find yourself in the area.

86 Dani et les poupées mohican**Nice 1922***Nice • Avril 1918*

Ma vie de milliardaire sans grand argent en ma poche m'amuse bien !... Le meilleur coiffeur de Paris, c'est Ernest chez « Achille », place de la Madeleine; le meilleur chemisier, Doucet, rue de la Paix; le meilleur tailleur, Jasko, 12, rue Tronchet (il fait tout tout seul et n'habille que les gens qui lui plaisent. On dirait qu'il est un peu fou. Il ressemble, quand il m'essaie un costume, à une petite fille qui fait des robes pour sa poupée) ; le meilleur bottier, « Bunting », rue des Petits-Champs... Grâce à eux et aux leçons de boxe de Hellers, me voilà « copur-chic », comme disait Bichonnade quand j'étais petit...

This is one of a series of three almost identical photographs, all exquisite. The 'Mohican' dolls seem to have had no particular significance apart from a more than passing resemblance to Dani himself.

Bichonnade, mentioned in the quotation, is the would-be angel in 4: *Bichonnade flies!*

Mon livre de photographie Flammarion 1977

Une promenade en voiture ressemble fort à une expédition. Mon père aimant beaucoup l'air, on ne met jamais la capote. Comme il n'y a pas non plus de pare-brise, on se retrouve complètement à l'air libre, on roule sous la pluie, on reçoit la boue...

Les passagers s'équipent donc de manière à affronter toutes les intempéries : grand manteau de caoutchouc (le parapluie de chauffeur), serre-tête en cuir du genre passe-montagne, et lunettes, de mica s'il fait beau, tout en métal lorsqu'il pleut, avec seulement deux fentes à hauteur des yeux. Cela n'empêche pas Maman et Papa d'avoir beaucoup de prestance dans leur tenue d'automobilistes.

The Lartigue family's insistence on open-topped cars seems astonishing in retrospect. One can imagine how wonderful it must have been to meander through the South of France, sun beaming down, roads quiet and empty, but how dreadful to drive like this in Normandy on a bleak winter's day. Fortunately in the early 1920s, traffic would still have been light, otherwise on crude roads, often without tarmac, the muddy spray thrown up would have been quite intolerable, even with heavy protective garments.

Judging by the lean of the trees and the blurring, the car may well have been moving when the photograph was taken, Lartigue turning round from his seat alongside the driver to capture these two bizarre creatures from outer space. The lenses on their strange goggles would have been made of mica, a transparent mineral much less prone to shattering than glass, as the first plastic sunglasses didn't come into use until the 1930s.

Rather a contrast with 77: *Bibi in the Hispano-Suiza*.

This photograph has been 'incorrectly' framed, to avoid cutting through Bibi's face on one of the images. The strange effect is that the cover in the foreground (Dani's crib?) projects forward of the frame, and Bibi appears to have her face pressed up against it.

Billancourt • 8 janvier 1925

Quatre heures. Abel Gance, dans son nouveau studio de prise de vues à Billancourt. Dix millions pour commencer son nouveau Napoléon. Gance parle de son propre génie comme je parlerais de mon cor au pied, si j'avais un cor au pied. Et, avec autant d'assurance, il parle de mon futur travail.

« Vous pourriez me seconder dans "un peu tout". Viser les détails. Vous vous occuperiez de ce dont l'opérateur aurait besoin, de ce que les machinistes oublieraient de faire. Partir pour la Corse découvrir de jolis paysages... » Drôle de nouveau métier en perspective !

Il me trouve « pessimiste » quand je ne crois pas complètement à la réalisation de tout ce qu'il me raconte, avec tant d'affection, et avec sa voix légèrement voilée, qui sait si bien caresser les millions des plus célèbres hommes d'argent d'Europe.

The film Lartigue was so sceptical about is now widely believed to be one of the masterpieces of silent cinema. It was originally conceived by Gance on the most grandiose scale—6 episodes of 90 minutes each, covering the whole of Napoleon's life. He only completed the period up to the invasion of Italy, but even that had a running time of 6 hours. Given that it also required three projectors to show the innovative split-screen images, it met with understandable reservations by distributors, who invariably cut it back to a more manageable length, with or without Gance's agreement.

Only in the early 1980s, as a result of enormous efforts on the part of the critic Kevin Brownlow, did a restored version of the film become available. This had a running time of 5 hours 13 minutes, more than had ever been shown in public before. Francis Ford Coppola later produced a shortened version of 4 hours, which was issued on laserdisc, and this is now the most widespread version.

Kevin Brownlow wrote in his introduction to the first English-language edition of the script of Napoleon in 1990 that an even more impressive version of the film was needed 'not only to restore it to even greater glory on the screen but to make sure it is shown, at least once a year, for ever'.

La traversée du siècle Editions Bordas 1990

C'est à l'Alcazar qu'il voit pour la première fois la « petite Printemps ».

« Une presque petite fille très très mince, avec l'air timide et un peu moqueur... C'est la petite Yvonne Printemps que je trouve mignonne quand elle ne fait pas le rôle d'un petit garçon ».

Yvonne Printemps was born Yvonne Wigniolle in Ermont, near Paris in 1894. At thirteen she became a dancer with the Folies Bergère, at fourteen she played Little Red Riding Hood in a review called *Nue Cocotte*, and by eighteen was starring alongside Maurice Chevalier in *Ah ! Les Beaux Nichons !* Along the way, she changed her name to Printemps (which means 'springtime' in English), the nickname she was given on account of her sunny disposition. Amongst her many charms was a light, clear and very beautiful voice, put to good account in over thirty of her husband Sacha Guitry's productions.

When she appeared in London in 1926, the noted critic James Agate was moved to comment: 'It is not exaggerating to say that on Monday evening people were observed to cry, and by that I mean shed tears, when Music's heavenly child appeared at the top of the stairs and came down them to kneel at Mme. D'Epinay's feet... At the moment of her entrance this exquisite artist made conquest of the house, and subsequently held it in thrall until the final curtain... Mlle. Printemps uses song and speech indifferently, changing almost imperceptibly from one to the other.'

Chatel-Guyon • Juillet 1920

Au casino, Robert, mon cousin, qui n'y voit pas très clair et que j'ai baptisé « Ubu », invite éperdument à danser ce que son imagination lui a fait prendre de loin pour une jeune fille ; et quand, en tourniquant, il passe près de nous, enlacé avec sa trouvaille, il éclate de rire à son nez (souvent trop long et quelquefois rouge).

It's a pity that Lartigue rarely bothers to explain his nicknames, as it means we do not know why his cousin Robert should have become Ubu. I like to think he shared a rumbustious character, and possibly a fondness for scatological language, with his namesake Père Ubu.

The thick spectacles he is wearing are there to correct the problem of short-sightedness that Jacques finds so funny. This was the result of childhood cataracts, for which the only treatment was a rather unsatisfactory operation to remove the lens of the affected eye. Although this restores the cornea's transparency, the eye loses its ability to focus, and even with strong spectacles such as Ubu's, poor sight and tunnel vision would have remained lifelong difficulties. It doesn't seem to have worried him too much, as he crops up quite often in Jacques' photographs of the period and invariably sports a big grin. (See 84: *The family on a balcony*).

Paris • 1920

Lorsque j'y réfléchis (ce qui est rare), je me dis, à propos de mes collections de photos : les seules que aient peut-être une chance de m'amuser plus tard sont celles que, justement, ne m'intéressent pas aujourd'hui quand je les prends. Non les choses belles, jolies, plus ou moins compliquées, que réalise avec tant de peine, et tant de joie (sinon d'amour) ; mais les photos quelconques d'insignifiants détails, pris au hasard d'une tranche d'existence qui passe et se démodera.

Lartigue's words here are prescient, because it is his 'snapshots' that have achieved the greatest renown. He tried at odd moments to make money from his photographs, in particular early in 1926 he bought some studio equipment and attempted to sell his services as a photographer (see 8: Portrait of Robert Haguet). His published memoirs mention sales of a few photographs at the time, but all comment soon ceases and it's clear that it wasn't a great success. It's hardly surprising—the only book of his formal portraits that I know of is *Les femmes aux cigarettes*, and the portraits are uniformly mediocre.

Later in his life, after becoming famous, he had many photographic commissions, mainly fashion subjects, about which he was recognised as being very knowledgeable, but they rarely show the vitality of his personal work. He was self-conscious about the perception that his talent had faded as he aged. In 1976 he received a letter from the noted photograph collector Sam Wagstaff, and wrote in his diary:

Entre autres une lettre de Wagstaff. Lui, le plus grand collectionneur du monde, il veut m'acheter quatre ou six de mes dernières photos couleurs ! Pour, dit-il, « prouver à d'autres (et entre autres à John Szarkowski, le conservateur de photos du Musée d'Art Moderne de New York), que mon talent ne s'est pas « arrêté en route » comme ils le pensent. »

Paris • 28 avril 1924

Ma petite fille... « Ma petite grenouille »... Elle restait des heures près du petit berceau à la regarder... Elle se promenait la petite figure contre la joue. Maintenant, l'angoisse est figée sur toute sa figure... Elle regarde, regarde ! Elle regarde tout s'enfuir ! Tout s'en aller ! Sans rien pouvoir retenir... Peut-être en secret aurait-elle voulu voir, pour mieux le regarder encore une fois, la forme d'un petit sourire... Le dernier ! Celui que j'ai vu hier...

Lartigue took photographs to preserve his memories. As a matter of principle, he chose not to remember unhappy events, so did not photograph them. This attitude is what makes the image overleaf such a rarity—it is one of the only two genuinely sad photographs out of all five thousand or so stereos, and both of them are of the same subject, taken at the same time.

They show Bibi holding her daughter Véronique, born two years after her brother Dani, in 1924. It was a difficult birth, and the Lartigue's feared for the health of the sickly child from the beginning. She survived only three months, and was buried in Paris on May 1st of that year.

San Sebastian • 15 août 1927

Soleil, brouhaha. Je regarde autour de moi, tout m'éblouit dans un imperturbable reflet de ciel. Soudain, silence, la piste est de nouveau déserte. Attente. Un son de clairon en forme de polichinelle danse dans l'air. En face de moi, le taureau surgit ! Il ressemble à un morceau d'acajou, oublié par mégarde chez le marchand de meubles en bois blanc. Immobile et furibond comme un grand-père réveillé en sursaut il regarde, étonné, suffoqué ! Et, soudain, il fonce ! N'importe où, comme s'il voulait embrocher le fantôme de sa fureur. Il a trop de place et s'arrête égaré. Alors, chamarré, un petit clown-danseur vient agiter sous son nez un voile couleur amarante. Il lui indique un chemin ; n'importe quel petit chemin imaginaire. A demi souriant et affable comme le groom du « Palace » parlant du beau temps au businessman préoccupé par les cours de la Bourse...

Lartigue's memory seems to be rather confused about his visits to bullfights—the memoirs speak twice of 'first visits', one in 1921, and another in 1927 from which the quotation overleaf was taken.

In addition to this there are photographs dated 1917 which show a Course Landaise, a French form of bullfighting in which the bull is actually a cow, and no attempt is made to kill it. Instead, the two types of torero—the écarteurs (evaders) who try to escape its horns whilst keeping their feet firmly in place on the ground, and the sauteurs (jumpers) who leap over the cow as it charges—are there to provide the most thrilling spectacle possible without bloodshed.

An animal which performs well is likely to return to the arena on other occasions, gaining in experience and cunning at each visit, and may even earn a billing on posters announcing the corrida. The best Course Landaise cows can fight ten times a year and continue for up to twenty years, accumulating guile as they age. Since there is neither blood nor death (except very occasionally for the torero) it is possible that Lartigue did not count this as a 'real' bullfight.

This photograph shows a traditional Spanish bullfight, but dates from three years earlier than the 'first visit' quoted overleaf, so presumably he simply mixed up the dates of his various visits. No matter, the picture's the thing.

Paris • 1 janvier 1923

Trois heures de l'après-midi. Je viens de développer les plaques des photos prises cette nuit chez Sacha grâce à ma lampe à magnésium, sorte de briquet à plateau, qui allume automatiquement la grosse pincée de magnésium déposée dessus. On met l'appareil en place sur un pied, on le règle, on ouvre l'obturateur... et flouff ! ça éblouit tout le monde, et répand un énorme petit nuage désagréable. Les gens ronchonnent, mais lorsqu'ils ronchonnent, c'est trop tard, ce sont leurs sourires que l'appareil a enregistrés. Photos réussies. Alors peut-être me sera-t-il permis de conserver quelques images (plus ou moins menteuses) de ces premières heures de l'année.

Henry Fox Talbot took the first flash photograph in 1851, using a battery to fire an arc across two electrodes placed in front of a mirror. However this technique was only usable on an experimental basis as the battery occupied a whole room, and the first practical flash gun didn't appear until the 1860s. This used the process Lartigue describes, in which magnesium wire and magnesium flash powder were ignited, producing a harsh white light and clouds of black dust which settled everywhere.

Unshielded burning magnesium was obviously very dangerous, with a real risk of fire, but the lack of any viable alternative meant that it was not replaced until around 1930 when sealed glass bulbs holding magnesium wire in an oxygen environment became commercially available. Although long since replaced by the electronic flash units that are now universal, flash bulbs are still coveted by speleologists who value their powerful light output in the profound darkness of a large cave.

In this photograph the couple facing us are unidentified, as is the woman whose back we see, but Sacha Guitry, the host, is on the left, seated alongside his wife at the time, Yvonne Printemps.

Mon livre de photographie Flammarion 1977

Le photographe, lui, doit bondir sur ce que le hasard lui offre, surprendre l'occasion rare, courir au meilleur poste, choisir le meilleur angle... s'il en a le temps. Car la règle d'or, c'est de « faire vite ». Alors, cadrage, composition, mise au point... pas le moment de se poser trop de questions : il n'y a plus qu'à s'en remettre à son intuition personnelle et à la vivacité de ses réflexes ! Le déclencheur doit être le prolongement de l'oeil : prêt à répondre « du clic au tac » à l'imprévu qui le provoque.

In the introduction by Beaumont Newhall to *Photographs by Cartier-Bresson* he quotes the photographer as saying: 'The picture is good or not from the moment it was caught in the camera. Cropping will not save a bad picture, because a picture is done by situating oneself in time and space. A mistake made then is irreparable. The whole relation to a frame changes if you bend slightly forward, backward, to the right, to the left—la petite différence.'

At least in his early work, Lartigue had no such concern for the sanctity of the frame. He had the happy belief that only the final image really counted, and bowed to the limitations of his equipment and the instant of shooting with supple grace. Anything on the final print that did not serve to recreate the desired memory in his mind was simply cut away.

This photograph is a typical example. Lartigue was quite content for it to be cropped to just the chorus line, retaining not much more than a tenth of the total image area, for publication in his first major book, *Diary of a Century*. In the process, of course, it was reduced to a very much more two-dimensional image.

It's instructive to compare the images in this collection, which are all as near to full frame as is practical (but see for example 98: *Zissou and Ettore Bugatti*), with versions printed elsewhere, which are often cropped, sometimes quite heavily.

Aix-les-Bains • 21 mai 1919

De temps à autre, je soulève les avirons hors de l'eau pour ne plus troubler le silence en suspens. De chacune des rames, tombe un collier de gouttelettes qui, à mesure, s'évanouissent en se réincorporant à l'immensité liquide d'où elles sortaient (confusément, je m'imagine que notre « vie » sur terre est un peu comme ces gouttes).

The best of several stereos Lartigue took of an oar of a rowing boat, a subject which obviously appealed to him for its metaphorical as much as its pictorial qualities. Like all his stereos taken from a distance of less than about two metres, it suffers rather badly from parallax errors, which crop opposite sides of the two images. The effect can be removed by reframing both images so they cover only the same area, but as there is then very little common area remaining, a much reduced image results. I like the photograph as a meditative moment in the hubbub of Lartigue's worldly life, so leave it more or less whole, for the reader to consider the further metaphorical implications.

Paris • 23 janvier 1917

Sem habite là. Sem, petit et un peu fripé, comme un ballon du magasin du Louvre, qu'on n'a pas fini de gonfler. Il fait des caricatures si ressemblantes que tout est ressemblant : façon de marcher, de s'habiller, peut-être même de penser. Il a fait la mienne aujourd'hui, et il a écrit au-dessus de sa signature : « A mon photographe ordinaire », parce que je fais souvent des photographies de lui avenue du Bois, et que j'en ai fait aussi ce matin, où il est avec Letellier sur le grand escalier qui descend vers la mer. Il m'a expliqué que « ordinaire » signifie, non pas : commun ou vulgaire, mais habituel. Quand même, me traiter de « Photographe », c'est un peu comique !

This is one of a pair of photographs taken on the same occasion. In both, Lartigue is playing the complicated games with reflections that he so obviously loved. Not only can both Dani and Bibi be seen in profile in the window on the left, but Jacques himself can also just be seen reflected in the mirror above the washbasin on the right.

The glass plates he used have much greater exposure latitude than one might imagine, and cope quite well with both the sunny sky and the dark interior of the room. Jacques was fortunate in viewing all these stereos as transparencies, so light was transmitted through the image, which meant that even the darkest shadow area could be seen well. To achieve a similar effect in a printed version, the shadows need to be lightened, which diminishes the overall tonal range, but does at least mean the final result can be viewed on paper rather than glass.

Paris • 5 janvier 1917

Je m'échappe du service, et me voici au Bois, mon automobile à côté de celle de Jean Dary, que revient de piloter un avion. Zigzags, virages, tête-à-queue, dans les larges routes autour de Longchamp : un peu comme au tennis, quand on commence à faire obéir la balle. On trace des marques sur le sol, on roule à toute vitesse, et *froutt !* on se retrouve en sens inverse, à l'endroit déterminé. Fameux truc pour apprendre à éviter un obstacle ou même pour accoster à un trottoir.

For the vintage car enthusiast, Bugatti remains the ne plus ultra of sports cars. From the moment a Bugatti finished second in the 1911 French Grand Prix, the blue-painted cars went from success to success. In 1925–6, for example, Bugattis won 1,045 events; in 1927, the year of this photo, 806 races and hill-climbs. Production quantities were not large, and it's amusing that more of these half-size T35s were produced than full-size cars—over 250 examples.

Jacques' title for this photograph identifies the children in the cars as Ettore Bugatti's two sons, Jean and Roland, but in fact while the blonde child is Roland Bugatti, Jean Bugatti is not shown. In an attempt to identify the other subjects, I went back to the original negative, and, to my astonishment, found Jean lurking in the trimmed-off edge of just one of the images, where he can be seen thoughtfully stroking his chin. He disappears from the other image because of the parallax offset, and is inevitably removed from even a full-frame stereo, in order to give the two images the same subject area. It's possible that the dark-haired child in Bugatti No 2 is Lartigue's son Dani, who would have been 6 years old at the time, but given the mis-identification it seems unlikely.

Paris • 25 mars 1921

Notre automobile est la plus belle. Les résultats de sept années de recherches (les quatre années de guerre plus trois autres de mise au point) sont concentrés là, dans ce nouveau grand châssis Hispano-Suiza. C'est le premier exemplaire sorti en France, et le deuxième au monde après celui du roi Alphonse XIII d'Espagne. Labourdette nous a fait une carrosserie digne du châssis. L'automobile est arrivée rue Leroux, devant notre maison, en glissant sans bruit, majestueuse, crème, sièges recouverts de cuir de Russie rouge. On a accroché, derrière, une petite remorque appelée « tren-car », pour les bagages; maintenant, elle nous suit sur ses roues élastiques, dans le grand nuage de poussière.

The bridge was, and possibly still is, somewhere near Bordeaux. I have not been able to identify the structure, despite numerous trips to vineyards in the area. Gustave Eiffel built a number of viaducts in the South West of France, and this may well have been one of them.

It's a particularly successful example of a technique commonly used in stereo photographs—forced perspective—in which lines converging on a horizon point greatly reinforce the three dimensional effect. Beginners to stereo photography, when viewing, sometimes have difficulty in combining the pair of images to produce a 3D effect, and subjects such as this can be helpful, one of the reasons for their continuing popularity.

Paris • 19 janvier 1929

Midi. Michèle Verly arrive pour poser avec ses yeux de beau temps, « presque vingt ans » et sa fraîcheur tout entière ressuscitée en une seule nuit.

Une de mes mains caresse ses cheveux blonds, l'autre mon chat noir... Machinalement, je me prends à les confondre. Donc si je n'aimais Michèle que du bout de mes doigts, je ne l'aimerais pas davantage qu'un chat. Au fait, est-ce que je ne l'aime pas que du bout des doigts ?

Cinq heures. A côté d'elle dans un taxi. Je la regarde. Sa tête est enfouie dans un chapeau de duvet blanc argent, elle est mince et ses grands yeux reflètent tout, même le rêve de mon imagination.

In March 1928 Lartigue went to see his friends Rico and Michèle on the set of the film *La Symphonie Pathétique* at Saint Cloud on the outskirts of Paris. Naturally he took a camera, and equally naturally, some photographs. One of these is overleaf, and how he managed to obtain such delightfully informal pictures with the primitive equipment at his disposal remains a mystery to me. Though clearly posed, there is never the slightest sign of a strained expression or a forced smile, and using glass plates in a magazine of 12 shots, there was rarely a chance of a second try.

Rico Broadwater was an American friend of Jacques from his early youth, first being mentioned in an entry for 1902. He was older than Jacques, and for a long time he seems to have played the role of a big brother to him, although as Jacques' sporting prowess increased and he was finally able to beat him at tennis and billiards, it became more a friendship of equals.

Jacques introduces Michèle Verly in his diary for the previous year, 1927, with this description: « Michèle Verly, c'est un fruit. Une petite pêche déjà rose mais pas tout à fait mûre, encore un peu acide et verte près du noyau. » She was already well-known as a film actress, and 1928 was the peak of her success, with three films completed that year and another three in 1929. Her career tailed off thereafter and she made her last film in 1941.