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T H E        F E L L        &        R O C K  
C L I M B I N G        C L U B  
O F        T H E        E N G L I S H        L A K E        D I S T R I C T

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## THOUGHTS ON CLIMBING\*

*G. R. Speaker*

Any attempt at giving expression to the thoughts and feelings that long and intimate contact with mountains has produced in the climber is likely to be both difficult in its analysis and venturesome in character, because of its personal nature. The analysis must needs go to the very roots of existence, the scheme of things—one's relation to and function in it, both from the spiritual and the physical or evolutionary aspect.

The intimacy bred of the climber's constant physical and mental contact with mountains is bound to make a deep appeal to the innermost self ; it becomes inextricably interwoven with his own make up, his philosophy, his creed. Just as the artist has his own medium of expression, poetically, pictorially, or plastically, so the vision of beauty seen and realised in the mountains produces, in the man who climbs with his heart and soul, a similarly artistic response in moulding all the knowledge experience gave him into a new medium of expression. He has his own perfect mechanical technique for approaching the mountain, for establishing that intimate personal contact with it through which the greater inspiration reveals itself to a mind attuned to the spiritual appeal of nature in its impelling beauty and meaning.

It is a thesis of ' living ' distilled from great experiences ; unorthodox to some, unscientific to others, more implied perhaps than presented in a co-ordinated, closely reasoned manner, since it resists dogmatic reduction to a formula. As an intensely individual statement it may even savour of indiscretion, but to those who feel that way about it I would say that it has invested my life with a new and inexpressibly satisfying meaning, which as a climber I would share with those who share the mountains with me.

Thus I embark upon my soliloquy—the musings of a hoary climber browsing in the high places on the hills !

My equipment for the purpose is of the scantiest. To begin with my capacity for forgetting is infinitely greater than that for remembering ; names of places and peaks or figures of heights and distances seem to elude my grasp and nothing but the happy memory of the man I climbed with and the subtle mountain charm in which I found myself caught up remains.

It is myself, and that complementary part of myself my true and faithful climbing companion, and the personality of the peak, that form the unit firmly set in the lacework pattern of the scheme of things. A common love of our glorious heritage—the hills—

\* A lecture given to the Rucksack Club in May, 1935.

unites us in perfect harmony in our quest and thus completes the circle of give and take. A happy principle, which fits exactly within the four sides of the square of the whole community of which we form an inseparable part; and that, I submit, is an enduring foundation upon which we may, fearlessly and faithfully, set the pillars of the pointed arch of our spiritual endeavour. Whatever else climbing may hold for us, the greatest of all its gifts and blessings is surely the friendship, the companionship, tried and won like pure gold from the solid rock. All else is subordinate to that.

Most of us would find it difficult, briefly and honestly, to answer the oft repeated question as to what caused us to devote ourselves so wholeheartedly and so faithfully to climbing. With most of us it is an enduring passion, which the passage of years leaves unaffected even when the intimate contact with the mountain is no longer possible. I was deeply impressed, when told by Sir John Withers at Zermatt one summer, how 87-year-old Sir Felix Schuster engaged a guide to take him halfway across Findelen Glacier, so that he might once again capture the thrill he experienced when, 70 years earlier, he had set out upon his first great expedition. That was not, of course, merely loyalty to his first love, it was Life to him, because apart from the mountains and the memories they awakened, he had no full existence. And at this present-day stage of my pilgrimage, I can only say that I climbed because I felt impelled to.

We are born climbers.

By his very nature, the climber approaches life from a different angle and seeks a solution of his inborn quest in a different dimension of consciousness, at first, perhaps, without realising it and later naturally, like the poet, who senses the essence of things. With the progressive scale of development, transmuting the physical acquirement into an art, an intellectual pursuit, and an experience of the spirit, comes the realisation of the greatness of the enterprise, and also the inadequacy of mind and body to encompass the unforeseen. Then fear, so aptly described by Wilson Hey, creeps in. The greater the knowledge, the keener our imagination becomes and, if we are alive to our responsibilities to those whom we lead, to our club, to mountaineering, fear will distil valour out of courage without engendering over-cautiousness. Stevenson very wisely stigmatizes prudence as the 'paralysis' of such generous acts as climbing involves. To resist the danger of exploration is worse than failing in it when we have tried.

No essay a climber could write would be likely to give a clearer insight into his make-up or character than his climb. All his love of the crag, the knowledge of his craft, all his mental resources and courage to overcome the unknown obstacles on the line of his



*Gerald Locey*

SPEAKER ON SEA WALL ARETE  
BOAT HOW

advance to the summit of his endeavour, have gone into the making of it. And if I lead up, where he has blazed the trail, I experience the delight with which he progressed over each successive pitch with almost musical rhythm and direction. You may find, if he is a true artist, that he maintains the quality of the climbing on the same high level, choosing with true intellectual discernment the harder or the more delicate course in preference to some evasive or limp variation of the theme in a minor key. Such are the Kelly-Holland type of climbs at home or the Pichl variety in the Dolomites, to mention only a few of those I know.

From the artist to the instrument. It may be presumptuous—but if ever it could be said that an instrument was 'almost human' in the range and depth of its response to the touch of the artist's loving fingers, it could be said about a crag. There is complete understanding, a blending and merging of the two by successive movements, until man and mountain ring as one on the summit. No mere man could ever 'conquer' a mountain—no true lover of mountains ever would! So-called 'fights' and 'victories' over our greatest friends and benefactors belong to the less thoughtful 'gully-period.' Now that we realise the thought that spaced nucleus and electron as far apart relative to the size as Sirius from the earth, everything in the universe that the eye can see can be but the material, transient expression of eternal thought; whatever man touches with his spirit, responds with spirit—and once again man's union with the throbbing rock or universe is complete. And the flux upon which this attuning is accomplished—is just man's love for his friend and his mountain. To most of us, climbing is not susceptible to epitomizing, any more than beauty or happiness. Whatever value or meaning we, by the grace of our divine prerogative place upon it—that is what it is to each one of us, exercising our highest, mentally and spiritually, creative faculties. If I place climbing in that category, I have given the motive for devoting all that is worth while in me to it in all its ramifications and implications.

At one time, I had no intention of touching upon that side or aspect of it; but upon reflection I decided that I should at least make an effort to lay the ghost—an elementary one at that—let loose upon me by a number of perfervid biologists in the smoke room at Wasdale Head. A Past President describing an experience of an occult or psychic nature of which he and two others were the unwilling and deeply distressed victims, deduced from that obsessing manifestation of a primitive entity the theory that climbing expressed the atavistic urge of the earlier evolutionary states of apeman. In that thesis he was supported by the majority of those present, several of whom had drunk deeply at the two great founts of

learning. Now that is a peculiar kind of pabulum which my organism could not assimilate, however much it might be within *their* digestive capacity. If we are prepared to consider root-causes of human actions and reactions to eternal impulses impinging upon our hereditary consciousness, then I would rather follow Bergson and say : mistaking the means for the end led us Westerners into the impasse where we find ourselves today. If it is axiomatic that the existence of the Universe postulates a system or a mechanism, it follows equally that it is *thought* that keeps it moving with such amazing precision. Our acquisitive, over-industrialised social order has allowed mechanism to predominate, to the virtual exclusion of the divine thought principle behind it. From that position there is no escape until, instead of allowing ourselves to remain bent down to the earth, we straighten our backs and turn our faces heavenwards. Thus out of the very excess of mechanism comes the desire to climb to free our brickbound souls. It is a deep craving for beauty, truth and happiness. I recall how, as a frail young man, whose expectation of life was too short to be of any interest to insurance companies, I was drawn to the mountains, with the irresistible force with which iron filings are attracted to the magnet. I do not know that the utilitarian idea of getting health and strength from them appealed to me strongly, or that I wanted to assert myself physically. But I do know that I was caught up by their sheer beauty from the moment I first set eyes upon them, and I knew I should stay to worship, without end or question. And thus I started upon the heavenly pilgrimage of which no true believer will ever wish to see or know the end. Of course, robust health might have given me a different incentive to start with. After all, the healthy physical satisfaction of surmounting mechanical difficulties and obstacles which call for the utmost degree of strength and fitness, apart from other qualifications needed, is in itself a much coveted reward, reaped by all who have realised that physical fitness must be attained and maintained at all costs. But the power to feel and to will—the sway of the senses so to speak—must sooner or later be subordinated to our mental powers—intellectualised in short—if it is to become a vital force in our life. It turns mere life into living. It is the early Gully-Period being succeeded by the faith climbing of face-climbers. Poise succeeds as a positive method the largely muscular indirect 'wedge and lever' process. Both are indispensable ways of progression—one the extension of the other. But physical poise, conditioned by the mind as it must be if it is to be automatic, fits us to take the next step up to snow-and-icecraft, by giving us confidence in balanced movement on small and slippery holds on steep slopes. Once

snow-and-ice technique is mastered, given an eye for the time of our upward progression over a reasonable slope, couloir or arete, we are equipped for our voyage of discovery beyond the mists of the valley. If we are wise enough, or should I say artistic enough, to invest our climbing life with the dignity of that purpose, repetition cannot stale the infinite mystical appeal which nothing can displace or replace in our affections. But our ultimate inward satisfaction only comes when we need no longer be solely concerned with the growth and exercise of the body for health and pleasure alone ; spirit must thenceforth inform the mind. The mind stored with worldly knowledge is none the less the slave and instrument of the body ; it is not necessarily more alive than a well-running engine. And for the matter of that it is no more human or civilised than that very excellent piece of mechanical perfection. So we climb to quicken our minds with the emotions which only the infinitude of the mountains can evoke. Even though we may lack the gift to express it, we sense this sudden realisation of a new untrammelled upward flight towards freedom in gazing upon the boundless vision unfolded before our eyes as we breast the summit ridge in the twilight ; the first rosy shaft of the rising sun has touched the highest of the myriad snowy summits that raise their ghostly silvery heads above the cloud-wrapped sleeping world below. And the wordless glory of the heavens irradiates our being to the uttermost recesses of our consciousness—the real living, ever-enduring thing in us.

' Mountain-tops ' Conway says, ' are for fairies, where they dance with the spirits of dawn.' We are of the stuff that dreams are made on—why not mingle with them as one of them ? Such a vision is more than an inspiring phenomenon ; it is true revelation of a divine impulse and purpose which must permanently raise the beholder to a different level of thought and vision. He will no longer dwell in the outer world of effects, but pass into the subjective life and work with causes.

Every reader of mountain literature must have been impressed with the deep enthusiasm of the writers of all ages for the Alpine scene ; with the amazing brilliance of their descriptive style ; with their infectious appreciation and with the evidence of the intensity to which their souls are roused to a realisation of the true meaning of it all. It must strike a sympathetic chord in our heart to read the confession, the declaration of a greater faith, from those who, by the grace of God, ' wring music from the soul of things.' And with Shelley, I glory in saying:—

' I am the eye with which the Universe  
Beholds itself and knows itself Divine!'

## LAND OF PLENTY

A. T. Hargreaves

In the first Journal this Club ever produced will be found a remark that one reason for the repetition of well known routes was that the 'old stagers' had done all the reasonably possible new climbs and, in consequence, had left nothing for the rising generation. At that time the list of climbs in the district numbered about 120, today the number is something between 450 and 500. One could be very tempted to say that now at last we are approaching finality, and that the exploration of new routes was bound to become reduced to one of mere elimination.

In fact, it appears to me that the possibilities of finding new routes which are in every way fine climbs, following natural lines and which are not dependent on the avoidance of holds on neighbouring courses, are almost as great as ever they were.

In an attempt to prove this, I will mention only three or four climbs in which I was concerned, although I could quote many instances such as Kirkus' classic *Mickledore Grooves*, Record and Jenkin's *Stoat's Crack* on Pavey Ark (incidentally this second fine climb is one of the best in Langdale and deserves to be better known), Birkett's routes on what was Macphee's secret preserve, the Castle Rock of Triermain, the *Gordian Knot* in White Ghyll, and *Hangover* on Dove Crag contributed by Haggas—the latter appears to have all the qualities of Scafell East Buttress, such as great steepness, exiguous stances and extreme exposure. Finally, there are the splendid series of new climbs in and around Buttermere by Peascod and Beck.

The point appears to be that it is not by just looking round corners or turning variations into complete routes, that the finest climbs will be found. Rather should the hopeful explorer look for new faces and buttresses, rocks that have escaped notice by being a little off the beaten track, which suffer from an excess of moisture in bad weather or which by a trick of lighting appear to be of uncompromising steepness seen from familiar points of view.

It still seems that the opportunities are to the genuine mountaineer. He who examines the whole mountain face from usual and unusual points of view and is not content to accept the traditional outlook on either the quality of the rock or the possibility or otherwise of any given face.

An example of a climb which thrusts its attractions on to an oblivious world is that of *Grey Bastion* on Scafell. Here a steep wall of rock ends in a prominent corner which every user of the *West Wall Traverse* must pass. From Hopkinson's Cairn on the Pinnacle

opposite it looks most attractive and is just the right distance for the route to be well seen. Actually, the course worked out from here in imagination was followed in every detail on the first ascent.

It is a fine climb on good rock, steep with excellent situations. The hardest pitch is a grey wall about half its height, and here we spent many trying moments before the leader eventually reached a capacious stance under a great overhang. Fortunately, like other similar places which seem to have been designed for climbers, an easy slab led out of its forbidding shadow on to a very airy wall where it was finally necessary to traverse left across a steep crack to easier ground, avoiding on the way a large block lying on a sloping ledge.

While we are on Scafell I might mention another climb on Deep Ghyll Buttress, *Jacob's Ladder*. This lies on the square tower bounding the Great Chimney on its right (N). Cross and I collected this climb on a sunny afternoon in June and were so astonished at the ease with which we had surmounted the steepest bits that some sort of a ladder was the only possible name for it. We were climbing well and having almost romped up the magic stairway, we built a cairn, then without hurrying descended the *West Wall Climb* close by—to find on arrival at our starting point that we had taken exactly 30 minutes.

A second visit to introduce our wives was made on a day that was not so sunny and was certainly not in June, this year.

And we suffered many jibes from our companions when, instead of dancing upwards over the steep brown rocks, the leader had the greatest difficulty in even maintaining the '*status quo*' and only just managed to avoid making another record, this time in descent.

A route which only just fails to reach the highest standard and is one of the longest in the district is the *Shamrock Tower* on Pillar. Scores of climbers must have noticed this fine mass of rock, but I suppose it suffered the defect of being in a land of plenty, and ambition leaped straight to the challenge of the *Grooved Wall* or *Walker's Gully*.

It was Whitsuntide and the sun had dried the moss and grass until they almost crackled, while the rocks were positively prickly. It was now or never and a large party composed of Cross, myself, our wives, and A. B. Hargreaves, made a serious attempt, starting practically direct up a high nose of rock which ends on the large heather and grass terrace corresponding with the almost level part of *Walker's Gully*.

Things went well from the start, although Cross who was leading seemed to be in a hurry about something and at one place in particular, a short overhanging corner, had forgotten all about holds,

at least so we who followed, found. Soon after this, having executed a 'split' that might have delighted the heart of a dancing master, but which I found merely painful, I was invited to hang myself on a rope ring, while Cross moved up to a grass ledge at the top of the crack. I did as bidden—adding a small arrowhead for luck. It was just as well, for when Cross had taken the tangle of rope out of the crack the rope ring had disappeared mysteriously.

We foregathered on the heather shelves which were unanimously dubbed the *Great Heather Shelf*. It is the 100 feet of walking here that detracts from the climb as a whole, although the climbing on both lower and upper sections is absolutely first class, both in quality and difficulty.

The final tower which now frowned down on us forbiddingly rises about 120 feet in an almost vertical wall split by a crack varying in width from a few inches to a foot or so. Unfortunately, the crack does not reach quite down to the shelf, and an awkward and delicate ascent and traverse must be effected to reach a stance a few inches square below the crack.

The crack itself is provided with good sharp holds at long intervals, and the party was suitably impressed by the grunts which later became groans of the leader who was climbing in stockinged feet. At the end of this severe ascent it is possible to traverse off on to the screes above *Walker's Gully*, but, as a ridge continues for another 100 feet or so of good climbing and scrambling, naturally we carried straight on.

Perhaps the *Prow of the Boat* on Kirkfell Crag comes into a slightly different category from the previous examples of true exploration, for as long ago as 1930, Geo. B. had introduced me to it. And, in common with many other seekers after treasure, I had tried it and failed, and had docketed it for a good day and a better form.

In the early days of 1940 we had been cycling up to Langdale at week ends, and the walk over to the hut had become so familiar that we left later and later on each following Friday night. However, the walk down from Esk Hause in mist and darkness was found to be a poor preliminary to serious climbing, so that after rising at 11 o'clock, a gentle stroll round the fields suggested itself as a suitable excursion and was duly accomplished with many rests and stops to investigate any little thing that roused our curiosity.

It was a well-rested party that laboured up Gavel Neese on the Sunday and, after parking luggage at the cairn on the nose, turned its steps towards Beckhead and Boat Howe Crag.

A warming up canter on *Breakwater Slabs* found us in good form and we decided to have a real crack at the 'face.' There seemed no doubting as to where we should go, the way, after an easy 50 feet or so, was obvious ; a V chimney, almost vertical and also almost hold-less, cut well into the overhang where a patch of green on its right promised relief. Cross with remarkable eyesight or perhaps endowed with prophetic vision, felt sure he could see a belay at the top of the chimney. I was not so sure. However after a severe struggle a shout announced that the belay existed. There was no stance but with a rope ring round the spike the awkward passage across to the right and through the overhang was safely accomplished.

By exercising all my strength and skill I was able to join Cross at his stance, convinced that for once in their climbing careers the lady members of the party would require a little moral assistance. My conviction proved correct, for it was only after a good deal of moral persuasion that they were able to reach us crying 'never again,' 'not for a thousand pounds,' and 'promise me you won't go near the Boat—it's a deadly place.' It certainly seemed 'no place for a lady.'

Success was still in doubt, for a vertical crack on the right was only to be gained by a sort of Hobson's choice, either a traverse over a bald slab or an arduous struggle up the lower portion of the crack itself. Cross took the traverse and I the struggle ; at least I didn't feel so likely to fall off. At a little ledge, a splendid belay turned up and, by making a comfortable traverse to the right, the rough backbone of the buttress could be reached and followed with increasing ease until some broken ledges near the summit suggested a suitable place for mutual congratulation.

These climbs were done during a time when general activity in rock climbing was feeling the first severe effects of the war. Since then difficulties have increased and the hills have regained something of the solitude that this generation has never known.

Soon, I hope, peace will reign again, and when our tigers return to their old haunts it seems almost certain that the torrent of new climbs will at last and finally overwhelm the already despairing 'tickers off.'

## WELSH INTERLUDE

*Marjorie Milsom*

The London express stopped again at yet another little platform on which stood a kind of wooden kennel containing the booking office, a crate of hens and two girls in mackintoshes. The name, printed small on the window to baffle the Germans, also baffled us. The roads gleamed with recent rain, the cows stood mournfully in wet, very green fields. Mist, like a grey table-cloth was spread thickly on low rounded hills divided into sections by hedges instead of the stone dykes to which we were accustomed ; the sheep were yellow-white and round, with a halo almost of angora wool, instead of being angular and roman-nosed and rough-coated.

The great train meandered on. The hills were higher now, but just as soft, with trees and hedges and broad rust patches of bracken glowing fireily even in the dim light, and in every valley a small grey and white river gambolled down, and M. dreamt aloud of trout and sewen.

The important junction where the taxi awaited us was a trifle larger than the other halts, and there were a few more houses in evidence. The train made another effort towards Aberystwyth ; we turned up the enchanting valley that leads to our hamlet, and, just beyond, to the village of Dinas Mawddwy, where seven valleys meet.

The inn is one of those houses that ' just grewed.' It is a combination of fourteenth century farmhouse and eighteenth century inn. The bathroom, born of passage out of cupboard, contains a period piece of blue and white Victorian pottery, a dangerously narrow bath, and plenty of steaming hot mountain water. Downstairs there is a respectable sitting room in the ' new ' part of the house and a fishing room in the old. Once a bar-room, M. and I now had the freedom of it conferred upon us. We collected wood from the hillside to blaze on the iron dogs in the evening, and light up the racks for fishing rods, the old Welsh dresser, the seventeenth-century bureau, the Arab writing box and the grey slate floor.

In this part of the house, too, are the kitchen and other ' offices.' No slick shining labour-saving premises these, but a maze of thick walls, intriguing corners, old round larders and big old-fashioned range. From here were produced the kind of meals one had almost forgotten and for which one's stomach no longer has the distending power. Possibly elasticity would have returned in course of time, but a week was too short to produce scientific evidence on this subject. One can only state that appetite exceeded capacity to cope with Welsh generosity.

Often we had occasion to wonder, yet again, just what it is about mountain people that is so peculiarly attractive. The Scots highlander, the Tyrolean peasant, the Swiss guide, the Lakeland shepherd, all have it—an innate wisdom and courtesy at once more simple and more obvious than that of other people. The Welsh, at least of this mountain valley, are no exception. There was the postmaster who showed us where the best fish lived (it was not his fault we made no spectacular catches) ; the grocer who turned his store upside down to find one particular postcard ; the parson who lent M. his salmon rod ; the gypsy from over the hill, in the pub at Dinas, who ennobled me with the title 'Miladi' ; the student from Bala who interrupted his 40 minute sermon to tell us what it was about ; the choir who sang an English hymn for our special benefit ; the three children we met on the mountain path who lived in a house to which no road led and which could not even be seen until one had climbed one of four or five encircling mountains ; or Brandy, half Corgy, half bull terrier, who graciously conducted us everywhere we went ; or old Mrs. Jones who dragged us out in the greatest excitement to see more than a hundred great bombers flying in formation over those glowing rain-washed hills. To what destination ? There was speculation of course, but in all there was the unspoken thought that this was the shield, humming like a thousand great organ pipes, for lack of which countless such peaceful valleys in a dozen less fortunate countries now lack men, food and livestock, and whose cottages are roofless, black and without tenants.

From here, with peace-time buses or a small car, it would be possible to make several big fell-walking expeditions, notably the traverse of Cader Idris to the west or Aran Fawddwy to the north. Aran Fawddwy is one of those beautifully shaped mountains whose peaks issue an irresistible invitation, and from which one would get a superb view on a clear day of Snowdonia some 35 miles away. But in October days are short and uncertain, even mountain roads are long, and there are plenty of smaller expeditions where one can wander on whale-back ridges and trace a pattern of valleys as intricate as the lines on one's palm, not caring particularly if the mist does come down or the squall of rain obliterates the landscape, for here there are no hidden drops, apart from one small dis-used and rather melancholy slate quarry. The hills, though steep, are clothed with springy turf and red carpets of bracken. There is hardly a stone to trip an unwary ankle, and bogs are on a miniature scale, just sufficient to show how greenly moss can grow when it really tries. One can stay all daylight on the easily accessible tops, or one can walk round their bases on nut-flanked cart tracks as old

as time, passing every few miles or so through some tiny farmyard where the word isolation has a very different value from the current one, and where a domesticated pig was very rude to Brandy before being called off by the lady of the cottage, or half a dozen sheep dogs would set up a purely demonstrative clamour followed instantly by an almost embarrassing display of affection, and liquid voices would spontaneously wish us good-day in foreign English, and angora-wool sheep gaze with a momentary wild surmise.

And in the homeward lanes one could pause for a handful of blackberries as sweet as grapes, or a bagful of hazel nuts, or a bunch of foxgloves and wild rhododendron flowering still at the end of October. For the last half mile we plunge into a wood of oak trees from which comes the sound of turbulent water ; a miniature Aarschluht is hidden here down which the salmon and sea trout are travelling at the end of another cycle. We come out by the double bridge, an old one carrying the narrow motor road and bearing the mark of 1942 in the shape of preparations for dynamite, and one much older still carrying the old foot track and bearing only the dignified marks of antiquity.

After dark we burn the logs we carried home, and Mrs. Thomas brings in two pewter mugs of mulled ale which she forgets to put on the bill.

We are warm, well fed and slightly intoxicated by something more than mulled ale. Once more the hills and the hill people have conferred sanity and a vision of what might be—what must be.

## LANGDALE MISCELLANY

Charles F. Rolland

After one or two false starts, Lewis and I arrived at the Wayfarers' hut in Langdale. We were delighted to find that Denny was already in possession. Lewis and I made our usual early visit to Scout Crag to try out the new boots I had brought with me. We were depressingly clumsy after a long absence from the rocks, and the rather easy climb seemed harder than usual. Anyhow, the boots got the blame and we returned to the task of persuading Denny that we could feed him as well as the Hotel. Naturally, he was not convinced, but he seemed quite happy when it was all over ; that is, until he found he had to do some washing-up !

The next day was fine and Denny was in good form after his day on Gimmer, where he had done 'E' and a somewhat hybrid 'Joas.' He wanted to go to Bowfell and over-ruled my objections by saying that if my boots were sore on the way, I could always take them off. Denny persists in walking the hills in what were his Sunday best shoes, so there was not much that I could retort. Anyhow, off we went to Bowfell. The boots were all right, but I got into trouble on account of the poorness of the promised water supply at the foot of the Cambridge Crag.

*Sinister Slabs* was the first choice. I was consulted as I had attempted it a year before. On that occasion, I made a strategic withdrawal from the top of the first pitch with the aid of a line sling that had evidently been installed for this very purpose. A reference to my guide book released the following information : 'Nails : Too difficult. Rubbers: Too wet. Creepers: (Kletterschue) Too muddy. So what ?' All this showed was that there would be vegetation. With strict orders to leave any gardening to the third man, Denny started. The first pitch went well and we did the second one by a traverse to the left from the belay and thence up a very clean slab. The third pitch was the psychological crux of the matter so far as we could see. 'A narrowing mossy slab. Good but small fingerholds ; footholds disappear.' Didn't sound too promising. Denny took rather a long time and got into some very peculiar positions, but he eventually disentangled himself at the top of the slab. We followed, more by low cunning than by fine technique, but we had learnt a little from Denny. The rest was less trouble and had one very fine stance, like the pedestal for some huge statue.

At the top Lewis and I started down the *Ordinary Route*, while Denny disappeared down the gully, 'to look at the *Right Hand Wall*.' When we reached the shelf that runs into the gully, we saw

a rather excited Denny at the other end. He wanted to try the wall, he said. So, to stop him trying it all by himself, we went along with him. We looked at it and found it distinctly terrifying from below. 'What does the book say?' asked Denny. I read it to him. 'Your turn to lead isn't it?' he replied. I looked at the rock and then at Denny. He really was quite serious about it. 'Oh, well,' I thought. 'we'll humour the old fool and do the first pitch. It looks quite easy, up a sort of minor gully and we can always retreat from the top of it.'

Off I went. It was quite easy and as I got higher I began to see an odd hold or two on the steep wall above. At the belay, a good look around revealed the line of attack and it looked very fascinating. A very smooth, steep wall and yet just enough in the way of holds to make the climb possible. When the other two were securely perched, I took off all unnecessary accessories and set off. It was all right as far as the first grass ledge and then trouble began. One has to step up on a foothold that is fairly large but slopes outwards. There is apparently nothing in the way of a decent hand-hold. It is one of those places that are probably perfectly all right once one has started them, but very difficult to reverse if anything does go wrong. It is a case of placing faith in the ability of one's foot to stay on a sloping hold in the belief that, if it doesn't, one is off. Anyhow here I was. I tried it twice and liked it even less; just could not bring myself to do it. That peculiar little demon that spends his time urging climbers to do silly things appeared, as usual. 'Scared are you?' he said. 'Look, it is easy. Any fool can do this. You've made much more difficult moves before, and you can't go back now. What will the others say?' 'Go away,' I said, returning to the grass ledge. 'I'm going to have a rest and eat a biscuit and then I'll do it.' Biscuits are very comforting in these situations and I might have made the move after all, but I suddenly saw a lovely little ledge right out on the edge of the wall, just where it bends round at an angle to join the great wall that rises up from the shelf on the *Ordinary Route*. Better still, there were a few holds on the way to it. There was a tiny fault in the rock; just as though someone had taken a two inch chisel and cut a groove across the face. The groove was full of quartz most of the way, but here and there the quartz had come away and one could stick one's toes into little holes. I started along it. It was very delicate and there was not much for the hands. There were one or two long strides too. I took great care to make sure that it was reversible, because there was no saying what other way there might be off the ledge.

The ledge was in a magnificent position, high up on the angle between the two steep walls. It was like standing on a small plat-

form suspended over the bows of a huge ship. The prospect of reversing the traverse was quite pleasant. The holds were small, but they were at least horizontal. However this manoeuvre proved to be unnecessary. There were some quite good holds sloping up to the right, back on to the official route. Of the rest, there is little to be said. It is a beautiful climb on fine rock, and as Denny said, it is a pity there is not another 200 feet. The other two came up by the orthodox way and did not find the step up at all difficult. I am not sorry I avoided it ; the ledge on the arête is one of the most beautiful stances I know. We all descended with a feeling that we had earned a little of Mr Bulman's best beer.

The second day was rather misty and Denny was keen to see Deer Biold Buttress, so over we went by way of Stickle and Codale tarns ; a most delightful walk. For once our guess as to the whereabouts of the top of the crag was not very far wrong and we were soon down, and looking up at the sharp, splintered rocks. This was Denny's first visit and it didn't require much exploration to convince him that the *Crack* would be sufficiently entertaining without any attempts on the Buttress itself. This time it was Denny's turn to lead and there was no competition from me. I had seen two folk climb this *Crack* and had been very impressed with the difficulties of the top pitch, so we took the precaution of hanging a short rope-loop down it, in case we got that far and could not escape from the top.

The first four pitches proved very interesting and we overcame them without any undue excitement. The troubles all began at the second Raven's nest. Denny and I assembled here and Lewis was at the little tree, 20 feet below us. We surveyed the problem. It looked very hard from close quarters. The *Crack* has become a chimney. It is about 12 feet deep at the bottom and very narrow. The right-hand wall runs straight up, overhanging the bottom just a little. About 20 feet up there is a rectangular overhang on this wall. It ends abruptly a few feet from the outside edge. The left-hand wall is formed by a steep slab, a few degrees off the vertical for the first 12 feet, so that the chimney widens. Then the slab suddenly becomes a distinctly vertical, if not slightly overhanging, wall. Both walls are very smooth and on the right one there is a growth of a very small green lichen. Fortunately, they were dry on this occasion.

I was sent into the narrow depths of the chimney, while Denny set about the ascent. He went up quite rapidly with his back on the left wall and his feet on the right, till he came to the place where the chimney ceases to widen. Here he stopped for a short rest ; when he got a little further, there were a lot of grunts and other

unmusical noises. Denny stopped ; so did the noises. 'I'm getting lumbago,' said Denny, and with this remark he slid down to the bottom again. 'Must have a rest,' said Denny. I emerged from the depths, where things were getting very cramped, sat in the Raven's nest and looked down to see if Lewis was still awake. He was, so I lit a pipe and waited for Denny's next move. That worthy had conceived a rather violent dislike for the pitch and was determined to get his own back on it by turning it on the left. A casual glance in this direction revealed the presence of a lot of bits of vegetation on some very steep, and none too sound, rock. Nothing daunted, Denny set out to blaze a new trail to avoid the depths of the chimney. He is not a lover of the comfortable, shut-in feeling of these places. I held tight and dodged a lot of heather, earth and stone that came from above, where Denny seemed to be having a lot of trouble, hanging on with one hand and gardening most assiduously with the other, not progressing very far the while. Eventually he returned and rested again. Then he had another shot at the chimney, reached the same place, got 'lumbago' again, and came down with an even greater antipathy towards chimneys.

As he was not allowed to go messing about on the left again, he suggested that I should try the chimney. With rather an open mind, I set off and found the first bit quite easy. It was much more difficult when the left, that is the back, wall began to get steeper. The angle seemed carefully designed to push one's back downwards as one tried to push it upwards. There was so little friction between one's feet and the wall that one had to press very hard upon them. Thus it was very tiring to remain motionless without even attempting to ascend. However, all went well except that progress was slow. Eventually, the time came to traverse out from the comfort of the depths to the airy outside-edge in order to avoid the overhang on the right wall. By now, Denny and the Raven's nest seemed directly below and Lewis was a long way down. During a little rest to gain some of my very lost breath, my left knee exhibited a strange desire to move outwards underneath its fellow. This most disturbing tendency had to be righted with a free hand. I moved up the bit above the overhang very slowly, by now very tired. After a few feet, I realised that my physical strength just would not permit me to finish the pitch and the sudden appearance of the desire to vomit that is well known to sprinters, decided the matter. I must go down again. Between grunts for breath this decision was conveyed to the others and I came down slowly and manoeuvring carefully round the overhang. There was great relief in the thought that gravity was assisting the proceedings, and the aforementioned comfort of the depths below the overhang was much

greater than before. Soon I was safe with Denny in the Raven's nest and just sat and panted.

The others confessed that the prospect of my descent worried them, but I had no fears on that account and it was infinitely easier than the ascent. We were all disappointed to have been so near the top of the crux and to have been beaten by sheer exhaustion on the last few feet. I began to feel that I might have made it after all and to be annoyed at having given up the attempt. Later reflection left me with the opinion that I had made the right decision.

Denny had another wild expedition up to the left and succeeded in finding a belay, to which I had to follow with no great enthusiasm. He got up a few more, very difficult, feet and then had to give up. We both returned to the ever-patient Lewis and set about the descent. This was done on the doubled rope. I came last and made the sad mistake of dropping the rope while fixing it at the top of the second pitch. The attempts to save me by tying on a stone and throwing it at me were not very successful and Denny came to my rescue by climbing the two pitches again. Safe at the bottom, we had a good laugh at the afternoon's entertainment and the other two set off to climb the Chimney while I wandered round to the top with the baggage.

I retrieved the rope-loop from the top pitch and decided that it might have been a very welcome if rather artificial aid to progress had we ever reached that stage of the proceedings. When the others arrived, we returned to Langdale, rather disappointed but happy. I was convinced that we could do the climb if we had more training for a future attempt. Denny remarked that the expense of energy that would be required would, in any case, be too valuable to be wasted on one of these horrible chimneys. But then Denny is a man of the airy, slab-and-wall school.

The next day was our last. We bade farewell to Lewis who had to return to civilisation. Denny and I took advantage of the lovely September day and made for Scafell, where Denny had been promised a special treat. This took the form of leading *Mickledore Grooves* on the East Buttress. This magnificent climb was in excellent condition, except perhaps for the loose block on the lower part and the moisture in the piece of grass from which one embarks upon the great slab. My chief impression as Denny crept his way up the long last pitch was one of isolation, only partially relieved by the extra belay which I arranged for luck. Fortunately, no extra excitement was provided, except when Denny had to hold tight when I got into trouble at the top of the final groove trying to go the wrong way. The climb is quite exciting enough without any untoward additions. Having found Bowfell's *Right-hand Wall*

sufficiently delicate for ordinary mortals, I was considerably surprised to find how much smaller were the rugosities (they are hardly holds in some bits), on the slab pitch of this climb. I suppose there are even smaller ones in places ; I hope I don't have to deal with them at the wrong end of the rope. Denny led in magnificent fashion and made it look absurdly easy. He was given respite from the teasing about his attitude to cracks and chimneys in gratitude for his confidence and skill on the wide open airiness of the slabs.

We finished with that delightful little climb, *Upper Deep Ghyll Buttress*, which, I believe, has the distinction of ending higher than any other in the Lake District. We had a very good view from the top and then descended *Broad Stand* to collect our sack and have a little food below the East Buttress. On the way back we discussed our great good fortune in being able to get a weekend together and in having such fine weather when we did get it. We wondered when the next time would be. I still wonder. I've had two wet week-ends since then, but I have been lucky. Lewis is now in India and Denny is reported missing from an operational flight over Germany. It will be a very happy day when we three climb together again.



## DAYS IN THE RAIN

Wm. Peascod

1942—a sorry year for the fortunate. Transport was a great difficulty ; old climbing friends were called from the hills to contest with pitches of grimmer aspect, and those who stayed behind looked longingly at the mist-crowned tops, hoping, more wistfully as the year advanced, ' maybe better weather next week-end.' Alas ! those rubber-starved hopefuls. Week-end after week-end of mist, wind and rain met their longing eyes. Sometimes, between the Sabbaths, sunshine would pour its radiance over the crags, drying them out, lowering the water content and sending the Fortunate's hearts soaring into the fleecy blue, to be lowered again below the returning mists and rain as Saturday morn rolled in. Occasionally, we did see sunshine on the Sundays—usually when arrangements had been made to spend the day midst the flesh-pots.

' But, I hear someone say, ' I'd give anything to be on the hills wet or dry.' And, I would assure you, I wouldn't trade my lot for his . . .

I recall a night spent under canvas in Birkness—two of us, Elwyn Banner Mendus and I. What fun and games we had. A storm hit our small tent ; the canvas flapped and roared in the wind, rain blew in under the eaves, the guy ropes sang. We hung on to the tent poles ; we were soaked in our sleeping bags.

Next day, or really, later that same day for the tempest burst on us in the early hours, we went up on to the nearest crag and made a new climb. You will find *Brant Bield Buttress* in *Climbs Old and New* if you are interested. Mention of it brings back memories of Speaker. He suggested last New Year this long V.D. on the crags to the left of the Gully, to offset the marked lack of such climbs in the valley. He was glad, when I wrote him shortly afterwards and told him of our success. He liked the name, too . . . Well, I wouldn't swap that week-end of rain.

And August, again in Birkness. How the Saturday filled us with the hopes of reward and how the Sunday doomed them. Ye Gods ! What rain ! Lyna Kellett stayed with us in our camp that week-end. At least she stayed one night ; the first night she spent under a boulder somewhere between Scarf Gap and Birkness Combe. She must have thanked the stars that winked above her for the rainless night. But the next day—after we were all washed off Grey Crags and reached our tents to find our ' dry ' clothes wet—strategy of the highest order was called for. I was glad Austin Barton was in the party. By some miracle he lit a fire, made soup and served it

hot ; then, after making one tent absolutely waterproof, the four of us—Margaret, my wife, w'as the other Child of the Storm—got into our sleeping bags and spent the night like the proverbial sardines in a tent designed for two.

No more sunshine did we see that holiday. Wet rocks peered furtively at us through the hurrying vapour wreaths. Frequently, thunder rolled across the valley below. Margaret, Austin and I cycled back home on the Monday, whilst Lyna walked back to Wasdale Head.

Many of the now familiar watery Sundays passed. Then Austin and I went to Ennerdale to look at the *Haskett Gully* crag. In due course we managed to lose our way in the murk and rain somewhere between Pillar and Saint Bees ; we found a stone wall eventually—the ridge wall—and, following this back towards Pillar, we wandered round in three-quarters of a circle and found the crag (to our amazement). I led Austin up a route on the left-hand side of the crag. The rock is good ; a bit of grass about ; belays where they are wanted ; the angle not frightening ; in short—passable.

About September, Elwyn went with me to the crag again. It was bitterly cold. The rocks were streaming with water. An icy wind whistled up the gullies and we retreated in disorder . . .

And then it came—a perfect day. Again in Birkness, with sunshine—lots of it and us brimming with enthusiasm. 'Now for it' we said. It would be fitting to say here, torrential downpours washed us, Grey Crag and Gatesgarth down to the Solway, but they didn't ; we never saw any rain. We were hopelessly successful. Just Austin and I (with a feminine spectator), waltzed up a route on perfect rock to the left of *Slabs Ordinary*. There was a grand finish, too, up a very steep wall. Exposed ?—yes ! It was magnificent. To finish the day we trotted up a little climb on *Harrow Buttress*—longer than the *Ordinary Route*, steeper too. And so two of us had some sunshine . . .

That was my last day on the hills with Austin. Now he is one who would like to trade me for my Wet Hill Days.

Glancing recently through the first number of the *Journal* published by the Club I came across a small chart—inset between the leaves—showing the Club membership and how distributed, residentially, throughout the country at the end of the first year of the Club's existence.

Interest being thereby aroused, I drew the outline of a fresh chart and spotted it out in accordance with the 1942 List of Members with results which the chart shows.

If the question be asked why go to so much trouble for the purpose of showing little more than that, at the end of the Club's first year, the membership was over 150 and is now, 35 years later, 775, it can only be replied that the trifling effort led to the making of other comparisons with the help of, amongst other things, the accompanying diagram and the analysis figuring on the 1942 chart which may not be without interest even though the effort might be more appropriate to a jubilee celebration.

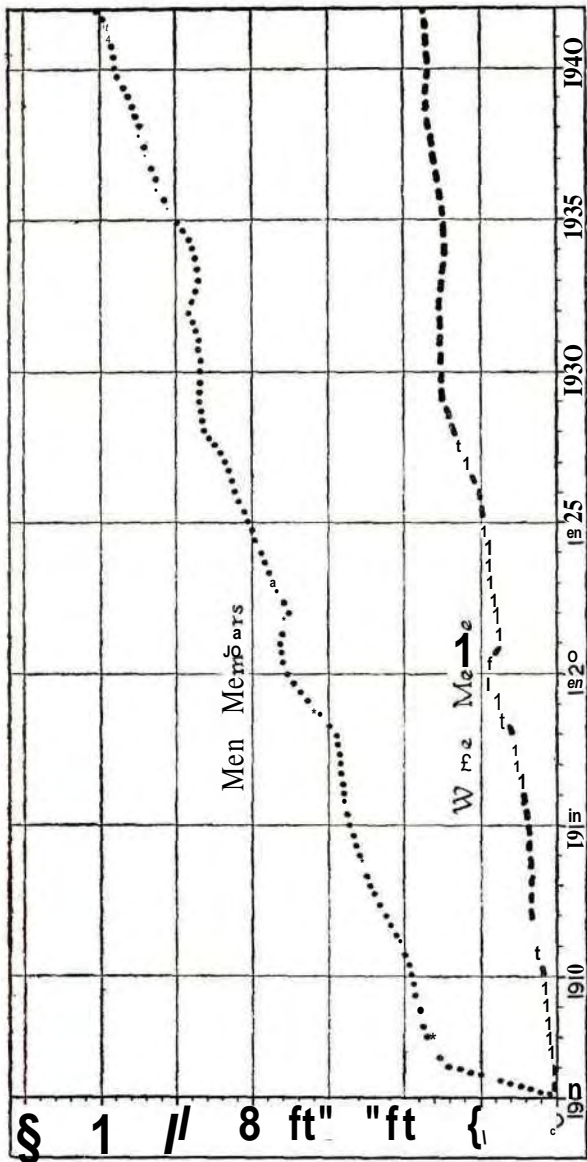
Arrogating to myself, therefore, the role of grand inquisitor or unofficial stocktaker to the Club, I may hope to draw attention to sundry facts bearing upon its growth and development which, as an evolutionary process, fails to be reflected ip, or revealed by, successive presidential speeches, reports, *Journals*, etc., unless they are studied and reviewed over a period of years.

One may observe—dealing with first things first—that if any proof were needed that the time was ripe for the formation of the Club, it is provided by the fact that within about a year the membership had reached the highly creditable figure named above and which, it is to be noted, is less than the current number of women members.

Turning to the graph, it will be seen that both ascending curves are satisfactorily constant in their upward sweep and would seem to prove that those who join the Club are not flash-in-the-pan enthusiasts and that those who come in stay in.

Prior to 1925 the lists of members, whilst published annually save during the 1914-1918 war years, were brought out at varying intervals differing by as much as six months, thus affecting the true accuracy of the curves to some slight extent.

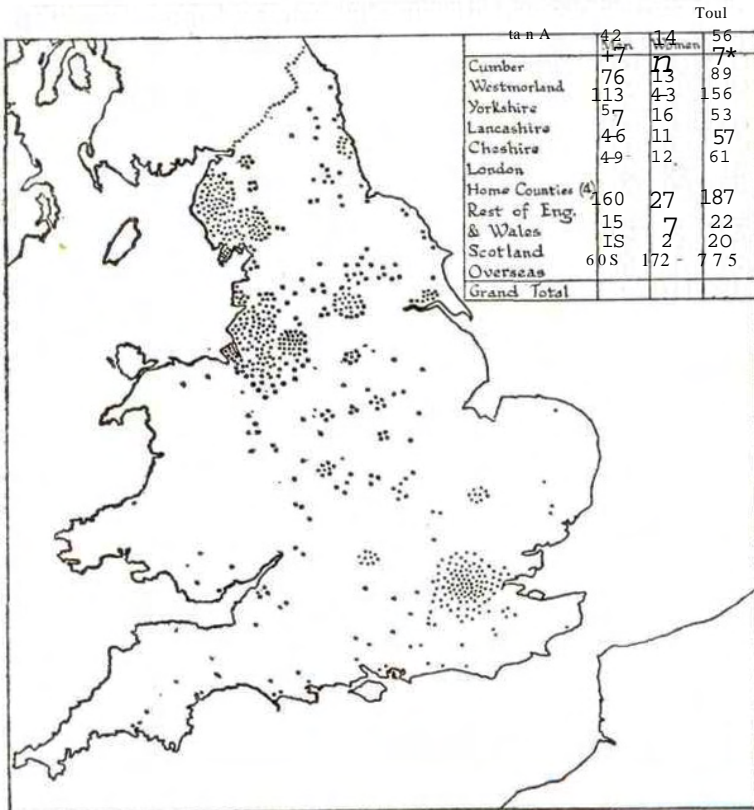
For the benefit of those not concerned to figure it out, it may be noted that during the three decades 1910-1940 the ratio of men to women members fell from 12 : 1 to less than 4 : 1, furthermore, with six female members on the Committee—two occupying the important positions of Hon. Secretary and Hon. Librarian, respectively—it will be seen how far our women members **are**



gradually weaving themselves into the warp and woof of the Club with, one is sure, nothing but beneficial, not to say colourful, effect.

Studying the data still further, note by the 1942 chart how noble Lancashire contributes to the membership—one-fifth of the total—also how the comparatively sparsely populated Lake District (Cumberland, Westmorland and that curiously detached piece of Lancashire which it embraces) stand forth to refute the oft-repeated assertion that people who live among the fells and hills are not interested in them. It may be said that having the fells at their door their membership might well be more but, *per contra*, they may from that circumstance have less need for Club membership and the facilities it affords.

Regarding town membership one is proud to be able to claim for the town of one's adoption (Kendal) the palm for numbers proportionate to population, not to mention its honourable record in



providing the Club from amongst its natives with two Presidents, two Vice-Presidents, two Secretaries and two Editors. *Floreat Kendalia*.

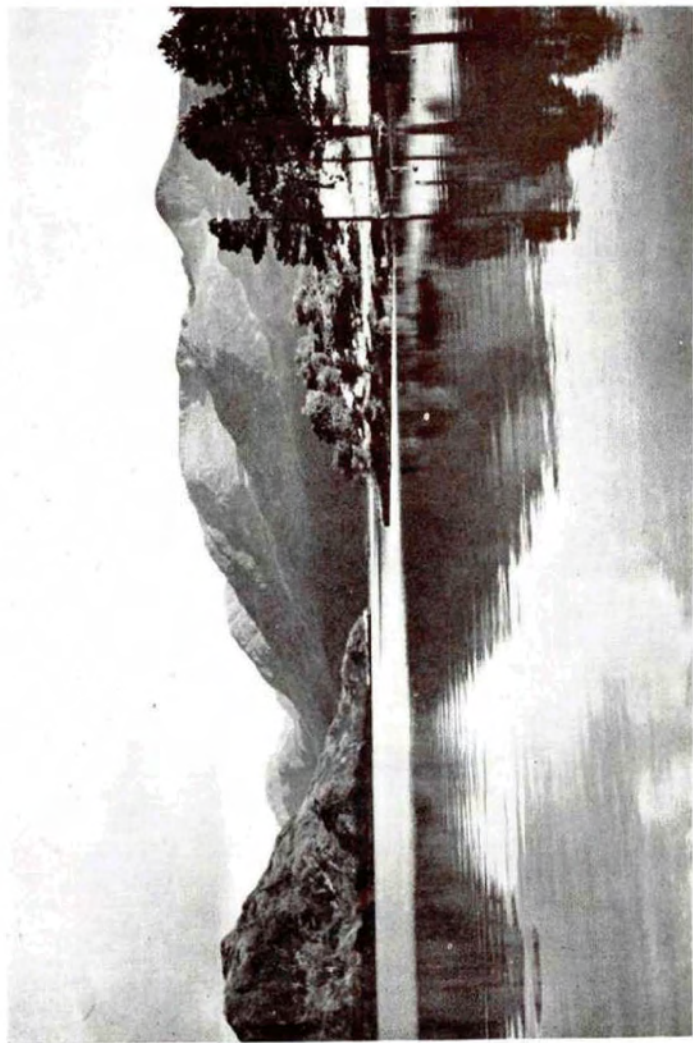
However the fact may be accounted for, it appears strange that, whilst at some centres of population the membership has risen two, three and even four-fold during the Club's existence, that of Barrow-in-Furness has fallen by nearly one half. May it be that Barrovian workers of today have found the surrounding countryside more pleasant to live in than Barrow itself—a possibility supported by Harry Scott's after-dinner story concerning Barrow and a certain woman with three<sup>1</sup> daughters—and that the motor-car and modern transport have rendered it possible for many occupied there to live outside, thus dethroning Barrow from its once proud position as one of the Club's citadels, though still claiming one of the fathers of the Club (Scantlebury) and the good George Basterfield.

Of the London Section—twelve years younger than the parent Club and resembling on the chart some great spiral nebula—little need be said (since the greater contains the lesser), beyond that it continues to dine, or lunch, once a year and walk off the effects next day. One who has been till recently a joyful partaker in such other activities as the section performs would here bear grateful testimony to the happiest of memories associated with the section and its members.

As regards Brackenclose, it can be stated that expectations as to its usefulness as judged by the demand have been exceeded from the first. The figure in terms of person-nights for the first year of its existence was well over 1,000 and for the year 1939-1940 about 1,300, whilst the current year promises to be still better owing partly to the restrictions on travel at home and abroad. The Hut Warden states that the Hut has proved a veritable boon as an ever open haven to many service people receiving unexpected leave and having, owing to too short notice, nowhere else to go.

On the subject of accidents and the comparative safety of climbing and fell walking, we all think, or like to think, that it is as safe as any other manly sport and recreation, but how to prove it statistically, there's the rub since there would seem to be no obvious basis upon which a comparison of like with like can be made. Motoring, for instance, is or was an everyday or every other day activity whereas climbing and fell walking is not more than a holiday or, at most, an occasional week-end activity. Suffice it therefore to name the fatality figure and leave it at that: during the 35 years of the Club's existence or, say, till the end of 1941, there have been seven fatalities within the membership—four in the Lake District, one in Switzerland, one in Wales and one in Skye.

<sup>1</sup>Two living and one in Barrow.—G.R.S.



CRUMMOCK WATER AND BUTTERMERE FELS

*J. R. Robertson*

## WHY DID IT HAPPEN ?

*Bentley Beetham*

The occurrence of any climbing accident of sufficient severity to receive record in the daily press is very greatly to be regretted, as tending to bring our noble sport into disrepute, but I have always felt that if properly recorded it should at least serve one useful purpose ; it should provide a lesson and perhaps a necessary warning to other climbers. Yet, when now I have suffered a bad fall, which according to the best medical opinion ought to have proved fatal, I can deduce from the occurrence no useful inference or admonition. This may well be because the cause, the crucial point, remains absolutely unknown. Anyone may guess at the cause, but as no one, not even my good second, saw it happen, no one knows what really occurred. I remained unconscious for more than three weeks and on coming round had absolutely no recollection of the fall, nor has any glimmering of it since come.

It seems probable that an accident may generally be attributed to one or other of five causes.

1. Inability to climb the pitch : technical deficiency.
2. A slip.
3. A hand or foot-hold giving way.
4. Stones falling from above.
5. A seizure, fainting or other sudden ailment on the part of the climber.

In considering the relative probabilities of these seriatim it should be stated that I had made the climb only a few weeks previously, its purpose being to serve as an introduction to boys who were beginning the sport, and that when making and cleaning the climb, I had been up and down it five times solo, and had later had the pleasure of taking boys up and down it several times. This seems to rule out cause No. 1.

The second, a slip, is generally caused by hurry, by lack of attention to the climbing through distraction, tiredness or bad conditions, by bad technique or rank carelessness. The conditions were reasonably good ; there was no hurry—we had the day in front of us ; there was no chatter, no neighbouring parties, no spectators, no distractions, and our attention was especially directed to the job in hand as we were making the ascent in order to assess the standard of the climb for the forthcoming guide-book. As to the third, no piece of rock was seen accompanying the body in its fall nor was any obvious piece missing when the climb was inspected the next day ; neither was any stone seen or heard to fall from above.

That leaves only the fifth, which may, of course, happen to anyone at any time, but it is a fact that I have never fainted nor had the slightest affliction of this kind in my life, and was, so far as I knew, in good health and in good form on the morning in question.

As climbing is still absolutely prohibited to me, it has been impossible for me to revisit the place, but I have been informed by the specialists that when I do repeat the climb it is just possible that the whole incident may be suddenly and vividly recalled to my memory. I sincerely hope that it will prove to be so.

Having thus failed to find a clue in any of the five most probable causes, it is only right to add that another, a sixth, has been suggested to me, and with increasing frequency and urgency since poor Speaker's tragic fall ; namely, age. It is true that he and I were respectively above and below the sixty mark. But I have always thought, and still do think, that one of the great advantages of mountaineering is that it can safely be indulged in from youth through manhood far into old age, whereas most other active sports last for **but** a brief period in our salad days. Yet it is obvious that with advancing years, strength and agility lessen, as do probably, though less patently, balance and the power of recovery ; but to offset this loss, experience, judgment, caution and possibly technique increase.

In old age, we may, in some cases certainly do, enjoy our climbing as much as we ever did in youth, but we may unconsciously be taking greater risks due to an unfelt, unappreciated lack of ability.

If there be any truth in this reduction in the coefficient for recovery with advancing years, then these recent accidents may, ;it least, serve to warn some of the old guard that they are not as good, as quickly and efficiently responsive to potential catastrophe, as they were and as they take for granted they still are ; and that, therefore, with advancing years they need to climb with an ever-increasing margin of safety.

This idea has an added significance at the present time. The effect of war strain, due to anxiety' and to overwork in the city, coupled with insufficient recuperative holidays in the open air, may well induce old age symptoms to appear suddenly and prematurely ; and therefore such unfitness is much less likely to be heeded and allowed for than if it had developed normally in due course. I know many close friends of Speaker feel that he was thus heavily handicapped on his last ill-fated visit to Cumberland.

In conclusion a word or two on another aspect of a fall may be of interest. Before the war there was much adverse criticism of the heavy not to say exorbitant charges levied on ski-ing and climbing accidents happening to Englishmen in the Alps, so, in fairness to

our Continental friends it may be well to state what happened in this case in the Lake District.

I was only six weeks in hospital, but there were bills to surgeons, nurses, hospitals, etc., for over £200. This plain statement of fact may serve as a useful warning, especially to young and impecunious climbers, against a perhaps unsuspected and serious consequence of an accident even on our home mountains.



## THE ACCIDENT —AND AFTER

C. P. Lapage

### PART I — THE ACCIDENTS WITH COMMENTS

It has been suggested that the following accounts of three accidents and of the measures taken to render first-aid or to rescue the injured may be of interest and of use to mountaineers of all kinds.

#### ACCIDENT I

Burnett's account of Accident 1 on Raven Crag in which Beetham was leading with Burnett himself belayed as second and Daley third reads :—

Beetham suggested that we should visit Raven Crag to do some of the new routes which he has worked out there.

At the New Year he had showed me two of the five. We were accompanied by Norman Daley.

We were climbing the *Cock's Comb*, so-called because its final stages consist of a steep flake of rock which splits a gully and has on its edge a number of serrations, which, when viewed in profile, are not unlike the comb of a cock.

B.B. wanted my opinion as to whether (1) the climb should be classified as moderate or difficult, and (2) it was suitable for taking boys on their first climb.

B.B. suggested that I should lead, but I preferred not to do so, and he started on a 100 foot rope with me second and Daley third on a 50 foot line.

The going was mostly on open faces of moderate difficulty until, at about noon, we reached the foot of the Comb mentioned above.

I was taking up my stance at the foot of this pitch, but B.B. said there was still a lot of loose rock, and he advised me to go well out to the left on a good grassy ledge. He threw the rope down in a coil, and apparently did not expect me to belay. However, there was a good spike of rock behind which I passed the rope, though I did not tie on.

The first stage of the Comb involves surmounting, by means of an arm pull, a step on the outward-bulging edge of the flake, about breast high. According to Daley, for I was not watching, B.B. had one knee on each side of the flake and had just started to pull up when he shot off backwards. I heard him call out 'Gosh,' and saw him turning over in mid-air as he disappeared from my view. He crashed head first into the rocky bed of the gully about 15 feet below and came to rest about a similar distance further down. At this point, the rope came taut, not excessively so, and probably prevented a considerable further fall. Daley was well clear to the left and below me on easy ground and was at B.B.'s side within a few seconds of his stopping.

Though there is no direct evidence, my opinion is that the accident was caused through a handhold coming away.

I made the rope fast and descended to find B. lying in the sloping bed of the gully facing outwards with a ghastly gash in the right side of his head. The bleeding was intense and as soon as this had been somewhat checked by the application of pressure with a folded handkerchief, we put a lot of clothing on to the patient and Daley went for help. I then descended for my rucksack which had been left at the foot of the climb and which contained first aid outfit and cooker and, on my return, after an absence of

perhaps ten minutes, found that the haemorrhage had started again. As I now had proper bandages, etc., I soon got the bleeding under partial control. B.B. had moments of seeming consciousness, but he was obviously in a very serious condition. I made a hot sugared drink, but he took only a very little of it. The stretcher with about ten men arrived before 9 p.m., a testimony to the speed of all concerned. There was no special difficulty in transferring the patient to the stretcher on to which he was firmly strapped, nor in reaching the easy ground to the left. I had to tie the patient's hands to the stretcher to prevent him from removing the bandages.

I went to Thornythwaite in advance of the party. I was not satisfied about the ambulance, so I telephoned Mr Todd, Keswick, who was most helpful. The party reached Thornythwaite at about 2-45. The patient was taken to the Keswick Cottage Hospital.

COMMENTS. This accident happened at 12 noon and the weather was good. Points to be noted are :—(1) That Burnett made the injured secure from a further fall by tying him to a belay ; (2) that immediate first aid was available. Beetham was accompanied by a tried mountaineer who had the sense to carry a first aid outfit. Bleeding was thus stopped by pressure from dressings and pads ; (3) All available warm clothing was put on and attempts made to give sugar ; (4) That the injured was strapped firmly on the stretcher and prevented from tearing off his bandages. Rescue work was also efficient and rapid. Dr Cameron came up to Thornythwaite to render first aid and the injured was soon in a hospital well-equipped with X-ray and nursing and medical and surgical services.

#### ACCIDENT II

Mr F. A. Milne's account reads :—

Mr Speaker, with two other men and myself, set out from Wastwater Hotel at 10-15 on Sunday morning, 20th September. He was cheerful and full of enthusiasm. The early morning had been wet and there was much low cloud, but by breakfast the weather was improving and continued to brighten ; the fells were clear of mist when we started and there was good promise of a fine day. We went up Great Gable by Gavel Neese, intending to climb *Topliet Bastion*, but some mist was falling again and Mr Speaker said that, as the holds on the *Shark's Fin* were rather delicate and would be slippery owing to the wet rock, it would be better to do something else and suggested *Eagle's Nest Chimney*.

We reached the foot of the climb at about 12-15 and Mr Speaker thought we should be able to do the climb and be down for lunch at about 2-30, leaving him plenty of time to reach Langdale for a meeting of the Alpine Club.

We then tied on the ropes and went together up the steep cleft to the stance below the first pitch. Mr Rothwell, the second, made a good belay over a large rock on the left ; Mr Mackeson, third, and I, last, waited near the top of the cleft.

Mr Speaker then started the climb and reached the large chockstone. His feet seemed to be firmly placed astride the chimney and he called out to us that there was only one way to do it and pointed out the right-hand hold higher up on the chockstone, which he then grasped securely. His

next move was to bring the left foot to a hold a little higher and then to reach out with his left hand for the hand hold. He was not satisfied and returned first the left hand and then the left foot to their previous holds. He then said, 'I don't seem to be in my usual form.' Almost immediately he tried again, obtained a good hold for his left foot and this time appeared to reach the left hand hold. At that moment, one or both hands slipped and he fell backwards, turning over whilst falling, and his head struck the rock in the cleft.

Owing to the severity of the head injuries, Mr Speaker must have lost consciousness immediately, despite the fact that he moaned twice. He made no further sound and we had only lowered him a few feet when he died.

As near as I could judge, the time then would be a few minutes before one o'clock.

After a considerable time we succeeded in lowering him to the bottom of the cleft. I then hurried down to Styhead for the stretcher and meeting two men on the way arranged for one to help me to carry the stretcher and first aid kit, while the other went to Seathwaite for a doctor and to arrange for an ambulance as a precaution in case there was still a slender hope.

By this time, the mist was very thick and it had started raining. We arrived back at *Eagle's Nest* at 2-20 p.m. In the meantime, Mr Rothwell had gone to Wasdale to fetch help. We then started to get Mr Speaker across the crag and on to the stretcher and were considerably helped by another man who then arrived, and later by others. Having secured the stretcher, we got it down *Eagle's Nest Gully*, at the bottom of which we were met by a party from Wasdale Head.

We transferred the body to the aluminium stretcher which they brought up and, two men returning to Seathwaite to cancel the arrangements made there, we carried him down the mountain to the Wastwater Hotel, which we reached at 5-20 p.m.

**COMMENTS.** *Stretcher.* The words 'transferred to aluminium stretcher' should be noted as the Eustace Thomas stretcher is much better than an ordinary one. It is, however, made of materials unobtainable at present, and the First Aid Committee are trying a wooden stretcher with skids designed by Mr. Duff of Denbigh. (Med. Press Circ, 1941). Important features in both stretchers are the extending handles and the skids. The handles enable the rear bearer to see where he is putting his feet, an almost inestimable advantage in going over rough ground. A similar comment on the superiority of the Eustace Thomas stretcher over the Styhead one was made independently by another member of the party who took Speaker down. Nevertheless, the presence of a stretcher at the top of Styhead should be generally known for a stretcher close at hand is a valuable asset. There is also a stretcher in the Youth Hostel at the top of Ennerdale.

*Times.* The times should also be noted in this accident. It occurred at 1 o'clock and the party reached Wasdale at 5-20. That

was with as efficient help as is ever likely to be available. Four and a half hours is good going, but it must be remembered that much more time may be taken if carrying a casualty who is in pain or needs frequent attention.

#### ACCIDENT in

Professor and Mrs Adrian and Mr Claude Elliott were descending *Central Gully* on the Ennerdale Face of Gable by the easier alternative. The bottom pitch was blocked by a dead sheep and the obvious alternative of the grassy ledges on the true left was taken.

In a very easy place the party were moving together and Mrs A. and C.E. were on a grass ledge above a six foot wall with broken rock at an angle of fifty degrees below it. Dr A. was on a ledge about eight feet above, further to the left. The right hand edge of the ledge was just above Mrs A. and Dr A., intending to descend to Mrs A., touched a big piece of rock. Immediately, though he put hardly any weight on his hand, a large part seemed to hinge out on its base, pushing him into space. (An examination of the ledges four days later showed that a monolith four feet high and six inches deep had come away.) C.E., who was leading, heard a noise and took a rapid belay round his right knee. The belay held when the rope came taut, and when he looked round Mrs A. was on the rock twenty feet below and Dr A. was twenty feet below her where he had stopped before the rope ran out. Mrs A's. leg was very badly shattered and Dr A. had a badly cut head and was dazed. He managed to get up to his wife but could only move with difficulty. Bleeding from the leg having stopped, C.E. went down for help, another man having appeared and joined the As. The weather was worsening at the time.

When C.E. reached Wasdale, by a stroke of luck, a man was just leaving in a car so he gave him a message to telephone to Rosthwaite, asking for a stretcher party. The mist had now come down on Beck Head. R. C. Abbott and others had joined the party bringing up first-aid rucksacks, while C.E. and young Wilson from Burnthwaite took up the stretcher and blankets, etc. When they reached the A's., the young man who had been left with them had gone to Rosthwaite with a message to say the Adrians, who had now been joined by other young men, were being taken to Wasdale. This was the cause of some anxiety but, fortunately, did not stop the rescue party from Rosthwaite.

While waiting for the rescue party and with the help of Youth Hostel members, Dr A., though hurt, had fortunately been able to give medical first-aid, and to splint the limb, in which both the thigh bone and the leg bone were fractured, with a walking stick, and also to tie it loosely, but fairly firmly to the other leg.

Apparently the metal leg splint, which should be kept attached to the first-aid rucksack was not brought up, but with a compound fracture it is doubtful whether this splint could have been applied. Bleeding was stopped fairly easily, and to avoid starting it again, the limb was disturbed as little as possible. Dr A. did well to render such effective first-aid when suffering from an injury. He needed help on the way down but improved later as he recovered from shock.

Abbatt's account gives some idea of the times—

Elliott came down to Wasdale Head immediately for help. He left about 5-30 with young Wilson from Burnthwaite, and the stretcher. I followed at 5-50 with the F.A. sack and we were all with the Adrians by 7-15. We moved off at 7-30, four to the stretcher and two assisting Dr Adrian. At Styhead by 9 p.m., where in a very bad light we managed to contact a party of police and Borrowdale climbers to whom we handed over, Wilson and myself returning then to Wasdale and the Y.H.A. people to Ennerdale.

When the Borrowdale party took charge it was blowing a gale and rain was falling heavily. At 10-30 they reached Seathwaite and found help there from Mrs Edmondson, and a trained nurse who had fortunately been brought up with the ambulance, with dry blankets, etc. Unfortunately the engine of the ambulance refused to start and another one was sent for but it did not arrive until about 12-30 or 12-45. Finally, after having some difficulty in getting through the floods, they reached Keswick Hospital at 1-30.

The Borrowdale party had been organised by the police who had been warned by messenger from Wasdale and telephone from Strands to Keswick.

**COMMENTS.** *Weather* : It is to be noted that the weather was extremely bad and the ambulance carrying the casualty only just got through the floods in time. Bad weather and the chances of time and place may make much difference.

*Stretcher* : C.E. says how helpful dalesmen are because they are used to hard work on the fells and have much greater carrying capacity than most climbers. He also praises the Eustace Thomas Stretcher, which, as Mrs Adrian said, was very comfortable. All who have used it have said that the skids are very useful for sliding over the rocks and allowing the patient to be put down for a rest without coming into contact with the ground.

*First-Aid Equipment* : Abbatt reports that there were some minor deficiencies and that the distribution between the two sacks was not completely in agreement with the inventory. Actually it is often very difficult to reassemble this kit after each accident, especially when the casualty goes down to another valley, and the Wasdale Valley is isolated. The first-aid rucksacks should contain suitable warm clothing and mackintosh and head covers for the injured. A list of contents is shown in the Handbook and the *Journal* 1938. 32, xii. 116.

A thermos of hot, sugary tea helped the casualty immensely and she said how very comforting she found lozenges supplied by hostel members, and a large butter drop which she was able to suck while

being carried down on the stretcher. The M. & B. tablets were given but proved a little difficult to swallow. Still the wound healed very well afterwards in spite of the fact that it had been exposed. There was hardly any pain so morphia was not administered. One cannot but admire her fortitude.

*Telephone* : C.E. also comments strongly on the absence of a telephone at Wasdale, and says that but for the luck of a messenger with a car being available, no rescue party could have been summoned from Borrowdale in time.

A protest re the absence of a telephone at Wasdale was made also after ACCIDENT n by one of the party who helped to get Speaker down. Then rescue parties were assembled at Borrowdale and waited there for some time to no purpose. He attributes this entirely to the lack of facilities for rapid communication. Actually, messengers were sent to cancel the Seathwaite arrangements as soon as the decision to evacuate to Wasdale was taken, but this did not prevent waste of time for doctors and rescue workers. Such waste of time may not always be avoidable, but it must be remembered that summoning these workers may mean also that they are prevented from attending to other urgent cases.

*Evacuation routes* : The choice of Borrowdale over Wasdale was justified by events in this accident. C.E. says that he considered whether evacuation via Honister with the ambulance brought up there would not have been the best. This point can be discussed, but distance counts greatly when carrying a stretcher and Seathwaite is probably the best choice.

Abbatt also says, 'I have heard that Elliott was criticised for descending to Wasdale rather than to Seathwaite, but I feel it resulted in help getting up quicker than would have been possible from Borrowdale.'

*Selection of the base* : This is not always an easy problem, especially in relation to Pillar and Ennerdale Face of Gable, where three routes are possible ; one to Wasdale and Whitehaven, another to Borrowdale, Kendal and beyond, and a third to Ennerdale, Lamplugh and Whitehaven.

Wasdale is often selected because it is the starting point of many of the climbers and rescue parties who are likely to go back there. Also in holiday time strong parties of mountaineers are usually there. It is, of course, near to Scafell.

On the other hand, it has great disadvantages. Medical and ambulance facilities are a long way off, and owing to there being no telephone, have to be summoned by messenger. (Police, Gosforth 33. Hospital, Whitehaven 75. Stretcher with J. R. Whiting, Wastwater Hotel.)

The Borrowdale valley is better if it can be reached. Seathwaite has no telephone, but Seatoller (Stretcher at Thornythwaite with Fisher Jopson, Borrowdale 37) has, and strong ambulance parties can come from Keswick if the local ones do not suffice. The Keswick ambulance (Keswick 21) service is good and the hospital (Keswick 12) well equipped, and the roads on to bigger base hospitals, like those at Carlisle (Carlisle 590), and Manchester (Ardwick 1721) are good.

Ennerdale (outfit at Gillerthwaite) is often forgotten or rejected even though it is a good evacuation route and base. A supply of carriers is problematical. It may be very difficult to find them in the valley, though there is the forestry department. It may be much the shortest and easiest route off the mountain, but the condition of the road from Gillerthwaite should be known before attempting to convey a casualty by car over it. (Angler's Inn, Lamplugh, 202 ; Police, Lamplugh 222 ; Hospitals : Carlisle 590, Whitehaven 75.)

The Langdale area is very well served by Bulman (the Old Hotel, Grasmere 72), and the strong Ambleside ambulances (Ambleside 18) and evacuation is to Kendal (Kendal 71) or Manchester Royal Infirmary (Ardwick 1721).

Coniston has a stretcher and equipment. (Police 51 ; Sun Inn 48 ; Hospital, Ulverston 61.) J. C. Appleyard (31) has local knowledge and has been of great assistance in other accidents.

#### PART II. — THE LESSONS

After making full acknowledgment to two excellent articles on the subject of rescue work by R. S. T. Chorley<sup>1</sup> and Wilson Hey,<sup>2</sup> and to the booklet issued by the First Aid Committee, the following suggestions are offered to those who may have to render service to casualties.

IF PRESENT WHEN AN ACCIDENT TAKES PLACE:  
 (1) do what you can to make the injured person safe and, remembering that he may become delirious, tie him to a belay ; (2) ascertain if possible the nature of his injuries ; (3) give immediate first aid (and it is to be hoped that after reading this article, climbers will, as Burnett did, carry simple first-aid appliances like lint, bandage, strapping, a shell dressing and brandy in rucksacks), and make him warm ; (4) if there are others present, send a messenger who can decide whether to run himself out or to keep himself with sufficient power for the return journey if the rescue party is likely to have difficulty in finding the injured ; (5) give the messenger

<sup>1</sup> F. & R. Journal 1927. Vol. vii, p. 404.

<sup>2</sup> F. & R. Journal 1935. Vol. x, p. 243, and Rucksack Journal 1936. Vol. viii, p. 175.

information, in writing if possible, of (a) the exact location of the accident, (b) the nature of the injuries and degree of incapacity : it may be necessary to ask for a doctor to come up to the injured, and (c) suggestions for evacuation routes. The selection of a base will be discussed later. He should make all speed compatible with safety but not run risks of falling and laming himself.

Those remaining on the scene, after attending to the injured can (1) study the map for each evacuation route. For instance, it is well to remember the extreme danger of parties going inside a confluence of two streams. In the winter time these streams may be so swollen that it is impossible to cross them without severe wetting and it must be remembered that severe wetting, with consequent evaporation, adds to the shock and exposure. Immersion very often results in the drenched person becoming a casualty or even dying of cold. It is the chilling due to evaporation that exhausts more than anything else. (2) Prepare for the rescue when the other party arrives. (3) Look round for water. (4) Build shelter for stoves and first-aid. (5) Clear a route for immediate evacuation and if darkness is approaching build cairns to show it. Commonsense preparations of this kind can do much.

If by any chance the injured recovers enough to move off unexpectedly it is essential to make sure that the rescue party is warned. It has happened that a doctor, who was not even a club member, staying on holiday in Borrowdale, has ungrudgingly gone up on two consecutive nights to mountain accidents, only to find on the second night that the injured had moved off to another valley. It may not, of course, always be possible to send such messages, especially in the darkness, but most accidents cause so much disturbance and discomfort to many people that every effort should be made to avoid confusion. For the same reason supplementary messages, whether by those on the spot or by those encountering messengers hurrying down, must be carefully considered and all panicky and contradictory or confusing ones avoided.

When the bearer party arrives the stretcher should, as Mr Hey says, be got up to the patient if at all possible and not the patient down to the stretcher. A good deal of harm can be done to fractures by lifting the injured about without the rigid support of the stretcher. A suspicion of fractured spine calls for the greatest care and if at all possible a doctor should supervise the moving.

A very important point is to put blankets and warmth underneath the patient as well as over him ; this is often forgotten and, as with a camp bed, if cold strikes up from underneath, no amount of warm rugs on top will prevent the patient being thoroughly chilled. This applies, of course, to what is done before as well as after the stretcher

arrives. A pillow or folded coat should be placed under the head. Also, tuck well in and exclude air holes. The patient needs to feel secure on the stretcher and also to be secure because a good deal of swaying may take place when crossing rough ground or streams. Jolting may be severe, especially in the dark, and guides should go ahead to warn about uneven ground, etc. If carrying is causing much pain, some effort should be made to relieve it, as continuous pain adds very much to the shock. The injured should be looked at frequently and asked about pain and discomfort and a morphia injection should be given whenever possible.

Send supplementary messages re progress and the condition of the injured. These may be of great help to the organiser at the base.

IF, WHEN OUT ON THE FELLS, YOU HEAR OF AN ACCIDENT : (1) See what state the messenger is in and either offer to go with him for help, or, if he is going strong, offer to go back to the injured. (2) Make sure of the locality, on a map if possible. (3) Do not panic and rush up and down with insufficient information or with unnecessary messages. (4) If you are near to the base when you get the message it may be better to go back with him and equip yourself with food and extra warmth or make sure it is being sent up for the injured and any rescuers. Rescuers may easily become useless, or even casualties, if they are short of food or insufficiently clad. (5) Make sure that the messenger himself has food and some rest, especially if he is to guide back to the accident ; he is usually so keen to get back that he wants to set off at once.

IF AT A BASE WHEN NEWS OF AN ACCIDENT COMES : (1) An organiser should be chosen and should take charge. (2) See that all available help is being called upon as there may be strong climbers or climbing parties in other houses or hotels. It should be remembered here that senior dalesmen, farmers and hotel keepers have usually useful knowledge gained from experience of previous accidents. (3) Arrange that bearer parties go up and that they are *well equipped* and have plenty of *food*, both for themselves and the injured and other helpers who may have been roped in on the way. Strong goers, including dalesmen if possible, should take up the stretcher and first-aid rucksacks. (4) Arrange that other parties are organised to act as relays of helpers who, if a sufficient number have gone up to the injured, can prepare food and hot drinks to meet the rescuers as they descend. Being carried on a stretcher is often very painful and extremely chilling, while carrying a stretcher is always hard work, so to find a cheerful group with thermos flasks and food and drink at a halfway house gives immense relief and encouragement. These relay parties may use the stoves and

heating appliances, but it is not easy to heat water on the fells and speed in getting the injured down must never be sacrificed on the way. (5) Arrange for housing at some hotel or other suitable place if messages re the nature of the injuries indicate that the patient is suffering chiefly from shock and does not need to be sent away to hospital. The chief need in such cases is snug warmth in a nest of blankets, hot drinks and perhaps massage to improve circulation. Hot water bottles are very useful but care is needed with frost-bitten extremities like fingers and toes, which should only be thawed very slowly and kept cool. The same applies to a hot bath. (7) Arrange for an ambulance when the severity of the injuries indicates that the need for surgical aid overbalances that for cold and shock. In serious accidents it is also always better to have an ambulance and a doctor waiting to receive the patients. If for some reason the doctor cannot go up to the casualty it may save time for the ambulance to take the injured down to his surgery. (8) Decide whether the injured is to go to a local hospital or a big general one. The police may take charge and, if so, matters are in their hands, but of course, advice can be given. Restful conditions are important for head injuries, but are not always the only considerations. The need for specialist attention and special appliances may indicate the big base hospital of a large town even though it is many miles away.

In one accident a climber fell and sustained multiple injuries and fractures to his limbs. He was brought back immediately to a big base hospital in a car by relatives who had motored some eighty miles to see him. He thus received the very best specialists' attention and he eventually recovered. He would hardly have done so had he been away from the facilities and special surgical knowledge offered by a big general hospital. An extra hour in an ambulance is **not** always a great strain.

With severe injuries, apart from those of the head in which rest is imperative, transfer to a distant hospital may be much the best, but decision in such cases is always difficult and no hard and fast rules can be laid down. Some responsible person, if possible, a doctor, should make the choice, or a trained nurse may be with the ambulance, and some drivers and police officers have had much experience.

Another point to note is that limb fractures are more likely to receive the right treatment in a hospital which is in an industrial area where workmen's accidents make the presence of a good fracture clinic likely.

Recognition of services of helpers in the rescue party and of hotel keepers etc., in the valley should be made. It is to be noted that dalesmen may give up a day's work and spoil their clothes ; hotels,

hostels, etc., may suffer an invasion of all kinds of people who, in many cases, may obtain food, etc., without paying for it, and local rescue officials, organisers and ambulance men may have to give up a good deal of time. The Club subscribes to some local ambulance services.

Reassembly of First-Aid kit and its return to base must be seen to. Parts may have been sent to outlying hospitals and can be brought back by the ambulance driver. Much of the First-Aid kit is quite expensive and some of it almost irreplaceable. Such action will help the local supervisors very much in their work of keeping outfits up to date. These outfits are paid for, in the first instance, by subscriptions from Mountaineering Clubs, but the cost of upkeep and replacement is met to some extent by donations from those who have received first-aid. Many casualties are not members of Clubs who have subscribed and their donations have usually been given gratefully when once the need for them has been pointed out.

A report of the accident and the rescue should be sent to the Secretary of the Club who will send it on to the First Aid Committee. Please do not be afraid of sending these reports and also making suggestions as they are most helpful to the committee. These reports are also important because after an accident and a rescue there is always a great deal of discussion and criticism of what was done and an authoritative account is of great value. Those who have taken part in a rescue should realise that there will be criticisms and discussions and not be disturbed by them. Club members should not condemn the action of anyone concerned with an accident until they have heard all sides of the question. Let them remember that no two accidents present the same problems or can be met successfully with quite the same measures. Darkness, degree of cold and wet, amount of help available, the season of the year, the need for great care in carrying, all make a difference to times and important decisions may have to be made under adverse circumstances.

The above accounts of accidents make sombre reading, especially to those who happen to have known the killed or the injured, but they raise points which give us all valuable and salutary lessons.

## CLIMBS, OLD AND NEW

*Wm. Peascod*

This year's crop of climbs includes exploration in Langdale, Buttermere and Ennerdale. The first Girdle Traverse of Bowfell Buttress has been done by the Hargreaves—Cross team, and seems to be a most interesting route. Pavey Ark has been visited by searchers of the new, whilst Birkness Combe again received full attention. Ennerdale produced a 'new' crag of some merit and considerable distance from the Valley.

With the calling up of more hill-friends, coupled with the bad weather of 1942, many of the hopes of further exploration had undoubtedly to be put away for 'future reference.'

### ENNERDALE

**MIRKLIN COVE** These hitherto unclimbed buttresses are in the HASKETT BUTTRESSES coonibe known as Mirklin Cove (Pillar Guide book). EAST There are three buttresses which have been named East, Central and West. East and Central are separated by Haskett Gully, whilst Central and West are parted by a scree gully.

**EAST BUTTRESS** IS the only one at present climbed. 325 feet. Severe. Leader needs 70 feet of rope. 1st ascent, W.P., A.B., 9th August, 1942. Start : At the base of the crag is a cairn at the foot of a short rib.

- (1) 35 feet. Climb the rib above the cairn, step left at the top then ascend a difficult corner on the right to a narrow ledge and belay.
- (2) 40 feet. From the left end of the ledge, i.e., above the 'difficult corner' traverse left starting with the right foot. Work upwards to a block and continue straight up to a rib above and to the left. Ledge and good belay.
- (3) 25 feet. Easy climbing up good rough rock. Small belay below a sweep of slabs.
- (4) 40 feet. Ascend the slabs for a short distance then traverse right. (This is rather awkward.) Good belay well to the right.
- (5) 30 feet. A mixture of grass and rock leads to some blocks at the foot of a large steep wall.
- (6) 60 feet. Above the blocks is a flake of rock on the wall. Climb to the tip of this then step right to a small ledge. Continue up the wall on good holds and where the rock impends work right and then up a groove. Small belay on the right of a short wall.
- (7) 15 feet. The short wall (avoidable). Blocks.
- (8) 80 feet. Easy ridge climbing, with belays at frequent intervals, to the top of the buttress. Cairn.

### PILLAR SHAMROCK

**SHAMROCK TOWER** What was thought to be a new route was done by LEFT ROUTE S.H.C. and A.T.H., June 1941. Starting from the Great Heather Shelf, 50 feet or so to the right of the start of Shamrock Chimney, at a grassy groove just on the right of a vertical right-angled corner.

- (1) 20 feet. Easy scrambling up the glass corner. Stance and thread belay.
- (2) 60 feet. The corner with a crack in it, ahead, was climbed to a grass stance below an apparently impossible finish (thread) ; a long and awkward step round the arete on the left then leads into the upper section of a very steep corner which gave access to easy ground. By walking across to the right an excellent thread belay was reached below a vertical crack.
- (3) 25 feet. The crack. Very strenuous and exposed with good holds. Excellent stance and belay.
- (4) 30 feet. A steep turfey corner. Grass stance and thread.
- (5) 50 feet. Continue up the steepening corner with increasing difficulty. After an awkward movement the final section of the crack yields more easily. Belay.
- (6) 50 feet. Climb some ribs on the right to the foot of a tower.
- (7) 40 feet. The tower. This is scratched and is probably taken by some parties finishing Shamrock Chimneys.

### WASDALE

SCAFELL 200 feet. Hard, severe in rubbers. This climb lies on the left hand face of Red Ghyll Buttress. RED GHYLL WALL 1st ascent, A.T.H., S.H.C., R.E.H., A.M.C., June 22nd, 1941. Start from a large, grassy ledge below a steep wall at the left end of the face.

- (1) 55 feet. A vertical corner with good holds is climbed to a narrow shelf ; above this shelf work left a short distance to a good rock ledge (no belay). The route now goes upwards to the right to a turf ledge and small belay.
- (2) 25 feet. Climb the left of two grooves. Stance and fine belay.
- (3) 45 feet. Ascend a slab from the left end of a large bilberry shelf. At the top move right to a slab with good holds. Small stance and good belay.
- (4) 30 feet. Steep rocks with good holds on the left of the face lead to a large recess and belays.
- (5) 45 feet. A slanting crack in an overhanging corner is climbed to the top of the crag. Cairn.

GREAT GABLE About 120 feet. Very difficult, with one short very severe section. Starts from gap. Descend NAPES RIDGES to the earth platform a few feet west of this point and traverse into the left hand branch of the

Needle—Perimeter Wasdale Crack. Continue along the well scratched traverse to the arete, thence across a slab, and behind the large flake of rock between the Lingmell Crack and Obverse Route. From the belay at the top of the first pitch of the Obverse, traverse horizontally for 8 feet into a crack. This section is a little strenuous (more so in reverse) and seems best done by using the left knee on a small shelf. Continue up the crack to the end of the climb. While climbing this crack, holds not actually on the Needle should not be used. June 16th, 1941, R.L.P., A. Bumstead.

### BUTTERMERE

BIRKNES COOMBE To the left of Birkness Gully are two big scree BRANT BIELD BUTTRESS gullies, then a broad buttress with a number of thin parallel faults cleaving the crag and tilted obliquely. This buttress was climbed starting from a cairn on a good flat ledge with a corner on the right and at the foot of the second fault from

the right. 1st ascent, W.P., E.B.M., 1942. 270 feet. Very difficult. Leader needs 70 feet of rope.

- (1) 40 feet. A small chimney breaking out on the left at the top. Small belay.
- (2) 15 feet. The wall above on small holds. Belay.
- (3) 60 feet. A three stepped staircase leads right to a wall climbed on the right. Block belay on right.
- (4) 30 feet. The small impending buttress above is turned on the right. Good flake in a corner.
- (5) 30 feet. A gangway on the left and a slab above and on the right (avoidable) which makes a shallow crevasse. Big belay.
- (6) 40 feet. Climb the chimney on the left ; traverse left at the finish to a thread at the foot of a long fault.
- (7) 25 feet. Follow the fault to a point where it deepens into a crack. Rock ledge and thread belay.
- (8) 40 feet. Continue up the crack to the top of the crag. Block belays.

#### GREY CRAGS

To the right edge of Harrow Buttress a narrow, flat rib runs up the wall. The route starts at a cairn at the foot of the rib, running up it, traversing the steep wall above and finishing up a groove. It gives a steeper and more continuous route than the ordinary climb. 1st ascent, W.P., A.B., 13th September, 1942. 140 feet. Very difficult. (Probably severe in boots). Leader needs 50 feet of rope. 2nd ascent, W.P., C. W. Hudson, Nov. 1942.

- (1) 20 feet. Ascend the rib to a corner on the left. Thread belay in a crack.
- (2) 35 feet. Continue up the rib to a small juniper ledge at the end of a narrow traverse, slanting up to the left. Small belays.
- (3) 25 feet. Ascend the traverse (tricky in boots). Step across some blocks at its end to a larger block belay at the bottom of a groove.
- (4) 20 feet. The groove. Belays.
- (5) 40 feet. The wall on the right of the groove to the top of the buttress.

#### GREY CRAGS

160 feet. Very severe. Magnificent rock. Leader needs 110 feet of rope. 1st ascent, W.P., A.B., 13th September, 1942. Start out of the scree gully below the slabs about fifteen feet to the left of the ordinary route traverse. Small cairn.

- (1) 100 feet. Climb up the wall a short distance until it steepens ; traverse delicately right making for a break, then ascend this to a narrow ledge running back left. Traverse the ledge then climb straight up on magnificent rock to the foot of a steep bastion and a pile of blocks below an obvious undercut of rock.
- (2) 60 feet. From the blocks step up to the left and to a niche. Leave the niche (awkward) and make a long stride to the right, over the nose of rock ; continue round a few feet, climb up a short distance then work delicately back left where better holds lead to the top of the bastion. Block belays.

#### ROUND HOW LEFT END ROUTE

On the left end of Round How is a large sweep of slabs above an impending wall ; below the wall is a number of large scattered blocks. W.P., D. G. Connor, May, 1939. 115 feet. Severe. Leader needs 90 feet of rope.

- (1) 25 feet. Ascend a steep, wet chimney above the blocks to a grass ledge.
- (2) 90 feet. Continue straight up the clean rough slabs to the top of the crag.

**ROUND HOW CENTRAL ROUTE** About the centre of the crag is a rather steep wall ; a large grass ledge above and to the left serves as a land mark. Cairn. 120 feet. Leader needs 70 feet of rope. Severe. 1st ascent, W.P., D. G. Connor, May, 1940. 2nd ascent, W.P., March, 1942.

- (1) 70 feet. Climb the wall above the cairn to a grass ledge. A bulge about midway will give most trouble. Belay round two opposing points.
- (2) 50 feet. A bulging wall above is climbed by a series of apparent zigzags to a rock ledge at the top of the crag.

### LANGDALE

**BOWFELL BUTTRESS RIGHT-HAND WALL TRAVERSE** 155 feet. Very difficult. Starts at the cairn two-thirds of the way up the North Gully on its left wall (which is the Right-Hand Wall of the East Face of the crag) traversing five ledges (four grassy). 1st ascent, May 1st, 1942, G. B. Elliot, H. M. Elliott.

- (1) 50 feet. From cairn make a rising traverse to the left over broken and grassy ledges to the obvious ledge which runs across the face. Block belay.
- (2) 15 feet. Traverse that distance to the left to the foot of crack in wall above.
- (3) 20 feet. Climb up crack with an awkward move on to the ledge, and pull up over the wall by the side of a spike of rock jutting out over face on to a grassy ledge, and belay.
- (4) 40 feet. Either straight ahead up the face (severe) or else up the grassy corner to the right followed by an interesting traverse to the left and over the top of a square-cut cleft on the face, land on grassy slope. Block belay.
- (5) 15 feet. Finish up wall to the top of Buttress.

**GIRDLE TRAVERSE OF BOWFELL BUTTRESS** 460 feet. Severe. A very interesting climb. 1st traverse, S.H.C., A.T.H., R.E.H., A.M.C.,

- May, 1942. Starts up the first pitch of the Plaque Route at the left hand end of the face. Leader needs 90 feet of rope. (1), (2), (3). The first three pitches of Plaque Route. 40 feet, 40 feet, and 40 feet. Belay.
- (4) 12 feet. Traverse horizontally right to a grassy nook and belay.
  - (5) 40 feet. A delightful traverse right is made—horizontally at first, then obliquely upwards, finishing with a rather awkward step round the the corner. Belay. (Junction with Sinister Slabs.)
  - (6) 70 feet. Traverse horizontally right to a crevasse on the great nose of the buttress. After a direct ascent of 20 feet the traverse is continued, delicately, to the right. Belay.
  - (7) 50 feet. The short wall above is climbed diagonally left to right. Belay (a few feet higher, on a ledge to the left, is the pinnacle. Belay on the Ordinary Route.)
  - (8) 40 feet. Pitch 6 Ordinary Route, to the flake belay.
  - (9) 70 feet. A descending traverse is made to the right to the foot of a groove. A very awkward step round to the right, on to the face

- of n steep slab, IVilluws. (There is a small spike on the slab for a loop of line.) After a slight ascent the traverse is continued, and finishes by descending to a grass ledge and belay on the corner of the buttress.
- (10) 60 feet. Traverse round the corner and ascend the steep wall upwards and right. Large platform at the top of a mossy gully.  
It is possible to walk off here, or a finish can be made up the last two pitches of Right Hand Wall Climb.

PAVEY ARK 370 feet. Severe. The climb starts from Jack's  
BRACKEN ROUTE Rake, half way between Gwynne's Chimney and  
and Rake End Chimney. 1st ascent, 17th June,

1942. G. B. Elliott, A. Mullan, S. A. Williams.

- (1) 15 feet. Climb open groove to good stance and belay.  
(2) 35 feet. Climb steep slab almost to top, then traverse to right on to the top of a large detached block of rock. Belay.  
(3) 40 feet. Continue up over heather covered ledges to corner effecting an exit by a 15 feet wall to right. This finishes on a steep bracken covered slope. Continue up this to a belay at the foot of face above.  
(4) 40 feet. Climb to the right of the huge smooth slab for 20 feet then traverse to right, to ledge and small spike belay.  
(5) 80 feet. Continue traverse to right, along heather-covered ledge, keeping underneath steep wall above until ledge ends. Drop down 8 feet to sloping rock shelf, then a rising traverse for 30 feet over heather covered ledges. Belay where the first obvious break in the face above appears.  
(6) 60 feet. Climb up 30 feet to corner. Step to right on to arete on small good holds, then up to good stance and thread belay in jammed quartz blocks.  
(7) 30 feet. Rising traverse to right across rock shelf to large pinnacle belay.  
(8) 40 feet. The steep face immediately behind the belay provides delicate climbing throughout if done direct. A less severe route to the left may be preferable for the last 10 feet.  
(9) 30 feet. Continue up the rocks above.

#### KEY TO INITIALS

Austin Barton	R. E. Hargreaves
S. H. Cross	E. Banner Mendus
A. M. Cross	R. L. Plackett
A. T. Hargreaves	Wm. Peascod

#### NOTES.

In these Notes it has been decided to include details of some changes in the older Lakeland climbs and a few words on some climbs of recent years.

ROCKFALLS. The rickety spike belays at the end of the third pitch of *Tophet Wall* (i.e. including the Direct Start) have disappeared—possibly thrown off by a party in a vain hope of something more stable beneath. Now, the rather tricky fourth pitch must be led from a belay which may be contrived at the end of the second pitch.

The 'fine spike of rock . . . over which the rope can be hitched' (*Route 1. Pillar Guide Book*) cannot now be distinguished from its fellow rocks in the scree shoot on the West side.

The Needle has undergone a brushing up. The blocks at the top of the *Wasdale Crack*, and visible on former photographs from the *Dress Circle*, have been removed, due to the energy of a certain youngest member of a well-known climbing family. He is a Great Lover of the Hills, and why he attacked the sacred Obelisk of Lakeland 'Glimmers,' I cannot say.

NEW CLIMBS. There seems to be doubt in some places as to the right to claim the *Face of the Boat* (Boat Howe ; *Journal* No. 36. 1942) as a first ascent. Certainly, the Groove mentioned in the description of this climb does seem to have a connection with the Hargreaves—Cross route (the actual first ascent) named the *Prow of the Boat*. (*Journal* No. 35. 1941) However, on this route, the pitch following the Groove bears right ; on Noyce's route, left. There seems, then, to be a parting of the ways here, only to come together again for the final section. If my assumptions are correct then the *Face of the Boat* is really a variation of the original first ascent, the *Prow*.

The two climbs on Raven Crag, Ennerdale, christened *Centipede* and *Scarab* (*Journal* No. 32, 1938) were climbed by the writer and S. B. Beck. *Scarab* is classed in the *Journal* as *very difficult*, but it was thought by us to be under-classed.

The fine cliff of Castle Rock of Triermain has two grand climbs running up the central massif (*Journal* No. 34, 1940). The second ascent of *Zigzag* was made by the writer and S. S. Beck in June 1941. The impression gained from this visit was that the routes are very fine indeed. The rock itself could be better, but did not give trouble. *Zigzag* has some grand situations, including an amusing gangway, a delectable semi hand-traverse and a delightful long finish.

It is a great pity some of the harder new climbs are not repeated by others. I feel sure these would help to dispel the illusion, quite prevalent in some circles, that 'Lakeland climbing is not a nerve-wracking business,' I leave that in the fond hope that it may reach the correct quarter.

## THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

*Mary Leighton*

The year began true to old custom in the heart of the hills ; Buttermere is a perfect place from which to start the year's activities. January wind and rain buffeted us up and along well-beloved crags and ridges ; Pillar drew her faithful pilgrims who found there joyful inspiration in spite of sleet in their faces and iced ledges under their fingers : High Stile, Red Pike and Melbreak were no less popular. The Edmondsons' traditional hospitality successfully counter-attacked the biting winds and soaking rain, so that indoors of an evening all was warmth and jollity, and nobody heeded the slashing at the windows.

On March 7th, the Club opened its sleepy eyes in Langdale. During the night ominous ' plops ' were heard as the snow slid off the roof, and in the morning rain was falling fast. Gimmer's shrill calls were scarce heard as yet ; the shouts of the storm-blast from Bowfell and Crinkle Crags barely reached the ears of the wakening mountaineers ; only the gentle rustling sounds from Blisco and Blea Tarn lured the tigers from their comfortable lair at Dungeon Ghyll. Off-days seem to be the rule rather than the exception in these days of increased labours, and the most energetic trip was made by two members who tackled Rossett Ghyll, ploughing waist-deep through wet snow.

And so to Easter. Everyone knows which valley is inevitably associated with the sound of boots splashing through flooded becks at this time of the year. One thing which nobody has succeeded in rationing or controlling in any way is the Easter downpour in Wasdale. One is forcefully reminded of George Basterfield's poems and songs on the subject. Happily the spirit of the climbers remains completely undamped. The log book at Brackenclose tells of climbs many and varied, old and new, easy and difficult, being done frequently in good weather and bad. This year most people walked to the meet from Borrowdale or from Langdale, or cycled up from the coast. It was fun being whirled down the Sty by a teasing wind after racing the storm over Esk Hause ; knowing that a dry change and a meal were just ahead, one had a glorious feeling of don't-carishness as the rain suddenly lashed furiously in all directions for the last half-hour. That evening Brackenclose was filled with a happy crowd of climbers, the merits of climbs new and old were discussed while the kettle boiled and the sausages fried. The smoke room at Wasdale Head was a hive of reminiscences ; Frank Smythe spirited us away to the Himalayas, where we met some of the 'tigers ' and learned of weird superstitions ; Speaker took us to

the Alps and introduced us to Alpine personalities ; then George Basterfield brought us back to earth right bang into Wasdale with his tales of ' Owd Joe,' of the chap with the ' Gurt lang thin gun,' and with his inimitable ' Cummerlan' Spring Song.'

On Easter Sunday, we tramped through swollen becks and boggy bogs, then fed on prawns and olives and marmalade **sandwiches** in front of a roaring fire at Brackenclose, and some of the millions of gallons of water which came down outside were satisfactorily converted into dozens of cups of tea inside. Every hour or so we would get up an appetite for the next section of the meal by doing acrobatics (**let** it be said to our credit that a little wood-chopping was included).

Monday was much the same sort of day, and after some knotty rope problems had been solved we drank more tea and rolled quite soberly about the floor of Brackenclose (you'll find the board and roller there still if you want to practise balance). Then we went our several ways over the fells ; some did the *West Wall Traverse* on their way over Scafell to Langdale, others crossed the Sty to call at friendly Thornythwaite before leaving the fells completely behind them.

With spring well on the way, the Club met at Thornythwaite for Whitsuntide wanderings. The weather may not have come up to the sweltering standards of some previous Whit-meets, but there was a feeling of summer-just-round-the-corner, and print dresses and khaki shorts appeared hopefully. The early morning bird-chorus with cuckoo accompaniment was just as lively, the hay grass was as sweetly scented, and the moon over the fells at night was just as silvery, so even though there were fewer tents and fewer people, the Whit meet was a Whit meet for a' that.

On Whit Sunday, some went to Scafell, and climbs were also done on Raven Crag and Dove's Nest. One party went by Gillercombe to Gable, and spent an amusing half-hour on the way up the ghyll watching hopeful hikers from Seathwaite come to a sudden halt at the lane end when they came to where the bridge ought to be ; most of them straggled away upstream towards Stockley Bridge, but one brave maiden took off her boots and forded the rushing torrent. The views from Green Gable towards the coast were framed in shifting mists and showed valleys full of soft blue shadows ; an icy wind blew across the ridge and scurried us on to the summit.

Coming back to the farm at teatime we heard of Bentley Beetham's accident, from which he has now fortunately recovered.

On Monday, we had sheeting rain in the hills, though nearer Derwentwater it was warm and mild with occasional showers.

Eskdale in June was a summer idyll, though rather a wet one. Those who walked over from Langdale via Bowfell, arriving at the



*From a Woodcut by G. D. Milner*

EVENING—THE ACK COLIN

Woolpack at 10 p.m., were fed by kind Mrs Armstrong on roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. This meet was notable for the presence of three men each with the name of a town, viz. : Oldham, Preston and Warrington. Graham Wilson and Wilfred Coombes were in the middle of a holiday ; the latter was reputed to be working out some weird and wonderful ' Tarzan's Traverse ' on the unexplored precipices of Lower Eskdale by way of relaxation after tackling sterner stuff on Scaffell. A projected trip over the Scaffells was ruled out next day by the state of the weather and the necessity of catching a bus at Seatoller. So we contented ourselves with a friendly stroll over the Hause, stopping for lunch by Cam Spout. The grassy slopes of Upper Eskdale lend themselves kindly to barefoot walking, though this practice is not recommended for the lower reaches of Grain Ghyll and the Sty !

Borrowdale had its share of trouble in August: an aeroplane crash, a climbing accident and devastating floods all in one weekend. Deep holes and broken-down walls in the fields at Seathwaite tell not of bombing raids but of raging torrents sweeping down the mountain-sides and across the valley. The wooden footbridge over Nickley Dub which used to serve as a diving board for hardy campers at Thornythwaite was washed away and fields were under water for many days. The fell folk came through it all bravely ; Mrs Edmondson rescued her floating rations to feed the helpers bringing in an injured climber from Gable ; Mrs Jopson kept her cheery smile in a kitchen full of rain-sodden garments ; the farmers brought in their stock to safety and saved what they could of the hay crop.

On August 28th, the Committee met in Ambleside, which proved to be a very good centre owing to transport limitations. A meal at Dodd's Cafe before the meeting put the company in good fettle for discussing the affairs of state (or the state of affairs), and may or may not have been the chief inducement to the sixteen members who turned up. Bentley Beetham (now looking more like his old self again), came by auto-cycle from Barnard Castle, in spite of a gammy wrist, a legacy from his accident at Whit. Nancy Forsyth cycled from Carlisle, and Kenyon from Carnforth. Various other people arrived by various other complicated means, and the result was a most enjoyable, though brief, meeting. On the Sunday, a party met on Claife Heights in the rain and had lunch with clothes steaming round a huge fire of larch ; the same clothes were later wrung out at Randa Pike, where Mrs Chorley gave us tea.

The twenty-fourth of September brought a morning of brief showers, followed by an afternoon of warm sunshine, and on this day a beloved mountaineer was laid to rest among the Wasdale

hills that are now his home. Six of us walked over Styhead carrying star-like Grass-of-Parnassus and branches of scarlet-berried Rowan. As we came into the sunlit valley a gentle stillness reigned. At Wasdale Head, we met some members of the Alpine Club who had walked over from Langdale, and Speaker's relations and one or two friends from the south. There were twenty or more people gathered together, and most were in climbing kit. As we followed our friend on his last journey through a field of corn, sunlit crags under the blue sky breathed a benediction. The service was short and simple, yet impressive. Speaker's rope and boots and rosebuds from his garden were placed on the coffin as it was lowered ; we lifted our eyes to the hills, and small birds sang. With the autumn sunlight streaming through the windows of the little church among the yew trees, any feeling of loss or sadness there might have been was transcended by one of joy and peace. Hard it is indeed to know that we shall see and hear him no more, but the Sage's words of wisdom and deeds of kindness **will** live for ever in our hearts.

On September 26th, 45 members came to Windermere for the Annual General Meeting. Before beginning the business of the meeting, the President referred to the great loss sustained by the Club in the death of G. R. Speaker, and members stood in silence for a few moments. The President undertook to write to Mrs Speaker expressing their sympathy.

On the Sunday, several members and friends enjoyed a walk in warm sunshine from Grasmere by Easedale tarn to Dungeon Ghyll, where the Alpine Club were holding a meet ; we welcome their annual invasion of our climbing grounds and hope that when happier days return they will not completely desert us for the mighty Alps. During that weekend climbs were also done on Dow Crag and Deer Bield Crag ; the latter shows promise of new discoveries by young adventurers.

October found Wasdale rich and brown. Brackenclose was by now wearing a very nonchalant air, having thrown off the shackles of debt thanks mainly to the untiring efforts of the Hut Treasurer.

We met in Langdale on November 28th, before hibernating for the winter. The Ski Club, just waking up from a long summer sleep, held its A.G.M. the same weekend. Hardy cyclists were again to the fore, and found the valley roads quite peaceful and devoid of traffic. Thirty members and friends enjoyed the hospitality of the Dungeon Ghyll Hotel. It was a pleasure to see R. S. T. Chorley, whose work now brings him nearer to the District after a prolonged absence in the south. The President led a party, including nine-year-old John Side, up Jack's Rake. Some went on

to High White Stones and the Pikes. Thin veils of mist kept floating across the ridges ; Bowfell and Crinkle Craggs were a deep rich purple, and Stool End Farm down in the valley, lit by a shaft of sunlight, looked like a doll's house set on a bright green carpet. On Harrison Stickle our shadows were thrown on the the mist for one brief moment, then the greyness vanished like magic, and there was Pavey Ark right ahead frowning like a great giant on an ink-dark stain that was Stickle Tarn.

Next morning, very early, the Club said its good-byes for 1942. Nine members left the hotel in clear moonlight with the stars twinkling over the dark blue ridge of Crinkle Craggs, and the valley was breathless with the spirit of peace ; there was a power of strength to be drawn from the stillness, a knowledge of the reality of the Peace of God on Earth. As we came down the valley and the dream-light faded before the vivid waking-light of a perfect dawn, we knew that our main job in life was to carry this knowledge which is called by some ' idealism ' into our daily lives to be translated into realism.



## IN MEMORIAM

GODFREY ALLAN SOLLY 1858 — 1942

Godfrey Solly was born at Congleton in 1858. He was educated at Rugby and was a very loyal son of the famous school. A solicitor by profession, he became Clerk to the Justices of Wirral in 1888, a position which he held for fifty years. He was prominently identified with the public life of Birkenhead of which he had been mayor and was proud to be a freeman. It was difficult to tell whether he found his numerous interests in Birkenhead and the neighbourhood as absorbing as his passion for mountaineering, but there could be no doubt of his devotion to them.

His character was built of simple elements ; piety, loyalty, transparent sincerity, devotion to duty. There was a superficial absence of the lighter elements which gave an undue appearance of solemnity. Yet his eyes could twinkle, and though the occasions when he produced a story were rare, when it came it was a good one. His long experience of public affairs and of legal practice, together with a deep human sympathy which was, however, sometimes masked by his intolerance of frailties, made him an invaluable consultant in the affairs of the many societies of which he was a member. His interests were not many, but to those he had he brought the unswerving devotion of those elemental qualities which I have indicated.

Though not in the first rank, Solly was a distinguished mountaineer. He had great strength, endurance and courage and attained a high degree of technical proficiency both on rock and ice. His reputation as a cragsman perhaps stood highest ; based no doubt on his pioneer ascents in the Lake District, the Fiisshorner and elsewhere.

He carried his mountaineering to an advanced age and was game for a climb of sorts until very near his end. His ascent of the Strahlhorn at seventy-five was a notable performance, and I had the pleasure of being led by him up the Pillar Rock a day or two after his eightieth birthday. His readiness to place his knowledge and experience of the Alps at the disposal of young British-trained mountaineers was a valuable factor in the revival of the Alpine Club after the last war, and the way he, who had passed his sixtieth year, kept up with the young tigers was a marvel to all who beheld it.

His knowledge of the Alps was extensive and intimate, dating from 1885 to 1937. In addition he was twice a member of pioneering parties in the Caucasus where he made first ascents, and had spent at least one holiday in the Canadian Rockies.

Solly /list visited the Lake District on walking expeditions, and had been at Buttermere as long ago as the time when it was customary to take a guide from there to Wasdale. He came to our crags like others of the pioneers as one seeking to practice and keep fit for Alpine mountaineering during the off seasons. Some of his first ascents, such as the *Eagle's Nest Direct*, and the Nose on Pillar Rock by the *Hand Traverse*, were not only notable in themselves, as setting what remained an outside standard for many years, but were still more praiseworthy as winter expeditions.

Solly was a sound and judicious if not a very enterprising leader. He belonged to the generation which learned to climb with guides, and took great pride in the fact that he had derived much of his craft from Melchior Anderegg, 'the greatest of the guides.' But he soon became a member of guideless parties and was one of that northern school which made guideless climbing respectable at the Alpine Club.

To complete this picture it is necessary to say something of Solly's work for the mountaineering clubs. He was of course first and foremost a devoted member of the Alpine Club which he joined in 1890, and of which he seldom missed a meeting. His Vice-Presidency in 1921 was a source of great pride and pleasure to him. He had, through his wife, close connections with Scotland, and was early a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, of which he became President in 1910. This Club always had a high place in his affections.

When our own Club was founded he was elected an honorary member, but his connection did not become intimate until his Presidency in 1920. As with everything he did, he took his duties very seriously. The period was one of great expansion and lines of future growth had to be laid down. His wise guidance during crucial years was of inestimable value, and in the course of his work he certainly came to have a great love of our Club, and became a constant attender at the meets and an abiding source of wise counsel.

At the New Year Meet at Buttermere we welcomed his presence particularly, and he seldom missed between the two wars. For many years, and until he had passed his seventieth birthday, he accompanied me on New Year's Day expeditions to Pillar Rock—sometimes he was the only volunteer. I prize the recollection of his companionship on these occasions, though he never would rope for the ascent, even when the rocks were iced, to my secret discomfort.

There are few of his calibre left, and even amidst the numerous sharp pangs of the war his going leaves a very special gap for many of us.

R. S. T. CHORLEY

The news of the death of Godfrey Solly came as a great shock to me and I welcome the opportunity of expressing my sorrow at the loss of an old and valued friend.

Though I had known him for years and we have had many walks together in the Lake District and in the neighbourhood of his home, I seldom had a chance to climb with him in Switzerland as his summer holiday there generally ended at about the time mine began.

Once, years ago, our parties met at Stein and joined forces for a short round, crossing the Steinlimmi to the Windegg hut and returning on the next day over the Zwischen Tierbergen Pass. I remember well watching Solly as he set to work on the fairly long and steep ice slope leading up to the col and in a surprisingly short time cut an excellent staircase to the top.

Another recollection is of an expedition made from Arolla when Solly was nearly seventy and I was in my sixty-second year. Taking a porter to help with the luggage as far as the top of the Pas de Chevres, to which point Mrs. Solly also accompanied us, we descended to the Seilon Glacier and thence to the Cabane des Dix. On the next morning the weather was uninviting with low clouds, mist and some snow. But Solly managed to find the way to the Glacier de la Luette and we ascended the long slopes of snow and ice to the upper part of the arete, running from the Col de Seilon to the top of the Luette, which we gained after some very hard work. Burdened as he was with a pretty heavy load, Solly, who led most of the way, showed wonderful energy for a man of his age in kicking or cutting steps in alternating snow and ice for about 1800 feet. The conditions were too bad to allow us to follow the ridge to the Pleureur as we had intended, so we returned. Solly was none the worse for his exertions.

I have never climbed difficult rocks **with** him, but he always maintained that he was at his best on snow and ice, and I know from experience how good he was as a step-cutter and in finding a way over a crevassed snowfield or glacier.

His love for the mountains and interest in anything connected with mountaineering never failed, and in one of his last letters to me he wondered whether there would be any chance of getting to the Alps, though not to climb, in 1943.

In his younger days he was a very strong walker and keen footballer. He was, I believe, one of the best forwards in the Birkenhead Park team, though this was before I knew him, and in later years I often went with him to see his old club playing matches on their ground near his home.

He did much public work of various kinds, and was a keen churchman. When staying at Arolla, one of his favourite haunts, Le usually read the lessons at the little English church there.

And now he has passed on, but he leaves behind him the memory of a lifelong lover of the mountains, a generous friend of good causes, and a delightful host. I, with many others, feel the poorer for his loss.

M. L. JOSELAND

G. R. SPEAKER 1875—1942

On 20th September, G. R. Speaker fell in the *Eagle's Nest West Chimney* on the Napes and was killed. Although the Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land so that we are almost numbed to his woundings, this blow caused a peculiar anguish in many a heart, and for each of that large band who rejoiced to call himself the Sage's friend there was a profound and lasting sense of deep personal loss. We knew at once that there had gone out of our lives a rare excellence which we shall never replace. The passing years will hardly soothe us to forget the pain of his loss.

Gustave Robert Speaker was born in 1875 in the shadow of the mountains. As a youth he grew to take a keen delight in hill walking and mountain climbing in the companionship of his father. When a young man his activities were much taken up with his business interests and, at the age of twenty-six, he founded the asbestos business which bore his name and which remained in his hands a pioneering concern, both in the realm of manufacture and in that of profit-sharing co-partnership. Speaker had three great interests in life ; his business, his home, and mountaineering. It is with the last that we are naturally here concerned.

Absorbed in youth by the work of building up his business, he yet found time for holidays in the Alps and was already an experienced mountaineer when the interlude of the war of 1914—18 occurred. His real career, however, started when he visited Wasdale in the summer of 1919 and fell in with Kelly and Holland, then at the top of their form. They at once appreciated his capacity as a climber and his excellence as a man. My friendship with him began a few months later and I was from the first swung off my feet by his breathless enthusiasm, and almost religious fervour for the hills. Speaker had indeed a quite unorthodox spiritual outlook on life. He believed in a very close relationship between this world and the next ; and I have no doubt that among the mountains he found himself raised above the ordinary state of mundane existence. They were the church in which he worshipped.

Speaker had great natural gifts as a cragsman, notably an exquisite sense of balance. Exploiting these with the brain of a scientist he became a really accomplished rock climber, and his eminence was recognised by the editor of the recent Lonsdale volume on moun-

taineering in the invitation to write the chapter on the Dolomites for it. He never showed the same enthusiasm for snow and ice, and though a sound performer on them it is as a cragsman that he will be remembered. He had an unrivalled knowledge of the Lakeland and North Welsh climbs, where he had done most of the severest routes and led a number of them even after passing his sixtieth birthday, including the Central Buttress of Scafell. A number of his climbs in the Dolomites (with Holland<sup>1</sup>), and in the Engelhorner (with Bradley), are classics. In the high Alps he had many of the best routes to his credit. Most of his mountaineering was done at an age when the majority of us have already given up first-class expeditions ; thus the distinction which he achieved becomes the more outstanding. He climbed mostly without **guides**, but he rejoiced in the companionship and skill of great climbers such as Josef Georges, Piazz, Alexander Graven, and other eminent guides with whom he occasionally made expeditions.

Speaker was a firm believer in the value of climbing clubs. He was not only a member of most of the British Clubs and of several foreign ones, but a member who was always ready to play his part in Club activities, and who inevitably achieved a position of trust and **influence**. His chief clubs were the Alpine (Committee), Climbers' (Committee and editor of the Guides), Swiss Alpine Club (British Association) (Committee) and, of course, our own Club which ever was closest in his affection and of which he was editor of the *Journal* (1933-1942) and President (1937-1939). Owing to his knowledge of and influence in the British mountaineering Clubs, he came to fill a unique place in their lives, and it is unlikely that anyone else will ever achieve quite the same position.

He was of course an outstanding personality in the Fell & Rock Club. At meets he was the life and soul of the party. He was always ready to sacrifice his day to a beginner and many are those who have graduated under his kindly guidance. He had a faculty for making the shy new member feel at home which I often envied. During the sing-songs he would make himself responsible for the parlour tricks side of the entertainment and his infectious boyish enthusiasm was an amusing contrast to his 'sage' appearance. This is a side of him which I particularly like to remember. His many ideas for Club activities provided a great stimulus. Whether it was a large scale pilgrimage such as that to the Napes Needle, or the meeting of a few friends with G. A. Solly to celebrate his eightieth birthday on Pillar Rock, Speaker was always the prime mover. He prized above all his editorship of the *Journal* and his association with the London Section. He brought to the *Journal*

•See Fe'l & Rock Club Journal

his usual enthusiasm, a sensitive, almost fastidious feeling for what is good, and an unusual capacity for ensuring technical excellence. No trouble was too great ; no expense was to be spared. From the beginning the London Section owed much of its success to his keenness, and after a time it became his child. There was no part of its activities with which he was not intimately bound up, and the annual dinner became his own personal party—the little gifts of Grasmere ginger bread, Kendal mint cake and violets for the ladies will linger in the memory as the real Speaker touch. He was treasurer from the beginning, and when Dorothy Pilley went on her world tour became secretary as well. No London Section walk was ever complete without his presence.

The outstanding trait in Speaker's character was other-worldliness. He would always put the interests of other people before his own. In his business, he made over most of his shares to his staff, and outside it no trouble or expense was too great when help or advice to others was in question. He had a genius for friendship quite unlike anything I have ever known, and this, combined with his generosity and assiduity in gifts and services, meant that his friends were showered under with good things. He would search all London for some little thing with which to please. There is hardly one of us who has not received much at his hands, but the spirit of the giver and the charm of accomplishment meant so much more to us than the gift itself. While, if we were in difficulties, his sympathy and understanding were as balm—they came from a nature which had also known sorrow, but had triumphed over it and attained a serene adjustment with life.

Sad as is the loss, I cannot but feel that he died as he would have wished, suddenly and painlessly, among his own hills and crags—to mingle his dust with his beloved Wasdale within sight of the grove of trees which he had planted and to remain there for ever at rest.

R. S. T. CHORLEY

B. S. HARLOW

On my first morning at the Manchester Grammar School I was placed next to Bernhard Harlow and within a day or two, at our first German lesson, he made an enormous impression on me because he apparently (to a new schoolboy) spoke German as freely to the German master as that hard ex-Prussian officer spoke himself. Many years later I found that he had lived a year in Germany previously.

After leaving school, we lost sight of each other for twenty years or more and then met again on the hills. I joined the Club in 1910

and he came in a year later. He never (so far as I know) climbed anything of importance but was always an ardent fell-walker with a great love for the hills and all that they stand for in the highest sense. Always quiet and unassuming, he never pushed himself forward, although the Club had no keener member. He never stood on the Committee during his thirty years membership, but was a Vice-president in 1926—27. He could never be induced to speak either at the Fell and Rock or at the Rucksack Club (which he joined in 1914), but occasionally when strongly pressed he would produce a recitation in Lancashire dialect.

Being a brassfounder, it fell to him naturally to cast in bronze the memorial which was unveiled on Gable in 1924. At about that time he blossomed out as a first-class photographer. For many years he took excellent snapshots of notabilities at meets, as well as lake and mountain views, including a successful 'snap' of the Brochen spectre which he, Hadfield and I saw from Hindscarth summit on New Year's Day, 1928. Also, incidentally, he photographed the Appleyard wedding in 1926.

Although I knew Harlow intimately for so many years, I had no idea until I spoke to the vicar at his funeral how much good he had done for the members of his church.

He wrote to me two or three years ago saying that he had had a slight seizure and asking me to go to see him. After a gradual recovery he was able to go fishing with some of his old Club friends, and even to go quietly to the hills again, but he died on September 26th, 1942. Only a week before his death he wrote to me saying that he 'was very weak but was keeping his pecker up,' inquiring about Bentley Beetham and closing with the words, 'I hope that when the present troubles are over the young fellows in the future will again be able to enjoy the freedom and the love of the hills as we have done.'

H. E. S.

#### MR. AND MRS H. S. GROSS

Apart from the 'mixed grill' of climbs embracing every category, there are, on the front-line-classic-crag-of-Doe, four supersevere 'courses,' that admit only the leadership of the highest skilled craftsman. *Doe Crag Traverse, Eliminate A, B and C* are all the creation of the late Herbert Spencer Gross. The sustained severity and thrilling exposure of the rock to be experienced throughout the four courses bears the indelible hallmark of a master craftsman. I could a tale unfold of a prowess bristling with adventure, but enough in the above to have known H.S.G. for a cragsman of the highest order.

I initially take a great pride in thus reminding the Club of these great adventures of the past on Doe because H.S.G. happened to be one of the many who accepted my invitation to leave the city street and climb.

H.S.G. was at once reclusive in nature, supersensitive and meticulous, though not timidly so. Ideally built for rock work, with slim elasticity of movement and a fine discernment of the texture and problematic aspects of the rock face, he was a joy to behold in the act of accomplishment.

H.S.G. was a great stoic, despite some of the mud of Flanders that adhered from the last Great War, but this rarely showed itself except under the stress of irritating circumstance. May I say that he was relentlessly pursued by a cruel fate for many years.

Firstly, Flanders bequeathed to him a physique undermined in health. He had a miraculous escape from death in a motor-cycling incident. He crashed, almost to death in landing from a gliding trip. This ended his climbing days. As a result of the latter disaster, he suffered a three weeks' brain storm and the return to self-consciousness found him with a deficient and confused optical vision which proved to be a permanency. For more than a year his 'firm' nursed him and maintained his appointment in full remuneration. Finally he conquered his disability and was able once again to follow efficiently his profession as a draughtsman, a marvellous conquest indicating a will power of iron.

His ideal for the future days of retirement was a peaceful home on the hills. This ideal he realised. He built 'Greengates' at the foot of Kirkby fells some few years since, and was in occupation when he died.

H.S.G. married Miss Todd who was a member of the Fell & Rock Club long before he joined our association. Mrs. Gross, along with her brother and sister (both members) visited the hills very regularly for many years. I have on various occasions had the pleasure of her presence on my rope and always found her a sound and fearless climber with a strong affection for hills and in possession of a friendly and sociable disposition.

These two hill lovers were an ideal couple and, although joined together fairly late in life, theirs was a real love affair; each seemed to overwhelm the other, as it were, with a pent-up affection of long years of waiting. They were happy, very happy, yet only for a short season, some two years or so. Fate still pursued, after taking a short rest. H.S.G. passed out on the first anniversary of the sudden death of his beloved wife. His last hope, his modest ideal, had crashed to pieces, he became a confirmed cynic, he shut himself off from the world and in spite of every friendly effort to console

him in his sad bereavement he departed this life leaving all things behind.

May both rest in peace, is, I am sure, the solemn and sincere wish of all who knew them both, a peace richly deserved.

GEORGE B.

MRS T. R. BURNETT 1923-1942

At the open doorway of a caravan there is a seated figure whose calm eyes look across peaceful water to distant sun-wrapt hills. A very lovely picture this, epitomising as it does the content of the open air and vividly bringing back to memory a very lovely personality. That seated figure is Mrs Burnett. Remembrance of her true love of the hills, of everything out of doors, of animals and of her delight in quick-witted repartee is an inspiration. The great charm of her character will live in our minds.

Though not a rock climber, Mrs Burnett had a great knowledge of the hills dating, long before her club membership, from the days when she walked over them with her father, Mr Justice Crompton. Not only was she familiar with the Lake District but with most of the mountains of Scotland.

She just loved the freedom of the caravan, for there she was able to increase her extensive experience of nature, birds, animals and flowers, and indulge in what was a real gift, her painting. Her knowledge of literature was profound and from her father she inherited her great sense of humour and sound judgment.

W. G. PAPE

A. R. THOMPSON 1908-1942

Owing to the difficulty of getting into touch with anyone competent to write of A. R. Thompson it has proved impossible to include a detailed notice in this number of the Journal. Next year, it is hoped the omission may be made good and a worthy tribute paid to this old and gallant mountaineer.

p. JACKSON, R.A.F. 1935-1942 *Killed in action at Singapore*

R. CRAIGIE 1908-1942

T. WILLETTS *Killed in action H.M.S. Hood*

PROFESSOR J. NORMAN COLLIE, F.R.S., D.SC, LL.D., F.R.S.E., F.R.G.S.  
ETC. Born 1859—Died 1942.

AN APPRECIATION by ELEANOR WINTHROP YOUNG

Professor Norman Collie belonged to the Second Age of great mountaineers, and was one of the most important of his time.

First came the early pioneers of Mid-Victorian years, who climbed and explored in the Alps mostly, and often wrote classic accounts of their expeditions. These helped to popularise the sport of mountaineering, and amongst them they formed the Alpine Club.

Next in succession came the generation to which Collie belonged—whose most stirring time was in the eighties, the nineties, and the early nineteen hundreds—a group of men, all notable in their own way, if widely different in occupation and outlook on life. These were as strictly pioneers of their time as their fore-runners had been before them. This second group were explorers, and guideless climbers, not only in the Alps but also in the Andes, the Caucasus, the Rocky Mountains of Canada, the Himalaya, Norway, and amongst their own hills of Great Britain and Ireland.

Of this group was Norman Collie, the most original possibly, gifted and daring of a number of close friends and climbing companions—which included Mummery, Hastings, Stutfield, W. P. Ker, Woolley, Slingsby and Bruce.

In thinking of Collie and his era, it is like seeing a particular line of peaks, belonging to one of the great mountain ranges. All the summits are remarkable for shape and colour and form, but here and there stands an isolated 'needle,' severe, yet accessible, rather bleak to the eye, but after some time of watching, there is seen to be light playing in the shadow and even a welcome friendliness in the approach. This particular peak seems detached from the main body yet is absolutely an essential part of the whole.

So, I think, was Norman Collie to his world—unapproachable at times to his acquaintance, yet to those who knew him well a fascinating companion and a devoted friend, standing apart from ordinary society, and yet, a host in himself when the company was to his liking.

A great scientist, he was made Professor of Organic Chemistry at University College, London, in 1902, and held this position till 1928. He was made Director of their chemical laboratory in 1912 and Emeritus Professor in 1928. He was at one time a Vice-President of the Royal Geographical Society and a Fellow of the Royal Society as well as a Fellow of the Edinburgh Royal Society. He wrote two books on mountaineering—' *Climbing in the Himalaya and on other Mountain Ranges* ' and ' *Climbs and Explorations in the Canadian Rockies* . ' He was also an artist with an impeccable taste in line and colour, which he brought to bear in his own painting of landscapes and in his unforgettable portrait of John Mackenzie, his friend and ' gillie ' in the Isle of Skye. He was a photographer of great distinction especially in his mountain scenes. He was a fine collector of rare Chinese porcelain of which he had an expert knowledge, also of jewels and Indian embroideries. Furthermore, he was widely read, especially in the ' classics '—ancient and English, and loved at all times to hit on the right quotation as an illustration to his vivid talk. An enthusiastic angler, he divided the time of his years in Skye between climbing and fishing.

Any one of these various pursuits might have contented most men, but Collie succeeded in enjoying and perfecting himself in all his activities.

It was, however, mountaineering that became his ruling passion, all other things came second to this, and in his mountain life he seemed both to lose and find himself.

He became really articulate and even poetical at times when the spirit was on him. ' Even ' he wrote in one of his books, ' if I never again had a chance of climbing a first-class peak in the Alps, I would return there to live the lazy, delightful, disreputable life in a tent near the ice and snows and the pine-woods ; to smell the camp fire, lie on my back all day amidst the grass and the flowers, listening to the wind and looking at the sky and the great silent peaks.'

Collie climbed and explored through a long period of years, particularly between 1880 and 1910, in the Canadian Rockies, where he made many first ascents ; the Himalaya when he joined Mummery and Hastings in their attempt to climb Nanga Parbat in 1895. Mummery's loss on the mountain later, left a lasting impression on Collie, and I think he was never wishful to return to the Himalaya again, for all his interest in and sympathy for those who climbed there.

He spent many seasons mostly guideless, climbing and camping in the Alps with Mummery, Hastings and Slingsby—some of the happiest of all his adventures as he himself records. Again, he was making new ascents and taking part in what always gave him peculiar satisfaction—reconnaissance and exploration. In Scotland he was truly one of the first of all to lead the way, particularly in the Western Highlands. He wandered greatly, more than often alone, in the Grampians and Cairngorms, placing his own small cairns here and there—observing, photographing and living to the full his solitary mountain life. He found his way up many of the cliffs on the Western shores and lost his heart once and for all **time** to the Isle of Skye, which later became, in fact, his home. He discovered, through this love of solitary wandering, in country hitherto unknown to himself, the most beautiful and wild mountain lands of Ireland, and it was Collie who, almost certainly, first climbed many of the sea cliffs of Donegal and Antrim in the north, and made his way up from the sea shore to the summit of Mount Brandon in the south-west and became familiar with the great mountains of Kerry and the lesser though equally beautiful and interesting peaks of Connemara. It pleased him to try and trace a relationship between the Irish ' Cuchulain,' the hero king and the ' Coolin ' in Skye.

His scientific observations gave him peculiar satisfaction when added to his mountaineer's skill or his Celtic highly strung imagination. An example of the first was his discovery of the Cioch in Skye—which has often been cited as the finest example of mountaineering reconnaissance in these islands. During a gleam of sunlight upon the cliff his trained eye picked out the shape of an unaccountable shadow, diagnosed it as an invisible pinnacle, climbed the cliff and located and named the Cioch.

As two examples of the second which touched upon Collie's ' supernatural ' leanings there is the great story he told only seldom of the ' Long Man of Ben Mac Dhui ' I once was privileged to listen to him relating his experiences on the mountain. ' When . . . I became aware that the man standing on the far side of the cairn must be well over seven feet high . . . I turned and ran, and ran, until he was left, I hoped, far behind me near the summit.' He also liked to tell of the organ peals in a certain cave in Donegal, and give his scientific explanation at the *end* of the tale, having stirred his listeners at the beginning with a saga of spirits and ghosts !

Of his coming to the Lake District, and particularly Wasdale Head, in the **1890's**, Collie wrote : ' It was my good fortune to be associated with those who were responsible for the second period,' meaning here the departure from the gully epoch to the face climbs. Here he followed Haskett Smith, John Robinson, Slingsby, Hastings and others and left his mark on Moss Ghyll in particular.

He went in the 1880's also to the Lofoten with Pricstmau and Woolley, and was pleased to lead Slings by on new expeditions there some years later.

Collie became a member of the Alpine Club in 1903, and a few years later served on the Committee. He was later elected an Honorary Member of the Fell & Rock Club. In 1920 he was chosen as President of the Alpine Club—succeeding Captain Farrar. This was fortunate as he was able to give much encouragement and help to the 1921 Everest preliminary expedition and to the 1922 active expedition led by his friend General Bruce.

Like so many truly learned men he was an indifferent speaker, though he admired the gift in others. He was at once, perhaps, too detached and too diffident. It was in fireside talk with friends that Collie excelled, and one of the pictures that will remain to those like myself who have known him well, will be Collie sitting back in his chair, his everlasting pipe set in the same cavity in his lower lip, his long legs stretched out to the warmth of the flames and his brilliant eyes flashing humour and scorn, kindness or wit as he talked.

He was sympathetic and helpful to all younger adventurers in any of his lines. But they had to have the same romantic feeling for mountains as himself if they were to hold his interest. The young mountaineer, Willy Merkel, when he was on the way to lead his German campaign on Nanga Parbat, asked us to introduce him to Collie, one of its first explorers. Merkel was a fine fellow, but his organising, modernistic 'all for the summit' point of view found Collie aloof and soon bored, and the meeting was a failure.

On the other hand that splendid young explorer and artist in living, Gino Watkins, when they met in our house in Cambridge, so far captured Norman Collie in twenty minutes' talk that Collie forthwith guaranteed him a grant from the Royal Geographical Society—the first and much needed support for his arctic expedition which Watkins received.

It is particularly interesting that one of this war's true heroes, the remarkable young airman, Richard Hillary, in his now famous book, '*The Last Enemy*,' describes Collie without knowing who he was and only little about him. Hillary and a friend were on leave and were scrambling in Skye in 1940, before the first great crash that nearly cost the young airman his life. After a grand day's outing on the hills, in the hotel at Sligachan, Hillary noticed Collie, and wrote a year after: 'We were alone in the inn save for one old man, who had returned there to die. His hair was white, but his face and bearing were still those of a mountaineer, though he must have been a great age. He never spoke . . . '—and a little Inter Hillary added, 'We thought him rather fine.' This meeting between the old man, the great scientist, mountaineer, and artist of life, and the young, equally great airman fighter and gifted writer, so near to their different deaths, is a charming picture to hold. Hillary died later as he wished to do, fighting his eternal battle with evil and cruelty—like a warrior of all times. Norman Collie passed to his rest after his long life of adventure and research . . . in the country of his adoption and where, as he wrote: 'then last of all, beyond the darkling luminous, jagged and fantastic outline of the Coolin, the glittering stars will flash from the clear sky; no wind will stir the great quiet and only the far-off sound born of the rhythmic murmur of the sea waves beating on the rock-bound shore of lonely Scavaig, remains as a memory of the storm.'

And I think, if there is any final 'legend' about this man around whom legends and stories inevitably grew, it will be that his presence remains there, sometimes felt, amongst his much loved hills in the Isle of Skye.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

This number was begun by G. R. Speaker and has been brought to completion as a co-operative venture. Gerald Lacey has been responsible for the illustrations, M. R. FitzGibbon for the Reviews, W. Peascod for ' Climbs Old and New,' and G. Anderson for the Index ; while I have had charge of the general editing. I should like to say now how grateful I am to my colleagues. Without their help, I doubt whether I should have managed to get the *Journal* out at all.

I think that we have all had one aim in view ; to try to produce a number worthy of Speaker and one that he would have approved. It is not for me to write of Speaker here. His loss has hurt many of us and made us the poorer more deeply than words can tell. Not long ago, I was reading a Life of Sir Thomas More. In it, I found an extract from a famous letter about More written by his friend Erasmus. Erasmus wrote : *Ad amicitiam natus factusque videtur*—it seems he was born and fashioned for friendship. All of us on whom the gift of Speaker's friendship was bestowed must feel that, if any epitaph could sum up in a few words his character, it would be something like this tribute paid by a man to his friend some five centuries ago.

The tailpieces for this number, which represent an innovation that will I hope be welcomed, have been done by Joan Tebbutt. We must thank her for thus putting her skill and time at the service of the *Journal*. We must also thank W. Heaton Cooper for permission to use his drawing for the frontispiece.

A matter of historical accuracy. The notice of Mrs Whiting published in the 1938 *Journal* over the initials H. P. C, was written by W. T. Palmer.

Following these Notes is reprinted a letter addressed to *The Times* in March 1942 by Mr. G. Winthrop Young, President of the Alpine Club. This letter is of considerable interest to mountaineers.

To conclude these brief Notes : I am instructed by the Committee to say that the same team has been asked to produce the next number of the *Journal*. All contributions, whether MSS., or line drawings suitable for tailpieces, should be sent to me, though photographs may be sent direct to Gerald Lacey. Correspondence in connection with Reviews should be posted to M. R. FitzGibbon and in connection with ' Climbs Old and New ' to W. Peascod.

I make no apology for the late appearance of this current number. We have all been working under conditions made difficult in one way or another by the war ; not least our printers, to whom I think we owe a very substantial debt.

TT — —  
KATHARINE C. CHORLEY

## STAMINA

*To the Editor of 'The Times' :*

Sir,

We are realising that this war **will** be decided by the quality of our manpower ; the last rounds will be won by the forces possessing the greater stamina, suppleness and trained toughness. Our material in manhood is unsurpassed. Can we do more to train it for the decisive years ?

In the past we have produced in each generation a small elite of athletes, a larger number of expert lookers-on, and a majority remainder of whose inactivities we have known nothing. In our emergency, what are we doing to better this standard ? Public interest has been caught by the little we hear of the training and achievements of the 'Commandos.' Commando training is based largely upon principles evolved during the last 50 years by our mountain climbers, many of whom are engaged upon the instruction. I write as a long-term mountaineer, and also as an educator. It is the men of our country who have made of mountain craft—as in past centuries we have made of sailing and seamanship—a masterly process of training in self-knowledge and self-discipline, in individual hardihood, and in comradeship for service. But the severities of climbing, of Commando training must defeat or discourage all save the gifted few, unless they form the culmination of a progressive preparation of heart, nerve and will. In our majority remainder, not only the physique, but even the belief in, and desire for, the possibility of personal achievement have to be regenerated.

When should this process be begun ? Our registration of boys from 16—18 has revealed a notable eagerness to serve. Some 50 per cent, of boys of 17 have already joined Training Corps or Home Guard, emulous to vie in service and hardship with their elder brothers. And yet, for lack of the right previous training, much even of this material is found to be already spoiled for good service. And another 50 per cent, remains unaccounted for. We must begin then, earlier still, during the school years and from 12 onward. To include our whole youngest generation, the right training can only properly be given through our schools, of every grade, complemented as they now are by the network of voluntary organisations.

What form should this earlier and progressive training for all-round fitness take ? To a mountaineer, the county badge scheme, supported in your leading article of October 27, **1041**, and described in 'The Fourfold Achievement' just published, makes strong appeal, since it embodies the fashion of discipline and of incentives which we have worked out in our mountaineering and seafaring experience. It has the advantage of being already under trial at a number of centres—for instance, in Hertfordshire, in H.M.S. Conway, at Derby School, Gordonstoun, at Dollar Academy, and at the Outward Bound Sea School at Aberdovey.

The scheme is capable of infinite variation. But, whatever the variation and under whatever name it may be applied, it is essential that the training be begun early, and that it contain those elements which toughen the moral as well as the physical fibre and which can continue to provoke the individual to always sterner progress. Commando qualities, General Wavell has said, are nowadays needed in every soldier of the line. They are called for also in every future good citizen.

Yours etc.,

GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG

20th March, 1942. Alpine Club.

## CLUB NOTES

The Club now numbers (December 1942) 701 members, of which 21 are graduating. In 1942, 41 new members were elected. 15 members have resigned or been written off. Deaths recorded are 17, including two Honorary members, namely Professor Norman Collie and G. A. Solly.

*The following members were elected in 1942 :—*

BARNES, F. O., Greengarth, High Hill, Keswick.  
CARPENTER, A. J. G., Newlands, The Avenue, Hampton-upon-Thames.  
COOKE, B. J., 6 Stanwick Street, Tynemouth.  
CUNLIFFE, Miss B. D., St. James' Vicarage, Accrington, Lanes.  
CUTFORTH, D. E., The White House, Sawrey, Near Ambleside.  
DICKSON, B. T., Nag's Head Cottage, Pinkney's Green, Maidenhead.  
DYDYNSKA, Mrs L. M., Lower Eaves, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire-  
ELDRIDGE, Dr R. W., Holmlea, Lymm, Warrington.  
ELLIOTT, G. B., 54 Leach Lane, St. Annes-on-Sea.  
ELLIOTT, Mrs G. B., 54 Leach Lane, St. Annes-on-Sea.  
ENGLAND, A., 22 Braithwaite Road, Keighley, Yorks.  
EVERETT, W. J., Thistledowne, Alnwick, Northumberland.  
FOSTER, Miss M., 15 Wadham Road, Frenchwood, Preston.  
FRANCE, H. J. W., Danesley, Tewin Wood, Welwyn, Herts.  
GRAY, Miss S. C., Winsley Cottage, Ripley, Harrogate, Yorks.  
GREGORY, Mrs H. K., 90 St. George's Terrace, Jesmond-on-Tyne-  
HERON, Miss N., Springsyde, Otley, Yorks.  
JENKINS, Rev F. L., The Laurels, Bishop's Castle, Salop-  
KAY, Dr GLADYS, Norfolk Lodge, Harrogate, Yorks.  
KNOTT, Miss E. M., 14 Rathen Road, Withington, Manchester 20.  
LAKEMAN, Miss M. S., "Elsternwick," Lenzie, Glasgow.  
LAWRENCE, C. A., 42 West Drive, Cheam, Surrey.  
MALING, D. H., Milestone Cottage, Hexham, Northumberland.  
MATLEY, Miss M., 15 Pinfold Road, Streatham, S.W.16.  
MEYER, H. A., Southwold, Fulmer Road, Gerrard's Cross, Bucks  
MILLARD, Mrs A. V., 39 Yarlside Road, Barrow-in-Furness.  
OLDHAM, T. M., "Mickledore," Westlands Way, Oxted, Surrey  
PRESTON, T. E., 21 Howard Street, Penrith.  
PRYOR, Mrs L., 63 Claude Road, Chorlton, Manchester -  
RICHES, Miss C., Moira House School, Ferry Hotel, Windermere.  
ROBERTS, G. S., "Silverdale," Chester Road, Hartford, Cheshire.  
SINGLETON, J. A., Y.M.C.A., 83 Bridge Street, Manchester 3.  
SUTHERLAND, G. A., Dalton Hall, Manchester 14.  
THOMPSON, HARRY, C/O. 40 Dragon Avenue, Harrogate, Yorks  
WHITAKER, FRANK, 13 Clarence Road, Harpenden, Herts.  
WILKIE, Miss F. M., 8 Town Bank Terrace, Ulverston, Lanrs.

*Graduating members elected in 1942 :—*

ECKERSALL, W., Woodside, Birtle, Bury, Lanes.  
FREEMAN, C. T., 20 Wildwood Road, Hampstead, N.W.11.  
HACKETT, J. W., St. Luke's Vicarage, Finchley, N.3.  
LEADEATER, H., Raysholme, Kendal.  
RAWLINSON, A. K., Breadsall Mount, Near Derby.

*Graduating members elected to full membership :—*

F. H. MERRILL, R. H. THOMLINSON, D. G. TURNBULL, C. H. P. VERRINDER.  
E. WORMELL.

Congratulations to the following Club members whose marriages are announced :

H. K. Gregory and Miss P. Allinson.  
W. G. Pape and Miss C. Stuart.  
Graham Sutton and Miss M. Gray.  
Mrs Pickersgill (nee Ruth Oldroyd).  
R. B. Berry.  
T. R. Clark.  
G. S. Prentice.  
W. Stafford-Gaffney.

So far as is known, 114 members are serving with His Majesty's Forces, and three are prisoners of war, namely, Captain P. N. Bartlett and Major E. M. Viney in Germany and Lieutenant E. J. Woodsend in Italy ; our thoughts and good wishes go out to them all, and to the numerous others who are doing work of importance in many spheres.

The following is an additional list of serving members received since the last Journal was published. The Secretary will be glad of any information which will help to bring the list up to date :—

F. O. Barnes	C. A. Lawrence (R.A.F.)
Miss H. Boothroyd (A.T.S.)	J. Lees
Mrs E. R. Chadwick (W.A.A.F.)	D. H. Maling (R.A.F.)
A. Chambers	W. G. Milne.
B. J. Cooke (R.E.)	W. M. Points (R.N.V.R.)
W. J. Everett	Mrs I. Robinson (W.A.A.F.)
R. A. Ewin	C. H. Scott (R.N.V.R.)
E. L. Furness	Mrs C. E. Smith (W.R.N.S.)
W. Greenhalgh	F. S. Smythe (R.A.F.V.R.)
J. J. Heap	H. Thompson (R.E.)
Dr J. Higginbotham (R.A.F.V.R.)	H. S. Thompson (R.A.F.)
Miss M. Hyde Parker (W.A.A.F.)	V. Veevers

Attention is called to the following notification issued in accordance with a Resolution of the Committee passed in October, 1939 :

" The Committee is prepared to waive subscriptions, for the duration of hostilities, of those members who are serving in His Majesty's Forces, and any member who desires to take advantage of this concession should notify the Treasurer as soon as possible."

It should be noted that :—

- (1) The concession applies to newly elected members equally with others;
- (2) It relates to subscriptions only, and not to entrance fees (Graduating members must pay their first subscription) ; and
- (3) Unless application for it is made to the Treasurer the assumption will arise that it has been decided not to take advantage of it.

The Committee have agreed that the period of Graduating membership shall be extended where necessary for the duration of the war.

It has also been agreed that the Club will refund carriage on slides used for lectures to H.M. Forces, subject to the discretion of the Custodian.

#### *First Aid*

Should an occasion arise for the use of a stretcher, the First Aid Committee are anxious to receive a report on the Duff (wooden) stretcher, which should be used where possible to conserve for more critical cases the more expensive, irreplaceable aluminium one. At a meeting of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club Committee in August, it was agreed, with the concurrence of Dr Lapage, that some responsible person at each centre should be requested and authorised to pass on for consideration by the First Aid Committee any claims from local helpers which could not be settled on the spot, the First Aid Committee then approaching relatives of the patient with a view to settlement. In the event of the patient being a member of the Club, and he or his relatives being unable to meet the claims, the Club would assist in their settlements to a maximum amount of £5 in respect of any one accident.

## BRACKENCLOSE

Miss L. Keilett, G. A. Sutherland and Miss J. R. Tebbutt have been elected to the Hut Sub-Committee in addition to those already holding office.

Arising from complaints received, or from wartime conditions, the following resolutions have been agreed upon by the Committee :

1. Fell and Rock Club members may not bring more than one guest each at a time, and must be resident at Brackenclose for the whole of the time the guest is there.
2. Members of kindred Clubs must apply to the Warden for accommodation at Brackenclose, and for the duration of the war they must not bring guests.
3. The use of sleeping bags by all visitors to Brackenclose shall be compulsory.
4. Members must give notice to the Hut Warden before visiting Brackenclose.

N.B.—Owing to wartime conditions no food can be got from the farm. Members should bring their own paraffin whenever possible, as supplies at the Hut cannot be relied upon.

Complaints have been received from the Wayfarers' Club that certain members of the F. & R.C.C. have been using the Robertson Lamb Hut without previously booking accommodation. Members are reminded that etiquette demands that anyone wishing to stay at a Hut belonging to a kindred Club should first notify the appropriate Warden. Offenders please note !

R.L.H. charges are now 2/- per night for Fell and Rock members and 2/6 for visitors.

The Pinnacle Club have given notice that owing to the situation of their Hut in North Wales, British members and friends only can be allowed to use the Hut during the war.

## THE LONDON SECTION

Sunday walks have been continued though the attendance has fallen as low as two members on some occasions. It was considered impracticable to issue a programme covering several weeks and arrangements were made from one Sunday to the next. Anyone wanting a walk should ring up the Assistant Secretary, at Abbey 7000, ext. 285 on Fridays or Saturday mornings.

Those of us who were able to go would like to express our thanks for the generous manner in which members living in the country have entertained the Section to tea after walks. In April we visited Mr and Mrs H. France at Tewin after a delightful walk through the woods of that district.

May saw us with Mr and Mrs J. O. Walker at Berkhamsted, admiring their lovely garden. In June, R. Tyssen Gee led us for a walk in the Reigate area, ending with tea at his mother's, and in November, after a walk on the Surrey hills we finished up with Mr and Mrs H. N. Fairfield at Epsom.

Other walks have led in various directions round London, but owing to the withdrawal of cheap day tickets, their radius has been somewhat limited.

The Section has suffered a terrible loss in G. R. Speaker's death. We feel the best memorial we can for the present raise is to keep going the walks which he loved.

JOYCE CHAPMAN, *Assistant Secretary.*

## CORRESPONDENCE

*To the Editor of the 'Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal'*

DEAR EDITOR,

I have read in last year's Journal the several expressions of opinion on the subject of pitons and other artificial aids to mountaineering.

Whilst one is naturally bound to take seriously the lightest word let fall by such authorities, after reading Mr Smythe's remarks with great interest, I feel I must take exception to the following sentence : ' I have only once seen a piton on a British climb and that was on a route known as the *Piton Climb* above Idwal Slabs of Glyder Fawr.' For, on taking down the well-thumbed volume of *Climbs and Ski Runs*, I turned to pages 121-22 to find the following words : ' Above the *Faith and Friction Slab*, Longland had, in the absence of a good belay, driven in a piton. It was the first that had ever gladdened my eye on a British rock climb.'

It seems that circumstances alter cases even for masters of the craft.

Incidentally, perhaps one slight reason for the slow adoption of pitons as belays on new routes is that the type of rock in the Lake District is specially adapted to the manufacture of belays—as distinct from unearthing. I can call to mind several stances on what were then new climbs and which, after a thorough search, appeared to be completely belay-less.

Instead of either abandoning the climb, or going on without safeguard, out came the recent addition to our paraphernalia—a slater's hammer—then a careful search was made for one of those diamond-shaped ribs which so often pose as good handholds, and turn out to be impostors with sloping tops. By judicious tapping with the spike of the hammer it is often possible to knock out a small block of rock thus leaving a hook-shaped notch which may make an excellent belay.

I should be glad to hear what the ' authorities ' have to say on this matter. Which, in their opinion, is the greater crime ? To knock a bit off the rock, or, to add a bit to it in the shape of an iron rail.

Yours, etc., A TIMID HERETIC.