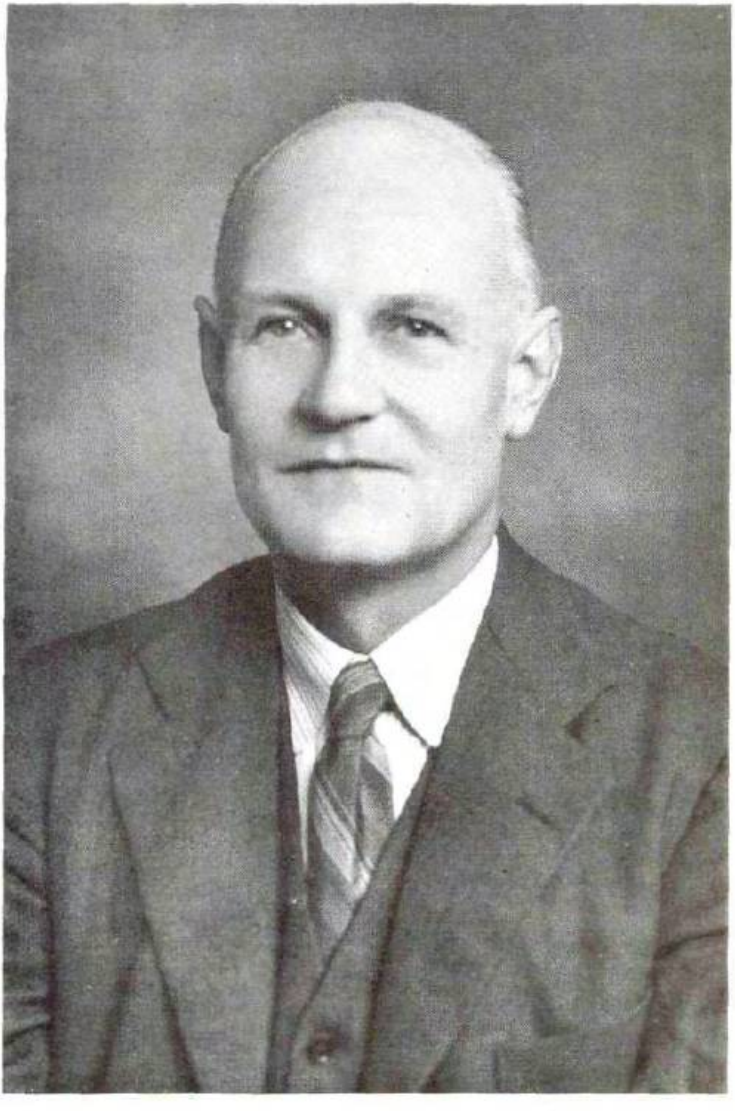

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AN INTERIM REPORT FROM BORROWDALE

Bentley Beetham

For many years a deep-seated depression has brooded over the dale. It has been fostered, if not indeed created, by comments appearing from time to time in the Journal. I will begin by first giving a few examples of these gloomy remarks, and then after each I will add a few facts which may help to dissipate the said depression.

' *Climbs in Borrowdale are few and far between.'* In the next edition of the Guide there will be detailed some 20,000 feet of climbing within a radius of about two miles !

'. . . . *their frequent wetness.'* Actually these climbs have a distinct advantage in not being situated high up on the larger western mountains, and often when the latter are swathed in wet mist and obscurity, or coated in verglas, some of these lower eastern rocks are in first-class condition. Neither is there any need to apologise for their ' *rather low standard of difficulty* ' ; there are routes here to suit all standards of proficiency.

At the date of the last Guide, 1936, after more than forty years of exploration, there were only twenty-two climbs in Borrowdale to be recorded, and, in the ten years that have passed since then, only three or four additions have been noted in the Journal ; yet now there is a sudden spate of more than fifty new routes. How is this to be accounted for ? The explanation is easy. In 1936 the Goldsborough Club, the mountaineering activity of Barnard Castle School, acquired the lease of a hut near Rosthwaite to act as its Lakeland headquarters, and it was soon apparent that if boys were to be suitably introduced to the true joys and art of mountaineering the popular crags would have to be eschewed, at least during the main holiday periods. Serious overcrowding of the rocks will increase in proportion to the influx of climbing recruits now the war is over. Reference to an actual occurrence will make the point clear. It was Easter Tuesday, and we had kept away from Gable since the preceding Thursday. As two of our stalwarts had on this day to return to business, we thought that the same would apply on a larger scale to Lakeland visitors generally, and that we might therefore visit a popular centre. On arrival at the Napes we found more than seventy people and miles of rope festooned on and about the Needle and the Dress Circle. Had we required an insight into the management of a circus or of a performing-flea show it might have been useful, but as an introduction to mountaineering it was utterly repellent. Without stopping we continued along the Gable Traverse and so to Beck Head and round to the Ennerdale

Face of Gable. Here there was not a single person visible ; we appeared to have the mountain to ourselves, and the great crags towered up in all their pristine solitude and grandeur. That there was not much climbing here suitable to the ability of our party was, of course, our fault, not the mountain's, and we quickly set about trying to rectify the deficiency—the result was the making of *Barney Buttress,* a good route of 500 feet, going from bottom to top of the crag and providing varied and interesting climbing on sound rock. And so the work has gone on ; we have made climbs, not necessarily where they offered themselves, but where they were required, and the result is that today there are more than eighty climbs in the valley to choose from.

It is often asked ' What is the climbing in Borrowdale like ?' To say that it is better or that it is worse than that found in some other place gives no idea of what it is like, and may moreover convey a wholly wrong impression ; perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that it is *different* from the climbing in most other centres. You go to Pillar or the Napes, to Scafell or Dow, and there are the climbs all spread out before you, like goods in a shop window ; and having paid due regard to the price—the standard of difficulty of each—you make your choice and up you go. In Borrowdale there is no such scansorial display : there are plenty of climbs within the reach of all, as I hope this article will reveal, but they have to be found, identified *and carefully followed.* In this last there is, I think, a hidden virtue, useful as training for the Alps, where a slight deviation from the intended route may lead one to an impasse, to less interesting climbing, or to a wrong destination altogether, and so wreck the whole expedition. On many of the grand old standard courses in Lakeland the general nature of the cliff often suggests where the way will be, and the routes are so cleaned and scratched that the faculty of route-finding or following hardly enters into the programme ; though of course the main thing, the climbing, still remains. These classic routes are often ideal ones—the easiest ways up difficult places, and any deviation from them leads only to harder climbing, and one is therefore inevitably shepherded back on to the right route. But impregnable-looking rock faces which are as yet unexplored are few and far between ; the pioneers have seen to that ; and such few as do still remain untrodden may well prove, on close acquaintance, to be as impregnable as they look. And so it comes about that many of these newer climbs in Borrowdale do not follow a natural line of least resistance up frowning cliffs, but choose deliberately a difficult way up comparatively easy rocks. Any deviation from the given route is therefore likely to reduce the difficulty, the interest, and

the pleasure of the climb. It is sometimes said that such climbs are artificial ; and so indeed they are, but a little contemplation will reveal the fact that so also are most other routes in this country—there is usually some other much easier way of gaining the same objective, the top of the climb. The difference between these ' artificial' routes and the fine old standard courses is really one more of degree than of nature. There are far too few Mustagh Towers, Matterhorns and Napes Needles, and so we have to increase the interest of attaining the summit by setting the course where difficulty lies ; but once the route has been fixed we must follow it scrupulously, or regard our effort to do the climb as a failure. This purity of purpose to follow the given route becomes more and more important on these newer climbs, since any departure from them savours not of exploration but of retreat, for it results in avoidance of the very difficulties which are the *raison d'etre* of the expedition.

Turning now to the climbs themselves, and following the method adopted in the Guide by starting at the bottom of the valley and on its eastern side ; the first place of call shall be the Bowder Stone. The cliffs hereabouts are of small stature and the climbs are therefore rather short, but some are distinctly good, and in view of their easy accessibility it may be useful to mention a few.

BOWDER STONE PINNACLE — An oak tree which grew at the foot of this much climbed route has fallen and dragged with it the whole of the rocks forming the lower part of the original first pitch, and leaving in their place a rather holdless, unsatisfactory slab. Fortunately this can be avoided by climbing a few feet above the old start and then traversing left so as to rejoin the first pitch a little higher. This does not materially alter either the standard of difficulty or the length of the climb.

BALDER'S CRACK — 120 feet. Severe. Starts a few feet to the R. of the Pinnacle Route.

(1) 30 feet. Up easy rocks to a fine stance and belay where a stalwart oak springs from the crack.

(2) 35 feet. Continue up the crack for about 30 feet and then go R. on to a spacious rock bracket where are innumerable belays.

(3) 30 feet. Move back into the crack, which is now a harder proposition, the final ten feet especially so, but the finishing holds on the top edge are a joy.

(4) 25 feet. From the top of this pitch a movement to the left brings you into the bottom of the crevasse separating the Pinnacle from the main mass. Go straight up the West ridge of the Pinnacle to the top. Then, descending a few feet into the crevasse, stride across and so reach the summit.

If this crack is harder than is desired the following may be done :—

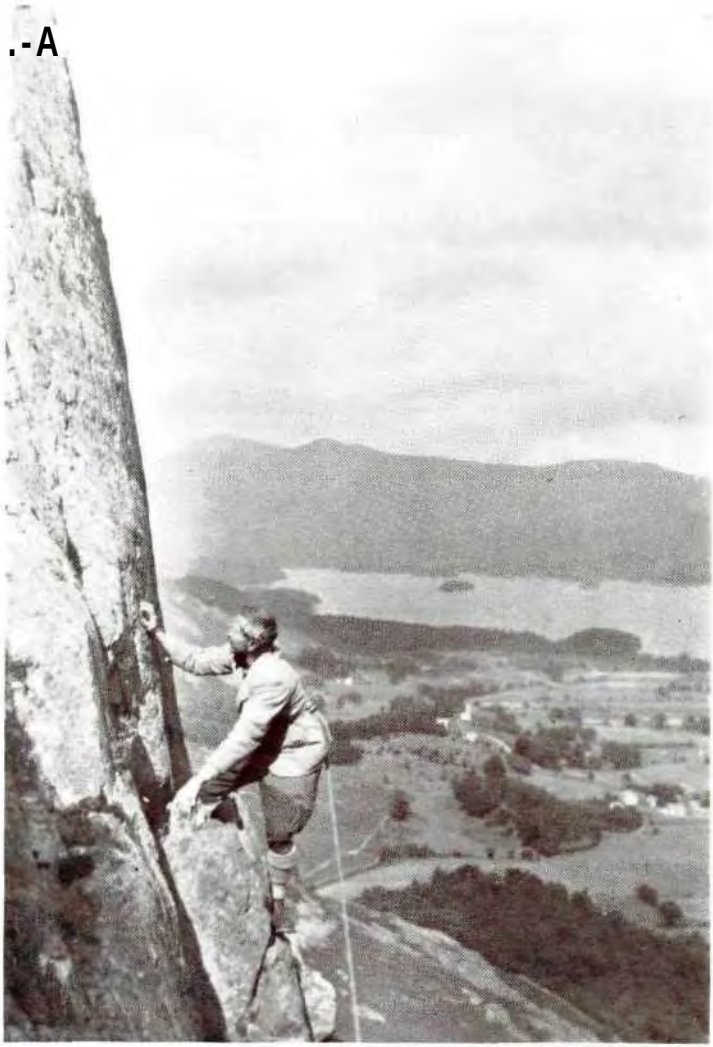
THOR'S EXIT 145 feet. Difficult.
(1) 30 feet. Starts up the first pitch of *Balder's Crack* route.
(2) 20 feet. Quit the crack and make for the nick in the attractive arfite on the R. Good stance and belay.
(3) 20 feet. Go up the arete to the spacious rock bracket (reminiscent of the Bandstand in Easter Gully). Belays innumerable.
(4) 15 feet. Move off the bracket to the R. descending into the gully.
(5) 35 feet. In the wall on the left will be seen a good clean crack, leading straight up the smooth face to the end of the crevasse at the foot of the Pinnacle. Excellent belay.
(6) 25 feet. Climb the edge of the Pinnacle to its top, then move along to its W. end, step over the crevasse and so reach the summit and the finish of the climb.

WODEN'S NEEDLE 100 feet. Difficult. This lies just round the corner to the L. from *Bozvder Stone Buttress,* and is an excellent little climb.
(1) 45 feet. Fine incut handholds on the edges of flakes take one in about 30 feet to the top of a lesser spike on the L., which may be used as a comfortable anchorage for the second. From here move first downwards to the R., and then up to the narrow top of the fine upstanding needle, which provides a belay.
(2) 55 feet. The movement upwards from here is airy and the wall above imposing ; but though the holds may seem small in comparison to the jug-handles used below, they are adequate and improve as you advance. A belay offers in about 20 feet ; the top of the wall is reached in 45 feet where there is a block, but it is better to go 10 feet farther and belay on an oak sapling.
There is no loose rock or stones on this climb, but care is needed when the top of the rock has been reached as hereon lies scree poised at a dangerous angle.

WODEN'S FACE 120 feet, Severe. Or 105 feet, Very Severe. One of the most accessible yet least visited climbs in the valley. It is on the face of a small outcrop about 40 yards to the E. of the path from the Quarry to the Bowder Stone. The bottom of the rock is screened by a sycamore tree directly behind which is the foot of the climb.
(1) 35 feet. Up the wall beneath a slight overhang and then in about 15 feet reach the jagged top of a large flake, which makes a good stance and belay.
(2) 55 feet. Get on to the wall above the flake to the R. and then work L. finishing up a slightly projecting rib leading towards a groove. Belay on a thick exposed root.
(3) 30 feet. Easy rocks to the left of a fine tree.
If something harder is desired it can be obtained by varying pitch two.

Alternative
(2) 40 feet. Having got on to wall from the top of the flake go a little farther R. and then instead of traversing L. go straight on up the face. The holds are poor and the standard is probably very severe.

Skipping much that lies between we will now go to Heron Crag, a new climbing ground about half a mile up Langstrath on its eastern side, and lying between the well-known bluff of Eagle Crag



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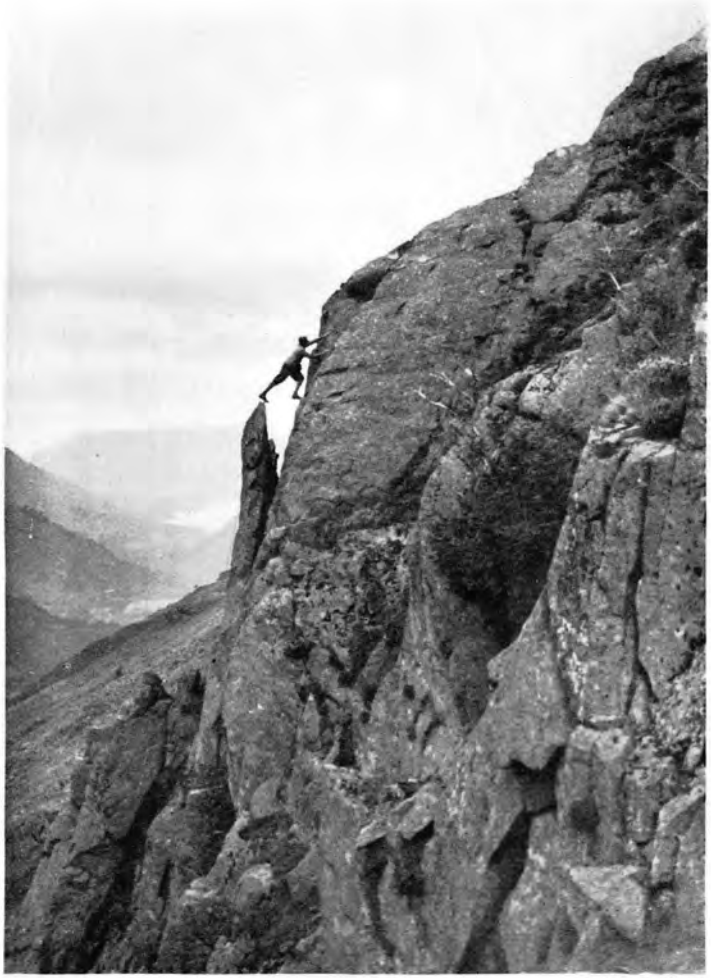
THE NORTH CLIMB, GATE CRAG



Bentley Beetham

THE FLAKE ROUTE, COMB GILL

and Sergeant's Crag. The rock is generally of good quality, is pleasingly rough, and the crag is bathed in the afternoon sunshine. After rising about 300 feet the cliff breaks up into a number of steps with steep risers between : the better climbs finish where the steps begin, but there is much pleasant climbing to be had above. The first two routes mentioned below, one a buttress and the other a gully, lie close together in the centre of the crag and start at its lowest point. They are more like some of the old standard courses than many others given in this article in that each is the natural solution of a rock problem—the line of least resistance that could be found.

HERON CRAG BUTTRESS. 360 feet. Severe.

(1) 65 feet. Up the nose of the pedestal to a rock ledge and large **flake** belay.
(2) 50 feet. Bear rather to R. to a grass ledge with tree near the gully.
(3) 70 feet. Up the nose on L. to big heather terrace. Block belay at the foot of the main step in the buttress.
(4) 40 feet. Go a few feet down the terrace to the R. to where it ends on the edge of the ridge, get on to the latter and climb straight up it. Fine situations and good climbing all the way up the ridge. A grass ledge off the ridge to the L. offers a good stance and belay.
(5) 35 feet. Regain the ridge where you left it and continue straight up ; nice, but rather difficult climbing to a belay on a small projecting flake just R. of the crest.
(6) 45 feet. Continue up the ridge for another 35 feet and then leave it and move L. to a large grass ledge and rowan tree belay.
(7) 60 feet. Up the ridge ; first keeping R. and then, where it flattens out, going slightly L. ; and so by a shallow scoop to the cairn at the summit.

HERON CRAG GULLY 280 feet. Very difficult, or mild severe. Starts just to the R. of *the Buttress.* Its first pitch of 65 feet begins in what is more like a broken curving crack than a gully, but above this, across a heathery slope, the foot of the true gully reveals itself, and the route thereafter is unmistakable and often unquitable. Belays are not numerous, but 70 feet of rope for the leader will suffice.

PINNACLE ROUTE 230 feet. Difficult. This lies a few yards to the R. of the gully and round the corner. It is an interesting little climb, and would be a thoroughly good route if it were not for the heathery- break between the 2nd and 3rd pitches. This break can be lessened by taking to the buttress at the foot of the gully, but so doing entails harder climbing than is in keeping with the rest of the route.

(1) 30 feet. The fine pinnacle is climbed by starting on the wall to the R. and later stepping across on to it. The summit may then be gained, either by its S. edge, or by the cleft between the cliff and the pinnacle. The top affords good anchorage and belay, if not comfortable seating.
(2) 60 feet. The route now takes to the slab beyond the pinnacle and goes up the wall above the slab. Belays offer at 30 and 40 feet and the last 20 feet up a vertical, right-angled corner containing only a poor crack, is very hard and the landing poor.

Above this strenuous pitch the cliff slopes back and 30 feet up steep heather follows, leading to rock at the foot of a wall.

(3) 50 feet. An easy shallow gully leads at the base of the wall to a finger of rock. Two ways of ascent are now available, one straight up the wall stepping from the top of the finger, the other to the R. up an easy crack and wall and on to a rock shelf ; both lead to a block belay.

(4) 30 feet. The route now goes straight up in the corner above the belay. The landings on the ledges are awkward, but in about 30 feet one reaches the end of a big ledge running across the face to the L. ; there is comfortable sitting accommodation here and a belay may be had round the base of a rowan bush.

(5) 60 feet. Traverse along this ledge to the L. for about 15 feet and then climb straight up on nice rock, with belays at intervals, to a broad grass ledge, the finish of the climb, and a large block belay.

There are other climbs here, but we must move on and go south to Sergeant Crag which is only about half a mile away.

For more than fifty years, ever since O. G. Jones made his way up *The Gully,* Sergeant Crag has been well known and much visited by climbers, and yet no fresh routes have been recorded in all this time. The rock is pleasantly rough, but it often weathers into rounded bull-nosed ledges reminiscent of gritstone. Nowhere does the cliff extend unbroken from top to bottom of the crag, but there is much useful rock available.

SERGEANT CRAG WEST FACE — 810 feet. Difficult. Starts at the lowest spur of rocks at the W. side. Cairn.

(1) 85 feet. Over a slab and broken rock to a grass terrace in 55 feet, then move 15 feet to R. and go up easy rock for 30 feet. Walk up grass for 10 yards and there—

(2) 50 feet. Take to nice rock for 50 feet till a great heather terrace is reached. Move to wall 40 feet on L.

(3) 75 feet. Up a groove on to wall which ascend diagonally to L. ; stance, but no belay, in about 35 feet. Traverse L. for 25 feet to a wall in two sections. Climb the wall to a grass terrace and good belay in 15 feet.

(4) 30 feet. The wall above overhangs a little but can be climbed on the L. to a heather terrace.

(5) 20 feet. Traverse L. into the bottom of a large gully arriving just above a rowan tree. This gully is split into two chimneys by a protruding rib of rock and seems to be designed for ' two-way traffic'

(6) 60 feet. Choose the L. section and find a good belay some 10 feet up the gully above the top of the actual chimney. The left wall has presented an unusually steep precipice from the foot of the chimney but here there is a brief break in its verticality and a few rowans grow therein.

(7) 45 feet. The route lies just S. of this break and goes up a fine bil of wall, by the aid of an irregular crack, to a rock ledge in 20 feet, and on up the easier wall directly above to a heather ledge and good belay Walk R. along the ledge for about 10 yards till it ends against a fine sweep of rock just above a sheep-stop.

(8) 65 feet. Easy ledges lead into a shallow scoop in the wall from which one mounts with some difficulty to a heather ledge.
(9) 50 feet. Straight on up the steep wall and then work R. to a belay on a large block at end of ledge.
(10) 30 feet. Continue upwards to a small flake belay.
(11) 65 feet. On up to the next belay on a narrow heather ledge.
(12) 50 feet. Get on to the wider ledge just above, and traverse R. for 50 feet to an exposed bulging corner. Belays are poor or absent hereabouts, but—
(13) 25 feet. The nose of the corner is of beautiful rock and in 25 feet a good belay offers.
(14) 160 feet. Above is an easy but delightful rock staircase.

Two good climbs, each of about 200 feet and of very difficult, or severe standard, lie close together and start just to the left of the foot of *two-way traffic chimney*, and may be reached either direct by easy climbing or circuitously by walking.

THE GREAT WALL 185 feet. Very difficult or severe. For the first 100 feet the route goes straight up the wall using the S. edge of a slight vertical projection on the face, almost an incipient, shallow, one-sided chimney of which the right-hand side is mainly absent. Fine situations and climbing all the way, but good stances and belays to which a second may be brought are conspicuous by their absence. One may halt frequently and comfortably, and it is probably best to do the whole of the pitch as one run-out. After about 80 feet the angle eases off a little and a belay can be had round a block projecting from a wall above a heather terrace at about 100 feet.

Above this the cliff is too broken to give a good continuous route, but there remains much height to gain and many steep walls to climb.

BROADWAY 200 feet. Very difficult or severe. Starts and keeps just to the L., the North, of the *Great Wall Route*, sometimes in a slight concavity in the face, and later, on the convexity of a broad nose.

(1) 90 feet. The climbing is nowhere easy but the nature of the rock and the holds it affords is similar on a fairly wide frontage up which varying ways of about the same standard of difficulty may be made—hence the name of the climb. There is a shelf about 45 feet up, on which grows a little juniper. A cairn was left here and a second might be brought up, but the belay is not good and it is probably better to go on another 50 feet to a big heather terrace sloping down to the L.
(2) At the back of this terrace is a long low wall or slab, 25 to 35 feet high, running N. and S. across the face. This is climbed in any of various places, and another 100 feet of climbing may be had above.

If a much lower standard of difficulty is desired then *Cheap Entertainment* has much to recommend it.

CHEAP ENTERTAINMENT 300 feet. Easy difficult. This climb starts on the L. wall at the top of *two-way traffic chimney* and goes up diagonally to the L. on easy shelves and ledges of delightful rock through the middle of the face, overlooking

Broadway and *The Great Wall.* Few climbs of such a low standard of difficulty give such good situations so easily attained, and the whole face is bathed in afternoon sunlight.

In less than 70 feet a broad heather terrace is reached where good anchorage may be had, though positive belays are scarce. Above this 2—300 feet of broken climbing, of difficulty varying according to taste and route, may be enjoyed before the top of the crag is reached.

On leaving Sergeant Crag, instead of retracing our steps down Langstrath to Seathwaite (opposite which in *Stanger Gill* there is more than 500 feet of climbing) it is pleasant to go over the divide into Comb Gill, our next place of call. Beyond the Gash Rock we pass, and probably enter, the delightful bathing pool, and looking at the fells on the opposite side we may notice on the left a long, easy ridge coming down. This is *Cam Crag Ridge* (755 feet. Moderate), which makes a nice route to the top of Rosthwaite Fell and so over into Comb Gill. This interesting, much-glaciated valley, because of its proximity to our headquarters, has been more thoroughly worked than some other parts of Borrowdale, with the result that there are over a score of new climbs in it already recorded, as well as a number of practice routes on lesser rocks. Some of these latter may be worth mentioning here for the benefit of beginners, and indeed of others too, for being so close and easily accessible they can be visited after tea or at any time when a change in the weather or in plans makes an odd hour or two available for climbing. Starting from Rosthwaite, the nearest are on Low Beck How on the lower slopes of Bessyboot, some ten minutes' walk from the main road. There are two routes here *Home Rocks, North* and *South,* each is of about 100 feet ; both are easy, the south one the more so, and the rock is good throughout. If we now walk up the track on the East side of Comb Gill until it has passed through a gate in the last fell wall on that side, and then follow the wall left, till it turns north at a corner, we will be within a few feet of the start of *Intake Ridge* (220 feet. Moderate), which gives over 200 feet of easy climbing and finishes on the top of *Glaciated Slab.* This ice-planed outcrop provides some excellent little practice climbs, which are here given from right to left as you face the slab from below.

TROD YAN 60 feet. Easy. Starts at the R. of slab and goes up easy rock into a shallow scoop, and then slightly R. up a miniature ridge to the grass on top.

TROD TAN 55 feet. Easy. Goes up the first well defined crack for about 15 feet and then bears R. up nice slabby rock to summit and belay.

TROD TETHERA 70 feet. Moderate. Up the second crack passing belays at 20 and 25 feet, and on to the crest of ridge in 55 feet, and the top and belay in another 15 feet.

TROD METHERA 80 feet. Difficult. Starts at a cairn a few feet L. of Tethera. No crack, delicate face climbing. After passing a horizontal groove a twisted crack leads to crest in 60 feet, the top is 20 feet to R.

TROD PIMP 90 feet. Moderate. Goes up the next crack, the third, to the left and then L. to the gap in the West ridge in 40 feet, now keeping R. makes the top in about 50 feet.

TROD SETHERA 95 feet. Moderate. Starts at the L. corner of the slab and goes up fissure to the gap in 45 feet and thence to the top.

TROD LETHERA 100 feet. Easy. Up the easy 40-foot chimney with good belays, then up scoop on to slab and so to the top.

TROD HOVERA 105 feet. Moderate. Climb the edge of the L. wall of the chimney from its foot and on to and over the blocks and into the gap. Good belays.

TROD DOVERA 110 feet. Moderate. Down round the corner on the L. in an overhung recess in which grows a holly. Climb this recess (thread belay at 30 feet) breaking out and finding a good belay at about 40 feet. Move L. and then up a crack in a corner to a platform, and so the summit.

Continuing up the east side of the valley we pass first *Comb Gill Flake* (230 feet. Difficult), which is quite an interesting little climb, and then *Les Deux Gendarmes* or *The Twa Hummocks* on which there are two routes, *North* and *South,* each about 250 feet and of moderate difficulty ; and so we approach the large but apparently nameless mass of rocks in whose lower and southern part lies the Doves' Nest. Just before reaching this latter a deep cut cleft may be seen high up on the left ; this is *Columba's Gully* (90 feet. Very severe), which despite its small stature and the comforting thread belay in the roof, is quite up to very severe standard.

There are many new climbs hereabouts, but two must suffice. The left (North) retaining wall of the gully gives a nice climb.

COMB GILL BUTTRESS. 240 feet. Difficult.

(1) 60 feet. Start at the cairn and take a few steps up easy rocks to the foot of a detached obelisk made of two blocks leaning against the great pinnacle above. Get on to the small mantle-shelf provided by the bottom block and so mount to the top one ; then on to and up the pinnacle by its outside edge, passing a good spike belay on the way. Delightful climbing. One can belay here, but if more accommodation is wanted cross from the top of the pinnacle to the buttress where there is a belay 10 feet up.

(2) 40 feet. The route now lies up the broken chimney a little to the L. The blocks in the upper part of this chimney, though apparently safe, should be used with care. Large perched blocks on the L. at the top can be used as a belay.

(3) 30 feet. Now move slightly downwards to the ledge on the R. and so reach a rather delicate movement round and up a large protruding block overhanging the corner. A good situation. Belay by a small mountain ash above.

(4) 30 feet. Now into and up a corner on the left, and then easily to a great block where the buttress narrows into a well-defined protruding ridge.
(5) 35 feet. Easy climbing along the ridge to its last steep step-up.
(6) 45 feet. Beautiful rock to the cairn at the top.

COLUMBA'S GULLY SIDE EXIT 205 feet. Difficult. Starts a little way up the Gully on the R. wall. The crack is unmistakable but is hidden from view behind a corner until you are opposite to it. There are blocks at the foot.

(1) 45 feet. A fine interesting crack. When nearly at the top do not finish via a scoop or gully straight ahead, but move across the vertical wall on the R. to the fine corner overhanging the start. This gives good climbing, a splendid situation and a perfect belay a few feet above the corner. The cliff slopes back here and nearly 50 feet of scrambling slightly L. up steep heather takes one to—
(2) 40 feet. Two rock steps, and ledges lead to a large platform bearing two rowans and a large spike belay.
(3) 45 feet. From here traverse R., using for the feet a narrow quartz ledge, high up on the wall, which disappears nearly horizontally round the exposed corner. An interesting pitch with good stance and belays in about 40 feet.
(4) 75 feet. Now go straight up in the corner and get on to a rib of **rock** on the L. that leads unbroken to the top. The holds are small in places, but always adequate as the angle is not severe.

Columba's Buttress which goes up the rocks to the south of the *Gully* is a little harder than either of the last two routes, while *Bond Street* on the southern edge of this mass of rock is distinctly easier, being of moderate standard.

DOVES' NEST. This place is so often visited by members and others, but so seldom are many of the attractions it offers utilised, that I feel a few notes additional to those already in the Guide may be useful.

The place is quite unlike anything else in the whole of the Lake District: it is not, as it is sometimes said to be, the result of ancient mine or quarry working; it is a rare natural phenomenon. A great rock face of a buttress has slipped bodily forward and downwards ; but instead of crashing into scree at the base of the cliff, its fall has been arrested, and it now leans back against the cliff from which it came, leaving cavities and fissures between the detached blocks and the parent rocks. It is the ' subterranean ' character of the routes through these fissures that has made Doves' Nest so widely known. The exploration of the dark passages is interesting ; the work is a pleasant mixture of potholing and rock climbing, and if it is combined with excursions on some of the outside routes which the same rocks afford, a surprising amount of exercise and entertainment is obtainable within a very small area.

On account of the sinuous and intricate nature of the routes in both vertical and horizontal planes they are as difficult to describe

as they are to follow, and Doves' Nest must be one of the few places in Cumberland where a guide, i.e., someone who really knows the terrain, is of much value to a party.

To assess the difficulty of these dark routes in terms of the standard courses is difficult, and I have been chiefly guided by observing the relative reactions of the same individuals or parties to them and to well-known courses ; and then, taking into consideration the unfamiliar conditions imposed by candle light, I have classified the Doves' Nest routes on a rather lower grade than such a comparison would normally suggest.

One often hears that Doves' Nest is the place to go to in wet weather, and though it is true that by doing so you get out of the rain, it does not follow that you get out of the ' wet,' for water drips from the roof and streams down the walls and on to unskilfully shielded candles. It would be better to say that however bad the weather is you can still put in an enjoyable day there, but that the place is interesting enough to warrant for it an allotment of better weather conditions.

Of the various courses I give pride of place to *The Rat Hole Route* (nearly 400 feet. Moderate difficulty), it is long, amusing and sufficiently strenuous to satisfy the average party.

THE RAT HOLE ROUTE — Starts just to the N. or L. of South Chimney.

(1) 50 feet. Descend behind the *Pinnacle,* pass along the chasm and up and over some blocks at the foot of the *Central Chimney* and so reach the *North Chimney.*

(2) 35 feet. 40 feet up this there is a fine stance on a shelf running out to the L. below the *Attic Cave,* but just before reaching this shelf a short, vertical, black opening some 10 inches wide in the R. wall will be seen. This is the Rat Hole.

(3) 50 feet. It is entered, most easily by lying on the right side and working one's way in. The walls are smooth and rather holdless, but as soon as a vertical position can be attained, movement straight upward leads to an increase in the width of the fissure. The correct exit is through the topmost hole far up on the R. This leads into the upper part of the *Central Chimney,* which is followed for about 15 feet finishing with a crawl under a block on the R.

(4) 90 feet. Here the descent of nearly 90 feet begins. First there is a vertical drop of about 20 feet between smooth walls conveniently near together. This leads to a ledge sloping downwards to a point vertically below the start of the pitch. Go down the ledge and through a large hole beyond its end, on good blocks, into the bed of a great sloping cleft which follow down to the bottom of the cove. The fissure here is spacious and in the floor in the R. corner there is a further hole or depression but we have found no way through in this direction.

(5) 30 feet. The route is on the other side, on the L. of the cave as you descend, and starts the ascent up an awkward little chimney, or cleft, followed by a crawl through a low passage towards the daylight of *South Entrance.*

(6) 30 feet. Instead of making the *South Entrance* climb the R. wall of the main fissure, on nice slabs, to the top of what is almost a pinnacle standing up in the fissure. Good anchorage and stance.

(7) 30 feet. Now leave the main rift and by the aid of a chockstone in a cleft to the R. reach a second higher chock, and so from it get on to a good ledge above.

(8) 20 feet. Follow this ledge for about 15 feet and then pull up over an awkward chock and so out into the *Attic Cave* in another 20 feet.

(9) Go out over the projecting block and down to the L. into *Central Chimney,* which is descended to its base behind the Pinnacle and an exit made by the lower part of the *North Chimney.*

THE BELFRY 55 feet. Very difficult. Lies in the *Southern Entrance.* Instead of turning down to the L. to get to the subterranean passages, continue straight in along a knife-edge of rock and on to a block at its further end.

(1) 25 feet. Climb vertically upwards for about 15 feet using any or all of the three cracks found there.

(2) 15 feet. Now by wedging against the sides of the chasm work back far above the knife-edge, but mounting only slightly and aiming for a small daylight opening in the ceiling. This opening has a sloping floor and is not easy to enter, the situation and approach being peculiar, but, once one is inside, it is quite comfortable for a rest before the final struggle is begun.

(3) 15 feet. This is up through a very narrow cleft which leads out on to the open face of the cliff and the finish of the climb.

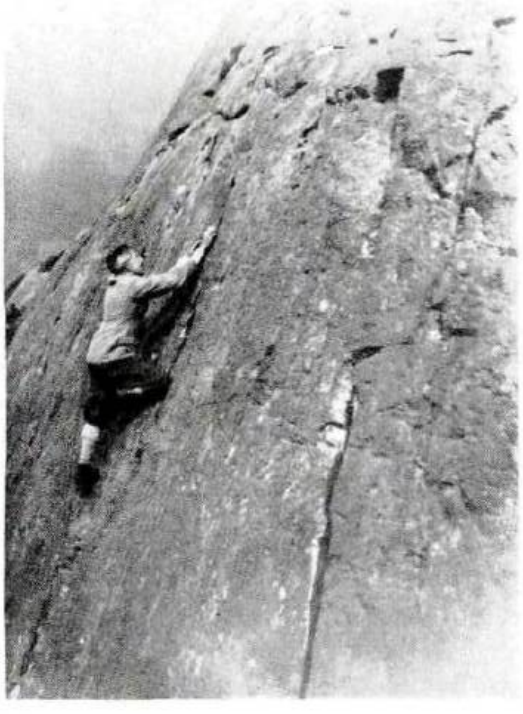
Crossing now to the other side of Comb Gill we come to Raven Crag. Here, as at Sergeant Crag, there has been but one route, *The Gully,* made and recorded in fifty years, but now there are more than half a dozen new routes, each well worthy of a visit.

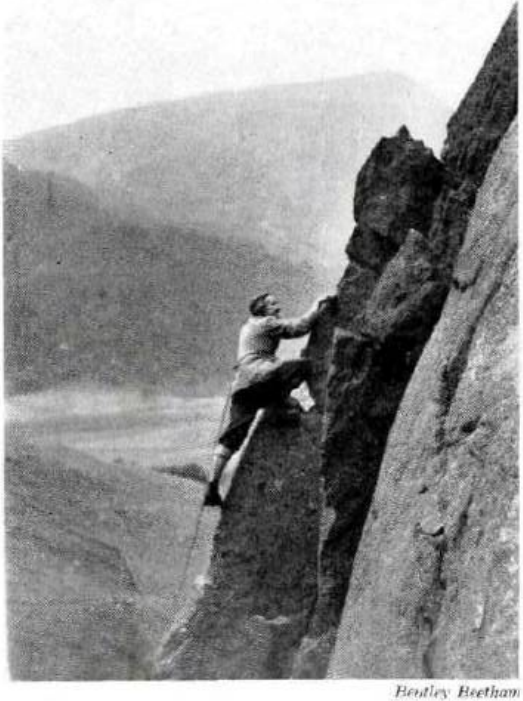
Raven Crag Buttress (350 feet. Very Difficult) is a thoroughly good climb, but as an account of it appeared in the 1942 Journal nothing further need be said of it now. Low down at the southern end of the crag there is a small outcrop having a nearly vertical face of fine rough rock ; on this, near its northern end is *Pedestal Wall,* a short but entertaining severe.

Of the moderates the best is probably *Quartz Ledge* which starts near the middle of some easy rocks sloping up to the south of *Pedestal Wall.*

QUARTZ LEDGE 280 feet. Moderate.

(1) 85 feet. Easy climbing on sound rock up a stepped crack leading L. Before reaching the corner break off to the R. and then go straight up, being thankful for the quartz-spangled ledge on the way. A broad flake offers a good belay at about 50 feet. Continue straight up until a terrace is reached. There is a block belay there 10 feet back.





Bentley Beetham

TWO OF THE CLIMBS, ACIATED SLAB, COMB GILL

Austin Burton

THE CRUX, RESURRECTION ROUTE, HIGH CRAG, BUTTERMERE

(2) 55 feet. Up the easy slabs behind the belay to a large bilberry bracket.
(3) 35 feet. Up L. using fine spikes of rock to the southern end of a large bilberry ledge with block belay.
(4) 35 feet. At the back of this ledge is a smooth vertical wall, but at its L. end will be found a narrow perpendicular crack. This is rather difficult to start, but handholds on the R. improve later. Follow the scoop above, to the ledge, 10 feet above which is a fine spike belay.
(5) 70 feet. Start in a little chimney to the L. but leave it in a few feet moving on to the wall on the R. up which go on excellent rock furnished with numerous ledges to the summit cairn.

As indicative of the amount of climbing there is to be had here, passing mention may be made of *Rowan Route* (430 feet. Very Difficult) which goes up the broken, vegetation-clad crag to the north of the gully, and though the site looks unpromising it provides some interesting and difficult climbing. *Cock's Comb* (410 feet. Moderate) starts up the easy rocks at the north corner of *Pedestal Wall* and was designed as an introductory course. *Slab Route* (255 feet. Very Difficult), goes up the great slabs to the north of the *Cock's Comb. South Gully* (300 feet. Moderate to Difficult) is the easiest thing on the crag, while *Zig-zag*, which starts to the north of the Buttress route, gives 300 feet of very difficult climbing.

Leaving Raven Crag and crossing now to the west side of Borrowdale we come to Gillercombe, wherein lies a most pleasant, though much broken, crag. It is sufficiently secluded to be away from the gaping spectator, yet is near and convenient of access by a fine approach up Sourmilk Gill ; moreover the crag is so situated as to get the full benefit of the sun. The rock is rough and nice to handle, and is of good sound quality where it has been sufficiently climbed for any blocks loosened by weathering to have been sent down.

Gillercombe Buttress and in lesser degree the *Gully* have long been well known and popular, and in the Journal for 1941 *Gillercombe Bastion* (310 feet. Very Severe) was recorded. It will be found just to the left of the gully, and left or south of this again and starting from the top of a scree recess is *Gillercombe Staircase* (385 feet. An Easy Difficult). Further south still and round the corner of some steep basal rocks is *Southern Buttress* (430 feet. Difficult), which may be made very difficult or severe to taste, by taking either the first or second of two alternative first pitches found on the right.

SOUTHERN BUTTRESS

(1) 50 feet. The ordinary route starts up the easy though steep wall in the recess round the south corner of the pedestal mass. A good ledge and belay are reached, and then a movement I,, is made into a scoop sloping L., which is followed on decreasing holds to a large grass bracket where grows a mountain ash.

(2) 55 feet. Up the wall and recess at the back of the bracket to a good belay. A junction with the harder routes where they have become easy is now made by a movement of a few feet across grass to R.
(3) 40 feet. Up to grass ledge with two sets of rocks descending to it. Choose the L. and steeper ridge which—
(4) 80 feet. Affords several interesting bits of climbing on good rock. Belays plentiful, and pitches can be made to taste. Walk half L. for 15 yards to the foot of next rocks.
(5) 90 feet. Easy staircase work leading to the foot of a small, but almost overhanging, piece of rock.
(6) 80 feet. The obstacle looks worse than it is and in 25 feet its 'beetling brow ' has been passed and in 15 feet belays offer.
(7) 30 feet. Keeping slightly L. a nice piece of rock will be met and climbed : then move R. for 25 feet to the foot of the final pitch which is perhaps the best on the climb.
(8) 45 feet. The route goes up the middle of the rocks and on to the mantleshelf, well up in the face, which is not easy to attain, and thence straight up to the cairn at the top.

Continuing left along the base of the crag, a steep scree gully will be seen coming down from the top. If this is ascended to about 60 yards from its summit a nice little climb *Gabbro* will be found on the right flank. The rock in the upper part is so good as to have suggested the name of the climb.

GABBRO 200 feet. Difficult.
(1) 35 feet. To the top of a little pinnacle standing slightly away from the rock face. Good belay.
(2) 50 feet. Traverse the face with difficulty and up a scoop to a fine belay.
(3) 30 feet. On up easy rocks to choice of belays at the foot of an impending corner.
(4) 30 feet. Straight up the nose of the corner on perfect gabbro-like rock to a fine situation and belay. This is the top of a great flake with ample fissure behind.
(5) 30 feet. Straight up steep slabs on perfect holds to a large block belay. This appears to be the finish, but by stepping across 3 yards to the L. a narrow shelf is reached from which a detached flake rises.
(6) 20 feet. Climb the flake and then step delicately from its top across, on to, and up, the final block.

To the north of *Gillercombe Buttress* lie other new routes of which one *Grey Knotts Buttress* (550 feet. Difficult), is easy to locate. It starts just to the north of the wire boundary fence at the foot of the crag and goes nearly straight up the rocks to where the same fence reappears on the summit of the crag.

The next and last place of call in the dale must be Gate Crag. This is situated on the western side of the valley opposite Castle Crag. It is easily and quickly reached by following the Grange to Honister bridle-path which passes close to its foot, about one mile after leaving the former place ; from Rosthwaite the Castle Crag track

is taken, which serves admirably. It has often been said that Gate Crag contains no climbing, and though it is true that heretofore there has been none recorded from it, I think the fault has lain more in the explorers than in the cliff they were visiting. It is not a natural climbing ground, and much of the excellent rock that it certainly does contain tends to be discontinuous and scattered about over the face, but the crag is of such large size that some of the routes yield more than 300 feet of actual climbing : in others the difficulty is compressed into smaller compass and becomes almost acute. The rock is slate and must therefore be treated with care, if not with suspicion ; but where good it is nice to climb on. Facing east it gets the full morning sun, and except on the north side the rocks dry quickly.

The different routes we have made on the crag give in the aggregate some 3,000 feet of climbing, but mention may here be made of only a few. Working across the face from left to right the first climb is

SOUTH BUTTRESS 385 feet. Easy severe. The location of this climb is suggested by its name and is marked by a large ash tree which grows at the foot of the buttress.

(1) 60 feet. Mount the little basal pinnacle and follow the clean rock to a good spike belay.

(2) 45 feet. Move round to the L., passing behind a holly bush, to the foot of a nice crack leading direct to the top of the pinnacle. (Alternative for those who do not enjoy cracks : the pinnacle is climbable at its L. or south edge.) Fine, if sharp, situation and belays at top of pinnacle.

(3) 40 feet. A difficult move round the corner on the L. and up a little chimney is now made. The rock and climbing is better the more one keeps to the R. wall of the chimney. A belay on a juniper root may be found to the L. of the route in about 40 feet.

(4) 50 feet. The way now breaks back unexpectedly to the R. round a protruding corner of rock just below a spindly yew and then goes straight up delightful flakes of rock to the top.

One must now walk up the ridge for about 100 yards to where the rocks become vertical again. Just round the corner to the L. will be found the next pitch.

(5) 45 feet. A good vertical chimney in which are chocks and one small aspen tree. A halt may be made at about 25 feet, but it is better to go on to enjoy the splendid anchorage and belvedere above. The chimney here penetrates right through the ridge thus making a narrow vertical chasm or rock crevasse going straight through from one side to the other.

(6) 30 feet. From the floor in the centre of this chasm climb upwards bearing R. to the top of the great pinnacle which provides a delightful stance and belay.

(7) 45 feet. From the pinnacle summit step over the chasm and cross sloping slabs to an obvious spike at a corner to the L. Get on to spike and find a second larger one beyond, which can be used as a belay. From here move upwards to the R. and finish the

pitch in about 20 feet. (From the belay one can go on L. for a few yards, climb a spilikin from the top of which handholds are reached which enable an interesting little pitch to be substituted for the movement to the R.)

(8) 70 feet. Easy but nice rocks follow : the angle soon eases and degenerates into a waste of stones and heath at the top of the climb.

Additional finish. 50 feet.

Towards the top of the ridge the angle improves again and presents vertical walls and sharp spilikins. Here on the L. will be found a clean shallow chimney which gives 50 feet of climbing and a nice finish at two large belaying pins on the top.

An alternative to pitches 1 and 2 may be had by ascending the vertical crack found in the South wall beyond the ash tree. This crack leads direct to the top of pitch 2, shortening the route but increasing its difficulty.

There are two other routes up this buttress, shorter and of Difficult standard. On the central mass there is an interesting climb, *Perched Block Route,* of only 200 feet but of very severe difficulty. The *North Climb* is the longest, reaching 700 feet, and of Difficult standard, but it is less direct than some of the others ; the easiest is *Upper Central Buttress,* 450 feet and of Moderate standard.

A HOLIDAY IN KULU

T. Howard Somervell

During the twenty odd years I have been living in India, I have had eight holidays walking, climbing and sketching in the Himalaya. One of two of them have found their way into the *Fell and Rock Journal.* And here is a short account of what in some ways was the best of the lot.

From South India it means a long journey to get to some parts of the Himalaya. Four or five days in a train to start with, and then a bus ride of maybe 200 miles or maybe 50. To get to Kulu took me in war-time eight days in a train, two on the road, and then the trek began. But the mountains there are very climbable, and only two or three days' march from the bus terminus, so they are more accessible than in any other region in the greatest of mountain ranges.

In 1944 my wife went home, leaving me alone in India, and there was one serious gap in my Himalayan travels, one region to which I had never gone, and of which I had heard, from General Bruce and others, a good deal—the gap between Kashmir and the Simla district. Kulu was the obvious place to go—and from there, of course, Lahul. My friend Professor Roerich was living at Naggar, and very kindly offered me hospitality, at his delightful home of Russian courtesy and Eastern culture, full of beautiful things from Tibet, China and central Asia, not the least beautiful of which are his own pictures. If I had never seen a mountain in Kulu it would have been worth going there to stay with that choice family the Roerichs. But as it happened I saw a great many mountains, and had grand weather on the whole.

On the way up to Kulu from South India I stopped in Delhi to get maps and stores and advice as to routes, coolies, etc. I was met first by the statement ' You can't get up to Kulu. All the bridges are down ' to which in bitter disappointment but fierce determination I replied ' Well, I know I can get a letter through, and if a letter can go I can, and what's more, I will.' After a train journey to Nagrota I found buses waiting at the station, boarded one of them and was taken 15 miles before our first tragedy. A terrific rain a few weeks before had washed away nearly every bridge on the road from Nagrota to Mandi, and certainly the prospect of getting through looked a bit grim. At Palampur we got out, and carried our stuff across a plank or two and a succession of boulders to the other side of the broken bridge, where another bus was waiting. This went—via many temporary bridges a few inches above water level—to the village of Joginda Nagar, where there

seemed to be no reason why it should not go on. But it just didn't, and stopped there early in the afternoon. There was no chance of getting further that day—no car or cart for hire, nobody willing to lend ponies. So we sat down on the road-side and ate spam (my first experience of that commodity) and drank beer, both kindly provided by a fellow-traveller, who was also going to Kulu. For an hour we waited on the road hoping, like Mr Micawber, that something would turn up. And marvellous to relate, it did. A station wagon with ample room for two, going our way. The Jehu was a grand fellow—we were to see a lot more of him later—and the car was the most Heath Robinson contraption I have ever seen. But it worked, and had two speeds—very fast and stop. On the former of these, with the briefest intervals of the latter, it got us through lovely Italian scenery to the Bavarian town of Mandi.

The Dak Bungalow at Mandi is first-rate, with a lovely view of that quaint mediaeval town, and gives an excellent meal. At 7 a.m. off we went again at breakneck speed, along the gorge to Katrain. And so up the road to Naggar to the beautiful and cultured house of the Roerichs. An unforgettable stay of a few days there, feasting on Roerich's lovely paintings, and on his household's truly Russian hospitality and lavish cuisine. Abdul, a silent and uncommunicative but golden-hearted Balti man with two ponies turned up on September 18th, and off we went, my luggage and food on one, tents and his stuff on the other.

Manali was our first stop, the bus terminus and the usual starting place for Lahul. A lovely apple orchard, in which are scattered many little houses which can be taken for a holiday by those who want rest and good food and walking of the ordinary mountain sort. And a dozen expeditions on the doorstep, each of which needs a tent, and a few porters or a pony, and three or four days. Fishing for those who like it—but for me the wide open spaces and the mountains of Lahul.

And so with my little Balti man and his two ponies, I started off on September 19th in showery weather. First to Koti, after visiting a *mela* on the way. This characteristic Kulu festival consists in the visit of the gods of one village to those of another, and apparently the visitors have to remain awake, dancing and slightly drunk for three days on end—so do most of the hosts. Then another village is visited, and another, and so it goes on during the slack season of the year. My companion thought it was a pathetic and degrading sight, and so it was. He said that no religion at all was better than a bad religion like that. But I'm not sure. I think the state of a person with no religion at all is more deplorable than one with a degraded and bibulous religion. But I may be wrong. Leaving

this sordid but intensely interesting sight, we went up the hill to Koti, a large Dak Bungalow in a lovely position on a hill above deep gorges. They had no milk or eggs, but the place seemed stiff with cows and hens.

Next day we walked over the easy but tiring Rothang Pass, seeing an interesting thing on the way. At about 9,000 feet one suddenly crosses a belt of entirely English vegetation. Below that level most of the trees and flowers are Himalayan but at 9,000 feet we found walnut trees, maples, sorrel, dandelions, daisies, campion, harebell, clover, wild geranium, and all the common English flowers. At 10,000 feet or so they stopped and once more we were in the Himalaya. Most of these flowers stopped there as suddenly as they had begun, and we got into pine-trees, with gentians and Alpine flora a little higher up.

Crossing the desolate and bleak Rothang Pass at 13,500 feet we look over into Lahul, a land which is geographically Tibet, though it happens to have got inside the Indian boundary. The houses, people, language, climate, treelessness, are all Tibetan, and as one looks across the deep Chandra valley one sees a typical Tibetan monastery in a rocky recess. But the chief attraction is the peaks on every side, all of them just the right size for climbing. Down the main valley the rocks and the scenery are very like parts of the Dolomites, but on a larger scale. I have never seen such precipitous rocks ; the spurs of the mountains drop into the Chandra valley with amazing steepness, and in places for thousands of feet they are very nearly vertical. As one passes the openings of the subsidiary valleys one gets a glimpse of some beautiful snowy peak, quite unnamed and only 18,000 to 20,000 feet high, but just asking to be climbed—if one could ever get up those pathless and rugged valleys. Some of them are impossible—in some, hanging glaciers roll over the edge of a sheer drop of 3,000 feet. But many of them look quite feasible, and there is ' a lot of stuff' waiting to give enjoyment to the climber along the south side of the Chandra. The northern (R) bank is quite different. The slopes are not so steep, the valleys are longer and more open, but the peaks at the head of them are higher, though with far less snow. Lahul contains hundred • of such mountains, some with large glaciers, others with precipitous rock ridges and unclimbable faces. But all waiting for the coming generation of enthusiasts to climb. During my wanderings in Lahul during the next fortnight, I climbed a few of the more amenable peaks, but did nothing very big, and only such things as were well within the powers of a solitary climber who goes for safety first.

This was primarily a sketching holiday ; I have found that one

cannot do two things properly in the mountains. If one goes for climbing, one does bad sketches ; if one goes for sketching, the climbing has got to take second place.

But of all the holidays I have had in the Himalaya, I think this Lahul one ranks about top. I saw no big mountains, though many tremendous cliffs and faces. Except for two days, the weather was perfect, and I believe it usually is, in Lahul—at any rate in September. There is a good sprinkling of Dak bungalows, all in good repair, and at most places one can get firewood, eggs and potatoes. And a large number of the climbable mountains require only one day's camping from the Bungalow in the valley.

The people are very easy-going, and seem to be almost as unreliable as the Kulu folk, who are the absolute limit in that way. But the Thakor of Gondla was very kind and obliging, and if we had needed his help there I am sure he would have given it.

The Thakor lives in the most romantic mediaeval building I have seen, except perhaps the castle of Kampa Dzong which we passed on the way to Everest. It is a tower of large size, containing ten stories of rooms, and with a look-out gallery all round the top. Around it is a group of typical Tibetan houses, the whole being built on a small hill in a commanding position at the junction of two valleys. As I gazed at this sinister and quaint building, I couldn't help wondering what the centuries have seen going on in those dark dungeons and the other rooms above built on the edge of a precipice. Torture, starvation, imprisonment of ordinary men for life, such as went on in many similar castles in this country ? Or did the tolerant and easy-going Easterner, with Buddha's precepts before him, behave a bit better than our wild, bloodthirsty mediaeval folk ? At any rate the present Thakor seemed a decent and courteous man.

On the way out to Kyelang I stuck to the track a good deal, and stayed at the bungalows. On the way back I went for higher ground, hardly followed the ordinary path at all, and got the most lovely views of peaks many of which had been invisible from the valleys. I only climbed three mountains, but as I said above I was out for sketching rather than climbing. The last day instead of crossing the Rothang pass with my ponies, I went over the two mountains immediately to its Western side, a steep climb up hard snow followed by rotten rock, and then a typical Skye ridge right along to the Beas Rikki. There are some large gendarmes, but I avoided these on their Northern side. Finally 1 traversed on to the final peak, an easy climb up broken rocks. I sketched continually while going along this ridge, and did four or five water-colours of the mountains round about, including the lovely ' Kulu

Weisshorn,' which is the finest mountain in these parts to look at. On the way down in the very late evening, I met two Himalayan Club people in a Mcadc tent, just started on their expedition while I was finishing mine.

And so to Koti, Manali, Naggar. Kulu valley seemed very blue and green after the red and yellow country of Lahul. The Roerichs once more entertained me, and I went again through their sketches and pictures just to see how I ought to have done my painting. Next day I started off again with Abdul and a pony up to Chandrakanni pass, a pass leading from the Kulu valley to the romantic and almost uninhabited country of Spiti to the East.

There we camped and I slept while he remained awake all night, keeping a large fire going to send tigers and bears away from his precious pony. I noted that in the morning the pony was alive, and I went up two of the small peaks near the Chandrakanni pass, with gorgeous views of the very fantastic and impressive peaks to the East, and the quiet beauty of the Weisshorn and other Kulu mountains to the West.

So ended my first holiday in Kulu and Lahul ; and I very much hope not my last. For variety of scenery and abundance of climbable mountains Kulu is as good as any place I have visited. Within six months of this Himalayan holiday I was once again in the dear old Lake District. And did I compare the two and say ' Oh for the colossal precipices of the Chandra gorge, with snowy peaks higher than Mont Blanc gleaming over their shoulders ?' No. I never compare mountains. If one started that, much enjoyment would be lost. All mountains are in their way perfect. And there is no rock in Lahul, I am sure, to compare with the Napes or Dow Crag. Nearly all the stuff I saw was pretty rotten, though one group of peaks had some fine Chamonix granite.

Home at last, and the Bowfell Buttress with my two boys (who were doing their first week of rock-climbing with me in April 1945) seemed somehow a bit nearer Paradise than all that the Himalaya have to offer. I hadn't touched Lakeland rock for nine years, and the pleasure of taking one's own sons up their first climb only comes as many times in a lifetime as one has sons—and not as often as that if you introduce two of them at once to the rocks.

So let us all rejoice in our British crags ; there are bigger things, but there's nothing better in the world. For all mountains, as I say, are perfect.

THOUGHTS ON A PIECE OF GLASS

F. H. F. Simpson

' I tried to turn the handle, but . . . '

—HUMPTY DUMPTY

As a child, I experienced a sensation of mild irritation on reaching the end of Humpty Dumpty's verses regarding his difficulties with the little fishes. It seemed to me that a story which had no ending was most unsatisfactory. That was long ago, and with the passing of the years I have come to the conclusion that the best among stories often has no ending. This truth, if such it be, forces itself upon me now, as I sit here with a lantern slide in my hand. It is part of our joint property, this piece of glass, and by the time you have opened these pages, some among you will have borrowed it, shown it to John Citizen, and returned it to me along with its fellows. Perhaps you have seen it before. Perhaps your reactions were only those of a person observing any photograph which an amateur has contrived to take at a suitable time of day, of a not unpleasant subject, and having the additional merit of being more or less in focus. Walt Disney's pictures would have made you laugh. Alas, I cannot do that. Let me at least try to make your heart gay.

One day in September nine years ago the present Librarian came to me as I sat on the gravel outside the New Dungeon Ghyll Hotel.

' How would you like to take over the Club Slides, and leave me to stick to the books ?' she said.

I forget what I said. When I was a kid I had a magic lantern. A brave, tall affair of Russian iron, with a blue glass peep-hole, a fine paraffin oil-lamp, and a mighty telescopic chimney, and much gleaming brass. I had too, sets of slides, coloured ones, about butterflies, battle-ships, and Aesop's fables. Today they call them projectors for they are neither magic nor lanterns, but the words have a nostalgic quality for me, and the smell of a paraffin stove, will momentarily bridge the years between. You can guess what I said.

Some weeks later Edward Lee and I called in Ambleside to collect the Club's slides. Lee's little black motor car was grey with a weekend's dust, and full of boots, shirts, ropes and other less necessary devices which we loved to have with us. The long black boxes were coaxed in, and the contents jumped and rattled along A.6. That was the unofficial beginning.

At a subsequent Langdale Committee we sat in an upstairs room

discussing the thousand things which beset the Committee always, and someone pointed out that there was a new officer with no title. After some thought the name ' Custodian' came up. Everybody looked at me, and I looked at Chorley, who was in the Chair. Chorley smiled at me approvingly.

' All right,' he said, ' Simpson, Honorary Custodian of Lantern Slides.'

' Not Honorary,' corrected the Secretary. ' Just plain Custodian.'

The President concurred, and down I went in the Minute Book, just plain Custodian. Earlier in the evening the Committee had determined to abandon the use of the pompous little word ' Honorary' as no one supposed that the Club's officials drew a fat salary. That was the official beginning.

Since that day, nine years ago, I have been hearing from first one, and then another, of the owners of the names in the little red book. In that time I have learned much about you, you Club member. What you do for a living. Whether you are tidy or untidy, particular or casual. Which newspapers you read. The regularity with which you pay your bills, for you are prone to use the nearest scraps of paper for packing. In fact I can, in many cases, drop you into a slot in our complex social order with the same ease as I can put this slide back where it belongs. Most captivating discovery, I can tell just what it was that first put your eager feet on the rough track leading up the valley, but never what it was that made you come again. I once nursed the theory that everyone who joined the Fell and Rock was above criticism. That, obviously, was when I was very young and had not joined myself, for now I know that you are just as representative a cross-section of the English people as may be found in any tennis club ; just as sage and just as silly and sentimental. I have watched your enthusiasms wax and wane, you young ones, and have admired the steady flame which blazes up every November when the time comes for the old stager's lecture to the Inner Wheel, or whatever was favoured. Most probably all officers of the Club are similarly well-informed about the members with whom they are in contact, and while, with your old letters before me, I ponder the sort of people you are, I dream more often, among my fragile charges, of other things.

When you have a cupboard full of little pictures, and a tendency to dream such as mine, you cannot help it. Humpty Dumpty was a dreamer. Whatever he sought was just round the corner. He never quite got there. Neither do I. Take this picture for instance : as I hold it up to the window I am looking through a smaller window, the frame of which is just black paper binding and a mask. Away to the left of it is an angular domestic chimney-stack, with an

assortment of chimney-pots on the top of it. There is another on the right, and more in the distance, with the same variety of pots, telling of the temperament of the particular flues which they crown, as surely as your letters tell me about you. But I do not see them now. The little picture shows me a wide sunny foreground of grass and rock, part of the tableland above Wrynose reaching up to the main ridge of the Crinkles. The Eastern marches of the Lake District are spread before me from Helvellyn and Saint Sunday Crag to the leafy dales round the head of Windermere, the smooth flanks of Fairfield, and the long ridge falling from 111 Bell towards Staveley. Here and there is a smudge of smoke from a heather or bracken burning. Pike o' Blisco fills the middle distance with his blunt cone of silver rock and golden grass. The West wind, with a sea track short enough to fill the sky with lazy prosperous clouds, blows into the picture, filling it with movement. The predominating colours are silver and blue, with the light gold of the grass in gentle emphasis. There are no deep shadows, for the sunny edges of the clouds throw down abundant diffused light. There is the picture. Add to it the silence, the warmth of the sun at noon, and stand with me before it. It could have looked like this a hundred years ago. It may be like this again tomorrow when you and I have gone.

We shall journey to this picture from Buttermere, and after a reluctant flight down Newlands, come to a noisy Keswick. Keswick is a place of extremes of emotion. The vast satisfaction of banging down a rucksack by the telephone box in the Market square, and melting at once into the contemporary scene to await a Seatoller bus, for, all of a sudden there is no hurry. Between buildings the hills watch, as one idles down the street to the bridge from which Skiddaw can be seen, and the row of poplars near to which Wakefield lives. The unpleasant rush up the hill, past the Museum, to the Station, for a train that is going to be late anyway ; the view from the platform, with last glances from the carriage window, neck craned, before the wooded cliffs above the river close in. That day, for a change, I was passing through the town, pausing only long enough to buy tobacco and entrust some of my baggage to the Railway Company. I passed the Chemist, the Grocer, the ladies' Outfitter, and Abraham's photographs by way of the pleasant little canyon which serves as a southern exit from the town. The bus was full of stout shoes and colourful Bartholomews. Their owners glanced curiously at my boots, which look bigger than they are when attached to my somewhat lean carcase. At Lodore the company tumbled out and dispersed, and I bounced on alone. The grass in Jopson's meadow was bright and scented, and the valley echoed mid-day cuckoo-call.

When at length I pushed away my plate in the low-ceilinged farm kitchen, I sat awhile at the table relishing the silent greeting of the sturdy furniture, the generous fire, the warm noon twilight of the small-windowed room. Outside the old barn wall was alight with the subtle tints of comfortable old age in June sunlight. Everything was just as I always recalled it, enduring and changeless. The wind was pulling at the tops of the Scotch firs behind the house, and the endless insect song droned in the great tree at the corner of the yard. The wind followed me down the lane and through the wood as I made for the track for Stonethwaite. Fat lambs snatched at their dams in the meadows round the river, their voices rising in an unsteady music above the constant call of the becks, full of the recent rain. Time was mine to spend as I felt inclined. The slowest pace sufficed in the flat fields beyond the village, for it was hot. Unseen birds sang in the wooded slopes of Rosthwaite Fell. Under the stone wall *Herb Robert* blossomed shyly. I turned into Langstrath and my shadow fell behind me. The whole length of the valley was full of blinding light ; Bowfell, a dim shape in the south, trembled in the liquid sun glare. The wide binks on Sergeant Crag were invisible from below, and the great rock face stood up in the sky with only a few lonely rowans breaking its even greyness. Langstrath Beck grumbled through the rapids. On the broken surface of the racing shallows diamonds danced. I forded the stream above Blackmoss Pot, for the bridge had been swept away in a winter flood. The water, ice-cold, swirled round my legs as I sought for certain footing. Forsaking the track I sauntered by the river's edge, over the hot shingle, following the swinging curves. A cloud of well-disposed insects rose from the damp earth before my trudging feet. Over the pink and green rock-pavements of the deeper pools the young trout darted. The severe and sunny loveliness of the summer afternoon, its gentle air and tall fell-shapes, embraced my spirit in its soothing quiet. Once I stopped to look round. There was no movement save that of the sky and water, the two captivating fidgets which enliven our greatest days. Here was opportunity, knocking once as usual, and heeding the kindly rap of her knuckles, I lay down on a dry gravel beach, and let the day slip away.

Near the foot of Stake is a sheep-fold ; not the one among the wind-tilted trees, but another, down by the stream. So far no raffish English holiday-maker had crammed the corpse of his surplus provisions among the stones of its grey walls. The crawling shadow of Glaramara had raced me to the fold ; the air was still and warm though clouds hustled across Esk Hause. A nine-pound ground-sheet, some old newspapers, and a blanket are fair stakes

to wager against a cold night, if there be not too much wind. The shadow hunted the evening sunblaze up Thick Side on to High White Stones, a deepening orange bar, whose glow flooded the valley with its warm reflection. At its swift fading, June twilight began at once to spin the first blue threads of night. Mrs Jopson's delicacies disappeared. Tobacco smoke crept from my low-roofed fabric lair.

Fishermen and other loiterers must have heard them, just as I then heard them. Voices ; from by the river. The delusion of conversation, a lively discussion, one speaker pressing an argument, the other protesting, and always, when you look round, nobody. Only the river. I too was cheated. I crawled from beneath the ground sheet lean-to and looked over the wall. Nobody ; only the river. The stars came out. The river gossiped on. ' Looking again,' a voice said, distinctly, submerged at once in the churning of the water. I listened ' What ! Looking so long ? ' More churning. I pushed my feet farther into the warmth of my empty rucksack. ' Looking for ever.'

It became quite dark. The constellations marched slowly to the West. I filled my pipe again. Would the voice, I wondered, have spoken even if I had not been there to listen ? Did it, by any chance, speak to me ? Why not ? The universe was perhaps filled with the spent vibrations of the echoes of yesterday. The Norsemen had toiled across the Stake centuries ago. Before them Stone and Iron age men must have forced this then trackless valley on missions of war and peace, or even mere curiosity. Surely some among these long-forgotten travellers had halted to look back at the falling curves of scree and bright bracken, at the dance of the fast-flowing water, muttering to their colleagues or to themselves. I dismissed the speculation as nonsense. It returned insistently. My presence was dictated neither by peace nor war. I had come at the dictate of an unnamed prompting. Sitting behind the little rampart of papers which encumbers my office desk, I dreamed often of such times as this, when I should be once more at liberty and—and what ? I watched the stars again for a while. I did not know. The prompting could spring from misanthropy, claustrophobia, or a dozen emotions with fancy labels, but it was none of these. Had I a benign fetter chained to my heart ? If so, the chain reached into an obscurity which I could not penetrate. Then was I like a puppy on a golden lead, the opposite end of which was held by an enigma. Sometimes I cantered through life on the slack, but frequently the lead pulled me up with a vicious jerk. How disturbing those jerks could be. On Pilling Moss when watching, across Morecambe Bay, the heaping August thunderclouds. When groping my way,

not a little frightened, through the darkness of a night of storm into Mosedale, anxious for a glimpse of the Hotel lights, yet telling myself I could do without them : lying in hospital when a late snowstorm bent down the nodding May blossom, and I craved to see more than just one slender tree, and in a February dawn, when a thrush tried out the music of his Spring voice, a few liquid echoing notes, but I—I had no time to stop, in my trim trilby and overcoat, aping the faintly scruffy gentility of the business man, my bag filled with papers, the trivial keys to someone else's prosperity. It was my old wind-proof and boots, creaking sack and weather-stained hat that I wanted, that I might tarry with my elbows on a wall top.

There was no hurry now. Precious time waited patiently with me, and I drifted presently into the borderland of sleep.

' Looking for ever.' The river stated a fact, not in a tone derisive or reproachful ; only flatly informative, but, with cunning reserve, it said no more. Perhaps the answer would come to me in that quiet June night, or in the light of tomorrow, as I traversed the ridges to Wrynose, to meet my friend. Perhaps never.

When I awoke the sun was lighting the tops of the high fells. Dew silvered the grass. I danced about to restore my circulation, packed up my belongings. I ate as I walked up the valley, and the morning air stung my cheeks. It had been just such a morning years ago when I had upset the civilised economy of the Ferry Hotel, to be on my way in a Summer's dawn. In the lanes near Coniston I had passed a man in old clothes, who wore a small red and silver badge. I glanced down at its twin pinned to my wind-proof, and resigned myself to the steep ascent to Angle Tarn, climbing steadily, and without pause, until I reached the shoulder of Bowfell looking down upon Rossett. It was just after six o'clock, and as I rested the sweat ran down my back. Beyond the edge of the plateau the cry of the becks was lost in the light wind. Eastwards from the ridge ahead a thin mist streamed lazily. The silence was intense ; my booted footfalls crashed out into space.

In the gleaming estuaries and the grey sea in the South, hidden from me for ten exciting days, the curving rim of the world could be seen, but on this high crest there sounded no slamming door, no insistent alarm clock. The industrial Cyclops was still there unseen ; it was incredible that its thudding pulse had beaten unchecked during these ten enchanted days. Presently public service vehicles would begin to run down the dingy urban furrows. Steaming scented water would chatter down a million waste-pipes over there in the silver mists of morning. Meals, luxurious and frugal, would prepare. Men would hurry to the same stations, pass

through the same doors as yesterday, and fulminate into the same telephones. A thousand salaried clowns in a dozen ministries would devise new confusions for the simple soul, while turbo-alternators screamed softly, spinning to light and heat the whole colossal pantomime. When the sun fell again beyond the sea men would have tried and failed, perhaps despaired, or even triumphed. A stream of coins and notes paid out as wages yesterday would jingle into a thousand tills, and slide back across bank counters to credit the accounts of the worthy and the scamp, and next day come forth again. Newspapers would herald the birth of an earl, the death of a pauper, the marriage of an oaf, the price of Consolidated Stock, and the falsehood of the big industrialist—and here was I, walking towards the preposterous vortex, pulling against my golden dog-lead.

The peace of these hills had endured since the ice withdrew, undisturbed by the warring of nations, until the pride of the Luftwaffe groped through the empty sky, and now, on an unnumbered day in its long story, I stepped into it in my clangorous boots, contented and perplexed, seeking the answer to a ghostly question, until at length, towards noon, I strode down from the Crinkles into this very picture which I was to hold later in my hand. If I knew why I was upon this desolate ridge, instead of capering half-naked in some open-air swimming pool, or queueing to see Ann Sheridan's legs, I should have found the other end of my chain. I looked slowly round me for it was time to go down for the last time. The great hollow under Wetherlam was jewelled with the glitter of wet rock in sunlight. Mist coiled in leisurely skeins about the flanks of Grey Friar, and there rose again the song of the overburdened ghylls. Two ravens over Stonesty croaked and tumbled, and before me, across a low rampart of rock was the picture. This was the moment I had craved, as so often before, when I set forth full of wild imaginings. Was my quest to go on for ever pursued by the children of today and tomorrow, searching for something finer, cleaner and greater than that which the brittle bitterness of drudgery, the turmoil of the streets, and the tyranny of the home had to offer ? I did not know. It would be disappointing never to know, and perhaps the final contentment lay in the seeking, or in the haphazard structure whose building began when the white jerseys of our forbears first dotted the walls of Dow Crag, and is perpetuated in the memory by a little pattern of vague cameos, people, things and places. The friendly scraping of chairs in the dining-room at Wasdale ; the trunk-full of honoured garments on the landing. Basterfield's knee-breeches, as he stands before the fire to amuse us with a tale ; Appleyard's

petrol-lighter flashing like a beacon in a moonlit farmyard. Pollitt's parka-shrouded figure on Scarth Gap, moving deceptively fast, and all of you, my friends, whoever you may be, who weave the pattern of my happiness. Together we shall come and go, but neither I nor the river can tell you the end of the story. Some day you too, will walk into this picture as I did, and hear the promptings of the infinite, and the words will not come when you try to reply, and perchance you will feel a little sad, as I do now with my piece of glass.

Down on Wrynose by the Three Shire Stone my friend's car waited. His small daughter came a little way to meet me, gave me a sticky kiss, and exclaimed at my sprouting beard. I stepped into the car, and the golden chain fell limp at my side.

' Tell me a story,' my small companion urged, when we were sitting later at lunch, by a tree-lined loop of the Crake. I listened for a moment to the rustle of the swift current, before suggesting the tale of Humpty Dumpty's trouble with the little fishes. She nodded wide eyed. I began :

' In Winter when the fields are white,
I sing this song for your delight.

In Spring, when woods are getting green,
I'll try and tell you what I mean.'

She listened to me with polite gravity as I recited the verses, until finally :

' And when I found the door was locked,
I pulled and pushed and kicked and knocked.

And when I found the door was shut,
I tried to turn the handle, but—'

' Go on,' she prompted.

' It ends there,' I explained, adding rather lamely, that this was the explanation which Humpty Dumpty had given to Alice, and that he had said ' Good-bye.'

She put her face very close to mine. ' Good-bye,' she said.

' Good-bye,' I replied gravely.

' Only we're not really going anywhere, are we ?'

' Of course not,' I reassured her.

' It's not a very good story, is it ?' she ventured.

I did not reason with her, but handed her a biscuit ; after all, I had held the same view when I was six.

I have not seen her since, and when I do meet her again she may still think the story is not a very good one. That may be because she has grown up and I have not. Who shall say ? Incidentally, Alice was her name.

MEMORIES OF JOHN WILSON ROBINSON

'A Founder Member '

We had been beagling in the Buttermere Valley, and left a Scales hare to her fate to meet John Wilson Robinson at the Liza crossing. The wind was high, the rain heavy, the mist dense, and we had little hope that John would be able to keep his appointment, and fulfil his promise to take us up the Rock. Punctually, however, the great man arrived on a bicycle which had punctured on the way from Gillerthwaite and had been mended with white adhesive tape. John roared a welcome to us. He was in hearty spirits as was his wont. He wore the inevitable Norfolk Jacket of brown Harris Tweed, with twill knickerbockers, brown stockings, and boots the product of a local cobbler. He was soaked to the skin and ought to have been miserable as were we, but weather however vile could not rob John's merry countenance of its radiance. John smiled through life.

We baulked at the leaping of the boulders round which the swollen waters were swirling. We would have preferred to wade the stream if only to throw into confusion the great trout of Ennerdale Lake assembling for spawning. John would have no trifling with the more hazardous crossing. So we jumped and jumped, without coming to harm and began the grind by the Waterfall to the Rock. The pace set by our guide was hot even for men accustomed to accompany the huntsmen of the foot packs and foxhounds on their traipses over the Cumberland and Westmorland fells, and we remember vividly the delight with which we happened on the droppings of a fox newly gone away. To examine the half-digested remains of beetles the fox had eaten, either for medicine or because that morning there had been lacking carrion or fowl for a meal, was not a business to be hurried. We thirsted for knowledge and we wanted to regain our wind. John no doubt suspected that we were in need of a halt, so he humoured us, though he showed us little mercy when we came to an awkward place where we thought the rope might have been used with advantage. We were to learn in a hard school, so this was the first intimation of the sterner things to come. But our first climb on the Rock was not to be done that day. The gale had grown in violence and a curtain of rain hid the Rock. We were not surprised, therefore, to be told that we were to travel by the High Level and Black Sail to Wasdale Head, and to leave the Rock for another day. John talked incessantly all the way of climbs and climbers, of the ' statesmen ' and their ways, and of hill sheep farming. John dripped knowledge and at Wasdale Head in a com-

pany eager to hear all he had to say, he was still in lively form. No one performed feats of acrobatic skill in the billiard room that evening.

Our first climb on the Rock came next summer, Miss Crompton of Manchester University Settlement, and Lawrence Scott, the younger son of the editor of the *Manchester Guardian,* and myself were John's charges. The weather was perfect, and we basked on the Rock. It was not a little thrilling to hear John describe when we reached the *Nose* how once he had lost his grip on the *Hand Traverse,* and to be piloted round to *Stony Gully* to gaze into *Savage Gully.* For my own part, I should have been glad to be spared the journey across Steep Grass which to this day I regard as the most horrid of all insecure places. How great a novice a novice can be may be gathered from the fact that having been the last man up I was unable to understand why I should be the first man to go down. And peering into Pendlebury I refused to take the plunge. John's eyes twinkled as I was informed I should be accommodated, and that I should be the last to leave. Only when Lawrence Scott stepped forward to lead, and Miss Crompton and John began re-adjusting the rope, did it dawn upon me that the novice was to assume a position intended for an accomplished climber. After that *Pendlebury* had no terrors for me, and the pleasantries of my companions fell on ears that cared naught about ridicule.

Thereafter, I was with John on every possible occasion. We had much in common. We were Gladstonian Liberals, we were interested in the affairs of local authorities, there were many topics other than those concerned with climbing which we talked of. What amazed me about John was that in spite of all his business cares, and he was zealous in the discharge of his responsibilities to landowners who sought his counsel and guidance, he contrived to oblige the numberless people anxious to walk and climb with him. Never was there such a friendly man. Never was there so companionable a man. He paid dearly for his ready response to the importunities of visitors to the Lake District. Often he used to work through the night that the work of the day should not be put off to the morrow.

John had long promised to take me up *Kesicick Brothers* on Scafell. We set off one Saturday evening from Boot to travel Burnmoor to Wasdale Head. On Sunday we left for Deep Ghyll. Allison, Blount, Robinson and myself composed the party. On this last climb by John (it was the last Sunday of September in the year before he died) we lingered long on Rake's Progress. It was a clear, warm, sunny day, one of those days when all's right

in the world, and one delights in being alive. Had John any foreboding of the illness which was to strike him ? I do not know, but John, though his usual gay jesting self and as entertaining a companion as ever, fell into reveries between snatches of conversation. These reveries so frequent as to excite comment later were almost embarrassing. It was so unlike John to allow silences to occur. But when we came to the Abrahams' famous climb and John put his hand on its slimy surface, there was passed his judgment ' not fit for us today.' Thereat, I felt that John was not physically in the best of condition, and that he believed *Keswick Brothers* to be beyond his capacity that day. We inspected *Scafell Chimney* and heard Blount's description of how he fell there and lay for a considerable time. Then we hurried back for *Deep Ghyll West Wall* and Scafell Pinnacle (easy way up). It was late in the afternoon before we finished. John had recovered from what seemed to be a passing indisposition, as we heard again his reminiscences of days with Haskett-Smith on Scafell. The tales were told with boyish glee. On the fells John was a boy not grown up. He infected everybody with his merry spirit. He was the life and soul of every party. He was a great man.

The sun went down in splendour into the Irish Sea. Heliotrope on the mountains turned to ebony. As we came down Brown Tongue a chill wind got up. The weather was changing. Next day was cold and wet. We were in for one of the clashiest and clartiest back-ends for years. John never climbed again.

'POUR LES SANS-GUIDE DEBUTANTS . . .'

S. B. Beck

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION . . .

Are you, gentle reader, by any chance placed as I was before the war—one of a party of moderate strength, with some experience of climbing in Great Britain but none of mountaineering abroad, of modest means but of frugal habits, and with a desire to fill those all-too-brief and rare holidays as full as possible ? And are your thoughts, after these long years of deprivation and frustration, once more turning to that classic home of mountaineering—the Alps ? Then read on, and it is my hope that you will learn of something very much to your advantage.

But, if you are so fortunate as to number experienced Alpinists among your friends, who can take you by the hand and set your feet on the right paths, or so wealthy as to envisage the continuous employment of guides, by whom you will be conducted up and down your chosen ways, then I have nothing to offer you, and you are out of my ken. Skip these fruitless pages, and turn to the weightier words of better men. I speak only to the less favoured of fortune. . . .

And to you I say—go ahead with your dreaming. It is possible for you, as it was for me, to spend an enjoyable and (weather permitting) successful holiday in the Chamonix district of the range of Mont Blanc, among as magnificent scenery as the Alps can show, and it is my aim to provide you with the necessary information, for lack of which my own first visit proved largely abortive, but the discovery of which enabled my next visit to become as profitable as I hope your first shall straightway prove.

First of all this matter of guides. I assume that your choice will be as similarly restricted as mine—between climbing entirely guideless and taking guides for the first few days. We chose the former course, and have never regretted it. We had, like Cromwell, to fling away ambition for the initial period, and to be with caution bold, but by attempting only the lower and easier peaks we were able to establish a feeling of being at home and at ease among our surroundings that enabled us to aspire to greater things. There are several such peaks within easy reach of Chamonix, on which the '*Routes Ordinaires*' constitute good training climbs, which prove excellent view-points, and which, being relatively low, enable one to get acclimatised to the altitude. They are, in the words of the guidebook, '*a recommender vivement aux sans-guide dibutants.*' Whereas a few days with guides will make a big hole in your presumably modest funds, and may not engender that feeling of

confidence and self-reliance which will enable you subsequently to fare further and higher. However, in either case, ' *revenons à nos moutons* !'

GUIDEBOOKS

It was my discovery of these in 1938 that revolutionised my ideas of what would be possible for us in 1939, and so greatly do they widen one's scope that I propose to describe at some length the Guide Vallot (Haute Montagne), published by the Librairie Fischbacher, Paris. Each volume is of the same handy pocket size as the new Fell and Rock guidebooks, but rather thicker, costs less than five shillings, and contains anything up to three hundred pages of closely-printed text. The most useful are *Fasciscules I, ' Les Aiguilles de Chamonix,'* and 2,' *La* ***Chains*** *de I'Aiguille Verte,'* but you will probably wish to acquire also *Fasciscules* 3, ' *Massifs des Grandes Jorasses et de Triolet,'* 4, ' *Massifs du Mont-Blanc et de Trilatete'* and 6 *bis,* ' *Chardonnet et Tour.'* Each is full, detailed, and well illustrated, and you will devour it eagerly every evening in hut or hotel, consult it hourly during the day—and probably treasure it long after your return, for I still browse in my copies on long winter nights.

Each route therein described has, after its ' *Premiers ascensionnists '* and ' *Bibliographie,'* a possibly quite lengthy section entitled ' *Considerations gene'rales,'* which gives notes on the length of the route (in hours), on its popularity and attractions, on the ease or otherwise of finding the way, and on the effects of bad weather, which, with an estimation of its standard, make this section invaluable in making one's choice of expedition. ' *Difficultes et Dangers'* may be treated separately, and a short note on ' *Squipement*' states what length of rope is needed, whether crampons are useful or essential, and the length of the longest ' ***rappel.'*** Then follows the ' *Itiniraire,'* and the detailed thoroughness of this account can perhaps be appreciated from the fact that nearly twelve pages are devoted to the ' *Vote Normale d'ascension* ' and *'de descente'* of the Grepon, including one whole page (nearly 450 words) to the ' *Fissure Mummery'*

These books could be purchased in any bookshop in Chamonix, and their translation is not difficult if one has at least School Certificate French, but they would be better read beforehand, for there are a few words or phrases of a semi-technical nature which might otherwise prove puzzling, and just one or two which might be misinterpreted—an ' *Alpiniste experbnente'* for instance, means an *experienced* one ! Also, their very fullness makes it difficult to choose from the numerous routes those which are most worth

attempting. It might therefore be advisable, when these troublous times grow *'normaux,'* to try to obtain them in England, from such a firm of booksellers as Messrs. Sifton, Praed & Co., of 67 St. James Street, S.W.I. You would find them fascinating reading anyway !

For the illustrations, which are numerous and excellent, greatly ' reduced' photographs have been used as the basis for some skilful sketching and shading, and on the results are superimposed continuous black lines to indicate the routes, carefully numbered and collated with the text. Each aiguille is usually so treated from several angles, and an important route is usually served by several illustrations.

MAPS

So helpful are these illustrations that one can dispense with maps in clear weather. The guidebook describes the way to the hut quite thoroughly, and once at the hut, one has only to compare the illustrations in the book with the mountains before one's eyes. A cheap paper map of the whole district may be obtained in Chamonix, but the rather old-fashioned cloth, ' Carte Albert Barbey' (1/50,000) of ' *La Chaine du Mont Blanc'* that we obtained proved unnecessarily large and expensive. To supplement the general map, small sections of a 1/25,000 map, printed on paper, the name of which I have forgotten but which were bought in Chamonix at about 1/6 each, can be used with a compass in misty weather ' *sur la montagne.'*

FINANCE

I make no apology for giving this topic second place, for if you are the reader I anticipate, then it is an all-important matter. And here, of course, my information is largely out of date, and can be of help only on the assumption that eventually the cost of living (and of travelling) in France will be approximate to what it was in 1939. Briefly, in that year my friend Austin Barton and I spent a fortnight in the Mont Blanc district at a cost of £13 each, inclusive of travel from England back to England. That allowed little for luxuries and nothing for guides, but we wanted few of the former and chose to dispense with the latter.

Travelling was made extremely cheap by reason of the 40 per cent, reduction in railway fares offered to visitors to France, and a third-class return ticket from London to Chamonix cost only *£4* 14s. 2d., valid for two months. And the trip could be made even more cheaply than that. A '17-day Holiday' third-class return steamer ticket from Newhaven to Dieppe (the cheapest route across the Channel) cost *£1* 13s. 8d., and a third-class return

railway ticket from Dieppe to Chamonix £2 Is. 8d., total £3 15s. 4d. Even a little extra comfort and convenience was not expensive, second-class travel on the latter journey adding only 14/6 to the outlay. And once in France, one could live very cheaply in those days, with the franc at 178 to the £—far more cheaply than in Switzerland, or England. A budget of *£4* per week was more than ample, for even at the uniquely-placed Montenvers Hotel we paid only 10/- a day, and elsewhere as little as 5/-, while the mountain huts could be utilised at a charge of 1/9 per night. It proved very reassuring to inexperienced Continental travellers, by the way, that all French hotels were by law compelled to display prominently in office, bedroom, and dining-room their exact and detailed charges.

JOURNEY

This was amazingly rapid, an important point for those with limited time at their disposal. The cross-Channel boat left Newhaven a little before noon, and was in Dieppe three hours later. The boat-train was waiting on the other side of the Customs' shed, and we were in Paris in time to have an evening meal in one of the numerous little cafes near the Gare de Lyon and to catch the 8-10 p.m. ' rapide.' After travelling all night without changing, we were deposited on the platform of St. Gervais-les-Bains at half-past seven next morning—and how good that cold keen Alpine air tasted after a night in a railway compartment ! The last few miles of the journey were made in a fascinating little electrified train which laboured its way up a long defile, crossed an airy bridge with the Arve dashing itself against the rocks in a gorge far below, rounded a corner—and there towering incredibly far above us were the snowy peaks and broken glaciers of the northern slopes of Mont Blanc. And so, within twenty-four hours of leaving London, down to the sophisticated little town of Chamonix, where the very streets and cafes bore famous names, and the shops were crammed full of mountaineering equipment.

To those shops it proved well worth while devoting the remaining hours of the morning, both for hut supplies and for any equipment that was lacking. Gleize, in the shop in the main street just a few yards from the station, offered (in his own words) ' *tout I iquipement de I'alpiniste, du skieur, et du campeur,*'[1] and I bought from him for sixteen shillings a Simond ice-axe that would have cost me thirty in England. Folding-lanterns, goggles, aluminium containers and so on seemed similarly cheap and reliable. And then, after a last leisurely lunch, we were ready ' *faire la montagne*' in earnest.

Perhaps you might prefer to book your journey through one of

the agencies, but a good deal of anticipatory enjoyment can be obtained in doing all the studying and planning and booking yourself, and all the necessary information and assistance could be obtained in those days from the Continental Inquiry Office of the Southern Railway at Victoria Station and from the French Railways National Tourist Office at 179 Piccadilly, W.I—and here I hope the Editor will allow me to pass on some stop-press information. The latter office has re-opened (on March 4th, 1946) for inquiries and the issue (under certain conditions) of railway tickets. The war-time limit on the amount of currency which can be taken out of the country has been raised, and a British visitor to the Continent may take up to 15 lb. of foodstuffs with him. Small concessions, perhaps, but undoubtedly straws in the wind—a wind which may even blow some of my readers to the Alps next August.

PLANNING

Here are suggestions for the first few days only, as after that you will probably prefer to choose your expeditions for yourself. After that lunch in Chamonix, take the rack railway to the Montenvers Hotel, magnificently situated overlooking the Mer de Glace, right opposite the imposing three-thousand foot northern face of the Petit Dru. From there one can climb next day the Aiguille de I'M or the Petits Charmoz, or both, by means of a gradually ascending path, the lower and ' dry ' part of the Glacier des Nantillons, an easy couloir, and a final airy rock scramble. Next day one merely walks up to the Couvercle Hut, less than five miles away and only 2,500 feet higher, but this is a gentle beginning for what will soon prove a strenuous holiday, and the day is well spent in spying out the land. As we walk up the easy Mer de Glace, we pass below the ' great' sides of the Grand Charmoz and the Grepon, and soon the Dent du Requin comes into sight, and then beyond it the Glacier du Geant and the way to the Col du Geant and Italy, while straight ahead towers the northern face of the Grands Jorasses. And then, after some steep rocks followed by gentle grass paths, there is the fine new Couvercle Hut, and near it the old hut, and—yes, the identical boulder beneath which bivouacked the pioneers. Classic ground, my masters, classic ground !

Next day the Aiguille du Moine makes a shortish, easyish expedition, consisting of a small, fairly steep, but uncrevassed glacier, a big and rather indefinite rock face on which one can roam almost at will, and a summit which forms a splendid view-point for the cirque of the Glacier de Talefre on one side and on the other the Chamonix Aiguilles and the White Monarch himself. One can be down in good time too to reconnoitre that glacier for the

harder expedition of the morrow—and so I take leave of you, ready now to launch out on your own, and to make your choice from the almost innumerable climbs of all lengths and standards, limited only by your own capabilities—and the weather.

Yes, the weather—that introduces the one discordant note, that is the only thing which can spoil the wonderful holiday that lies before you. In Britain, you can continue to climb in bad weather, and may even gain a fierce enjoyment from the battle with the elements, but in the Alps it makes most of the courses impossible for the ' *sans-guides debutants.*' That is a risk you must be prepared to take—of a holiday which could still be pleasurable, but which would not include many first-class ascents.

HOTELS AND HUTS

It seems to be the usual thing in Switzerland to book accommodation at an hotel, and to climb from it by utilising the mountain huts as required. That is definitely not the best plan in France, and the only hotel it is necessary to stay at is the Montenvers, the usual starting-point for the ' *Routes Ordinaires* ' of the Grands Charmoz, the Grepon, and the Blaitiere. No advance booking was needed there even in August, though the latest arrivals sometimes slept in odd corners or on staircase landings. Elsewhere, it is best to ' stay high,' and to live at the larger huts for spells of several days.

Of these, the three most popular were the Couvercle, the Requin, and the Argentiere Huts, all the property of the C.A.F., and all big, commodious buildings with sleeping-room for a hundred people—I have slept in the Couvercle with a hundred and eighty companions, but it no longer seemed commodious. In truth, they seemed to accommodate all who came, and no advance booking or other formality was needed. They were extraordinarily cheap, too, making a charge of only 1/9 a night, and one could even obtain meals at reasonable prices—*café complet,* the usual breakfast of coffee, rolls and butter, for a shilling, and a fairly good lunch or dinner for three shillings, and this at a height of eight or nine thousand feet ! Of course, as a rule, we preferred to carry our own food and prepare our own meals.

Sleep tends to be scanty and broken, however, so that it is pleasant to fall back on an hotel occasionally for a restful half-day and to catch up on one's sleep. The Hotel du Lognan appeared to be excellently situated for this, at a cost of only 7/- a day, though it stands at over six thousand feet (near the Glacier d'Argentiere) and proved much more quiet and peaceful than the crowded Montenvers. Chamonix is best avoided, except for the purchase of supplies, as though there are many hotels they seemed often full

and it was not always easy to obtain accommodation there at short notice.

PREPARATION

Climbing on snow in Lakeland winters had taught us the use of the ice-axe for cutting steps, belaying, and glissading, and we studied glacier-work in the text-books of the experts, of which one well-suited to the novice as being thorough and yet simple is *Mountaineering,* by T. A. H. Peacocke. The resultant combination of practical and theoretical knowledge sufficed to take us up the easier glaciers, and thereby to reach most of the well-known rock faces. Of all the High Alps, the Chamonix district seems to offer most in the way of rock-climbing, and therefore the greatest scope to the home-trained climber, who will be readiest to regard glaciers as a means of access to the rock. Of course, one is hardly likely to become a first-class iceman by these methods, but the comparatively rare and brief visits here envisaged would not allow such a development anyway, and I am concerned more with the extraction of the maximum enjoyment and achievement from each individual holiday.

And to obtain that one must certainly begin an Alpine visit as fit as one usually ends a British holiday. My chief impression was of the need for hard going—for a really early start, a relentless pressing on, and a continuous effort to save time and get down early. Then the broken sleep and irregular meals of the huts make great demands on one's staying-power, and in the limited time at our disposal we cannot for a moment contemplate the conventional three-day cycle of ' hut—peak—rest-day,' with the hotel as base, but must at all costs live up at the huts as far as possible, and strive to achieve a programme more nearly approximating to a cycle of ' peak—peak—change-of-hut ! '

AND BY WAY OF CONCLUSION . . .

Well, there is the gist of the information I can supply, some of it, alas, sadly out of date, and it is my hope that whoever first makes a post-war visit to this district will bring it up to date in the pages of this Journal (dare I hope, in the next issue ?). And if there be those who deem it inadequate, then they must, before making public proclamation of its insufficiency, proceed either to supplement it or to provide an alternative scheme for doing something to open the way that has too long been closed to all but the fortunate few, and to break down the barriers that have too long been formed by the old dogmas about ' serving several years' apprenticeship behind good guides ' and the like. The young and

inexperienced and impecunious of other nationalities have had their path made ready and their way straight, and young Frenchmen, for instance—of a nationality not traditionally associated with mountaineering skill or enthusiasm—are aided by the Club Alpin Francais (with its 28,000 members) to flock to the Alps in their hundreds and take to ' *I'Alpinisme'* as to the manner born. The young Swiss have or had the help of the C.A.S., Italians of the C.A.I., and Germans and Austrians of the D.O.A.V. Are only ' *les jeunes Britanniques* ' to be kept out, and to continue to look into happiness through the eyes of a handful of writers of mountaineering books, the while those snowy domes and rocky aiguilles remain for most of us what they have been since their discovery—as remote and inaccessible as the Himalayas, or the mountains of the moon ?

UNDELIVERED LETTER TO A FRIEND

Mary Leigh ton

April 1942 THE COTTAGE
WESTMORLAND

This place is so peaceful and quiet that I can sit down and write to you undisturbed.

I imagine you are still in the middle of the desert with no green beautiful things anywhere near you ; my own surroundings are just the opposite so let us imagine that happy days are here again and I can show you the magic beauty of this valley.

We'll reach the cottage in an hour and a half from town pushing up hills most of the winding way beside a winding stream. Steep slopes close in on either side with some of last year's russet bracken glowing in the warm sunshine. The hedges are just bursting into leaf and we can grab some tasty hawthorn leaves as we ride along (' bread and cheese ' they call it here). Primroses are opening, violets peep shyly from under the bushes and Herdwick lambs are skipping beside their mothers while the birds all sing for dear life. Old farms that seem to have grown out of the soil are very scattered in this valley which has so far escaped most of the ' improvements ' of civilization.

Because today is market day in town the dusty old grey bus comes trundling down the lane and we have to squash ourselves and the bikes against the hedge to let it pass : the last plump farmer's wife with her heavy baskets has been set down at the terminus far up the valley where the letter box, last sign of civilization, props up the wall (like the one in Wensleydale where we once stopped to post a letter in '39 which said Next Collection Wednesday and we wondered whether it meant last Wednesday or next!)

Just past the letter box the scene changes : the small fields are bare and rocky ; straight ahead the road becomes a grassy cart track and gradually climbs to the pass. Grass and bracken give way to screes and crags : a big one on the right is the haunt of buzzards (I saw a pair just now circling round and round as though they owned the world).

Let us leave the crags to the buzzards and ravens for the moment. We turn left here, cross the beck by the humpy stone bridge and go through the farm gate which is very old and falling to bits, past the shippons with their lingering smell, round the corner of the barn with its creaky doors, and here is the cottage snuggling under a steep straggling larch wood. The building is long and low and grey with walls 2 ft. thick. The front door opens from a porch

into the living room which has five other doors leading from it ; the first on the left opens into a small parlour, the second into the scullery, third into a larder, fourth to the stairs (stone and twisting) and fifth to a back passage from which opens the back door (there's a sink in the porch outside and logs are stacked by the whitewashed wall). Further along the passage a door on the right goes into the kitchen ; there's an old black range in there and ham hooks on the ceiling. Upstairs are four bedrooms with creaking floors **and** higgledy-piggledy walls.

This evening we'll walk up the valley and explore the ghyll which comes down beside the pass. Rowans and heather grow in cracks and on rocky ledges above deep emerald pools. On and on we go lured by each tumbling splashing waterfall. Standing on the edge of one narrow bit of the gorge it is impossible to see the bottom because of overhangs but looking back from farther up-stream we can see a clear deep pool about thirty yards long which would be ideal for a bathe on a hot summer's day. It is hard to leave such a place.

How good it is to be uncivilized for a while, to get up at sunrise and cook ham and eggs on a blazing fire of logs, logs which were dragged down from the hillside and chopped and stacked and dried : to fill the old iron boiler on the hob with pails of water drawn from the spring above the shaggy garden : to explore the valley and fells and crags all day. And in the evening when supper is over how good it is to sit in the firelight and watch the flames shadow-dancing on walls and ceiling, throwing their liquid light on to the dark polished oak of the old cupboard, while outside in the silence Daylight creeps quietly away over the fell as Twilight comes stealing up the valley. Here is peace indeed.

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It is now almost three weeks since that grand Easter trip to Wasdale. I got a half-day off on Easter Saturday, so just after mid-day I grabbed the old rucksack and put on my rags and boots and caught the bus to Dungeon Ghyll. I had a cup of tea and **a** bun in the kitchen with Mrs Bulman then set off in warm gentle rain up Mickleden. Three fellows at the foot of Rossett were on their way back from step-cutting up frozen snow in a gully on Great End. We wished each other good day and I plodded on to the col where the wind was increasing in ferocity as the rain receded. I went plunging down to Angle Tarn which looked quite arctic with its ice-floes floating under ice-covered crags. As I came up the final slope on to the Hause Alan Crags were half visible on my right: the wind increased almost to gale force and the rain stopped, though heavy clouds were boiling up behind me.

It felt oh so good to be alive, to race on the wings of the wind over the summit and down beside Ruddy Ghyll (full of snow cornices) to Sprinkling Tarn. It was wild and lonely and wonderful, with the wind screaming round Great End Crags and no sign of life except a few stray Herdwicks wandering listlessly round the boulders.

Once on Styhead I started a head-on fight against the wind which seemed to have swung round. The sky got blacker, the air got colder and suddenly the rain and hailstones came ; in five minutes I was well and truly soaked and went plunging blindly down the stony track. It was a relief to reach the grassy level, but I was sad to see that the trees behind Burnthwaite had been cut down ; I always used to think of them when I read :

' There are no woods like the larch woods
Where the primroses blow pale,
And the shadows flicker quietwise
On the stark ridge of Blacksail.'

I got to the hotel about eight o'clock, three hours after leaving Dungeon Ghyll, and took a peep through the dining-room window ; I saw the Sage in his usual place at the head of the table and the Bard and several others all digging into their rice pudding and prunes. Edie greeted me with her customary enthusiasm and I was soon wallowing in a welcome hot bath.

That evening I was perfectly content and enjoyed a glass of hot milk and several of Mrs Lewis's rockbuns while the smoke room was gradually filled with a buzz of conversation. Smythe was there and gave us Everest anecdotes and Himalayan folk lore; we had Alpine reminiscences from the Sage, and the Bard supplied local colour.

Easter Sunday morning brought to mind a drawing by Chiang Yee : he saw the dalesfolk going to service walking with umbrellas through sodden fields in a downpour of rain, and mist down to the valley floor almost obscured the little church in the yew trees. Whenever I see that picture I can feel rain trickling down the back of my neck. It was not an inspiring day for Pillar nor even for the Napes.

So we went along to Brackenclose . . .
. . . Where by the fire we sit you see
Drinking refreshing cups of tea
Then Bentley Beetham we find there
Who supplements our frugal fare
With prawns and olives from heaven knows where,
A special treat we all declare.
Having barely finished one repast
We start another which will last

Till seven or quarter past and then
We'll toddle slowly up the glen
To Wasdale Head
Dinner and Bed.

Terrible but true . . .

The Bard entertained us till midnight with his tales of ' T' Ghosst 'Are,' ' T' Gurt Lang thin gun,' his ' election speech ' and such gems as ' Harebells in Mosedale.' Who haj not come away from an Easter meet feeling enriched by the memory of such an evening round the smokeroom fire ?

Monday morning, and still the weather refused to ' tak oop.' We spent some time gymnasticating and practising rope management, and hauled out the First Aid Rucksacks to replace the sugar and brandy which had disappeared and might be needed urgently. At noon we started bog-hopping to Brackenclose and the Sage showed us a bathing pool near the hut which failed to attract at the time but was pocketed in memory for future use.

Again we drank and ate, then B.B. came in having tackled a dripping *West Wall* in a howling gale with two others who had gone over to Langdale. Homeward treks were beginning. As A. had to collect her bike at Dungeon Ghyll and I had to be at Jopson's that evening we set off accompanied by H. and the Sage, ploughing our way through the squelch on the Lingmell side of the Styhead beck. The zig-zag grassy track made pleasant going even in a downpour and we thought of days of long ago when pack ponies carried among other things illicit (black market) goods from the Cumberland coast to warm the cockles of a dalesman's heart. At the top of the pass we waved our soggy goodbyes. A. went over the Hause to Langdale, H. and the Sage returned to Wasdale, and I went down by Taylor Ghyll to Thorneythwaite. What joy it was to get into dry clothes and have a meal at that farm of farms, solid and friendly and unchanging. Always at evening there is the warm coppery light on the fir trees by the barn : the faint feathery greenness of birches on the slopes of Thorneythwaite Fell : blue woodsmoke from Seatoller cottages curling among the larches on Honister : ' spink-spink ' of chaffinches hopping from branch to branch : the gently gurlging beck slipping and splashing over smooth clean stones : small trout gliding smoothly or darting swiftly in the clear emerald water of Nickley Dub : a hundred sights and sounds and murmurings vibrating deep in the memory, undisturbed by discords and distresses, guarding for ever the shrine of Peace and Love and Happiness within us.

THORNYTHWAITE—ABOUT 1899

Miss Percy Jopson, Miss Jopson, Snr., Darwin Leighton,
Mrs. Jopson, Jnr., Miss Sally Jopson and "Laddie"

AMENITY AND ALL THAT

E. W. Hodge

Preservation of Amenities is a subject which just now is fully getting its due share of attention, alike from bureaucrat, propagandist, and man-in-the-street, and waits only on the precise manner of its fulfilment. But this is no mere formality, for there are both difficulties and alternatives. We have to ask ourselves not only just what sort of amenity we really value, but what else we are ready to sacrifice for it. The present article is not intended as propaganda for any one view (apart from the need for comprehensiveness and tolerance) but simply to discuss aspects which have not had due notice, and to try to clarify those that have.

Landscape beauty is of many kinds, and what is beauty to you may not be so to another. In order not to wrangle about words, let us admit all the different meanings. There is the beauty of the wilderness, the beauty resulting from simple or functional living, and the beauty of deliberate art. There are the more elusive and indefinable beauties visible to the lover of the picturesque. These last are the raw material of the artist, and he may find them in docks, steel works, or slums, as well as in mountains. Beauty wrought of iron, smoke and steam is as old as J. M. W. Turner, and older.

Wilderness beauty will naturally appeal most strongly (at least for a brief spell) to people who live in crowded or monotonous towns. But at its fullest it is hardly to be found in England. The Lakeland mountains are relatively a mild version of it, the dales (scenically equally important) even less so. True mountains may for scenic purposes be defined as the level above which Nature takes charpe, irrespective of Man's farming efforts. In past ages, men readily saw, and hated seeing, that the true note of mountain scenery is that of chaos and ruin. Nature was always known to be heartless, but she is a slut as well : the muddy glacier stream, the masses of rotten rock, the unstable scree, the river and marsh sprawling over the whole valley floor, the vegetation poisoning its own bed until it becomes a peat-bog. How all this refreshes the spirit, after too much of the city ! or after the clean orderliness of a dormitory suburb ! But remember that in a real mountain landscape it would be absurd to be fussy about the disposal of litter. The Wilderness, in so far as it is genuine, is able to look after itself. The affinity of the Lake Country is rather with the old-fashioned landscape gardening : degrees of picturesque wildness set in a frame of civilised scenery, whether that of mansion or farm-land.

The greater works of man (where sufficiently unself-conscious,

because utilitarian) have some of the grandeur of natural features. Quarries with their suggestion of the activity of vanished Titans, may appeal to the romantic taste ; spoil heaps are no worse than some of Nature's own efforts, whilst railways and roads give dignity to many a wild valley. The element of actual design, where present, adds the higher quality : that of meaningfulness, which natuie totally lacks except in so far as the human imagination supplies it. Wordsworth's famous primrose could not, without his countenance, succeed in being anything more than a primrose. He expresses despair and negation in that other line where he says : ' Rolled round in earth's diurnal course, with rocks and stones and trees.'

Most people's taste for wilder nature is rather more rapidly satiated than they suppose. Faced with the Wilderness, everyone must wear out his temporary and sterile surfeit with people and the cities, and, sooner or later, according to his stature, feel the want of the element of art. Even the taste for observation of nature is not a stable mood in itself but tends automatically to refine itself and to become raw material for scholarship or for imagination, for man's self-expression by means cf art.

The beauty of the Lake District is due to a combination of causes—causes indeed often mutually at war. It owes much not to mere circumstances of rustic life, but to deliberate if unobtrusive planning pursued steadily over a century and a half. Opinion about amenities in 1790 or 1820, if not quite as active as in 1945, was as active as 1930's, and perhaps more intelligent ; and as sound as either. As the influence of Wordsworth began to be felt (by no means early in his own life) there was more tendency to idealise the *status quo* both in nature and in rustic life and to reproduce it. Thus a tradition grew, and the farmhouses, with their rough but uncommercial good cheer, and the ecological pattern resulting from contemporary farming came to be felt by the townsman as symbols of what was permanent and right. This imitative sentiment, one may note, coincided with a somewhat stagnant period generally in artistic creation, a period in which emphasis was on representation of the actual, rather than on creative design.

A difficulty in meeting the wishes of some would-be preservers is that those wishes contain a certain measure of unreality. Many visitors have an ardent wish not merely to appreciate actually visible beauty but to convince themselves that the district is much wilder than is really the case. Personally I am not one to shudder at the sight of other people on Scafell Pike. Let all who can make the grade, be welcome. I know how the full force of the weather that has shaped the hills, awaits its appointed season. I have found

no need of pretence in the loneliness or the rough going in some parts of Britain, even close to electric pylons.

Once, in Borrowdale, a lady begged my opinion whether first one, then another, building (some of them quite modern) was the home of Rogue Henries. I had to remind her that the scenes described in novels are, after all, imaginary, but I felt a brute. The garb, the huge boots, the special type of heartiness assumed by the Lake District walker (of yesterday perhaps more than of today) were they not to a large extent an attempt to convince himself that he was a member of the small ancient and conservative communities of dalesmen ? There follows from this a certain demand that the dalesman shall play up, by remaining, or appearing to remain, as he was. The Scott report remarks : ' Neither the farmer nor the forester can be regarded as simply members of an industry or on the same footing with those in other great industries . . . They are unconsciously the nation's landscape gardeners.' But as the minority of the Committee remarks, if they are expected to be this they ought to be paid for it. The Committee's solution is that agricultural industry should receive protection from competing social, national and industrial demands for land use (and how urgent these are) ; whilst the townsman, forbidden to encroach on the countryside, should be rewarded by peeps, as often as can be afforded, of this rather make-believe world in its unspoilt purity. The Committee make bold assumptions regarding the nature of the ' balanced agriculture ' or ' traditional farming ' to which they so often refer, and regarding its economic feasibility. Professor Dennison's very able Minority Report makes hay of these assumptions. These, however, are subjects much too large to deal with here.

It is to the aspect of scenery dependent on the traditional local farming, that our Lakeland amenities movement stands most heavily committed. Modern methods in agriculture and demands by the countryman for better living conditions may indicate something widely different, modern social requirements and claims to land use may hammer for admission, hill sheep farming itself may lean heavily on subsidies, but some Friends of the Lakes still loudly trumpet for a district preserved by and for sheep farming almost alone.

In emphasising ' traditional' agriculture as the basis of our preferred type of amenity, do we not approach the sophisticated cult of simplicity of the late eighteenth century, when duchesses dressed as milk maids and hermits were hired to sit in grottoes ?

In very limited areas we shall be justified in sacrificing all other considerations to amenity ; due compensation, direct or indirect, being made to those who live in them. But in the areas now

suggested for National Parks, some of which are the size of counties, it is evident that control must be light, in inverse proportion to their size, if free local government itself is not to be suppressed. However keen we are on amenity, national, social and economic interests must, in a proper sense of proportion, come first in such huge areas. The Council for the Preservation of Rural England envisages that in these Parks, a Parks Commission will be supreme, and that, so far from holding an even balance between different claims to land use, it will put amenity foremost, subject to no appeal short of the Cabinet. For just what conception of amenity all this is to be done, and who is likely to man the Commission, is naturally of great interest to us guinea-pigs in the Lake District. One may form one's own opinion about the value of the suggested consultation with local authorities, by the Commission in whose hands is to be vested such absolute power. Virtually deprived of democratic rights, long may the rural housewife wait for her electricity, her market bus, her extra bedroom, or modernised school, or local employment for her son. The offcomer who wishes to find a home in the district will be little better than an outlaw.

It is true that British landscapes, even hill landscapes, are largely man-made. Given different ways of land utilisation (for example, more cattle and fewer sheep or no grazing at all) the landscape would change too. The war-time re-introduction of sheep to the Scottish deer forests will only carry a stage nearer its ruinous end the process begun by the improvident timber-felling of the eighteenth century followed by the clearance for sheep-farming of the early nineteenth. (In the main, it was only when sheep had become in those parts a bankrupt form of exploitation that the land was turned over to deer.) Hill sheep-farming, unable to repay to hill pastures the equivalent of what it took, was an extractive industry progressively deteriorating the land. Julian Huxley says : ' Some people regard sheep as the salvation of the Highlands, but from the point of view of deforestation and general impoverishment of the flora, as well as of human depopulation, they have been a curse.' Frazer Darling says : ' Hill pastures and glens under sheep deteriorate faster than under any other class of stock.' It would be most interesting if the National Trust could set apart (perhaps in the Styehead area) an experimental sheep-free sanctuary for Alpine plants. In the Lakes, sheep have not faced quite so drastic a test of survival value, but the Report of the Committee on England and Welsh Hill Sheep Farming mentions ' a state of widespread dilapidation in the industry ' and says that ' neither the capital, the manpower, nor the confidence necessary to revival now exist within the industry.'

An afforested Lakeland, indeed, would be just as native, just as traditional, as a District artificially made safe for sheep farming. ' Commercial afforestation ' (that bugbear) is after all two hundred years old in these parts. The same people who will complain of the harsh outlines of the boundaries of plantations of trees, will yet praise the patterning of the landscape by stone walls running up over the skyline—the very thing which the great English school of landscape gardeners (from whom Wordsworth so largely derived his practical ideas about scenery) would have abominated. The same people who complain of the periodical felling of the forest, are often those who assent to the proposition that it is to efficient farming that we should look for amenity preservation. Such farming, implying the improvement of grassland, involves treating grass as a rotational crop, and the substitution of more uniform expanses of grasses of good economic quality for the worthless but more or less picturesque nardus grass, rushes and bracken to which we are accustomed. It is only fair to say that whatever may be the case in Wales, the home of modern grass experiment, ploughing for re-seeding would not be easy in the intakes of Langdale, Borrowdale, etc. Such steep or bracken-infested land, the Hill Sheep Report suggests, might well be afforested. Part of the valley-floor of Wasdale is almost unique as an example of Wilderness scenery at main valley level—the nearest thing we have in England to glacier-torrent valley. I for one should be sorry to see it reformed, smiling and clothed with turnips. A really substantial economic benefit can argue effectively for itself, but in awarding our judgment on any ambitious scheme advocated partly on economic and partly on amenity grounds, in somewhat unspecified shares, let us always be clear how far a subsidy would be justified by the one expected kind of benefit and how far by the other.

Followers of Mr C. S. Orwin's opinions may think that the modernised farming he advocates, with its concrete farm roads, fifteen-foot gates, enlarged fields, improved buildings and consolidated, mechanised and departmentalised farms will in themselves add nothing to the picturesqueness of the country, whilst his plan for decanting industry into the villages will hardly add to their attractiveness from the point of view of the visitor. These, nevertheless, are straightforward proposals to meet the needs of the age, which it does not become us to deny, provided that we also watch their detailed application to ensure that amenity has its due place. Efficiency is not without its beauty. Where I personally should join issue with Mr Orwin is in his distinct preference (other things being equal) for unfreedom and for officialism, and for his

reluctance to give credit to private owners, such as those who have safeguarded the Lake District up to the present age, and to the smaller farmer. I have alluded to Mr Orwin as he is not only an active publicist, but has been a good deal concerned with land administration in more than one capacity in the Lakes ; amongst other things as a co-director (with Mr Symonds) of Lake District Farm Estates Ltd.

To return to afforestation, much has been said (though unreasonably at best) about the way in which a blanket of forest would smother the delicate rugosities of the Lakeland landscape. (One's mind flits to the varied greens of the different species, to the thousand minute points of shadow or reflection, to **the** shreds of mist clinging among the forest spires.) The well-known views of the Rev. Mr H. H. Symonds have, it seems, now been extended to the lonely and shelterless expanses round Haweswater. But a scenic argument designed to apply to the broken landscape of Eskdale and Duddondale can hardly be made to serve, without inconsistency, for the flowing contours of the Eastern fells. The jealousy of forest scenery, which Mr Symonds has done so much to create by his energetic propaganda, must indeed be almost unique in the world. It is interesting to note that his opposite number in Wales, Mr Williams-Ellis, does not appear to share it in regard to that region. The writer of the recent official Report on National Parks, Mr Dower, at least suggests that afforestation has a positive part to play : ' Steady and discriminating tree-planting in particular is an almost invariable requirement in the valleys and lower hillsides of inland National Park areas, not merely to replace existing timber but also to make up for the heavy inroads of recent years, especially in this war and the last'—and the next.

There is, perhaps, a place for everything. One may not wish to see the whole Lake District treated like Thirlmere, but all the same, Thirlmere has elements of beauty which one is glad to see represented. To me, the view of water through trees, particularly conifers, is one of the most entrancing in nature. How much the Grasmere side of Dunmail could be improved by planting, and how the first glimpse of that lake would gain by the effect of surprise as one emerged from the woods, let us say, about Town End Cottage ! Incidentally, one may notice the care and skill of the Thirlmere planting, the many non-commercial trees near Wythburn, and how some of the public paths are bordered by cherry or other hardwood. Before the reservoir and planting, the scenery of the road from Dunmail to the hill above Keswick must have been, by comparison, monotonous and rather poor—a shallow lake, bordered by much poor marshy pasture intersected by a lot of rather

ugly little bits of fence walls. The lake is greatly bettered by being brought nearer to the bases of the crags, and by more adequately filling its valley. Indeed, natural lakes and streams seldom fill their valleys as fully as imagination demands. If the lake edge suffers somewhat by the variations in the waterlevel, this is surely no more untidy than the surroundings of an Alpine torrent—nothing like as untidy as a sea-shore. In some such cases, as in the Monessie Gorge of the Spean, the exposure of the water-sculped rocks is a real gain ; in other cases it is at least interesting geologically and ecologically. At Loch Laggan I thought this kind of fresh-water tidemark, with its piles of clean-washed boulders and its expanse of pale-gold granite sand, was a welcome high-light in the landscape ; at Thirlmere this is less attractive, though I like to see the half-tide islets occasionally exposed in their clean, glaciated shapes. Do not let us become the victims of cant in all these matters. Often, I have noticed that people's reaction on the spot is ' How interesting,' but it is only after reading propagandist pamphlets that they dutifully alter this to ' how frightful.' I would not, however, wish to see Glen Affric made into a reservoir. That Glen has a natural beauty which the Thirlmere valley never had, dependent on the marvellous versatility of its river, now merrily rippling over shallow rapids, now immensely deep, dark and still, expanding smoothly into lochs, and now forming the most sinister gorges and falls. Moreover, there is the variety of its vegetation (again unlike the Wythburn of pre-1890) especially the fine native Scotch Pines. Again, is not the touch of wildness which redeems the Kentmere valley in part due to the occasional clumps, and even plantations, of Scotch pine and larch ? How the darkness of conifers enriches the colour-scale in many valleys ! The top end of Kentmere, about the reservoir, would gain immensely by plantation, and it is to be hoped that no Friend will try to tempt the owners by the offer of a trifling sum of money to enter into private restrictive covenants which would forever deprive the public of this additional possibility of beauty not to speak of depriving the nation of wealth.

One need not question the good intentions or occasional usefulness of the method of restrictive covenants, to point out that it is capable of several sorts of abuse. In the old days of the struggles between High and Low Church, it was the somewhat similar custom privately to buy up presentations to livings in order to install party nominees, but this technique, in Church politics at least, is long since discredited. Amenity is a public question, and policy should if possible be a matter of general agreement openly arrived at, not a clandestine competition to purchase far-reaching restrictions which may not command universal approval. Such

means perhaps have their proper place in the pioneering stages of the amenity movement, or in desperate cases ; but when private societies attempt to sterilise the productivity of huge areas in imposing their aesthetic preferences, they go too far. The owner himself should be encouraged to plan positively, in accordance with his more intimate knowledge and interest. It is regrettable to have to prohibit building or planting merely because some people may do so tastelessly, when in abler hands these operations have benefited the landscape.

The view that the only acceptable form of beauty is that resulting from traditional land use and the *status quo,* is a very pessimistic one. Nothing indeed could have given rise to such a view except experience of a period in which extreme selfishness prevailed, when it was a question of snatching the smallest business advantage, or of saving a few pounds by building one's house of the cheapest materials or without consideration for one's neighbours, or a few minutes in one's headlong weekend rush from town. Not the alleged force of competition, so much as lack of morality, was responsible for these things, and it is in the town, not the country, that we should seek to cut them off at source. These forms of ill-conditioned greed were characteristic of an age, which is perhaps passing. Public authorities too could sin, in the dullness and parsimony of their layouts, often worse than owners of private estates, and without their excuse. It amounted to this, that we could not trust ourselves to carry out any enterprise with decency, and therefore felt safe only in carrying out none. In the future, the danger is rather of the deadning hand of authority, ironing out by restriction or propaganda the qualities of spontaneity and diversity and true creativeness which are the prerogative of the individual. We need not cling too timidly to the sentiment of the traditional, or make the Farm House High Tea the basis of enormous authoritarian schemes of amenity planning. In Mr Orwin's brave new world, farm houses are likely to play a much smaller proportionate part in catering for visitors than in the past. To conceive, as does the C.P.R.E., that questions of diverted use of agricultural land disputed between National Park and other interests, should in future be incapable of solution, except at Cabinet level, shows a faulty sense of proportion. We need not fear that we shall not be able to create new forms of beauty. Those who built the farms which seem so appropriate now, often managed to do so without worrying very much about architecture, and merely by doing a straightforward job. (But we need not consider too highly as a model for imitation, what was never a deliberate style in its origin.) When they did consider architecture, they wrought far better still.

Pylons, roads, or dams, like houses, can be works of art fit to ornament any landscape, be it hill or vale. Great works of art are such by virtue of able design (including restraint where called for) in the particular circumstances, and not by the wholesale application of taboos. Commercial plantations, quarries, public utility services, or ordinary efficient farming operations, all have this in common, that they are not primarily works of art ; but we should rationally accept them all (save in very special cases) as part of the panorama of life and work. Avoiding romanticism and snobbery about such things, we should see that they are harmonised by reasonable planning control, the need of which nobody now denies either in town or country. (Planning organisation is however no substitute for actual planning ability.) Then we may find that we have built as well as the men of old, and will be free to rediscover, not only in National Parks but all over England, the beauty and picturesqueness of common things. The craving for the ultimate wilderness will always be with us, but the foregoing is the best antidote to its overdevelopment.

A VISIT TO THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS IN AUGUST 1877

C. F. Hadfield

The subjoined account is from a letter (the commencement of which was unfortunately destroyed) written home by one of two maiden ladies who visited Norway with a friend in 1877. The two sisters were the daughters of an East Anglian farmer. Having adequate means the two ladies, who lived together in Essex for the whole of their long lives, devoted some months of most years to prolonged travels over much of Europe and also Egypt and Palestine. Both ladies lived to a ripe old age and only died in the years preceding the recent European war. In their last years they were i.itimate friends of the present contributor and his wife, and the reminiscences of their experiences and reflections on their extended travels were a source of unfailing interest to the last.

. . . . western side of the Lofoden Islands, a place seldom gone to by steamers ; this one only touches once a year. While the cargo was being unloaded the Captain came to say he was going to dine on shore with the owner of the island, he, the mate, and the chief engineer. So we three and a young Norwegian sat down alone to our dinner. Just as soup was eaten in rushed the mate breathless. He had come with an invitation for us all to dine on shore at the old gentleman's house. We were not to stay to make a toilet so off we set in a small boat and were received by our host at the landing place. He was 80 years old, a very fine old man. An old lady met us at the door and she immediately began to divest us of our wraps. Then a large tray with liquers, biscuits, etc., was brought forward and we were supposed to drink some, all standing, Sis and I in a dreadful state lest the liquers should make us queerly in our heads before dinner. We then went for a little walk and then dinner. Sis and I to walk first into the room and sit in state at the head of the table on a sofa—but I must tell you that the Captain believed we are the first foreigners who have ever landed there. The table was so nicely set with good linen and napkins. I cannot possibly write every little particular but tell you when we get back home. It is the custom to constantly chink glasses, bow, drink, and bow again, and this little bit of politeness is constantly recurring. As we rose from table we shook hands with our host and hostess all round. Then the old gentleman seized Sis and I by our hands and dragged us round the house to see his dairy and then back again to have coffee ; then over his stores and back again to the sitting room where all sorts of liquers and wines were again brought and the gentlemen

smoked, Mr G. being honoured with an enormous meerschaum pipe, really as large as a half-pint mug, at which he gravely puffed for a long time, but I am sure it was an awkward thing to hold. Then we all began the chinking of glasses and bows again all round, and what we drank and tasted I cannot tell. Lastly, we all stood with glasses in our hands, choruses were sung, between each of which we salaamed most profoundly at each other. This is called in Norway a'Skaal.' Then hot brandy and water came at which we were obliged to protest against taking when more liquers were brought for us. He was such a thorough old gentleman with his nice hospitable ways and we all took quite an affectionate leave taking. We shall never forget our visit as now we had had an insight into thorough Norwegian ways. Our host would make little speeches to us which the Captain or mate would translate ; we would bow and smile in return and send back an answer by our little interpreter. Our Captain is a dear little fellow, so attentive and kind. We are now in his private cabin, I may say we have taken possession of it. We shall come back in the same boat so it will be quite like home to us. As for a boat we have every comfort we could wish but oh ! how we still hate them, and yet it is the only way of seeing this part of Norway. I am very glad to do it but I think I shall never seen Tromso again. Just fancy a week on board, or I should say more than a fortnight as we have only slept two nights on shore yet. We have only one passenger left now who goes to Tromso with us. He can speak English but is so dreadfully shy and quiet. We land tomorrow but I am writing this now in case a mail packet leaves as soon as we land. The cold has been something frightful and yet sometimes the Captain says it is quite hot. Our experience is certainly to the contrary and what we should have done without the disputed portmanteau and its contents I cannot say. I am quite weighed down with scarlet flannel and waterproof petticoats. But we are so fortunate to have it fine—a very little rain has fallen this afternoon. . . . We both sleep at night in our long flannel dressing gowns and feel a little cold even then—it is a sort of frosty autumnal air. But at present we have not taken cold nor ought we with our marvellous wraps. We have just passed a curious church, the bell tower instead of being built on the top of the roof is a little detached place a short distance from the building. There are lots of seagulls and some eider ducks but we have not seen a whale which is quite tiresome. But as we are nearly always laid up when we get a piece of open sea I am not sure we could manage to rush up to see it but I am sure I should try.

CLIMBING IN NORTHUMBERLAND

H. Keith Gregory

If any excuse is needed for what follows, it is that the county of Northumberland may soon come more under the feet of climbers and fell walkers—that is if petrol flows and orthodox mortals begin queueing for C.B. It's a big wide county with plenty of space and if I get a little vague on such a sizeable subject it is mainly that here and now I have neither notes nor maps, only remembrances.

It's not much good saying ' Northumberland is rhombic in shape, the east and west sides bounded by the North Sea and Cumberland, and the south-east by Westmorland and Durham : except for the coastal belt and the lower Tyne Valley it is hilly.' That won't ring a bell and if you would profit get out a |-inch O.S. and see for yourself. If you haven't a map the sketch may help : it shows the main roads, which divide the county with sweet reason, and the location of the crags.

Beginning with climbers, what have we to offer ? Should they be lazy ones, within half a mile of the Roman Road, but facing northwards and away from it, is a group of rocks chiefly above Crag Lough. Uniformly steep and stretching along an intermittent front of three miles, these rocks look like basalt and probably are, but if I say this definitely, I'm sure to be informed later that they aren't. They vary in height from 20 to 100 feet and maintain an average of 70 feet over two longish stretches. By now there must be at least twenty or thirty worthwhile climbs, most of them severe and very much so. About a third of these climbs were first done by B. A. Butcher, Secretary of the recently formed Northumbrian Mountaineering Club, and myself. The best ones I can remember we called *Trapezium, Main Wall* and the *Three Organ Pipes,* but whether or not these names still hold after five or six years I don't know. *Main Wall* probably does, as it is an obvious name for the climb, the longest on these crags, which beginning up a very steep wall, with widely spaced holds, leads to a foot square ledge below an incut corner. This is climbed to a vertical chimney which is suspended over nothingness. *Trapezium* is named after the top of a pinnacle of that shape which forms the first pitch. *The Organ Pipes* are three parallel chimneys with only about ten feet of boiler plating between each, one and a half had been climbed by 1943 and it was whilst doing the first ascent of one that a large block nearly prevented one of the present committee continuing a career in the R.A.F.

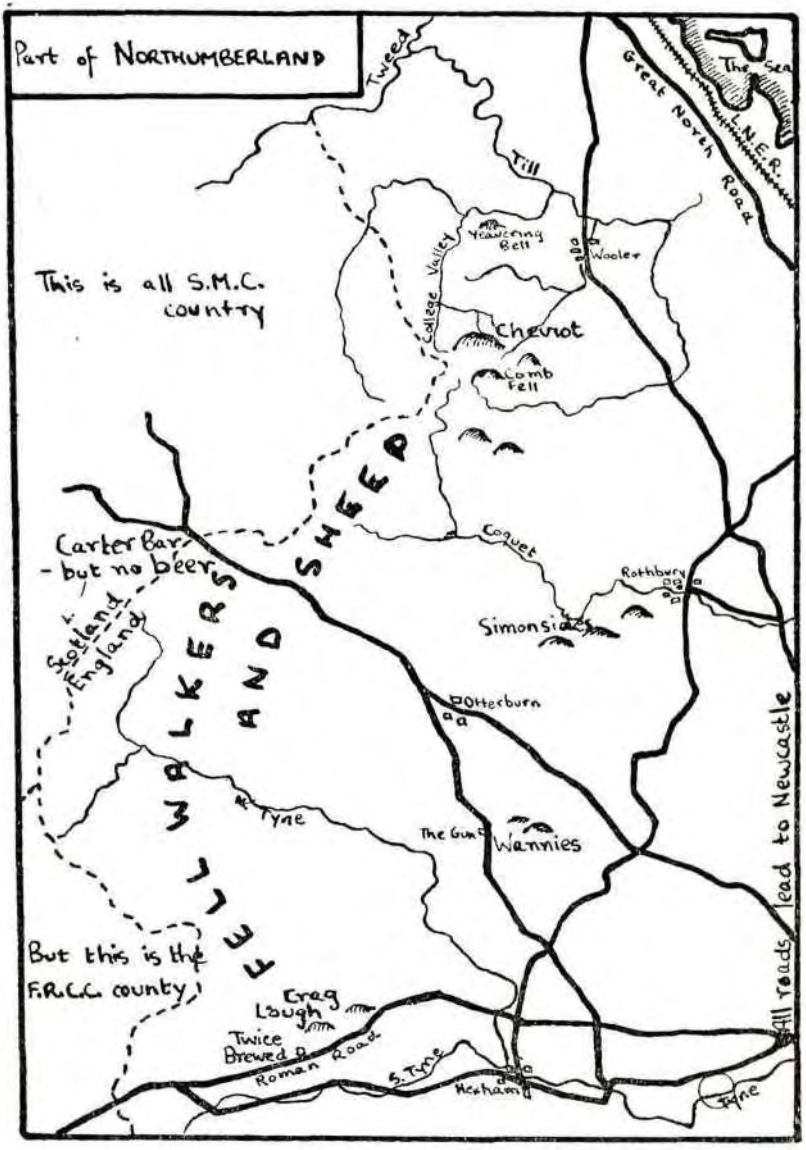
Always, and especially when doing new climbs, test everything. This is not the rock where holds snap off, but when B.A.B. was

doing a new lead, a huge upright monolith moved outwards with extreme slowness and he was only able to get clear as it leant over and crashed down. Holds are generally wide apart and square, no jug handles. Since the rock is smooth and hard, rubbers and liberal use of pressure holds is the easiest way of getting up although I have heard that tigers in nails perform at times. Apart from the Crag Lough cliffs, more but shorter climbs are found at Sewingshields and Kings Crags, at which latter place is the *Rabbit Stone*, an isolated rock ascended with some difficulty by its long north-west edge and swiftly descended on the east side. Don't try and lassoo the top. Before we leave the crags along the Roman Road, fish for pike in Crag Lough, swim in Broomlee and Halleypike Loughs and the Twice Brewed Inn is a good place to stay.

Next of climbing interest are the Wannies. The rock here is sandstone, because if you rub it long enough you could fill an hour glass. For the sake of posterity rubbers please, as some of the easier courses are rapidly disappearing. The climbs are more friendly but shorter, up to sixty or seventy feet, although still technically difficult. *Great Chimney, Boundary Corner, Ravens Nest, Idiots Delight* and *Main Wall* is a good sample. If you go there almost any weekend, the natives will tell you which is which : it's a fairly popular place being only about 25 miles from Newcastle. Rossiter seems to describe a climb here in the 1942 Journal. I once did a girdle which was thin in parts, until near its legitimate end it annoyingly disappeared : but the 200 feet or so are worth doing.

Further northward the Simonsides are similar in character. Most of the climbs here were first done by a man called Emley, although some of the King's College people might object. Anyway I don't think it matters much who first did any of these Northumberland climbs so long as they are known. Both the Wannies and Simonside need more walking to over heather, nothing very steep but very lovely country around each.

I've left the best for the end ; the climbs around Cheviot, Northumberland's only mountain, if you allow that a mountain is a hill that makes its own weather. There are three main groups—Henhole, Bizzle and Dunsdale. The latter face south, begin thirty yards from a cart track and you can get one route of just over 200 feet if you count the 50 feet of pleasant slabbiness at the top. The rock might be anything, in fact I now confess that geologically I am completely innocent of the whole Cheviot area, but the water is soft and the trout are wonderful. I think that apart from the longest climb which B.A.B. and I did in 1941, the other routes I did solo from the next year onwards. The two best are the girdle, and a


Part of NORTHUMBERLAND
Tweed
Till
The Sea
Great North Road
L.N.E.R.
Yeavering Bell
Wooler
College Valley
This is all S.M.C. country
Cheviot
Comb Fell
Coquet
Rothbury
Carter Bar - but no beers
Scotland
England
Simonside
Otterburn
CHEVIOT AND WALKERS
Tyne
The Gunn
Wannies
But this is the F.R.C.C. county!
Craig Lough
Twice Brewed
Roman Road
S. Tyne
Hexham
Tyne
All roads lead to Newcastle

route to the left, up a very steep and narrow slab rather like *Yellow Slab* on Lliwedd.

Bizzle is a stark sort of valley with crags on its west side which rises very steeply in bilberry and scree to the several outcrops. *Bizzle Chimney,* a big black cleft, is well seen from Dunsdale and was climbed first about 1910 by a Newcastle shipbuilder and his family. Around to the left from the chimney and facing the valley is a big incut corner. After 70 feet it joins the chimney near the top. I've only climbed this once, in three things, winter, a howling gale and riding breeches which wouldn't allow me to stretch my legs apart. My wife held the rope and froze. The difficulty, conditions apart, is the steepness and lack of good holds. First, one side of the corner overhangs, then the other, and even when you reach the top a dropped karabiner falls cleanly to the grass ledge below. In good conditions this should still be a good lead. B.A.B. and I have tried other possibilities in Bizzle and getting only so far, maybe twenty or thirty feet, have been very glad to climb back and eat bilberries at the bottom, wondering why the obvious route would not go.

Henhole is the last of the Cheviot centres and here a stream running down from the immense peat hags on Cheviot's summit, has cut through the rock leaving one cliff facing south and the other opposite it just over the burn. In the rocks facing north is the only genuine gully in the county. Nearly 200 feet in length the foot overhangs so that a lodgment is made by rising traverses from either left or right, both difficult. The gully itself is quite steep and a huge nest of twigs and roots in its bed about half way up forced us on to the left wall. We called it *Nesting Box Gully.* I first climbed it one November with Emley, and even so early it was iced. As far as I know only one other route has been made up the buttress ; this was to the right of the gully. We could not make the rocks on the left go because of a short overhanging wall. The line of rock just over the burn has some fine, though shorter routes on it. Perhaps the climbing may be likened in some respects to Kern Knotts. The rock is clean, fairly smooth and again generally steep. The route to the *Trou de Cannon,* an obvious hole in the face, is very pleasant, but try the continuation to the top of this 140-foot buttress and you'll know what thinness means. Over to the left of the main *Trou de Canon Buttress* are several shorter routes with plenty of room for more. One route that I began in sunshine and rubbers ended in a snow storm, and the final wall would have been problem enough without the snow arriving.

Well those are the main rocks in Northumberland. There are others you can find on the 1 inch O.S., and if in fact you look for

them you'll climb on one which was used for a machine gun range. There are two short but delightful climbs where great use is made of bullet scars and really nothing else. You may have gathered that the climbs in the county are steep with technical difficulties ; they are generally, as is so often the case in the gritstone county and places like Almscliffe, but there are many more routes which are easier than most of those I have mentioned, so don't be put off on the score of difficulty.

I took you northwards from the Roman Road to Cheviot, and we'll stay in the north because it is in these hills that the nature of Northumberland can be most easily grasped by a newcomer. If we think now from the fell walker's aspect, here is one of the very finest parts of England, and this for a variety of reasons. First of all you've sufficient height and distance, probably more than you thought. Cheviot is 2,676 and you can walk twenty-five miles on a main watershead crossing not even a cart track ; or walk fifty miles from Yeavering Bell in the north to Crag Lough and cross one main road, and one secondary. You can do this and still remain in the county unless you want to step over into Scotland. It is lovely country for walking in all seasons. Bracken is rarely troublesome. There are large stretches of heather and that long tufted grass that force one to take a very knee-bending stride, but as it is nearly all sheep country short grass is plentiful.

A cross-country walk at night is fascinating. If in the Lakes you walk from say Stonethwaite to the Old Dungeon Ghyll in the dark, there is no difficulty at all except maybe somewhere round the top of Stake. Try and imagine those hummocks and turns at the summit of Stake magnified and covering ten square miles or more at a time. That will give you some idea of your job ; and even with a map and compass, and no one to argue with, you must be very lucky not to go wrong at least once. Peat hags at night can be almost terrifying if the candle goes out or the torch will not work. In moonlight they seem sinister, especially where a group of small streams runs through a hag which has sides of ten feet or so. The whole Cheviot area in particular, forms a subtle challenge to night walking, or expeditions made in mist and bad weather, and if you've read the Journal long enough, you'll know that in these conditions I'm not the first to say that Cheviot's top is the most difficult to find in England.

There is not much left now but I've said nothing of the weather. Here Northumberland scores heavily. The railway posters always told us the east coast resorts had the highest sunshine records and that the air was bracing. Allowing for advertisement blurb this is mostly true. There is much less rain on the east side and although

as **a** rule it is colder in winter this is another good point. If there is a fall of snow early in the season it takes some shifting and should you have any skis bring them between December and the end of March and you may be lucky, especially on the slopes east of Cheviot and Comb Fell. Snow, once it has fallen, tends to stay over long periods. I've seen snow on the south-east side of Cheviot into May and visible from fifty miles off.

You know of the ' Twice Brewed ' Inn on the Roman Road already. ' The Gun ' at Ridsdale is a fine place to stay for the Wannies and there are several hotels in Rothbury for Simonside. Wooler is really too far for climbers interested in Cheviot, but it is possible to stay sometimes at the farms in the College Valley if plenty of notice is given. Walkers may stay almost anywhere and the Northumbrian farmer or shepherd is usually very helpful if you want to barn-storm or camp. There are also several conveniently placed Youth Hostels where there is usually room if you steer clear of weekends.

It is possible that a guide to the Northumbrian climbs may be published fairly soon by the new club, and this would of course give anyone who intended going **all** the information they would need. Until then I hope that this short account will help those **who** decide to give Northumberland a trial.

RAID ON RUM

F. L. Jenkins

April, May and June are said to give the best chance of fine weather on the West Coast, but it is indeed a chance, and I am invariably unlucky. So it came about that L.K. and I spent V.E. Day in Glenbrittle watching the rain, and debating whether, if a gorse bush were carried up Sgurr Alasdair, it would burn at all, and if it would, whether anybody would see it ; but the discussion was quite academic—nobody went out that day.

Later days were more strenuous. After a visit to the northern end of the Cuillin Ridge, and a day's climbing on a very greasy Sron na Ciche, we crossed to Rum in a motor-boat on a day which promised to be fine, after some heavy morning showers. As we drew near Rum the peaks were clear, the sun shone on a sparkling sea, and we were filled with hopes of delectable routes on untried buttresses.

A landing was made in Loch Scresort, and some very kind friends who had come for the sail acted as porters to the head of the Allt Slugan, and then returned to the boat. We saw our first deer below the bealach and then, crossing into Glen Harris, I picked up an antler. A bivouac was established just below—this was sheer optimism as Glen Harris runs S.W., but the wind was easterly on the day we landed. However, we were soon to learn more about island weather. With an eye cocked on the now threatening sky we rushed up the wide, stony ridge to Barkeval, and down to cook an evening meal before the storm burst upon us.

The night was wet and windy, and during the short hours of darkness a bird which we never saw swerved about uttering a hoarse, owl-like hoot. Each succeeding night we heard it, but were unable to see it. The wildest conjectures were made—could it be a petrel three miles from the sea at 1,300 feet ?

The next day, after waiting on the weather, we set out in mist over Allival and Askival. The ridge from the bealach to Allival is broad, stony in places, and presents no difficulty. It was while descending the South Ridge towards Askival that we really became aware of the looseness of the Rum rocks. Big boulders were most cunningly balanced and gave a sickening lurch and sometimes crashed together when stepped upon. The Askival Pinnacle or Gendarme looks stupendous in the mist, and a rope is advisable. It can, however, be turned on the left or East. From Askival summit we descended the West Ridge to the Bealach an Cir in a furious hailstorm. Much was visible under the cloud layer down Glen Dibidil in brilliant sunshine, but soon it, too, was blotted

out by the storm. A hasty return was made round the head of Glen Harris to the bivouac. All that night and the next day the wind and rain continued, and there was nothing to do but lie up in sleeping bags, but after thirty-six hours a sleeping bag although it be on heather and minus the obtrusive malevolence of stones, loses some of its attraction.

The following day, therefore, we went out determined to defy the weather, traverse the ridge, and, if necessary, get soaked. Needless to say our wildest fears were justified. Having crossed to the Bealach an Cir—there had been some discussion whether we should start the ridge from Barkeval, and traverse Allival and Askival again, but the weather settled this in summary fashion—we climbed the East Ridge of Trallval to its twin summits. Visibility was nil, and we zig-zagged to and fro on the South Face at different levels in the search for the Bealach an Fhuarain. The S.M.C. Guide mentions a small cairn on Trallval at the point where the route turns south, but we did not find it. The cliffs we had meant to look at on Trallval were shrouded in mist behind us as we climbed to the wet and slippery rocks of Askival. These looked impressive from the Bealach, and we scrambled up as quickly as possible in level, wind-borne, and very wet rain and hail. The arete is said to narrow for 40 feet half-way up, but we never noticed it in the conditions. We quickly arrived at Askival summit and, leaning on the wind, continued along the broad grassy ridge to the Nameless Peak (Sgurr nan Goibhrean) and Sgurr nan Gillean. Some stupendous slabs were visible for a moment through the mist on the East Face of Gillean, but these were quickly dismissed as not meriting investigation at the time—some other day perhaps—and merely rejected as a possible line of descent. Dropping down to the South, into the full force of the gale, we ousted a sheep and lamb from a gully, and made a very wet lunch. Then turning East we waded down boggy slopes into Glen Dibidil. I felt I really could understand the psalmist when he wrote ' The waters stand in the hills.' The waters certainly stood as we descended those squelching slopes. If the mist had not been thinner lower down we might easily have waded into the sea.

Glen Dibidil has some fine waterfalls, and these were seen at their best, but it was a long tramp back to the Bealach an Cir. For variety, below the pass it snowed, and this was even wetter than the rain. Marvellously, precipitation of all kinds ceased as we dropped into Glen Harris. We rejoiced that the wind would dry our clothes to some extent, but found it far more efficient at chilling the person.

The next day, our last, was fine, with a cold easterly wind.

Determined to do some rock climbing, we went round to the East face of Allival, and there, eschewing all scratches, attempted a likely route, but the damping effect of still wet breeches was too much for the leader, and he retreated. We eventually went up by a route which disappointingly eased off in angle and difficulty after 30 feet. It is a steep arete to the left of the small stream on the left of the main gully stream. After a second pitch of 90 feet the boulder-strewn slope with further short outcrops above was reached, just below the South of the summit.

We returned to Glen Harris over the summit, packed up everything and descended the Allt Slugan to Kinloch, and bivouacked on the shore to await the early morning call of the ' Lochmohr.' In this sheltered bay the first midges of the season were active, but to offset these there were rhododendron and laburnum in bloom, deer scavenging on the shore, the crying of sea-birds, and a great stillness.

WELSH WEEKEND

J. Carswell

Two hundred miles of uncomfortable pillion riding, prefaced for me, this long promised weekend, but the jolting, boosted as it was by a heavy rucksack, was more than compensated for by the journey through Lakeland at the unfamiliar hour of 6 a.m. Each lake and tarn had its coy veil of white mist and the fells stood out sharp and clear in the morning light, their feet shrouded in the soft haze of a perfect summer's morning. The very air had a heady, exhilarating quality which seemed to affect both Mendus (I.M.B.) and the bike, for we reached Preston in the short space of two and a quarter hours. Our hopes of an early arrival however, were rudely shattered by the puncture fiend, who attacked us so persistently that at Wigan a new tyre was called for, and as we rolled in ingloriously on a flat tyre, my companion revealed his philosophical nature by expressing his relief at being no longer an object of interest to the speed cops.

Repairs effected, we were quickly through Chester, crowded with holiday traffic, and into Wales, where after a period of wrestling with Welsh place names on sign posts and through the medium of the Welsh rustic, we eventually deposited ourselves safely, but sorely, at Capel Curig. Mendus, exerting the influence of his Welsh origin, and talking more ' Cymric blarney ' than I had believed him capable of, obtained digs for us where there were none so to speak, and we found ourselves in the attic next to the tiles, in what appeared to be the family stronghold when the rest of the house was full.

A visit to the nearby local washed the dust of travel from our throats, and we repaired to some slabs behind the house for a workout, and to try conclusions with these Welsh rocks.

Balancing difficulties were put down to some obscure ' natural hazard,' and we mentally adjusted the standard of our programme, but as the wavering persisted on the open fell-side the reason was obvious ; beer has its effect I suppose, wherever it is consumed.

After a breakfast the quality and quantity of which is now only a beautiful memory, a golden morning found us on the Nant Francon en route for Idwal.

The day was made for delicate climbs of the no struggle order, and a pleasant stroll brought us to the slabs.

Glyder Fawr in bright sunlight, presented for us an unusual sight, contrasting sharply with the dark, frowning aspect of the Devils Kitchen cliffs. Idwal sparkled invitingly, reminding us constantly of the bathe we had promised ourselves on the way back.

Reference to the guide produced a bewildering choice of climbs, but the opportunity of sampling the *Tennis Shoe*, with its 600 feet of slabs, was, under such ideal conditions, too good to miss. The memory of a cold bleak ascent, and an abortive attempt, which was rudely terminated by a rainstorm of cloudburst proportions, when we traversed into the groove of the adjacent *Ordinary Route*, with water bubbling ankle deep over our rubbers, and almost waist deep when doing a sitting glissade down the groove, needed erasing, and here was the opportunity.

After passing the problematical belay at the top of the first pitch, this climb done in boots, was full of very delicate movements, and a steep rib equipped with poor and awkward holds brought us to the terrace from which the steep *Holly Tree Wall* springs.

The *Holly Tree Wall*, the scene of another aquatic expedition, was completed with dispatch, and we retired to the foot of the crag to do justice to our somewhat sunbaked sandwiches. Thus fortified, we repaired to the start of the *Ash Tree Wall.* This climb, though steep and with an 80-foot run out, is equipped with magnificent holds which contrast sharply with those of the *Tennis Shoe.*

This route again deposited us on the ledge, along which a short walk to the right brought us to the *Piton Route.*

Our expectations regarding the quality of this route were fully realized, and it gave us quite the hardest climb of the day. The lower portion of the climb presents no outstanding difficulty, consisting of a series of steep corners where strong arm tactics are quite effective.

From the last of these a difficult leftward traverse on steep rock leads to a rounded bulge at the bottom of a groove with an obviously difficult exit. The prospect of doing the groove without some safeguard nearer than the belay was not attractive, and the bulge, though in a good position, was useless without one. The problem was solved by the discovery of a piton about 10 feet higher, probably the one which gave its name to the climb, though we neither of us suspected its existence.

Halfway up a steep difficult pitch, poised as we were over the whole expanse of the slabs, is no place to debate on the ethics of the piton problem, and I swallowed what scruples I may have had and tied on. After descending to the bulge and bringing Mendus up, I essayed the remainder of the pitch. This gave good, steep, clean, climbing, on small rounded holds, until it became necessary to step to the left, here the holds petered out and gave me a long pause. *Lazarus*, tantalizingly close to the right, offered insidiously, an easier finish. The interest of many climbers on the slabs below,

emphasized the need for action, and ignoring *Lazarus* I turned my attention to the pitch, finding myself in complete agreement with Astley Cooper, that it is easier to climb a difficult pitch when there is no alternative. *(Vide* 1935 Journal.) The only available handhold was a fragile looking flake, and inserting finger-tips behind this, with some misgiving lest it should break away, a semi layback movement landed me on a good ledge so unexpectedly off balance, that it was extremely difficult to avoid falling backwards.

The remarks of my second as he completed his ascent confirmed my impression of the climb and we wandered down to Idwal for our long deferred dip.

The following morning found us by the shores of Llydaw en route for Lliwedd, with Snowdon mirrored on its dead calm surface, and the dark but inviting mass of Lliwedd on our left. The usually boggy land, almost dry this morning, and the sparse scree, were soon traversed and landed us at the foot of the crag.

On seeing us uncoil the rope at the foot of the *Avalanche,* a party of earlier arrivals approached, and, having impressed on us the difficulties of the climb, proceeded to make inquiries into our qualifications (if any).

Our expectations of the *Avalanche* as a climb being thus unexpectedly confirmed, we approached it with increased vigour. The energy of our approach, not meeting the expected opposition, an hour's climbing found us at the foot of the *Red Wall.* The *Red Wall* was taken as a fitting finish, from the top of which, after unroping, we reached the summit by the *Terminal Arete.*

My companions now expressed a desire to ' do ' Crib Goch, and after descending to the Bwlch-y-Saethaw, we tackled the glass and tin-strewn scree slope to the summit of Snowdon, Mendus divesting himself of his shirt on the way.

On arrival, somewhat to my surprise, he suggested patronizing the hotel, but to his request for a cup of tea, was countered by one that he should put on his shirt before he could be served. In a few well-chosen phrases, delivered with legal incisiveness, he left the management in no doubt as to his opinion of hotels on mountains and the petty restrictions attaching thereto. We left with indignation but certainly not discomfiture. He has since told me that being without a tie, he was once refused admission to the Paris Opera House, and I await news of his further sartorial adventures with interest. Outside, after being looked at with interest by a train-load of tourists, looking remarkably bovine in their coaches, we turned our backs on the civilization of the summit, seeing Lliwedd on the other side of the Horseshoe, with a new interest.

We had wished to do some of the newer climbs over the weekend, in order to give substance to the contention (which we at least had never accepted) that Welsh climbing is so much superior to Cumbrian. We had toyed with the idea of Clogwyn (Cloggy), but not being acquainted with the flora of the district, we had no means of assessing whether any of the holds, no doubt removed by the intrepid early explorers of these crags, would have had time to grow, or if grown, would have matured to the requisite state of toughness.

As we had only a short day left we picked on *Dinas Mot Direct*, which besides being very accessible, would by all accounts give us a climb of great quality which would worthily uphold the contentions of Welsh devotees.

We had the luxury of riding over the Llanberis Pass encumbered only with a rope, and, parking the bike by the roadside, five or ten minutes scrambling over the scree brought us to the foot of the crag.

We had no information beyond the fact that the route went up a long slab in the centre, by a ' zig-zag route bearing the mark of genius ' into a black corner, the difficulty of leaving which, had been impressed on us at great length. So it was with no great confidence that we embarked on the climb, at a point which, from below, appeared to give the most promising line. A rising traverse to the right gave out on to a long clean slab, completely unmarked, and climbing this had all the interest of a first ascent. The appearance of the black corner above, assured us that we were on the right line, but the method of entry was not obvious. The route of ascent after the traverse, had taken me diagonally across the slab, and as the corner was apparently inaccessible from here, a further traverse back was necessary, without the promise of much at the other end. A slanting line of holds gave access to a black mossy recess, which we were fortunate in finding dry. Fixing a loop for a running belay, I climbed out of the corner on good holds at the back, reaching a good stance and belay after 90 feet.

The rock of the next pitch did not uphold the high standard of the climb as a whole, and being very steep, gave us a bit of trouble, though it was only about 20 feet long. This completed, a curious yard-wide pillar, semi-detached from the main mass, was reached by a rather holdless little wall, and we climbed it simian fashion, with hands and feet in the side cracks.

A loop was draped over the top, and the rope threaded to safeguard the step across a somewhat aching void, into a short bottomless chimney. A brief wriggle, and we emerged from the heather screen covering the top, on to the fell-side.

That night we were in Cumberland, looking at our holiday in retrospect.

Our recorded impressions of these climbs may dig up an old bone but certain things struck us forcibly. Firstly, the *Avalanche,* in common with a great many other Welsh climbs, does not provide the quality of climbing such as provided by a Lake District route of a similar reputation.

Dinas Mot Direct is a good very severe, and a very fine climb of the highest class, but reports we had received of its outstanding difficulty were again not borne out.

Also the guides themselves tend to overrate the climbs, we think ; and the system of more than one classification per climb could, with advantage be changed to Kelly's model.

As to ' extraneous difficulties ' of loose rock, vegetation, etc., under the collective title of ' natural hazards,' surely we cannot be expected to take these seriously as likely to provide more attractive climbing.

In any case they can be found on any mountain, anywhere. In spite of all this however, we are enthusiastically anticipating the day when we can have ' More of Arfon.'

THE ROPE STRETCHER

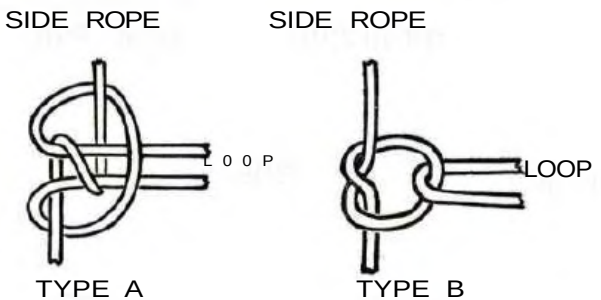
A. S. Pigott

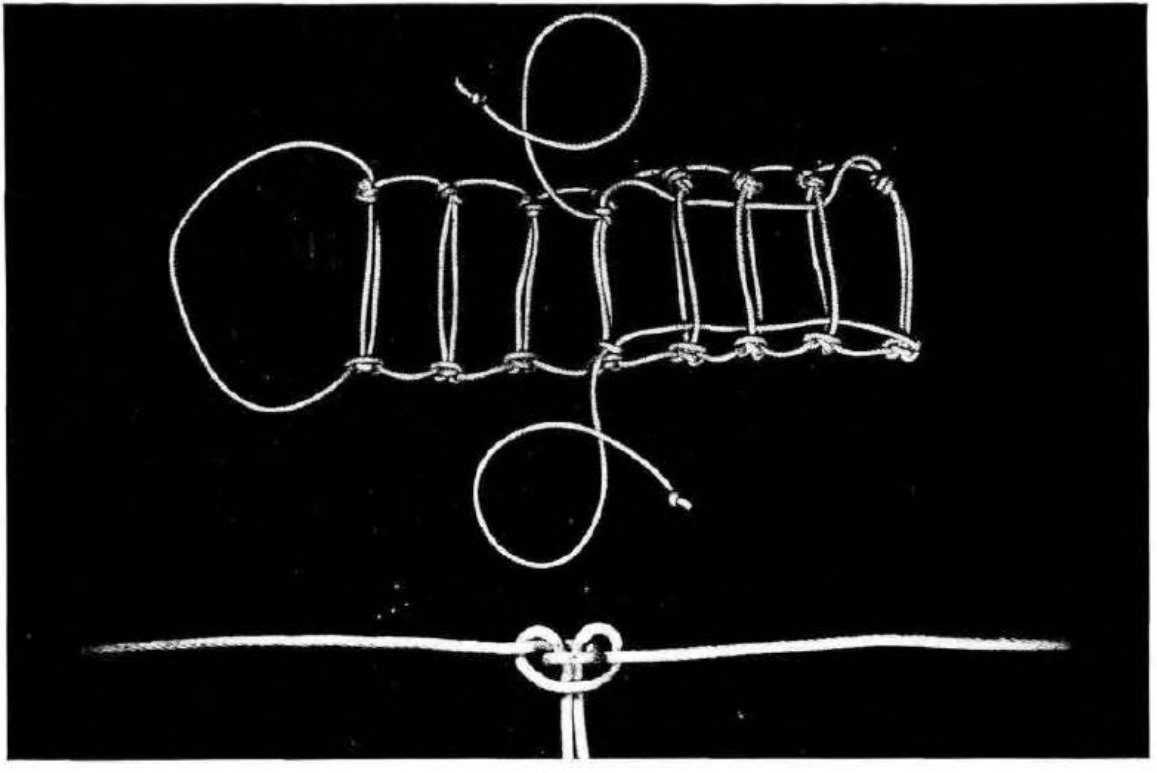
The illustrations show two methods of making a stretcher easily and quickly from a climbing rope. The difference lies only in the knot used to secure the loops to one of the longitudinal ropes. This form of stretcher is useful for carrying the victims of minor accident, or exhaustion, to warmth and shelter in the shortest possible time ; but it is laborious to carry, usually uncomfortable for the patient, and better equipment should always be sought and sent to meet the carrying party. Cases of serious injury require a rigid stretcher. It is repeated that broken limbs must be immobilised so that movement does not cause pain. A broken leg might be tied firmly to the sound one ; a broken arm to the chest.

The knot in Type A is a better job and should be used if the rope is eighty feet or more. Type B requires less rope and may be used if the rope is a short one. In both types the loops, which are tied with a simple overhand knot, begin eighteen feet from one end of the rope and are tied at eight or nine-inch intervals. With Type A they should be about three feet long *before* tying and a convenient measurement is to take the distance between one's mouth and outstretched finger tips. Type B needs a loop of only thirty inches *before* tying, the distance from mouth to base of palm. In both cases they should be about twenty-three inches long in their final state after the free rope has been passed through and attached.

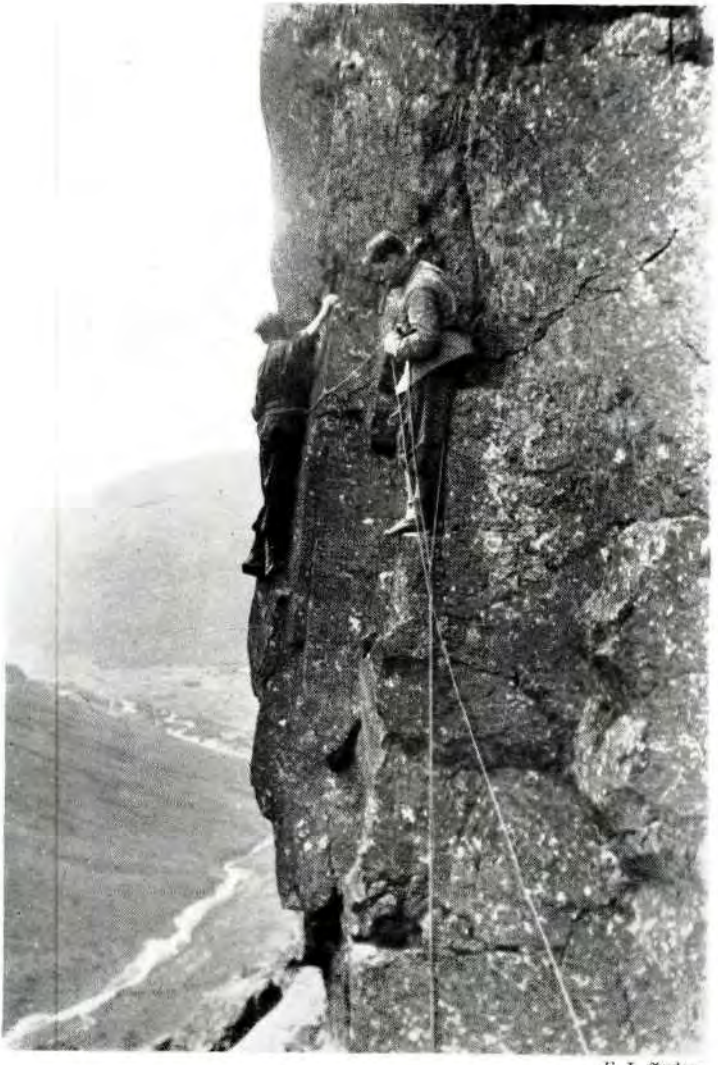
Before securing the first loop allow for enough rope to pass over the shoulder of the end bearer. If there are only four bearers it will be necessary to make a shoulder loop at both ends even if it means shortening the stretcher and it is really easier to carry with two such loops ; the front bearer pulls forward, the rear man resists the pull and the longitudinal ropes are thus kept more taut. Other helpers take their place and lift at the sides. A disadvantage is that the front bearer is apt to bump against the patient's feet and in the case of a foot or leg injury it is better at that end to have two bearers, one on each side. This means a minimum of five bearers but more are desirable ; they tire quickly, particularly those at the sides by the patient's hips. If the rope is a long one the extra length can usefully be employed by threading the two ends back to the centre and using them as carrying slings as shown on the photograph.

The bed of the stretcher can be padded and the patient wrapped and covered with coats, woollies and so on but care should be taken to tuck loose ends well in to prevent them trailing on the ground. A pillow can be improvised from a rucksack.





Method of Making Rope Stretcher



F. L. Jenkins

THE BUTTONHOOK, KERN KNOTTS

TWO POEMS

MARE TRANQUILLUM

Can there be unity :
Some tranquil ocean
Whither all fragments,
Washed smooth and rounded,
Travel together ?

When all our journeying,
Climbing our mountains,
Scatters the fragments,
Loved, warm and precious,
Far from each other ?

Each was a happiness,
Fragrant in passing:
Inns by the roadside
And joyous caressing,
Breast of a mother.

Long we trod lovingly,
Dwelt in the starlight,
Laughed at the splutter
Of guttering candle,
Blew at the thistle.

Though we spoke laughingly,
Promised the flowers
Blossom in springtime
And plucking in summer—
Far are the meadows.

Shall the high purity,
Snow-clad and solitary,
Lonely and luring,
Utterly desolate,
Show us the answer ?

In some futurity,
Sunlit and golden,
Where all this turbulence
Empties its waters,
Blending our spirits ?

Else for eternity,
Fleshless and shivering
Bones must lie shuddering
Fast in the mountain,
Frozen forever.

John Bichervaise

HOLLOW STONES

We are the climbing men
We are the mountain men
Gregarious, monotonous
With full, rich voices
Illustrating stories by agile poises
Mounting to climb
We continually chatter
Of affairs that really matter
In curious jargon.

This is our climbing ground
This is Wordsworthground
Here the riven cliffs are raised
Here they receive
The adulation of a creed unsound.

The masters of the Cumbrian school
Cover their canvases with care :
Surpassing standard is the rule,
For other craftsmen cry such ware.

What shall we do ?
Win the smooth wall to the left of the Flake
Directly descend from Hopkinson's Cairn
Up the stiff crack without Linnell's piton
Wondrous and many the routes we can make.

These crags
To whose lava I raise my Balaclava
Cannot compel me to be rash
Merely compressions of volcanic ash
Here my sport
Lies with difficults and moderates
I have been faithful to thee, Hargreaves
In my fashion.

Perspective now distorts the expert's passion :
All in a row the routes are classified,
The neophytic vision modified,
And worth is measured by the skill supplied.

R. L. Plackett

WASDALE

GREAT GABLE

THE NAPES 400 feet approximately. Very severe. Rubbers.

THE EAGLES' CHAIN First traverse, 6th September, 1945, J.W., J.U. This climb starts at the foot of Abbey Buttress.

(1) & (2) 60 feet. The first two pitches of Abbey Buttress.

(3) 35 feet. Traverse right on to Abbey Buttress Variation and ascend the Wall to a ledge. Traverse right to a stance and belay in Eagles' Nest West Chimney.

(4) 35 feet. Traverse across the Wall of the Chimney on to Long John and ascend to the platform above the West Chimney.

(5) 40 feet. Traverse horizontally right on to Eagles' Nest Direct, and step down into the Crow's Nest. Step down and traverse right to a grassy crack (Eagles' Crack). Ascend for 10 feet and traverse right to another grassy crack. *Line* belay above on the right.

(6) 40 feet. From the top of the belay step down and traverse delicately right to a grassy crack which is climbed for about 20 feet to a good stance on the left. Doubtful block belay.

(7) CO feet. Descend for 8 feet and make a slightly descending traverse to the right and round an awkward corner to a grassy crack. Climb the crack for about 20 feet. (Junction with Eagles' Corner) belay on the right.

(8) 35 feet. Traverse right and descend to the stance and belay at the top of pitch 2 of Tricouni Rib.

(9)& (10) 105 feet. The top two pitches of Tricouni Rib.

THE NAPES About 240 feet. Very severe (rubbers used).

DEMON WALL First ascent 10th April, 1945, A.R.D., A.B. Ghylcrist.

The route starts between Tophet Wall Ordinary and Direct Start, later crossing this climb to traverse the prominent slab well seen on the left of the fourth pitch of Tophet Wall.

(1) 35 feet. Starts opposite a huge boulder in Hell Gate about 15 yards right of Tophet Wall Direct Start. A groove slanting to the right is entered and climbed for a few feet to a good spike. A very difficult pull across is made on to the vertical wall above the spike. Continuing upwards to the left, better holds lead to a ledge (top of Direct Start).

(2) 20 feet. Traverse right round a bulging corner to enter a grassy recess. Good belay.

(3) 25 feet. The wall a few feet left of the belay is climbed on very small holds to a rock ledge. Belay for line, about eight feet higher.

(4) 20 feet. The shattered overhung ledge is followed to the belay at the top of the third pitch of Tophet Wall.

(5) 50 feet. The fourth pitch of Tophet Wall is climbed for a few feet until good flake holds enable a break-out to be made on to the large, steep, slab on the left. A slightly rising traverse is made across the slab on small flake holds and poor foot holds. The last few feet are the hardest. A good belay is obtained on the far edge of the slab. This pitch is sensational and exposed.

(6) 25 feet. A delicate traverse is made from the belay block left across a rib to an upstanding flake.
(7) 70 feet. An upward move round the corner to the left, grassy scrambling, and a rather awkward pock-marked slab finish the climb.

THE NAPES — About 380 feet. Very severe (rubbers used).
TOPHET GIRDLE — First ascent 11th April, 1945. A.R.D., B. Black.

This climb traverses the entire Tophet Crags from Tophet Bastion to Tophet Ridge.
(1) & (2) 65 feet. The first two pitches of Tophet Bastion.
(3) 30 feet and upwards. Traverse to the right to the belay at the top of pitch 3 of Brimstone Buttress.
(4) 30 feet. The wall above the belay on the right is climbed on rather doubtful holds to a ledge. A good block flake belay in an exposed corner on the right.
(5) 25 feet. Fairly easy slabs above lead to another small, exposed, stance overlooking a deep gully. Doubtful thread belay round some jammed stones in a crack on the left of the stance.
(6) 50 feet. An awkward step across the gully is followed by a delicate traverse right across a mossy wall. Very steep grass groove leads to a good belay overlooking the great slab on Demon Wall (top of fifth pitch of latter). This pitch is very severe and exposed, and can be avoided by climbing grass ledges followed by a delicate traverse right. (Reverse of pitch 0, Demon Wall.)
(7) 50 feet. The great slab is crossed on small flake holds, the belay at the top of pitch 4, Tophet Wall, being reached. (Reverse of pitch 5, Demon Wall.)
(8) 50 feet. Pitch 6, Tophet Wall.
(9) 20 feet. Pitch 6, Tophet Wall is climbed for a few feet, when a short traverse round a rib to the right leads to a good corner. Block belay.
(10) 60 feet. The shattered ridge on the right leads to good ledges. Scrambling only remains.

ENNERDALE FACE — 2nd ascent, 9th September, 1945. T.H., L.M.
ENGINEERS SLABS

ENGINEERS SLABS — 2nd ascent, 9th September, 1945. R. J. Birkett,
UNFINISHED ARETE — Gilpin Ward.

SCAFELL GROUP

PISGAH BUTTRESS — 185 feet. Very severe. First ascent, 28th July,
STEEP GHYLI. GROOVES — 1945, R. J. Birkett, T.H.

The climb is on the Pisgah Buttress Wall of Steep Ghyll and starts exactly opposite the start of "Slingsby's".
(1) 15 feet. Steep rocks for 15 feet to a ledge.
(2) 20 feet. A few feet of climbing up the Wall above brings one to a good ledge and belay at 20 feet.
(3) 60 feet. Take the easiest line to an open chimney directly above which is followed to a stance and belay.
(4) 90 feet. Easier climbing. Start up the groove ; finish on the easier upper slabs of Pisgah Buttress.

EAST BUTTRESS THF GREMLIN'S GROOVE — 185 feet. Very severe. First ascent 29th July, 1945, R. J. Birkett, T.H. and L.M. Starts some 20 feet to the right of Slime Chimney at a cairn at the foot of the obvious groove.

(1) 80 feet. The groove is followed for 80 feet to perched blocks and belay.
(2) 35 feet. Bear right to a good rock ledge and small flake belay.
(3) 30 feet. Up to the overhang then step right to good rock ledge and a tiny belay, suitable for line only.
(4) 15 feet. Climb the short, vertical wall to big grassy ledge ; block belay at right hand end.
(6) 25 feet. Awkward ledges are climbed to the foot of a lay-back crack which is followed to the top.

EAST BUTTRESS SOUTH CHIMNEY — 215 feet. Very severe. First ascent 12th August, 1945, R. J. Birkett, T.H. (T.H. led last pitch.) Starts at a crevassed block on a grass terrace 30 feet lower down than the start of Morning Wall and something like 100 feet to the left of the same. It is an obvious chimney, the right one of a pair.

(1) 25 feet. The open chimney is followed to a poor stance and thread belay.
(2) 40 feet. Under 40 feet of chimneying to a grass ledge and block belay. A thread can be arranged about 8 feet above the start of this pitch to safeguard the leader on the overhang.
(3) 35 feet. Easier broken rocks than a littie slab (on which the chief hold is a tiny jutting-out flake), is followed to a good grass and juniper ledge with a belay at its left hand end.
(4) 15 feet. Climb rock ledges bearing left to good ledge and belay.
(5) 100 feet. Take the line of least resistance up the chimney, a small spike on the right, and about 25 feet from the top can be used as a running belay if a sling is carried.

ESK BUTTRESS THE GREAT CENTRAL CLIMB — Very severe. Rubbers. Probably the best climb on the crag. Certainly the most sensational from the point of severity and exposure. Starts in the very middle of the crag directly below the Central Pillar Cairn. First ascent 8th July, 1945. T.H., R. J. Birkett.

(1) 100 feet. From the middle of the foot of the Central Pillar, scramble to a conspicuous grass ledge.
(2) 80 feet. Climb straight up the vegetated rocks to the foot of the Central Pillar proper. A pinnacle leans against the face here.
(3) 100 feet. Climb on to the pillar and diagonally right, crossing Bridge's Climb, from here climb straight up to three conspicuous perched blocks and an overhanging nose on the left.
(4) 35 feet. A very delicate traverse left under the nose brings one to a groove which is followed to a mantle-shelf, then up the wall above until it is possible to mount another mantle-shelf on the left. Belay 10 feet above.
(5) 20 feet. Next climb up until it is possible to use the belay as a foot-hold, then traverse delicately right to a small stance on the corner of the buttress. Small belay low down.
(6) 15 feet. Make for the grass recess above. Belay on left.
(7) 15 feet. Another grass recess is reached in 15 feet.

(8) 20 feet. This is a sensational pitch. There are two grooves, ascend the right-hand one for 10 feet, then traverse right to the edge of the rib, swing round the corner on one small hand-hold, the holds improve after this move and one lands on a very small ledge above the big groove. Small spike belay.
(9) 50 feet. Further direct upward progress being impossible, a way had to be found on to the right wall. This was done by abseiling 20 feet down the groove to a point where it is possible to wedge in by bridging above some loose grass ledges. The climber then moves right until it is possible to mount a small grass-covered mantle-shelf. The pitch finishes some 10 feet above on another grass ledge. Small inconspicuous thread belay.
(10) 30 feet. Above is a good juniper covered ledge. Belay at left end.
(11) 40 feet. Up the overhanging crack which rises from the middle of the ledge. Then climb to the foot of another obvious crack. This is Frankland's crack.
(12) 20 feet. Frankland's crack. From here one can finish up Bower's Route, and this was done by the first party. Later, however (14th Oct.) a more direct though harder finish was found.
(13) 40 feet. Grassy ledges bearing slightly leftwards bring one to the foot of a steep right-angled crack.
(14) 20 feet. Climb the crack which will be found both strenuous and severe.

ESK BUTTRESS THE GARGOYLE'S STAIRS — Severe in rubbers. This climb is rather dirty, but possesses character and is well worth doing. Starts at the left end of the crag at a crevassed block with a cairn on its top. A landmark is a very conspicuous perched block (THE GARGOYLE) on the summit of the crag. The starting rib is almost directly below this. First ascent 7th October, 1945. R. J. Birkett, T.H.

(1) 30 feet. A rib just to the right of the cairn is climbed to a detached block which is used as a belay.
(2) 40 feet. Continue up the rib to a stance and small belay at 40 feet.
(3) 50 feet. A steep grassy slope leads to a right-angled corner. Red stains on the rock will identify it.
(4) 40 feet. Up the corner, which is strenuous, to a small but good spike belay. Poor stance.
(5) 50 feet. The grassy groove is followed to a good ledge and small belay.
(6) 60 feet. Continue up the same groove (still mossy), to a spike belay.
(7) 20 feet. One short easy pitch leads to the top of the crag.

ESK BUTTRESS AFTERTHOUGHT — 90 feet. Severe. Rubbers. First ascent 10th September, 1944. R. J. Birkett, T.H. At the south end of the crag overlooking the stream is a steep cracked wall with a cairn at its foot.

(1) 40 feet. Straight up the crack above the cairn to a huge belay.
(2) 50 feet. From the belay straight up the steep rocks above.

Some 200 yards north of Esk Buttress and on the same contour, will be found a small crag split by a gigantic cleft. On it will be found two short climbs, THOR'S CAVE and THUNDER RIB.

THOR'S CAVE — Severe. First climbed in socks because boots had been left at the foot of Esk Buttress. Would probably be of similar standard in boots. First ascent 14th October, 1945,

T.H., R. J. Birkett. The start is reached by walking up the bed of the cleft to the foot of the obvious cave pitch.

(1) 25 feet. The first pitch leads to a small cave and constricted stance. Small spike belay inside the cave on the left.

(2) 25 feet. The next pitch looks much worse than it is. The overhang is overcome by backing up with the back on the right wall. Thread belay at the top.

(3) 50 feet. From a little higher up the bed, traverse out on the left wall to the lower one of two chockstones, then mount the higher and larger chockstone and finish on top of the crag.

THUNDER RIB Very difficult in rubbers. First ascent 14th October, 1945. R. J. Birkett, T.H. The climb follows the rib to the right of the entrance to Thor's Cave.

(1) 15 feet. The rib is climbed to a block.

(2) 25 feet. Bear slightly right up overhanging blocks to a good ledge and block belay.

(3) 30 feet. Up to the grassy corner. Large spike belay.

(4) 50 feet. The chimney.

ENNERDALE

MIRKLIN COVE About 240 feet. Possibly just severe. First
HASKETT BUTTRESS ascent l'Jth July, 1945, J.W., D.W.J. (alternate
TWIN RIBS leads). This climb lies on the Buttress to the right of Haskett Gully. Two prominent, steep, parallel ribs run up to a large overhang. Climb starts 20 feet to the right of the foot of the ribs in a grassy corner.

(1) 65 feet. Climb wall for ten feet, traverse left to edge of right-hand rib which is followed for 20 feet. Then cross groove to left-hand rib. Climb this to small stance with spike belay 12 feet higher.

(2) 30 feet. Continue up edge of left-hand rib for 15 feet, step right and follow groove to good stance and belay in niche below overhang.

(3) 25 feet. Swing out to left under overhang. Pull up on good holds and climb wall to stance and belay.

(4) 40 feet. Easier climbing up broken edge of rib to large grassy ledge and belay.

(5) 80 feet. Rough scrambling to top of Buttress.

BUTTERMERE

GREY CRAGS 120 feet. Very severe. Rather exposed. The
SPIDER WALL route is an ascent as direct as possible up the middle of the front of Harrow Buttress and starts up the first steep groove to the right of the corner of the ordinary route and about 20 feet left of Harrow Wall. Cairn. First ascent, 5th August, 1945. W.P., G.G.M.

(1) 25 feet. Ascend the groove and when near the top move out on to the shattered rib on the right and up to the ledge and large block near the Ordinary Route.

(2) 30 feet. Immediately above the block is a recess with converging walls on each side, that on the left forming a large overhang with a crack below. Using the crack on the left, ascend as far as possible up the recess, using a narrow rib for the feet ; with difficulty leave the crack and pull up on a large handhold, making for the wall on

the right. When a standing-up position has been attained on this wall, it is possible to step back on to the large rock platform on the left, using a good handhold on the platform for the final pull. Thread belays.

(3) 25 feet. Above and to the right is a scoop or V groove trending right. Climb into the groove with difficulty and ascend leaving it near the top for a rock ledge and good block belays on the left at the end of Harrow Wall traverse.

(4) 40 feet. The steep wall above is climbed making for a bracket about the middle of the face. Once the bracket is reached, ascend direct to the top of the buttress. This pitch is exposed, and holds, though small and at times rounded, are just adequate.

RIB AND WALL 285 feet. Very difficult. This route was made as an attempt to reach the highest point of Mitre Buttress with continuous climbing and a minimum of artificiality. The route starts at the foot of an obvious rib or narrow buttress which comes down between the Mitre Direct and Harrow Buttress, and continues up the rib until this abuts against the steep wall of which the Mitre Climb is the left-hand edge. This wall is then ascended working right on steep rock until a narrow easy angled slab leads to the top of the buttress. The line diagram of Grey Crags shows the rib and wall and the narrow final slabs. First ascent, 5th August, 1945. W.P., G.G.M.

(1) 45 feet. The steep rib is climbed, keeping more to its right-hand face, to a grassy nook and block belays.

(2) 30 feet. The ridge above, though fairly steep, has good holds, and leads to large blocks at the foot of a small buttress.

(3) 15 feet. The steep little buttress is climbed and its roof-like top is crossed to where it abuts against the main wall.

(4) 45 feet. The main wall here is a steep mass of very* shattered rock and is ascended, working right, to the left-hand edge of a steep rough wall (just above is a short vertical V groove). Block belays.

(5) 35 feet. Climb out and up on to the face of the wall and traverse across a narrow ledge to the right, then up into a square, very deeply cut cave, formed by a huge detached block. Belays.

(6) 35 feet. The steep wall on the right of the cave is climbed *en face,* on rough rock to a ledge and belays.

(7) 80 feet. Easy angled slabs of very rough rock and bounded by a short steep wall on their left, lead off to the right to the top of Mitre Buttress.

LONG TOM 135 feet. Very Severe. Exposed. This route follows the right-hand edge of the front of Grey Wall as far as possible. Start a few feet to the right of Fortiter at a cairn on a small rock ledge below the steep rough right-hand edge. First ascent, 5th August, 1945. W.P., G.G.M.

(1) 70 feet. Ascend the wall above the cairn. Pass a small overhang on its right and step left again above it. Ascend the wall direct, keeping to the outer face, until the steep rock gives on to a small square grass ledge to the left of a large overhang. At the back of the ledge is a long thin pillar of rock ; it is possible to thread the rope round the base of this pillar for a belay.

(2) 40 feet. The right-hand face of the thin pillar is climbed for a short distance, then it is necessary to step across to the wall across a

vertical corner to assist in the ascent of the final section of the pillar, the top of which is a fine flake, above which the rock bulges. The bulge is overcome by handholds well to the back of a large block, and a movement is made left and up between two very fine pyramids of rock. Avoid the right-hand pyramid, on account of its instability. Belay on left-hand one, stance to the left.

(3) 25 feet. Ascend the easier angled ridge above on good holds, to the top of Grey Wall.

DOW CRAG

'A' BUTTRESS SOUTHERN CIRCUIT 420 feet. Very severe. Rubbers. Leader requires 80 feet of rope. Best number, three. Rather artificial in places, but the route gives interesting climbing both strenuous and delicate, and of considerable length. The route commences on a rib immediately below the scoop of Gordan and Craig's Route. First ascent, of lower section, 18th April, 1945. G. F. Parkinson, G. Dwyer ; of top section, 12th May, 1945. G. F. Parkinson, J. Lloyd, G. Dwyer.

(1) 40 feet. The scoop at the left of the foot of the rib is climbed in lay back manner on a large flake on the right wall. A strenuous pull lands the leader on to good holds on the rib. Easy climbing to large blocks at foot of scoop.

(2) 50 feet. A steep buttress with a right-angled groove in the centre, is now climbed above the blocks. The grass ledge is attained at the top by a delicate and difficult movement. Move up to the belay at the foot of an overhanging crack.

(3) 45 feet. The leader now moves left on the Girdle Traverse, making use of sections of pitches 2 and 3. After a difficult move round the corner, the leader traverses slightly upwards for 15 feet to a good belay and small stance.

(4) 70 feet. Move over rather broken slabs diagonally upwards to right to a small stance on the top left corner of the overhanging crack. (This crack has been tried with no success due to the severity of the overhang.) Belay on spike 10 feet above.

(5) 45 feet. Cross over the crack and traverse at same level to the right. Climb over very steep doubtful flakes on good holds, directly above, to a good capstan and stance at top of pitch. Eliminate 'A' route.

(6) 60 feet. The second can either stay at this belay or join the leader at a large boulder 20 feet to the left on a grass ledge. The next pitch is the crux. The leader stands on the boulder and climbs directly above over the overhang. A good hold is found for the left hand, and a difficult movement brings the leader on to a steep slab above. This slab is climbed until the angle steepens again, a delicate traverse is made to the right round an exposed corner for 20 feet (approx.) another difficult movement on to a small mantelshelf is made, bearing slightly left. The Gordon and Craig Traverse is reached. Belay.

(7) 65 feet. Pleasant slabs are climbed above the belay and bearing to left the top of Necklace Route is reached with no difficulty. The last pitch of Necklace Route can be added if desired.

LANGDALE

BOWFELL BUTTRESS LEDGE AND GROOVE — 335 feet. Just severe in boots. First ascent 5th May, 1945. R. Desmond Stevens. G., Stoneley. Starts at cairn 60 feet to right of Buttress Route, 15 feet short of N. Gully.

(1) 25 feet. Climb wall right to left into groove which is followed to large ledge.
(2) 40 feet. Follow groove to ledge and small belay.
(3) 30 feet. The short wall is followed by a staircase to the right which leads to a ledge below a small overhang.
(4) 25 feet. Follow staircase to left for 15 feet, then right to stance on ridge overlooking North Gully.
(5) 60 feet. A step up is followed by a traverse to the right to the foot of a groove which is ascended for 10 feet. Traverse left along sloping ledge to ridge and ascend to platform.
(6) 20 feet. Severe. A traverse to the right for a few feet is followed by a step up on to good footholds. Traverse is continued (poor handholds) to stance and large flake belay.
(7) 15 feet. Traverse into chimney and ascend to flake belay.
(8) 40 feet. The groove is followed to an awkward mantel-shelf. Good holds lead to a grass ledge which is followed left to large belay.
(9) 35 feet. Traverse left to foot of crack and ascend to ledge. (Pitches 2 and 3, Right Hand Wall Traverse.)
(10) 40 feet. Traverse left on to face and ascend crack to foot of final wall.
(11) 15 feet. Ascend wall to summit of buttress.

WHITE GHYLL HOLLIN GROOVE — 240 feet. Very difficult. Near the bottom of the ghyll grows a Sycamore tree. 50 feet above this will be seen a V groove splitting the skyline, the route starts directly below this Cairn. First ascent, 1st August, 1945. R. J. Birkett, L.M.

(1) 20 feet. Climb chimney to stance and block belay.
(2) 25 feet. Step on to rib on the left and climb straight up to stance with spike belay on right.
(3) 25 feet. Climb steep scoop in rib above to stance and belay round holly tree.
(4) 50 feet. Straight up groove to huge grass ledge.
(5) 40 feet. Cross grass ledge to a steep rib ; climb this to good stance and spike belay.
(6) 80 feet. Continue up rib to top of crag.

THIRLMERE

CASTLE ROCK OF TRIERMAIN OVERHANGING BASTION — Second ascent 5th August, 1945. G. F. Parkinson. The climb was made after inspection on a rope from above a few months' earlier. It was found that the hardest section was the beginning of the top Gangway, but that the scoop is also very hard.

CASTLE ROCK OF TRIERMAIN VIA MEDIA — 125 feet. Very severe. Rubbers. Leader needs 70 feet of rope. First ascent, 10th May, 1945. G. F. Parkinson, W. Rae. Commences 50 feet to the right of the lower crack in Scoop and Crack Climb, under an obvious rib.

(1) 40 feet. The overhanging wall to the right of the edge of the rib is climbed from the base of the crag. This is strenuous and the second man could help the leader by providing a foothold for his right foot. A rest is made near a tree. Move left on to the edge of the rib and climb up to the grass ledge above. Belay on tree, or on flakes higher.

(2) 40 feet. Move up over pleasant slabs and then diagonally across to the left to a shattered corner. Belay.

(3) 45 feet. The leader descends slightly and commences on the bottom left-hand side of a steep slab. Move diagonally upwards to the right, crossing 3 doubtful flakes en route. The top portion of the crack of Scoop and Crack is now reached and the right-hand corner of this is climbed. The rock is very steep but holds are adequate. Belay at top of crag.

BORROWDALE

GUNNER'S CLIMB The crag, nameless on the O.S. 6 in. map, on which this little climb lies, is just above the 1,000 feet contour at the head of Troutdale. It may be reached in half an hour or so from the Borrowdale Hotel or from Grange by a path which winds up between the stream and Greatend Crag, or in less time from the Bowder Stone Pinnacle over Grange Fell. On the former approach, where the path comes out from the trees and becomes nearly level, you can see the rocks up on the left and a short way ahead. They are in two storeys. Prominent in the lower one is a steep narrow slab to the right of an overhanging block. The climb starts at a cairn below this, 12 yards up to the right from a small yew tree. First ascent, 23rd June, 1944. A.K.V., A.M.D., J.R.T. 120 feet. Very difficult. Leader needs 45 feet of rope.

(1) 40 feet. Up easy rocks to the overhanging block ; then out on to the slab and up it to a short V-chimney which leads to a heather ledge. Belay on the top side. (This pitch can be divided below the overhang, where there is uncomfortable room for two and a thread belay high on the left.)

(2) 25 feet. Over the egg-shaped bulge on the left to a broad heather platform. A down-pointing flake on the left side of the big recumbent boulder makes a belay.
Walk about fifteen yards to the left to the foot of a buttress of clean rock. Cairn and small low belay just short of the lowest point.

(3) 25 feet. Straight up for 10 feet, and traverse left for 10 feet to a ' nest.' Belay and small stance 5 feet higher.

(4) 30 feet. Moderate climbing on the right and up a ridge to a belay where the angle eases.

KEY TO INITIALS

A. M. Dobson	W. Peascod
A. R. Dolphin	Miss J. R. Tebbutt
T. Hill	J. Umpleby
D. W. Jackson	A. R. Verity
G. G. Macphee	J. Wilkinson
L. Muscroft	

(Non-members names are given in full in text.)

NOTES.

On 21st April, 1945, H. K. Gregory and J. E. Cordingley climbed the second gully to the East of the Great Gully of the Screes. The Gully is identified further by a huge block where the walls close in. There are about eight short pitches in all of average difficulty.

Graham Sutton reports that the deep gully on Kirk Fell facing Gavel Neese is worth attention on an off day. It offers 500 or 600 yards of interesting climbing and scrambling, on sound rock provided one keeps to the gully bed below flood water level, and lastly two genuine pitches, a 12 foot vertical chimney and then a longer slanting chimney, and immediately above this a smooth water shoot pitch. A steep waterfall pitch above this is dangerously rotten and is probably better left alone. The rock then deteriorates and the gully bays out in the scree shoots on both sides. There is an easy exit on to the fell side above the first of the two pitches mentioned above but above the second pitch the side of the gully is very loose and dangerous.

Whitestones Crag, a small outcrop on the east side of the main Newby Bridge—Grange road, about two miles south of Newby Bridge is recommended as a suitable scrambling ground for south-bound climbers who have been turned off the higher crags by bad weather. The general length of the climbs is 80—100 feet, and most of the routes are scratched and cairned. During 1944 and 1945, G. F. Parkinson, G. Dwyer and W. Rae found nine climbs there, including a very severe Traverse of 150 feet. At least three other ' very severes ' have been made.

A dangerously unstable block of very large dimensions is reported in Savage Gully. It is about 40 feet up the fifth pitch just at the point where the right-hand groove is abandoned temporarily for the left-hand one and is thought to weight about a ton. It is difficult to negotiate and constitutes a danger both to Savage Gully and the North Climb. The party who encountered it would have sent it down but for possible danger to other people on the mountain. Until it is safely out of the way caution is advisable.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

A. M. Dobson

The New Year meet at Buttermere was a huge success, more than 30 members and friends being scattered through the hotels and farmhouses in the village. On Saturday early comers walked on the fells, while others walked or cycled from all the quarters of the compass. Sunday was a beautiful day with a cold north wind. There was a grand turn-out on to Whiteless Pike, Grassmoor, Crag Hill and Sail ; some descended Lad Hows into Rannerdale, where Burnett celebrated with one of his famous bonfires. Meantime, the more energetic and tigerish went into Birkness Combe. The really venturesome negotiated icy slabs, while Emrys Williams established a glissading school on a suitable patch of snow. Most returned ravenous and satisfied with the day to their dinners. Afterwards there was a very pleasant gathering in the Buttermere Hotel, where the President and Edmund Hodge gave interesting talks and lantern shows. Thus the last few hours of the old year sped away, and the new one entered to the light of a beautiful moon. On Monday many members had to return whence they came by foot, cycle, or taxi, but some remained to enjoy the truly magnificent conditions and spend the first day of 1945 among the hills. A strong party was seen ascending *Stack Ghyll* with a speed which, it was thought, was conditioned by the hope of a return to sunshine at the top. The evening was memorable for an enthralling lantern lecture by Bentley Beetham on climbing in the Atlas Mountains. Tuesday saw the regretful breaking up of the meet, some of the more tenacious cherishing the hope of ' doing a dim on the way home.'

About two dozen came to Langdale in March. The minority who were not on the Committee spent a comfortable evening by the fire in the Old Hotel lounge, while the majority shivered through the longest and most strenuous meeting of the Club's history—at least, we hope it was the longest. It was brought to an end, after hints of increasing force from Mr Bulman, only by passing on its difficulties to a Sub-committee. Sunday was dull and damp. After a couple of hours' vigorous house-cleaning, the Sub-committee made tea and got down to its work at Raw Head, and (with occasional help from bystanders) spent the rest of the day in a state of intense concentration. One party ventured on to Pavey, and were rewarded with a purple mountain saxifrage and a gloiious sunset.

Easter at Brackenclose was celebrated by heavy rain, gales and a full hut ; 25 members and friends attending the meet. On

Good Friday several parties started out for the crags. Everybody returned wet and satisfied, but nobody climbed—one party congratulating itself on failing to find Elliptical Crag in the mist. (A suggestion was made that the place should be re-named Elusive Crag, as a similar thing has happened on more than one occasion.) Saturday and Sunday were equally wet and, if anything, colder and windier ; a few modest climbs were done on Scafell by two or three parties. Monday, the only fine day cf the meet, turned out to be a short one, as many people attending had to get away early to catch trains, cars being still conspicuous by their absence.

The innocent few who ventured to Raw Head in May fell into the hands of the Warden and Blackshaw, and spent useful hours in erecting the stove and partitioning off a drying-room. Some of the Club's leading climbers demonstrated the art of balance in difficult situations. The more retiring supplied hot drinks and encouragement.

Upwards of CO members were in Borrowdale at Whitsuntide, and while accommodation was in great demand there was a marked absence of campers. One may expect this to be altered next year, and we look forward to the day when we shall have large-capacity quarters of our own. Thornythwaite was full, but on account of shortage of staff was not allowed to overflow. It will be a source of great regret to the many who have enjoyed the hospitality of this headquarters to know that Mr and Mrs Jopson find themselves obliged to ask us to change our rendezvous. All will join in acknowledging their unfailing kindness and in wishing them the best. The weather was reasonably good, most folk getting wet only once, and while there was less rock climbing than usual many excellent excursions were carried out. The Napes were very empty for Whit, but Langstrath and the surrounding hills attracted many visitors. The beck side became the scene not only of feasting but also of engineering and confiagatory activity on a large scale. It appeared that a crow-bar or even a bulldozer might ultimately become part of the valley walker's equipment. Nature lovers had the usual opportunities for gratifying their interests, and an ex-President devoted special attention to the wren.

It was rumoured that one member might be found in Eskdale for the June meet. A search party which set out from Borrowdale took the wrong turning on Mickledore and were seen about sunset eating chocolate by Scafell cairn.

The August Bank Holiday meet was divided between the two Huts, Brackenclose being the fuller. In spite of fine weather and dry rocks, there was an atmosphere of easy-going content. The Raw Head Warden was observed paddling with his three-year-old

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

A. M. Dobson

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IN MEMORIAM

W. P. HASKETT-SMITH

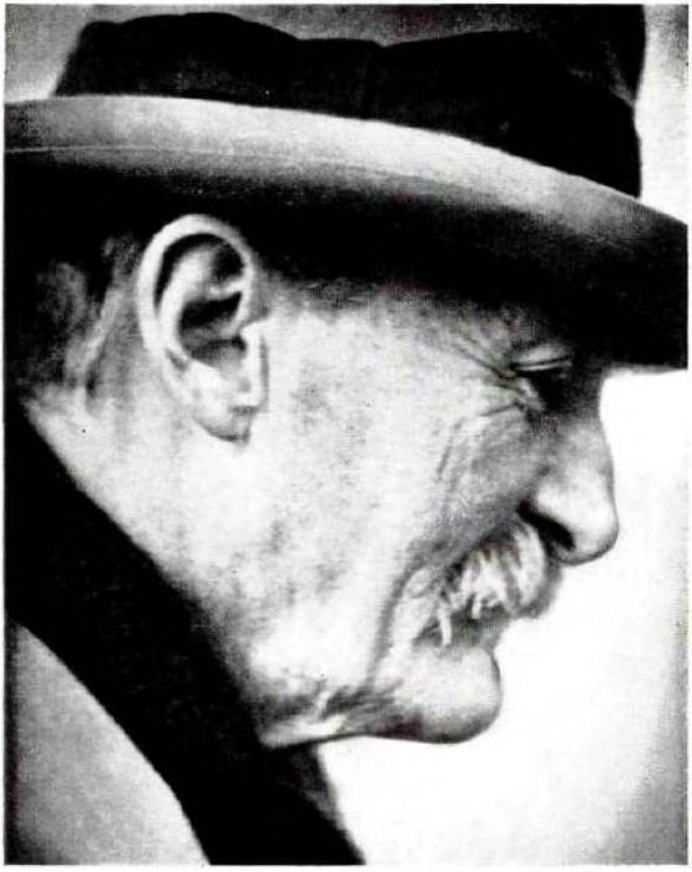
The Club has lost one of its most distinguished Original Members, Honorary Members, and Past-Presidents in the death on March 11th, 1946, in his 86th year of Walter Parry Haskett-Smith.

Hid Presidency of the Club, although it extended over twice the usual period (1913-1917), coincided largely with war years when activities were much curtailed and he was thus debarred from such an active part as he would otherwise have filled. He had already presided over the Climbers Club (1901-1903) and had been a member of the Alpine Club since 1890.

He had a distinguished scholastic and athletic career at Eton (the Rev. T. Dalton's House) and at Oxford (Trinity College). At the latter he achieved in the long jump the then record of nearly 25 feet, but as this was accomplished in practice only it was not officially accepted. Later he was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn though I believe he never actually practised. In fact the story is told that he once had a serious quarrel with an old friend—a solicitor and member of the Alpine Club—who with the best of intentions sent him a brief.

Devoted to rock climbing he was one of the famous band—Slingsby, Robinson, and at a later date Owen Glynne-Jones and many others—who early explored our crags. He had already spent several years in climbing them—the Pillar especially—before the famous day in June 1886 when on a solitary walk he noticed the Needle and there and then made the first ascent. His later ascent in 1936, 50 years later, when at the age of 74 he was led up by Chorley (the then President) ably supported by Speaker, will be well within the recollection of the many hundreds who witnessed it. ' Tell us a story ' shouted someone from the Dress Circle as Haskett-Smith sat on the top block. ' There is no other story. This is the top story,' he replied immediately. He had, I believe, been on the Pillar the previous day and probably these two were the last rock climbs he ever did. About this period he began to suffer from a troublesome affection of the eyes and from that time his iron strength seemed to fail and he gradually withdrew more and more from the society of his friends.

It is not the purpose of the present notes to give any detailed account of his mountaineering feats nor do I feel competent to do so. In addition to the Alps he travelled widely in Norway, Spain and the Pyrenees, North Africa, Greece, the Balkans, the Rockies and even the Andes. After his presidency expired he was, I think, seldom in the Lake District but his interest in the Club was well



E. B. Johnson

W. P. HASKETT-SMITH

President 1913-1917, Honorary Member (1907)

maintained in his devotion to the activities of the London Section. He served and attended on the Committee almost continuously until quite recently. He was always present at the annual dinners and other functions and he seemed never to miss any of the Sunday walks. Sometimes, though not often, he would lead one of these and he then usually managed to include a visit to some object of special interest. Two such walks I particularly remember. One was in Kent where his friendship with the owners enabled us to inspect the famous old Manor House of Ightham Moat. Again, on another day, in the Windsor neighbourhood he took us a personally conducted tour over Eton College. The amazement apparent on the faces of the many Eton boys who were strolling about on the Sunday afternoon was highly amusing and I doubt very much whether they would have readily believed that the very shabbily and somewhat eccentrically dressed elderly man who was guiding a party, not much more respectably equipped, was himself a very distinguished Old Etonian. But his own favourite county was undoubtedly Kent where he was born in 1860 on the family property of Trowswell, near Goudhurst. This he always referred to as ' our part of the country.'

Like many great men of strong personality Haskett-Smith was full of little fads, foibles and eccentricities, many of which showed up on these London Section walks and while endearing him to us more and more, also added to our amusement. As hinted above, in later years his method of dress would be charitably described as careless. At dinners he always appeared in a well-known velvet jacket, quite dressy in itself, but somewhat spoiled by a shirt front lacking a stud and a tie resting anywhere but in the right place. But such accidents caused him not the slightest embarrassment. On walks also his attire from hat to shoes was far from neat and he seemed to take a delight in making it as unsuitable as possible. There was one famous coat which appeared but seldom. It was a long, square-cut, tail coat of thick check material with outside flap pockets much like those in which Leech used to dress his sturdy farmers in the earlier days of Punch. This, as I say, seldom appeared, and then only on the very hottest and most grilling of July or August days. Another instance of this bizarre taste in dress was the outfit in which he appeared at the wedding reception of a Club member. It was not an occasion for formal garments. Haskett-Smith appeared in a lounge suit which was certainly very far from new, but which would have passed unnoticed had he not thought well to show it up by a pair of bran-new white wedding spats. Another eccentricity on these walks, for which we were always on the look-out was that he usually, but not always, declared

himself under the necessity of returning to fulfil an engagement (quite fictitious I believe) and so to catch an earlier train or one from another station than that arranged for the party. He would have been highly surprised to hear it stated but the fact was that in spite of all his experience he had an almost uncanny penchant for missing his way. The result was that sometimes after leaving us early in the afternoon to catch his own particular train he would arrive at our station, hot, tealess and tired, just in time to join us on the return journey.

As a conversationalist and a raconteur I have seldom met his equal. I have known two famous mountaineers of which this might be said but they differed markedly in one respect. The first, who shall be nameless, had only some half dozen stories in his repertoire but he told them with such skill and zest that they never failed to please and were called for again and apain. With Haskett-Smith it was very different. I must have walked some hundreds of miles with him listening to his stories and reminiscences but I can hardly erer remember him repeating himself.

As an after-dinner speaker he was a past master but there again he had his peculiarity. When he had previous notice he could be relied upon for an excellent and amusing speech. But if through the failure of another speaker he was asked to take his place at short notice he would consent but, when the time came to propose or reply to the toast he would do so in the fewest possible words and sit down. With his abundant and ready wit and knack of quick repartee this was certainly not due to inability to make a brilliant impromptu speech. It was just one of his foibles.

As a man of very wide reading and education his conversation was always full of items of varied and curious interest, historical, legal, antiquarian, or even philological. As an instance of this he once pointed out to me that if the drive gate at the entrance to a park had a wicket gate at the side this might usually be taken as an indication that there was a right of way for pedestrians. What the actual legal position may be I do not know but I have frequently proved the general truth of his statement.

Although so well equipped for a literary career his actual output seems to have been small. He certainly contributed articles from time to time to mountaineering journals, and probably the same is true of periodicals dealing with other subjects in which he took particular interest. Of actual books from his pen I only know of two. That of most interest to climbers was his *Climbing in England,* a small pocket handbook issued many years ago. The subject was not so popular in those days, and, as he once told me himself, it was not a commercial success and very soon went out of print.

The fortunate may still very occasionally be able to pick up a copy on a second-hand bookstall. My own copy was lent to a friend and so lost long ago but recently I was lucky enough to obtain another. Unfortunately it is not at hand at the moment for reference. The handbook, in addition to a concise description of all the then known climbing crags in England, contains an excellent and amusing selection from the writing of the older travellers in times when mountain scenery was regarded with horror rather than appreciation. The whole was also enlivened by occasional flashes of the author's caustic wit. A good instance of this is contained in his paragraph on the Cat Rock on the Napes. After a most detailed description of how this was, on a specified date, attacked by a party of famous, named climbers, the last sentence reads—I quote from memory—' It is a little difficult to find if the grass is long.'

In addition to his devotion to climbing and mountaineering he had as already indicated, other special interests. He was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and was a mine of information on many subjects of antiquarian interest. But the two special interests on which I am more informed were concerned with the Fishmonger's Company and the Society of Genealogists. As a liveryman of the Fishmonger's Company he passed through all the usual offices before becoming Prime Warden in 1915-1916. Many members of the Club will remember the princely hospitality with which he entertained them at one or other of the magnificent banquets held in the Fishmonger's Hall, now alas so badly damaged by enemy action. On the occasion when I was the fortunate guest I was requested to come early and the period before the official reception was spent by my host in a tour round the many pictures, curiosities, and other objects of interest contained in the Hall. Then there was the progress up the fine stairway lined by past winners of the ' Doggett's Coat and Badge Race ' on the Thames, each in a splendid scarlet uniform and holding an oar. This old-established annual race is held, it may be remembered, under the auspices of the Company. Of the dinner, and the speeches that followed, I need give no description, though, rather to my surprise, I finally came away quite competent to do so. The second book, referred to above, was published in 1916 and entitled *Apprentices and Freemen of the Fishmonger's Company {before* 1650).

The other Society—that of the Genealogists—also absorbed much of his time and he was frequently to be found during many hours of the day engaged in research among the vast accumulation of documents held by the Society. At the lectures and meetings held in the adjoining hall he was always present, and not infrequently

a participant in the discussions to which his peculiar knowledge of the derivation of place and family names gave added interest.

His failing health, and, I believe, actual bomb damage, led him to leave his house in Russell Road during the war, and he disappeared from London. When wishing to convey to him the greetings and good wishes of the London Section several of my letters were returned marked ' gone away.' At length I succeeded in obtaining his address at Parkstone, Dorset, and it was here that he died. By the time my letters reached him he seems to have been too ill to attend to correspondence and I received no reply. One of his brothers, who also lived there, pre-deceased him by some months, and one feels sad to think that his last years must have been very lonely.

In the above notes I have made no attempt to give a detailed record of Haskett-Smith's achievements either as a climber, a scholar, or an antiquary, but simply, and I fear very inadequately, to give some description and appreciation of the man as I knew him from fairly frequent intercourse over more than a quarter of a century. In commenting on his numerous foibles and eccentricities I trust that no one will consider that I have transgressed the canons of good taste, as nothing could be further from my intention. These peculiarities and fads were an essential part of the man himself and to omit reference to them would be to render the slightest sketch of his character and career incomplete. In a smaller man they would have been unworthy of notice but in one of his outstanding personality they serve to throw into relief the greatness of his career and his achievements.

C. F. HADFIELD

It is almost as if the Needle had fallen. Haskett-Smith had so long occupied something of the same isolated and traditional position in English climbing history. Rarely can a single name be so justly associated with the beginnings of a sport. When he began climbing, the first phase of mountaineering, the opening up of the Alps, was coming to an end. The second had begun, with the group of the mountain-explorers, Freshfield in the Caucasus, Slingsby in Norway, Conway in the Himalaya, Collie in Canada, carrying the new craft into distant ranges. Haskett rocketed in on his own, fascinated by the single adventure of climbing rocks. He found, of course, his elders, the Pilkingtons, Slingsby, John Robinson, Collie and others, already at work on the pleasant cliffs. He joined their company as an audacious and popular junior, and of their joint and joyous first ascents in the '80s the gallant veteran

G. P. Baker can now be the only survivor. But to the older mountaineers, of the wider view, English rocks were then still only a happy preparation for greater mountains, a pass-time in the off seasons. Haskett joined them ; but he was never absorbed into their mountaineering company or into their exploratory enthusiasm. Agile, an all-round athlete, very daring, self-confident and strongly individualistic, he was out from the first for climbing pure and simple, for its thrill and adventure, and for the physical and nervous satisfaction in mastering it. He had an erect, supple style, making good use of the feet and of balance, and with always something of the amateur ' rush ' in it.

George Anderson has a charming story, of him pointing out the place in the high wall on the one side of the Eton playing-fields, which he was the first to scale. Another Waterloo, we may think, to the credit of those playing-fields. Boys have always climbed ; but Haskett was the first notable instance of the successful athlete in whom the passion for climbing competed with, and surpassed in the end, the passion for orthodox games.

His rather glittering entry upon the new sphere was the final touch that turned rock climbing in England into an accepted new sport. And this was brought about by a single feat, his dramatic discovery and ascent of the Napes Needle. It was the unique appearance of the Matterhorn, combined with the tragedy of its first ascent and Whymper's solitary return, which extended the knowledge of mountaineering, and its acknowledgment as a sport, to the whole world. In a smaller field, it was Slingsby's single-handed first ascent of the picturesque summit of Skagastolstind which set mountaineering going as a sport in Norway. And I think we may say that it was the drama of Haskett's lonely discovery and ascent of something so fantastically shaped (for our peaceful island scenery) as the Needle, which first won public recognition for rock climbing and launched it as an established, if at first not very popular, sport among us.

He followed it up by bringing out his two little volumes, which first told us where rock climbing was to be found in our country, and acted as the first guide to our cliffs. In them, also, he was the first to dignify rock climbing with a book to itself ; and to those of us who were then young and in the first decade of the new climbing fever, the volumes came surrounded with a romantic and sibylline nimbus of golden promise now irrecoverable and probably even unimaginable by a more sophisticated climbing age.

Haskett had a genuine love of hills ; and since life had made it easy for him to follow his inclinations, he wandered far afield, in various mountain countries. His joining with Count Russell in

exploratory climbing in the Pyrenees did not a little to draw attention in England to this range, and it earned him a place among our mountain explorers and prophets. But it remains difficult to place him as a mountaineer. Genial, and with social gifts, he went gladly with friends ; but he was never associated with any mountain group, he undertook no serious exploration and he wrote no further of his experiences. With an appearance not unlike that of some Chinese philosopher—of exceptional physique—his early loss of hair, his long moustaches, and the quizzical expression he cultivated, underlined this effect, and made him seem to strangers often aloof and mocking, and almost deliberately whimsical. It was indeed the curiosities of life, the absurdities, and contrasts, the quaint origins (as of place names), verbal puns and ingeniously mis-applied quotations which occupied much of his talk and charged his copious memory. In mountain climbing, I do not think he was ever much interested in the technique or craft. In the mountaineering world, he discharged his duty as a pioneer admirably, by taking his turn in presidencies and delivering a number of humorous speeches, fireworks of anecdote and literary jesting. In the development of mountaineering, however, in the serious promotion of its social side or of its kindred activities, he took little part, and one came to accept the fact that a mountaineering notion or even a climbing feat had to present itself to him in some ingenious collocation or humorous context, to earn his attention. He never lost a youthful reserve and a certain defensive detachment.

Through his long life he remained consistently loyal to his interest in rock climbing, and especially to the climbs upon his first love, the fells. With the years, of course, his ' legend ' grew, and the more so because he himself changed so little, even in appearance or mannerism, from his youthful and traditional self. Later generations came to acclaim his every re-appearance generously and appropriately. His sense of humour enjoyed the fact, and his unfailing memory could support and amplify the occasion from his stores of reminiscences. A fell walk with him, even in age, when his splendid lung-power enabled him still to maintain a stout pace simultaneously with a continuous flow of ludicrous anecdote and jest, such as called for continued laughter and appreciation from his companion, must be a coloured if exhausting memory for many of us.

Early in this last war, when speaking at a climbers' lunch about early climbing days, I saw him, unexpectedly, sitting near me. The recollection of all that his name, his audacity, his jokes and his little volumes, had meant to so many of us, coming as a revelation more than half a century before in the very beginnings of climbing

time, the thought of all the immense developments which had taken place in mountaineering since then, and the sight of himself sitting there so little changed and still with his quizzical smile, brought one of those moments of emotion and memory which are overwhelming. It was time playing one of the very tricks of contrast and topsy-turvydom in which he himself took such delight.

Historically, I feel that we must put Haskett-Smith by himself, apart as a climber as he himself stood apart from all mountaineering development in his long lifetime. To the end I believe that his interest in climbing remained much what it had been when as a boy he first scaled the wall at Eton : he loved it for the sheer and individual adventure which steep rocks could give his skill, his judgment and his iron nerve, and for the fun—more particularly for its fun. It is just for this reason, and because of that special, primal and perhaps unique relationship between him and our own rock cliffs, that his name will be for all time associated with the beginning of English rock climbing as a sport for its own sake. And the Napes Needle, in its own fashion unique, is the best monument to him, and to that beginning.

GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG

T. M. HARDWICK 1932—1945

It will scarcely be possible to fill the gap in the personnel of the London Section of the Club caused by the death on May 28th, 1945, at the age of 75, of T. M. Hardwick, or 'Tom,' as he was affectionately known by so many of his climbing friends.

Always keen on mountains and the country it was while climbing in North Wales about 1911 that he came in contact with members of the Rucksack Club which he joined in 1912. He was a fairly regular attendant at their Easter meets for many years and it was as a guest member of the Rucksack Club that he was welcomed at London Section walks and dinners about 1929 or 1930. He soon became so regular in his attendances that he thought it only right to join the Fell and Rock Club, for which he was amply qualified, and he did so in 1932. Although he attended several Annual General Meetings in the North his real club activities were directed to the London Section. For years he seldom, if ever, missed a walk and was very often responsible for leading them, or advising others who did so, from his astonishingly wide knowledge of the country round London and the Home Counties. He had a wonderful eye for country and memory of previous expeditions. With the assistance of a large collection of well annotated maps he could always point out the correct route and give dates and particulars of adjoining routes taken on previous occasions.

It was with great sorrow that his friends noticed that his health had been on the decline for some time although he allowed this to have but little effect on his activities—though latterly distances had to be somewhat curtailed. On Easter Monday 1945, exactly six weeks before his death, he was walking in his beloved Leith Hill district from Gomshall to Holmbury St. Mary.

Although the news of his death came as a severe blow to his numerous friends it was a relief to them to feel that he had been able to continue his favourite pursuits almost to the last and was spared a long period of invalidism which would have been highly irksome to his energetic nature.

C. F. HADFIELD

J. R. WHELDON, O.M.
T. L. COWLISHAW 1910 — 1945
F. F. THOMAS 1941 —-1945

Killed whilst testing a Spitfire in Darwin, Australia. June, 17th 1945

EDITOR'S NOTES

The longer grows the tradition of the *Journal,* the more anxious becomes the task of each new Editor who attempts to uphold it. My first duty therefore is to thank my contributors for their work which has done so much to render the task a privilege.

As one of the functions of the *Journal* is to give " news " which is of interest and importance to members, I am especially grateful to Bentley Beetham for his contribution on the new climbs in Borrowdale and for the amount of work which has gone into the preparation of this " Interim Report." A whole new field of climbing is opened up, our appetites are whetted, and we look forward to the publication of a comprehensive guide to the Borrowdale climbs. The great difficulty of every guide-writer is to keep pace with fresh discoveries and this must apply especially to Borrowdale. Those of us who have been taken up ***Chamonix,*** one of the latest additions, and a climb of great quality and interest, an astonishingly short distance from the main road, can testify to the special charm of climbing in Borrowdale.

The twenty new climbs recorded in " Climbs Old and New " reflect the increased activity which the return of peace has brought. The new routes on Tophet Wall are especially interesting, for the great slab which is so conspicuous a feature of this face has hitherto been an insurmountable obstacle to the long projected Tophet Girdle. These climbs, the new route on Esk Buttress, and the solo second ascent of *Overhanging Bastion* to mention only a few, indicate a very high standard of technical accomplishment.

With our membership still growing, old friends returning to the fells and crags, and new friends eager to gain experience, the Club is embarking once more on a full programme of Meets. Training Meets are an important innovation and it is hoped that novices will make full use of them.

The closing of Thornythwaite as Club Headquarters in Borrowdale is a sad event in our history and will be dealt with fully in the next issue of the *Journal.* At this time I can only record our appreciation of the hospitality and kindness received from three generations of Jopsons, deplore the circumstances which have culminated thus, and wish our good friends all that they can wish for themselves in their retirement.

A simple and moving tribute has been erected by a friend of the late Darwin Leighton in the Serpentine Wood at Kendal, where he was wont to meet and feed his bird and animal friends every morning. It is in the form of a block of stone let into a wall and bears the inscription " *To Darwin Leighton, friend of all living creatures in this wood."*

On 21st October, 1915, H. R. Preston completed the 348 " two thousand footers " from the list of the late W. T. Elmslie. This is the first record I have of the completion of the set.

The year 1945 brought the return of that most popular Club function—the Annual Dinner, the first to be held since 1938. It was held at Keswick, at the Royal Oak Hotel, instead of Windermere as formerly and was well attended. The time-honoured custom of the toast to " Absent Friends " was observed. The toast of " The Club," coupled with the names of Lawson Cook and Graham Wilson, was proposed by Katharine Chorley, who spoke of the tremendous debt owed by the Club to Lawson Cook, our past President, who had borne the burden and heat of office without many of the sweets throughout the war years and who had guided our fortunes with threat wisdom and patience and given tireless energy and much precious time to our affairs during that very difficult period. She went on to welcome Graham Wilson as an old friend of twenty years' standing, whose services to the Club in the past were already great, so that we could begin the period of reconstruction with full confidence in his lead. Finally she referred to the responsibilities which the Club was carrying now that it had grown to be a force to be reckoned with when great questions such as the establishment of a National Park in the Lake District were under discussion. But linked with all this, there was the Club's living tradition of love of the mountains and good fellowship among them, a tradition which was a precious heritage from our early intimate days, when members all seemed to know each other, and which we must on no account lose sight of amidst the pressure and interest of any wider activities.

Replying, Lawson Cook said that Mrs Chorley had been generous in her personal references, in spite of the researches she claimed to have made. Perhaps as in the case of the Queen of Sheba, " One half had not been told her." The parallel need not be pressed for the monarch whom the Queen had visited had a reputation in some respects hardly appropriate to the President of a mixed club. He regarded the honour that had been done him as a tribute to the value in Club life of the ordinary member. Without any claim to distinction in the mountaineering world, he had always tried to render loyal service to the Club. After acknowledging his indebtedness to those who had enceuraged him to accept and fulfil the duties of office, particularly Chorley, Burnett and Kelly, he said how glad he had been to hand over the guidance of the Club to his old friend Graham Wilson, particularly now that more active Club life was becoming possible, and, after a term of office extending over

five years, to resume his place as a humble but loyal member of the rank and file.

Graham Wilson paid a tribute to the great work of Lawson Cook and said how fitting and proper it was that Cook should make the main reply to the toast. He went on to say how greatly he appreciated the honour of being President of the Club, but how undeserving he was to hold such an office, his only claims being a very real affection for the Club which had and would always be the greatest interest in his life, and his love of the fells, crags and dales of the Lake District. He thanked Mrs Chorley for her kind remarks and paid tribute to her work as Editor and expressed his regret (a regret shared by every member of the Club) that she had felt compelled to relinquish that office. He reminded Mrs Chorley that whilst she had twitted him about having jumped down a pitch in Intermediate to avoid a falling rock the only members of the party in cover were herself and another lady and it was only the latter who got hurt—not being able to resist the innate curiosity of her sex, she had put her head out to see what was happening. He referred to the ever increasing number of those walking and climbing and of the consequent responsibility of the Club to promote proper instruction, example and safe methods, and he spoke of the pleasure the Club had in making Kelly an Honorary Member and how worthily the present members were maintaining and even increasing the high standard of rock climbing.

There have been so many requests for the words of the songs written by John Hirst and sung by Hirst and Lawson Cook at the Dinner that I am glad of the opportunity of printing one of them at the end of these Notes. It goes to the tune of that well-known duet, " The Two Gendarmes."

Finally—and the shortage of good climbing boots is such that no apology is necessary for including this note—Mrs D. Pilley Richards (now returned to America) has left for sale with Miss M. A. Fitzgibbon, of Rydale Chase, Ambleside, a pair of hand-sewn Swiss climbing boots worn for only two weeks, size 6J, Vibraum soles, tricouni heels.

E. BANNER MENDUS

To avoid further delay in the publication of the Journal it has unfortunately been necessary to have the cover printed in Letterpress instead of die-stamped as usual. Owing to difficulties in the die-making industry our Printers have been unable to obtain the dies.

E.B.M.

THE TWO MOUNTAINEERS

We're mountaineers most disingenuous
And of ourselves we take great care.
We never conquer courses strenuous,
When danger looms we're never there.
But when we see some moderate mountains,
Not too severe nor yet too far,
We do them in,
We do them in,
We do them in, we do them in,
To show what mountaineers we are.

We love to boast of peaks ascended,
We never mention when we fail.
Our invitation is extended
To all to follow in our trail.
And if some not too active persons
Should rashly try to call our bluff,
We do them in,
We do them in,
We do them in, we do them in,
To show that mountaineers are tough.

We lay great emphasis on nutriment,
Our ample frames we needs must feed.
The guides who carry our accoutrement
Must thus preserve a moderate speed.
If when to Brackenclose returning
We're faced with ham and eggs for tea,
We do them in,
We do them in,
We do them in, we do them in,
To show what mountaineers we be.

JOHN HIRST

CLUB NOTES

The Club now numbers (January 1946) 952 members of which 37 are Graduating. During 1945, 64 Full and 16 Graduating members were elected, 1 resigned, 4 have been deleted from the list and the deaths of 5 members have to be recorded.

The Club offer their congratulations to E. Banner Mendus and J. Heaton on their marriages to two of our lady members, Miss E. Jenkins and Miss M. E. Hamer, respectively, and also to C. F. Rolland, F. L. Jenkins, Miss M. N. Young and Miss D. Willis on their marriages. C. F. Rolland and I. H. Appleyard are now serving with the forces, which brings the Club total to 141.

We are happy to welcome back those of our members who had the misfortune to be taken prisoners of war and hope that they have by now recovered from their experiences.

With the end of the war it was possible to once more hold the Annual Dinner of the Club. Owing to lack of facilities in Windermere it was decided that the Dinner should be held at the Royal Oak Hotel, Keswick, when upwards of 150 members and their friends were present despite the difficulties of transport, a most enjoyable evening was spent by all able to attend and our thanks are due to Mr Beck and his staff for their efforts on our behalf.

J. C. APPLEYARD.

LONDON SECTION

Chairman:
DR CHARLES F. HADFIELD

Committee :

Lady Chorley
H. N. Fairfield
Miss M. Glynne
J. E. Jackson
Mrs Lancaster-Jones
Mrs Milsom
Sir Leonard Pcarse
W. A. Poucher
R. Walker

Hon. Sec. and Treasurer : Mrs M. Garrod, 19 Douglas Rd., Harpenden. *Telephone* 230.

During the past year the London Section has suffered a sad loss with the death of our old friend Tom Hardwick. He has been a devoted member of the section since its start. His profound and detailed knowledge of the Home Counties made him a most valuable member on walks. Not only could he be relied on to take the place of a leader who failed, but he was always able to extricate a party which had strayed from its prescribed course and set them once more on their way. His sons have kindly presented the section with a set of two inch maps of the Home Counties which will be of great value to us.

On December 1st we met for our 25th Annual Meeting and Lunch at Brown's Hotel ; 60 members and guests were present. Dr. Hadfield was in the Chair and made a short speech concerning the election of a new Committee. He referred to the progress of the Speaker Memorial, unfortunately Government restrictions make plans for building a Packhorse Bridge very difficult, but we are still hoping to carry out the plan and negotiations are slowly proceeding.

Monthly walks are being arranged as usual for the coming year and possibly a lecture or so. With members returning to London we are hoping for a larger attendance on walks. Next December we expect to revert to an Annual Dinner and also to be able to have a greater number of guests.

MAHJORIE GARROD, *Hon. Secretary.*