



A. W. HARC KEAVE S
(President, 1953-1954)

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

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LETTERS FROM EVEREST

John Hunt

Namche Bazar—25.3.53

. . . The walk has been quite heavenly, specially since we came down from the final high ridge to the Dudh Kosi, which drains from the Everest massif, and turned North. This is a tremendous gorge, reminiscent of the Teesta — very rugged indeed. We have followed the path up it for three days, getting progressively higher — here it is 12,000 feet. It has stayed fine, except for some rain two days ago and yesterday it was cloudy. But for the final walk up here the day has been glorious. We had a fine view of Everest and some fantastic nearer views of peaks the size of Siniolchu, all flaked and jagged—quite unthinkably difficult. Flowers have been wonderful—the rhodies above 7,000 feet are deep or pale pink, and all the magnolias have been at their best—great, heavy white blossoms. Several mauve primulas and other flowering bushes. We have continued the practice of starting off at 6 a.m. and stopping for breakfast about 8—8-30, usually by a stream. This has given us a chance to get cleaned up and have a dip. On one of these occasions we nearly lost Chas Evans. Ed and Chas and I had gone to bathe in the Likhu Khola, a biggish river—Chas plunged in and was at once swept under. He hit a rock, reappeared and then went under again! However, he was luckily unhurt and had not taken a mouthful, so managed to get in to the bank before we went to his rescue; it was a nasty moment! In this Sherpa country the people are very friendly indeed and greet us as we pass their houses, the latter are strongly built stone buildings, with good timber work — very like Swiss chalets — but you will remember them at Lachen. Potatoes and barley are growing at present in their small, stony and walled-in terraces. On arrival here today we found the wife of one of our Sherpas on the path with a teapot of Tibetan tea—the pot decorated with coloured paper in our honour! We had to drink some tho' it was not very nice. Naturally there has been much interest in our arrival and great welcomes for the Sherpas who live here. Crowds of kids are swarming round the camp, some of them playing with kites just like those we saw by the road pond! The village headman has been to see me—do you remember the Lachi man? And also some Indians who are manning a frontier check point—they have a wireless which may be useful in emergency. This camp is on a Col just above the village, with views both ways to high and fierce-looking peaks.

Tyangboche—29 March 1953.

This is written just before we leave on the first period of acclimatisation; Chas Evans' party has already gone, as they are trying out Tom B's Closed Circuit Oxygen as well as the O.C. This has been an invaluable three days, partly restful, partly pretty busy, with instruction in wireless, oxygen, cookers (I have asked Ed to tell Reggie how pleased he is with the latter), sorting out of loads, issuing of kit (everyone is both impressed and delighted with everything—the NZ pair have asked me to send you their special thanks), making up of accounts, articles for the 'Times,' etc., etc. This is a simply heavenly spot — I won't repeat what has gone to the 'Times ' as you'll see it there. Yesterday we were entertained by the Lamas at the monastery. The head Lama is only a small boy and is away in Lhasa, so his No. 2, a very portly and impressive old man in fine red robes, looked after us. We entered the sanctuary—you will remember the Gangtok one, where I laid a scarf on the Lama's chair and on that of the Abbot of Rongbuk (+ some money!) then I presented the expedition flag. After that we sat in an upper room and had a meal, the old acting Abbot was very interesting about Yetis, leaving no doubt whatever in my mind about their existence—the diary will give you more details. Later that day the young Abbot's mother entertained us to tea, which was also interesting—they are all most friendly folk.

This a.m. prayers were offered for the expedition most of the morning. Six of us did a training scramble up to 16,000 feet, and tried out our little wireless sets with great success. We had stupendous views all round, and got our first sight of the S. Col.

Training Camp (Circa 17,500 ft) — 3 Apr 1953

. . . Here we are 'acclimatizing ' and having a thoroughly wonderful, if fairly strenuous time. George, Greg, Tenzing and I have come two days' journey from Tyangboche, and are camped beside a glacier (we have named it Nuptse glacier) which springs from the foot of that great mountain wall. So far we have climbed an easy rock peak using oxygen, starting from 18,000 ft., and going up to 19,700, the times have averaged 50 minutes, which is a good proof of the value of the oxygen at present stage. Then yesterday we crossed our glacier and set up a light camp for just the 4 of us, at nearly 19,000 ft. beneath

a very attractive snow and rock peak (we have called it Chukhung peak, after the top village in the valley below). This morning we climbed it by its very steep North face, which I led. It involved a lot of step-cutting and we are all rather pleased to have done our first peak, and without undue effort. We then came down its South side back to this main camp.

Tomorrow we plan to return by crossing a Col into the valley which comes down from the Khumbu glacier, this will take us 3 days and depends a little on the weather, its snowing at present.

Well, there's all the news up to date. I'm well but slight sore throat and catarrh — Ed Hillary was much worse with some complaint when we left on 30th.

Base Camp — 8 Apr 1953

... Its been a very busy 3 days, so much to arrange and think of for the future. The worst headache is finance — I'd gladly have handed this to someone else, but with so much at stake have not felt able to do so.

We are all astonishingly well and all have reached much the same standard after the first week of training, I've actually gained 5 lbs.!! The best sign is the fact that everyone seems pretty happy—Tom Bourdillon came up to me last evening after we'd had supper by a camp fire and said what a success he thought it all was.

The next big job ahead is the icefall reconnaissance, which Ed Hillary is taking on. I am moving up after his party, to see the results and take decisions on the spot. Charles and Greg and Tom B are clearing up here on return from their acclimatization period and will meet Jimmy Roberts with the second oxygen consignment. So all is fairly well in hand.

We are feeling well; yesterday had the first Ready Mix scones, which were pronounced to be excellent by all. At lunch today George Lowe brought me a stew made in five mins. in one of your Pressure Cookers—and send you his thanks!

Camp beside Imja Glacier beneath Nuptse — 12 Apr 1953

I am starting this letter early but it won't catch a Dak runner before about this day week. There is just a chance I may have received some of your letters by that date, brought along by

Jimmy Roberts. But not before I'll have had to send this on its way, as my party will then be up at the foot of the Icefall, with Greg and his Dak* arrangements still functioning from Tyangboche.

This is the third night spent at this camp, on the third acclimatization period. We (Noyce, Ward, Bourdillon and self) are mainly trying out the Closed Circuit oxygen, and this has come through its trials quite well. We are in quite wonderful country, under the very shadow of this fantastic mountain, and across the way from the Nuptse—Lhotse ridge which so frowned above us last trip. Yesterday, Tom and I climbed a very nice rock peak of 19,500 feet, and this was today repeated by Mike Ward: Wilf, Tom and I spent today training Sherpas on steep ice and snow. My little caravan had a most interesting outing among seracs beneath a great ice ridge of 20-21,000 feet which divides us from the valley known as the Hangu away to the East. We got to rather over 20,000 feet before turning back. Ed Hillary's party has gone up to reconnoitre and prepare the Icefall, and tomorrow my party is starting on its way to join them—three days' journey. Meanwhile, Chas Evans has been training a select few of our Sherpas in using oxygen. I gather from a scribbled note that this has been a great success. Weather has turned nasty on us, and we came up here through 3-4 inches of new snow. Yesterday was fairly nasty too, but today has been glorious again.

13/4. We've come down to the Valley (Chukhung) from our training camp, and are now half-way up on the other side—in a lovely grassy alp. Tomorrow we hope to cross over to the Khumbu valley on our way to the icefall—and Everest. There is a chance of climbing a peak on the way.

When we get there, it will be the end of one important phase, and the beginning of Everest proper. I think we shall all be very ready in every sense to get on with the real thing at last.

14/4. I'm giving this to Tom Bourdillon, who leaves me tomorrow morning to return to Tyangboche. I've come down beside the Khumbu glacier, and an easy two days' march from the foot of the icefall, after crossing our pass from the Imja valley this morning. For some reason I was going awfully badly, having had a somewhat breathless night, and had to decide to let

*i.e., Mail.

the others climb a 20,000 feet peak from the pass, I came straight over and have rested up ever since. This was rather tantalizing, as you can imagine, but there could be no doubt I wasn't up to it. Mike has **run** me over with his stethoscope and given various drugs — he suspects pleurisy but thinks he's checked it. Anyway, I'm feeling much better already!

Tomorrow we go up the glacier and cross it to the foot of Pumori, whence there is a frozen lake, this is to be the place where we will rest up for a few days before going up to Base Camp.

Base Camp Khumbu Glacier—21 Apr 1953

I am scribbling this to you in bed before setting out for two days work in the icefall glacier. Morris, the 'Times' man, is sending a runner back to Kathmandu and it's a chance to get letters off. This confounded pen won't write when its cold. You'll have a terrible time trying to read it. We are very nearly all assembled at Base Camp, beneath the icefall and ready for the job. It's been snowing overnight which is a nuisance as we have hundreds of Coolies coming up today and tomorrow and there'll be the trouble with snow blindness. Do you remember the awful trouble we had? There's really not much change since I last wrote. We intend to start the loads moving up on 24th, and there's still a good deal to do to make the icefall easily passable for the Sherpas. We shall know the worst by tomorrow about snags high up at the entrance to the Cwm, where there was a huge crevasse last year. So far we've bridged two or three smaller ones lower down, and have a certain amount of beams to put across others.

I am staying tonight at Camp II, half-way up, after helping Wilf today, then tomorrow up to Camp III site with Ed Hillary, George Lowe and George Band. Finally, down tomorrow ni^ht to launch the Build-up period. The idea is to come right off the mountain half-way through •— early May — for a rest, while a reconnaissance is made of the Lhotse Face—I shall probably take part in this, so as to make the plan for the assault.

Base Camp Khumbu Glacier — 23 Apr 1953

., . . Well, tomorrow we start the big task of lifting stores into the Cwm. I was up there yesterday, after spending a night very much relieved to find only one impassable gap before we at Camp II (half way up) and with Ed and George Band was

could really say we were into the Cwm proper. Tomorrow I am going up there again with Chas Evans and Tenzing.

We have moved the necessary sections of the ladders up to Camp II today, so as to take them on with us tomorrow. Most annoyingly it is snowing hard again and all our hard work on the track will have to be repeated. It's certainly a very serious problem, this icefall, and I only wish I could feel happier about its safety. We are all at Base except Mike Westmacott and Ed, who are working on the route from Camp III. Chas Wylie has gone up to change the ladder sections already laid over crevasses, for wood which Tenzing has brought up. Dawa T, looking *much* older, has come up with Jimmy Roberts.

Khumbu Glacier — 28 Apr 1953

... I came down yesterday from Camp III which is now firmly established at the head of the Icefall. Two days ago, Tenzing, Chas Evans, Ed Hillary and self went right up the Cwm, following a reconnaissance the previous evening, and reached the Swiss Camp IV at 22,000 ft.,* where we are going to establish our Advance Base. It was rather a thrill to blaze the trail thus far, and to know that we were, indeed, through. There had been some doubt about getting up the icefall itself, which is exceedingly complicated and difficult —• then the big question mark about entering the Cwm, where the Swiss had such trouble last year with monster crevasses—and now, unless there are big changes in the ice which produce fresh problems, we seem to be up to schedule and able to stick to the long-determined programme. The process of ferrying the loads up is well under way. I left Greg and Wilf at Camp III, in charge of moving stores up to Camp IV; others are looking after the ferry service from Base to Camp III, a two-day journey. Chas Wylie and George Band are just due back from Camp III, having moved up yesterday afternoon with two Sherpa trains to Camp II. And so it is intended to continue until 2nd May, when we are to have a break of three days. During this break, Chas Evans with Tom B, Chas Wylie and Mike Ward are to carry out a reconnaissance of the Lhotse Face getting as high as they can, the first pair using Tom's Closed Circuit Oxygen, the second pair the Open Circuit. As a result of this reconnaissance I shall decide on

*Later reclassified as 21,200 feet.

what plan to adopt, and we shall be busy between 6th and 10th May preparing for that plan.

Well, time seems to slip away and doubtless before very long we shall be put to the real test.

*Camp IV (22,000 feet) * — 1st May, 1953.*

Chas Evans, Tom Bourdillon and I have arrived up here at the beginning of a reconnaissance of the Lhotse Face. I am spending tomorrow with them and we are going as high as we can, then they are going up to establish our future Camp VI, at about 24,500 feet, it all rather depends on the weather, for hardly had we got in than it started snowing and it's doing so really heavily—all the track below us must have filled in by now; most disheartening, this regular and heavy new snow.

This recce is a very important affair, for it will show us how to stage the assault. Chas Wylie and Mike Ward are coming up tomorrow using Open Circuit oxygen, when Tom and Chas E are to use Tom's Closed Circuit. We used the latter coming up today, with success, cutting an hour off the time taken last time from III to IV despite the fact we were carrying a good 50 lbs. Pugh proposes to come up here, too, tho' whether he'll make it I rather wonder. This is where the Swiss spent so many trying days last autumn. We will eventually make our attempts on the top from it, for it is close enough to the Lhotse Face and quite a comfortable spot. As I mentioned, there is a good deal of Swiss food here and a damaged tent, as well as other odds and ends.

4th May.

Am just down from Camp V after launching the big reconnaissance of the Lhotse Face. Poor dears, they are started off in baddish weather and I'm worried about them.

I'm sitting in my little 'Yanky' tent, which you saw at Lusk's, rather weary after coming down early this a.m. from Camp II and with a tiresome cold—others have gone down, at my advice, to a camp site two marches down the glacier for a 'breather.'

Base Camp Khumbu Glacier — 4 May 1953

. . . What is there in what we are doing which stirs people so? Letters and telegrams go on coming in full of such fine sentiments.

*See footnote on page 6.

Chas E, Tom B and I, with the Bourdillon Oxygen apparatus, went some little way up the Lhotse Face (to 23,500 feet or so), prior to the proper Reconnaissance, and yesterday I had a long day, first going up to Camp V with the Recce party and giving them final instructions and then escorting 3 sick Sherpas down to Camp II en route for Base. It was rather interesting that, whereas I'd used oxygen the day before, I went up to 23,000 feet again without it, but just as easily as with—in tact, it was altogether a more pleasant experience! I am now worried about the Recce party, as the weather has turned foul just as they are wrestling with the Face. It isn't going to be at all easy, I fear—but then this is no surprise.

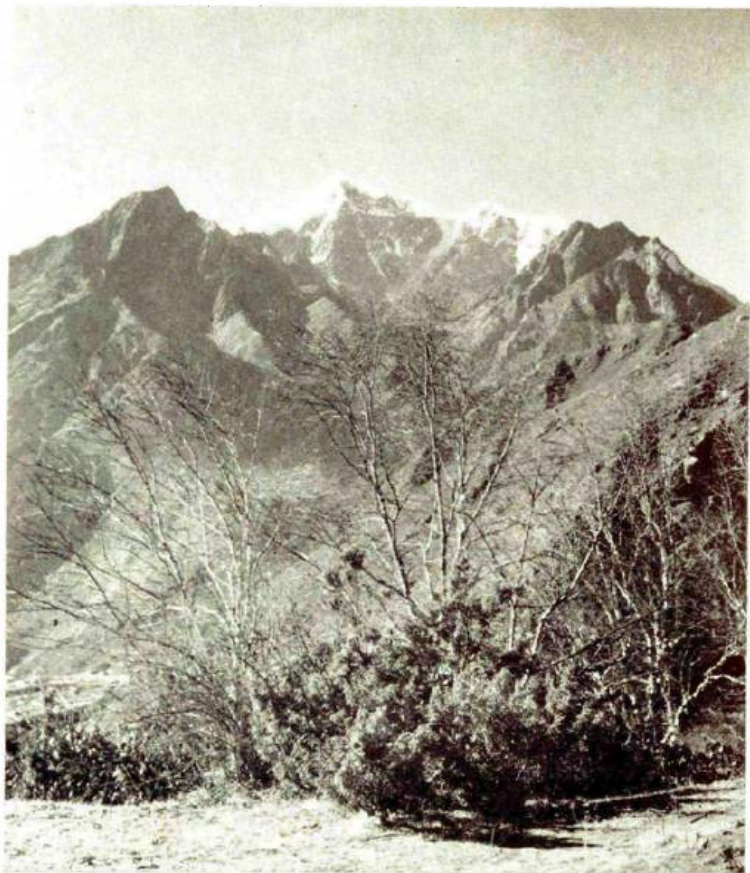
Base Camp Khumbu Glacier — 7 May 1953

... to catch James Morris' runner, with his report on the plan, which resulted from my conference this morning.

Chas Evans' Reconnaissance of the Lhotse Face and the oxygen tests have enabled me to decide on using *both* Closed and Open Circuit equipment, in a double assault on the summit. After lots of thought I've decided on the 'line up' for the assault as follows:—

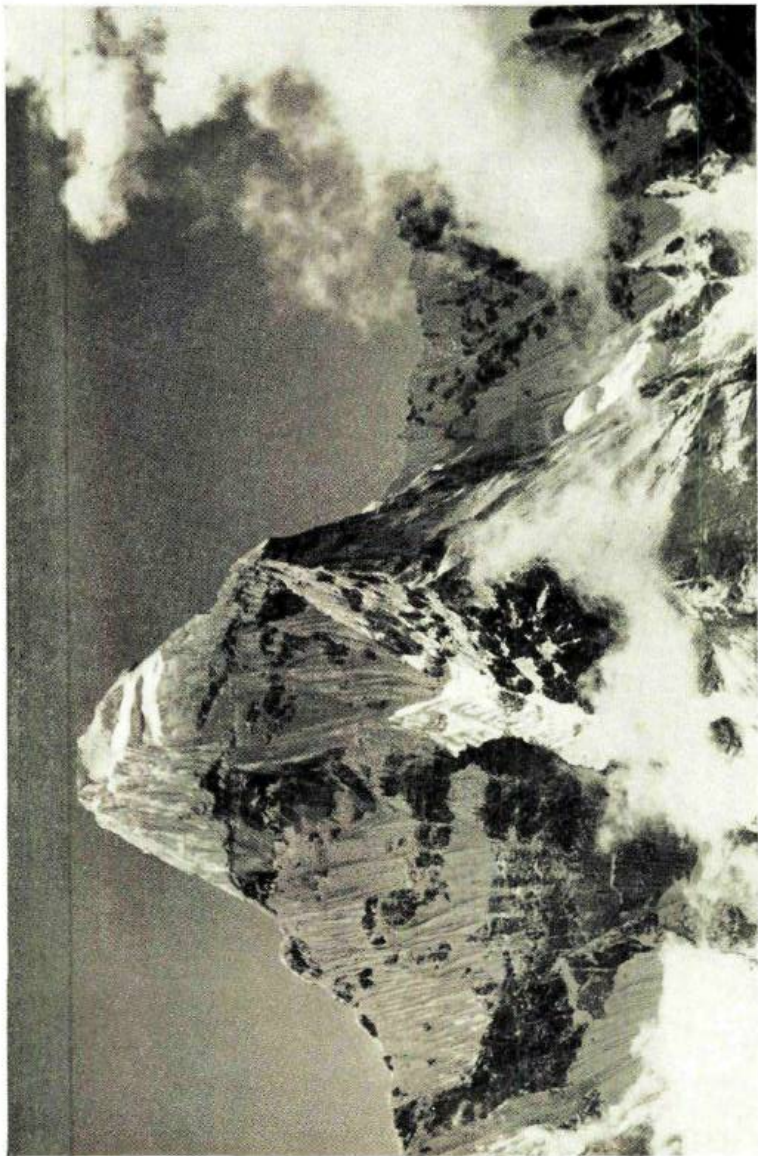
- | | | |
|---|--------------|---|
| 1. To prepare the Lhotse Face and establish Camp VI (n-15 May) | { | Low
Band
Westmacott
plus 4 Sherpas |
| 2. To carry to the South Col | { | Noyce
Wylie
^ plus 12 Sherpas |
| 3. First Assault Party (Closed Circuit) | J
j | Evans
Bourdillon |
| 4. 2nd Assault Party (Open Circuit) | i
I | Hillary
Tenzing |
| 5. Support Party (to establish Camp VIII on SE Ridge at 27,500 or 28,000 ft.) | f
-
^ | Hunt
Gregory
plus 4 Sherpas |

It was tempting to go for the top myself, but I'm sure I've chosen the best men for the job and that my position enables me to control the business and make decisions on the spot. We are now in the final stages of getting stores into the Cwm and, if weather suits, may go straight ahead after 15th. Equally, we



A. Gregory

TAWECHE FROM THYANGBOCHE



A. Gregory

AMA DABLAM

may come down and wait for the weather. At the moment its pretty ghastly and as you know, so very much depends on this.

Ed and I go up to the Cwm again on the 9th to release George Lowe and his team for the Lhotse Face.

As from Camp VI, 23,500 ft (Lhotse Face) — 16 May, 1953*
 . . . Camp III, having come down to arrange the final move to Advance Base, before we make our bid on the top. The weather has suddenly relented in these last few days and, tho' it has slowed us down, we are now very nearly ready — I've fixed 20th for the first carry to the South Col (Wilf's) which will be followed by the Assaults if the weather holds—I pray earnestly that it may for the next 10 days at least. At the moment Wilf Noyce and George Lowe are at, or moving up to, Camp VII at 24,500 ft.,^f in order to prepare the last bit of the route towards the South Col; Ed Hillary went up there yesterday and set up their tent. Tomorrow stores for Camp VII will be carried up before the assault. All are in fine fettle if a little tensed up — I find the suspense trying too, and feel we ought to be 'at it' already in this perfect weather — but there is no speeding up the machine and we must be patient now.

Advance Base Western Cwm — 20th May 1953
 . . . Everything is really in the balance till we see how Wilf fares tomorrow morning. He has the difficult job of preparing a certain critical passage across the Lhotse Face, and taking a string of Shcrpas to the South Col. If he succeeds in this, then we shall be half-way *set* for the assault in the next few days. The party preparing the route up the Face has unaccountably failed to finish its job—our wireless communications have broken down and we can only watch events from here. They spent all yesterday in Camp. Today — as 2 days ago — they started out, only to return. It is tantalizing and desperately disappointing. But we live on, in hopes of success tomorrow—the weather today is glorious and seems fairly set, but how long can it last? You may well imagine just how anxious it all is, for me.

All well, we shall see fairly soon, I hope, but cannot wait indefinitely like this without spirits dropping a bit.

*Later reclassified as 23,000 feet.

^fLater reclassified as 24,000 feet.

Advance Base Western Cwm — 22nd May, 1953

... the first Assault party is just off. Yesterday we watched Wilf Noyce, with Sherpa Annullu, climb to the South Col from Camp VII—a thrilling sight and a very fine effort, for it meant we had conquered the Lhotse Face at long last — after nearly a fortnight's anxiety and struggle. Today Ed Hillary and Tenzing, whom I'd sent up yesterday to 'boost' the morale of the Sherpas, are leading 14 Sherpas to the Col. Chas Wylie is also with them. They are well up in the gully besides the Eperon des Genevois and seem to be going well. Wilf and Annullu have just returned here after their fine and historic effort and their reports are encouraging — little wind and good snow conditions, quite a lot of Swiss stuff about, etc., etc.

Chas E, Tom B and I are going up to Camp V tonight. This means we should be on the Col on 24th and T and C will try for the top, from the Col, on the next day.

Ed and Tenzing are at the moment on their way to the Col —they are to come down and follow us up as soon as possible—• 24 or 48 hours interval.

To James Morris (of *The Times*)

South Col—27th May, 1953.

Dear James,

I hope you've been able to piece together a connected story of the momentous events since 23rd May. First Assault Party had a pretty trying journey struggling up here on 24th May owing to strong overnight wind; we ploughed up and across the Traverse in foul, breakable crust, very tiring for those remaking the track, of which there was little or no sign after the big carry to the Col (3 of the climbing party and 14 Sherpas) on the previous day. This, and the very poor showing of our two sick Sherpas, decided me to mark time here on the Col on 25th May, despite good weather and the risks of deterioration. It was, therefore, only yesterday that the first Assault Party started up together with the Support Party — the latter reduced by the failure of a Sherpa to myself and Da Namgyal. The 'Summiters' (Chas E and Tom B) did not get off till 7-30 a.m. owing to technical trouble with Chas' set — this recurred throughout the day, and the delays undoubtedly affected their decision not to go on to the highest point. My party, therefore,

started first, its task to dump stores for a camp on the SE Ridge, for use by the second party. We got away soon after 7.00 a.m. With one man short I decided that we should carry the greater part of the load to as high a point as possible, but leave to the second support party (Gregory with 3 Sherpas) the task of lifting these stores higher — I had always hoped for 27,800, a shoulder on the SE Ridge, on the next day.

We were soon overtaken by the Closed Circuit pair, themselves carrying 50 lbs.; the superiority of this equipment above 26,000 feet was most marked. They forged ahead up the steep couloir leading to the Ridge and I last saw them some 200 feet above me, partly hidden by mist and driving snow, going strongly. We reached the Ridge — it was a great struggle — at 27,300 feet*, at the point where still stands the remains of the tent used by Lambert and Tenzing last Spring. From here we continued, painfully slowly, for perhaps a further 200 vertical feet, to the foot of a steep rise, at the top of which I hoped to pitch the tent. But we were both fairly well spent and I therefore decided to dump the stores (tent: oxygen: food: fuel etc) at this point—I calculate the height to be 27,500 feet—we turned, without oxygen, and proceeded very slowly downwards. The oxygen lack made itself felt pretty severely and extreme precautions were taken in the couloir to avoid accidents. Moreover, the weather had closed in and it was snowing and blowing fairly hard. We must have got down soon after 1 p.m. to be received and wonderfully cared for by Hillary and Tenzing, who had just arrived from Camp VII. We were both fairly well done in and I shall not easily forget their kindness. Soon after arrival, other members of the second assault party came in with tremendous news—Chas and Tom had been seen passing over the South Peak soon after 1 p.m.—our excitement was tremendous.

Our relief was enormous when they were later sighted at the head of the couloir soon after 3 p.m. They came in to camp at about 4-30 p.m. with the story (which I'll get Chas or Tom to relate) of the first ascent of the South Peak of Everest—and let no one think of this as some minor excrescence on a ridge—you have but to view it from here.

STOP PRESS. All preparations were in hand last night for

•Later reclassified as 27,200 feet.

+Later reclassified as 27,350 feet.

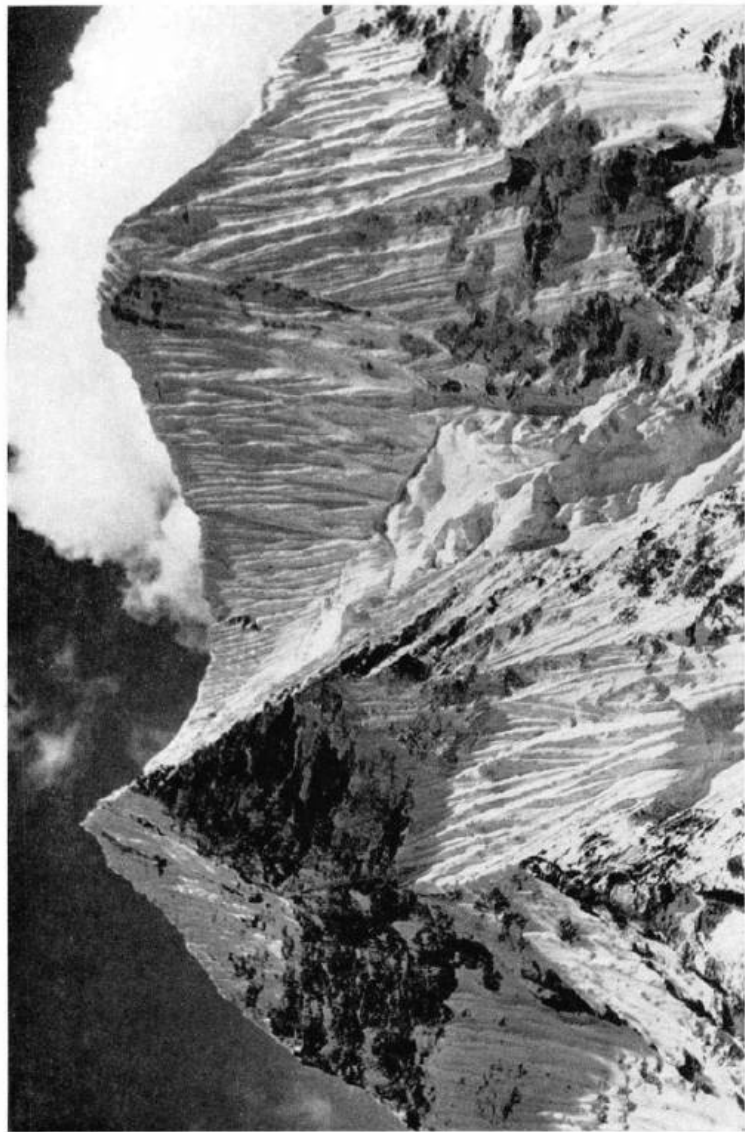
the second assault. The party with a gallant band of Sherpas making their second ascent to the South Col, carrying reserves of oxygen and other stores, had arrived and hopes were high. In the evening the wind rose and we all passed a cramped and sleepless night, buffeted by a rising gale. This morning it must be blowing at some 50 knots and I had to decide on a postponement of 24 hours in the second attempt. It would have been futile to face the fury of this fearsome west wind — movement between tents is itself an ordeal. So we are held up. At present conditions are pretty dreadful, but we hope for an abatement. We have stores to allow for this contingency and intend to stay it out, at least for a further day. The most worrying feature is the lack of rest and wearing effect on the nerves of this gale, tearing at our canvas and shaking us continually in these very cramped conditions, making any sortie a nightmare. Meanwhile, everyone is waiting patiently for an improvement in order to take the opportunity whose prospects we all feel are so bright.

P.S.—In case it has not already occurred to you, you may think it worthwhile to comment on the fact that, whatever the issue may be, we have so far sent up no less than 9 of the total climbing party of // to the South Col (2 of these twice), all in excellent order. Of our Sherpa team, no less than 19 men have carried loads of 30-40 lbs. to the Col (6 of these twice). These facts have put us in this very strong position of enabling 2 assault parties each to delay 24 hours on the Col, consuming oxygen, food and fuel. 3 of us have now slept 3 nights up here.

Adv. Base —29th May, 1953.

This scrap of a letter will go by hand of James Morris, of the 'Times,' who will probably be off to UK with the final news in a day or two. I got down from the South Col with the first Assault Party yesterday—more or less whole—but a fear we are really casualties after our effort on 26th. You will know the story so I won't go over it all. It was funny to look westwards from 27,500 feet on the SE Ridge (my limit) to Kangch and all our old friends of 1937 —just the reverse view I'd had from Nepal Peak.

At this moment we are anxiously waiting for news of Ed Hillary's bid for the top — they are at it now, and I've sent Wilf Noyce with three Sherpas up to the Col to help get them down.



A. Gregory

TWIN ICE PEAK, IMJA KHOLA



A. Gregory

LOOKING DOWN THE WESTERN CWM FROM CAMP IV

Wilf was splendid in helping us, for we reached Camp VII in a state of very near exhaustion — in fact I only came down here because we feared Tom Bourdillon might not get down alive.

Camp Base — 1st June, 1953.

. . . I don't remember when I last sent you a letter; was it before I went up to the South Col? That was the start of the assault and from then until the evening of the 30th, when we knew the outcome of Hillary's and Tenzing's attempt, there has really been no respite at all — some terribly difficult decisions had to be made, but somehow they have each and all turned out alright. I've felt very sure of the Tightness of each one, as of the final outcome, all along, as though guided along a predestined track, a curious sensation of confidence answering to Faith. And that big imponderable, the weather, has been with us just enough to see us through.

It started on 23rd, when I had sent up Ed and Tenzing (night before) to intervene in the vital carry to the South Col. Wilf, one of those leading the Sherpas, had made a wonderful change in the stalemate on the Lhotse Face, by going up to the South Col with one Sherpa; but it was by no means sure that the rest would go on up next day (23rd). There were 14 of them then up at Camp VII, and on those loads the assault depended. Only Ed and Tenzing could tip the balance, and I sent them up from Adv. Base, knowing well the risk of prejudicing their effort in the second assault. But first things first, and it worked. On that day (23rd) we watched no less than 17 little dots emerge from the serac in front of Camp VII and continue steadily, if slowly, up the face and across the traverse. All but one went on without hesitation into the couloir leading to the Col — and that defaulter's load was taken by someone else. With the essential backing thus ensured, I decided that the first assault party should start, the weather had been good for a week, and we must tempt Providence no longer. So off we went — on oxygen — to Camp V that night, Chas E, Tom B, myself and Sherpas Da Namgyal and Balu.

Soon after our arrival, down came Ed., Tenzing, both dreadfully tired, and a few of the stoutest of the Sherpas; the rest stayed up at Camp VII. Among these was Dawa Thondup, well in his 40's, whose medical fitness had been in doubt up to the

last minute and addicted to strong drink — a remarkable performance, this.

Next day we went up to VII and on 25th evening reached the South Col. It was blowing as only it can on that dread and desolate spot and we will none of us forget the terrible struggle, lasting over an hour, to erect our Pyramid tent. We were so exhausted at the end, when we had put up this tent and the Meade, that it was already out of the question to go for the Summit on the next day, as planned. One day's delay thus resulted, spent at 26,000 feet on the South Col of Everest in fine weather. I even managed to walk—very slowly—to both edges of this curious, stony plateau, and photograph the views both ways. To the East, over the left shoulder of Makalu, was Kangch and its satellites — I could make out the twins, Nepal Peak and Tent Peak, just as I'd seen Everest and her neighbours from that group in 1937.

We had a good night on oxygen on 25th and got away early on 26th though Tom and Chas had some delay with freezing up of the Closed Circuit valve system. I was with Da Namgyal, our mission to place stores for the Ridge Camp as high as possible — the camp to be finally established by the second support party accompanying Ed's assault party. We were pretty heavily laden, for the other porter, Balu, who should have been in my party, had utterly failed to turn out of his tent.

Well, we made our way (both on oxygen) up to the crest of the SE Ridge by a very steep couloir, following T and C — I can't describe to you the agonies of it—my oxygen wasn't functioning properly and it seemed a struggle for dear life to make each 5 or 6 paces upward — a terrible nightmare. We stopped for some time at the skeleton of the Swiss tent, used by Lambert and Tenzing in May, 1952, then managed by a great effort — laboured step by step, fighting for breath, to get up another 150-200 feet, with the weather closing in (snow, wind and mist). Da Namgyal was now at the end of his tether and I had to urge him on to a convenient-looking ledge, where we could dump the kit—a Meade tent, assault rations, kerosene, oxygen (we left our own bottles for use as sleeping oxygen). We actually tried to scrape a platform for the tent, but in our feeble state it was useless and in any case I wanted it placed higher—at the top of a shoulder on the Ridge—by the second party. Through the mists I could still see T and C above us, just getting to the crest of

this shoulder. We started down, probably 11-30 a.m. Terribly slow and wobbly now without oxygen. I had left my second bottle by the Swiss tent and for a time tried to use it on the way down to the couloir — but owing to the defect (in my mask) I found this worse and decided to carry it down to be used by the 2nd party. We secured each other, rope length by rope length, in the couloir—Da Namgyal had one slip, then at last were on easier ground, and the strength seemed to leave one like water. I could see the 2nd Assault Party winding up the Lhotse Face and already two figures at the Col. As we descended they came towards us—Ed and Tenzing. I collapsed hopelessly into tears and found I'd no more strength to walk in. Ed was splendid in propping me and eventually bringing oxygen, which just did the trick. He kept me on it for some time after, in the little 'Blister' tent.

Later, George and Greg arrived, *jubilant*, they'd seen T and C on the South Pk! For some time we thought they might well have made the summit (they were seen at 1-15 p.m.)—the Sherpas with the second party thought the South Pk *was* the top. But when they at last came down, at about 4-30 p.m., we learned that they had NOT, quite rightly, following their briefing and not having enough oxygen for the double journey, they reported the connecting ridge as formidable.

Followed a grim night of strong gale, T, C and I crammed in the Meade and without oxygen to assist Ed and Tenzing with their support party to get off. We were in pretty poor shape next day, Tom specially so.

It was blowing a gale anyway and Ed had not started. A twenty-four hour delay was decided on; luckily we were sufficiently provisioned in food, fuel and oxygen to last this out. We sat through the morning in fair misery in the Pyramid, failing to get the stove to light—outside, all hell was let loose and I began to feel towards the S. Col as the Swiss had — it had an atmosphere of death. About midday it was time for Tom and Chas to go down, taking with them yet another 'failure' from our elite Ridge team — the renowned Ang Temba. They left, 5 minutes later Chas was back. Tom was in a very bad way — perhaps dying—on that villainous slope up to the ridge—on his knees and unable to make it. Another Sahib must join this party to get him down to VII and below alive. Here was a quandary. I had decided my post was here, to take decisions on the send-off

of the 2nd Assault and to support Ed on return. I turned to Greg and George, it must be one of them. Then, in their chagrin, I saw my mistake. I was finished, they were fresh. That Ridge Camp must be pushed higher and they were already—as I had been—one man short. I must go down. But it was a bitter decision to take. Packed up with help of the others, in haste, while Tom was being given oxygen and physical help to the top of the Eperon. Ed carried my pack and I said farewell to him and George on the top, before joining the other three.

We stumbled and stopped and straggled our way down the endless slopes of the Lhotse Face to VII—Tom improving with his oxygen, I getting more tired. Reached there to find it occupied, to our joy and relief, by Wilf and Mike who anticipated our need. It was as well. Ang Temba fell head first into the crevasse above the camp, and Wilf was able to extricate him. Wilf, too, at my bidding, stayed to feed and care for us (Tom, Temba and self) that night, while Mike escorted Chas down to IV. We three were helplessly weary, and I had already decided to send Wilf up with 3 fresh Sherpas, to reinforce Ed's party. Chas* would be able to send the Sherpas up here to VII.

Next day we plodded on down, reached IV — a veritable haven — about 1 p.m., having passed Chasf bringing up the three Sherpas to join Wilf. It was a glorious day and we felt pretty sure the second assault was on.

On 29th, all day, no news. I'd fixed that Wilf should place sleeping bags on the Eperon, arranged so as to indicate ' Summit,' ' South Pk,' ' Failure.' But we saw nothing despite anxious searching with glasses until dark. We saw Wilf go up with this party and two of them return to Camp VII. We saw three descend from the Col.; later, these materialized into Greg and two of the Ridge Sherpas—dead weary but triumphant. Despite yet another ' failure ' Pemba (leaving them with *one* useful carrier, like me) Greg, George and Ang Nima had carried the camp 300 feet higher than my dump (to 28,000 feet)J—on the shoulder, thus giving Ed and Tenzing a magnificent send-off to the top.

On 30th came relief to our prolonged tension. First we saw

•Evans. tWylie.

JLater reclassified as 27,900 feet.

5 figures crossing the Lhotse Face, down from the Col. This meant that all were *safe* (Ed, Tenzing, Wilf, George and one Sherpa). Then, in early afternoon, three people approached Adv. Base — we'd seen them emerge from VII shortly after the 5 had arrived there — I started up to meet them, followed by Mike Westmacott, the strain was at last to be ended one way or another. I realized it was Ed himself, with Tenzing and George Lowe, they made no sign, evidently they'd *not* made it, after all. Then, suddenly, they started gesturing with their axes towards Everest's Summit above us. I couldn't make the mental switch for a second or two, then emotion and joy and wild excitement overwhelmed me utterly and I must have seemed possessed for some time. Weeping foolishly, I embraced Ed and Tenzing in turn.

Shouting to the others, asking questions. Everyone crowded round, everyone was equally mad, the Sherpa team were grasping these two splendid, lucky people by the hand, grinning broadly. Such a scene as I've imagined, but never believed could come true — Everest was climbed yesterday by Ed and Tenzing at 11-30 a.m. We'd made it, exactly according to plan. We had crowned the efforts of all our illustrious predecessors. We had stood at the apex of this pyramid of hard-won experience and endeavour. What a tale to tell the waiting world!

ON MAKING A HUT

Harry Spilsbury

When the Salving House was bought many of us thought it far too small and awkward to plan, with its narrow kitchen, its attractive fireplace and chimney at the wrong end, its situation right on the road at a bus stop in the middle of Rosthwaite village and, perhaps above all, the lack of funds available for its alteration and equipment. In the end, this last handicap was a blessing in disguise, for it gave about fifty members an opportunity to help in the work of conversion. Whether they spent numerous weekends working there, or merely an hour or two on their hands and knees scraping the floor, or sand-papering some of the bunk uprights, they will assuredly feel that the Salving House belongs to them far more than if the work had been done by contractors.

The enterprise was, too, the means of discovering amongst our members much skill and even craftsmanship, capacity for infinite care and patience, ingenuity and improvisation and, above all, a desire to put their best work into the many and varied jobs which went into the making of the Hut. Some members gave materials, new or used, often in addition to service, and others, unable themselves to give of their labour, were so impressed by the sight of so much voluntary effort that they contributed generously towards the cost.

Planning the layout was a cross between solving a jigsaw puzzle and putting a quart into a pint pot. A special sub-committee was formed to make recommendations to the main committee. Almost every member of the former produced some sort of a plan—all different, yet most of them containing good points. The ladies yearned to preserve the fireplace and chimney and to have it in their own dormitory; some wanted the partitions to run lengthwise, others preferred them laterally. The possibility of an upper floor and a loft was considered and rejected. The honorary architect produced plans which were almost fiercely discussed. Then someone had a brainwave, suggesting an L-shaped living-room, with a dining-space-occupying the smaller side of the L, and fixed seats along two sides, on the attractive continental model.

One member pleaded for the enlargement of the kitchen by removing the lavatory, knocking down the dividing wall and giving access at each end. The surveyor had been busy with

measurements designed to fit two complete toilets where there had been only one previously: would there be enough headroom? What about the beam? Another member enthused about the extra two feet of space which could be secured for the toilets by pulling down part of the main wall and replacing it by a 3-inch breeze block partition; but how much would this cost and could we afford it?

Then there was the argument about bunks. The first suggestion was twelve, the main committee ruled that there should be no more than eighteen—and finally twenty-four were put in on the 3-tier Brackenclouse model. How many should the ladies have, and how many the men? The ladies were jockeyed out of the end position with fireplace and chimney, and it was decided that the latter must come down, as a luxury which space would not allow. At last, under the skilful handling of the Chairman, agreement was reached, a revised plan was drawn up and submitted to the main committee and approved. More wonderful still, a sum of £700 was voted for the alterations and equipment.

Now came the complicated business of securing estimates and deciding which sections of the work should be done by members; how many of the pet schemes sponsored by little groups could we afford, and should we have a window here or a rooflight there? The contractors were asked to give estimates for each bit of work about which there was doubt. Consideration was given to essential and desirable equipment, probable costs, and sources of supply. By now it was late autumn, the meetings, often long, took place by candlelight in the cheerless Salving House before a wood fire on the condemned hearth. Nearly everyone had different ideas, but at last all was agreed, and the contractors were asked to take over and make all possible speed. They got off to a flying start and by Christmas much progress had been made. Some maddening delays followed, and it became obvious that the contractors could not finish by the end of February, 1953, when the first working party of members was to descend on the place. However, through the good offices of the Architect, the professionals kindly agreed to allow the amateurs to make a start before they themselves had completed their work.

Late on a Friday at the end of February the Foreman (as he was dubbed by his fellow-workers) arrived on a lorry kindly lent by one of our members. It had started from Liverpool, a hundred miles away, where it had picked up thirty mattresses

and pillows, bunk canvases and bunk uprights, more timber further on, primuses, tools, food, various other odds and ends, and finally, at Kendal, fifty steel tubes and a gate. There were no lights at the Salving House; it struck damp and chill and reeked of wet mortar, which lay in heaps all over the floor — or so it seemed. Fortunately the weather was fine; the cargo was unloaded, and somehow a place was found for it inside the hut. The lorry and driver departed for Scotland, the Foreman rigged up a bed and crept into his sleeping-bag with the smell of wet mortar still in his nostrils. Thus ended the first part of the preparation.

Many hours had been spent searching for equipment at bargain prices: the mattresses cost only 30/- each, the feather pillows half a crown, bunk canvases were bought at rock bottom prices, the cross struts for the bunk ends came from a dunnage merchant, and the bunk uprights (Malayan light hardwood) were picked up quite by chance at a Merseyside Marine Store for a fiver (about one-fifth of the cost of new timber). It is true that the uprights were not straight; three weekends had already been spent at home planing them, sorting them out to avoid knots, and matching them so that they could be pulled straight with the help of cramps. The steel tubes had been kindly given by a Past President and quite a lot of juggling was needed to get all the lengths required out of the material available.

On Saturday morning the other members of the first working party began to arrive. Our dining-room (save the mark!) was established at one end of the kitchen, where the 'gent's lav.' had formerly been, and where we could get some warmth from the primuses and an oil stove. The first job was to erect some bunks, a long task. Every upright had to be 'plumbed' and careful measurements taken for spacing and ensuring that the bunks were level — i the bulging walls increased our difficulties. Holes were cut in the concrete to receive the uprights, which were secured at their upper ends to the main cross timbers or roof joists — a tricky and tedious business this, but well worth the effort, to judge by the stability which resulted. Drilling the holes to receive the tubes called for much hard work and persistence. One member who did much of this work, skipping about the cross beams like Tarzan, brandishing an axe, became quite heated on the folly of spending one's weekends in this way when one might have been on the hills. Later, however, he

drilled for hours to put an 8-inch hole through a stone gatepost, and then 'stepped' the latter into position in a bed of some hundredweights of concrete, so perhaps his complaint was not very serious after all. An equally good job was done by a young farmer member in putting in the other stone gatepost, which weighed several hundredweights, and in rebuilding the wall.

One of our first discoveries was that the skylights in the lavatories had been badly positioned, so that the washplaces were in complete darkness, though there was wonderful light next door! We overcame this by knocking down the upper half of the partitions and glazing them. If you tried to shut the doors of the toilets you banged your head on a beam, so we cut the doors in two, hinged them on the telephone-kiosk principle, with leather tabs to pull them to, and cut out the beam. This job was entrusted to a distinguished Elder Brother and Past President, who was later referred to by a graduating member as 'the old gentleman who put tabs on the what-nots!' The fanlights could not be locked — and the sash bars fitted by the contractors threatened to brain anyone below—so we devised bars which come down diagonally to the side and lock the windows when closed.

At Easter we had many visitors, all anxious to help, and I fear they spent many weary hours sand-papering the bunk timbers and scraping the floor, which was literally covered with an uneven film of hard cement-mortar left by the builders. Nearly every newcomer had a spell of this work, and the only one who really jibbed was another highly esteemed Past President, who, after ten minutes or so, just got up and walked away, muttering! We had our nocturnal visitors, too. One night at 2 a.m. a little figure climbed into the women's dormitory by the window, stumped through the Hut, collected a rucksack, and clattered out again. Oh yes, the ladies knew who it was!

The plumbers did an excellent job: not only was their work neat and efficient, but they also went to great trouble to conceal the gaspipes, so often left exposed by fitters, as if they were things of beauty. There was much delay in fitting the stove, which was badly needed for warmth in the early days; when it did arrive it was the wrong size and had to be returned— We were, however, fortunate in having a fairy godmother at hand: a member who lives on the spot invited us to come to her cottage each

evening and supplied us with excellent coffee and cakes, while we reclined in comfortable chairs before a huge fire.

With calor gas and the stove installed, the hut became much more comfortable to work in. We were a source of much curious speculation to the ' locals ' and to visitors, who gathered at the weekends outside the windows and watched us as we worked. They seemed to think the place was a carpenter's shop, but they couldn't make out why we worked on Sundays and late into the night. Enquirers were told that we got treble pay for this!

Many hours were spent on planning and fitting up the kitchen; if only it had been two feet wider! — but we dared not suggest that the outer wall should be pushed out, because of the cost. To his great delight the Chairman of the sub-committee was allowed to dismande the old counter, and the seasoned timber from this was most useful for shelving and many other jobs. At that time new softwood was on licence, and any we bought was so green and wet that we had to leave it to dry for months before we could attempt to work it. The erection of the bunks was taken in stages, and went on over several weekends. The fitting of the upper part of the partitions was another long and tedious job, in which we had some valuable professional assistance from one of our members. For this we used Weyroc and found it excellent, but the roof-joists were so badly worm-eaten in places that one dared not drive in nails, and it was often difficult to secure a hold even with screws. We have come to the conclusion that the bunk uprights and the partitions are holding the roof up in some places.

The seats for the dining-alcove gave rise to long discussions. Someone had heard of a number of chapel pews for sale in Aspatria, so an expedition set forth one Saturday to inspect them and bought four. They had to be joined and mitred (a tricky business), but in the end they made a very satisfactory job. We tried to remove the ecclesiastical appearance by cutting away the beautiful curves, etc., but evidently without success. A parson who visited us one day immediately exclaimed : ' Ha! church pews!' We are now waiting for a long oak refectory table to go with them.

A strong working party turned up the weekend when painting was due to begin, but alas, the paint had not arrived, and instead the whole party spent their time scraping, cleaning down and making good the walls, a task that well repaid the labour

involved, although it was a disappointing hold-up at the time. No one could have restrained the team from painting had the material been there; when it did arrive there was great competition to use the one roller we possessed, which did excellent work even on the old uneven plaster.

As I have said, we discovered all sorts of skills amongst the workers as the months went by. One of our 'regulars' did the final fitting of fillets at the top of the partitions, covered the spaces over the windows with Weyroc, and made all the shelves for the bunks, work requiring great patience and craftsmanship. The excellence of this work will long be admired by the discerning. Others toiled just as cheerfully in the kitchen, making the bench for the stoves, fitting aluminium sheeting and painting the ceiling.

A Past President — they all took their share, as keen as school-boys — was discovered to have a flair for mending cisterns, and spent many hours sitting on the women's 'what-not' tinkering with a defective flush: but he put it right. He has not yet been told that the men's flush requires attention. The wardens were a tower of strength, he with the woodwork, and she mainly with cleaning down and painting: it was a great pleasure to work with them. Most of the detailed planning had been left to us by the sub-committee, and this to me was the most fascinating part of the whole affair. So much had to be devised, always with an eye on the cost, and usually second-hand material had to be used. There was much consultation, and everyone contributed ideas. The workers represented a real cross section of the Club, and perhaps the variety of vehicles standing in the yard most weekends was typical of this: an ancient Austin 7, a 1935 Alvis, a modern Singer, two or three motor bikes, a one-time taxi, a new Morris Minor, and the odd push-bike.

It is said that an army marches on its stomach, and it is very true that without the devotion of one or two ladies the working parties would not have functioned half so well as they did. Mostly we fed communally; many tempting dishes, brought from home by the gourmets, were shared by all; others handed in a variety of rations, which later emerged from the kitchen as succulent stews. In the early days facilities were very restricted, until the calor gas cooker arrived. When the heating stove was fixed, there were unlimited supplies of hot water: but the cook still had to contend with the vegetarian, the man with tummy trouble,

another who was slimming, and (more numerous these) the workers with insatiable appetites.

There was a great spurt at Whit weekend, when the official opening took place. Amongst other work done was the clearing or great heaps of rubble and stones from the yard. This was accomplished by a team of young Amazons, under parental supervision, who levelled it all out, only to be told that there were cobbles six inches lower, and that the ground must be cleared to this level. Nothing daunted, they set to again and finished the job. A garden border, gay with flowers, sprang up suddenly where previously there had been but cobble stones — all this in two or three hours through the efforts of an enthusiast.

The work was by no means finished, however, and continued well into the Autumn of 1953. Many workers spent a dozen or more weekends there, including all the Bank Holiday weekends. The weather was often fine, and many a longing eye was cast on the hills round Borrowdale, but no one shirked. Numerous jolly alfresco meals took place in the yard, with a few minutes' rest afterwards. A persistent chaffinch, no doubt infected by the general spirit of diligence, came tapping at the bedroom windows each morning about 6 a.m., when someone would get up and make tea for the company, to encourage *them* to get up. Work usually began before breakfast and continued until 11 o'clock or midnight. The Hon. Editor told me that he found himself one day absentmindedly writing 'Slaving House' by mistake. He also alleged, a little querulously, that he never got to sleep until 2 a.m. and had to be up at 6. In fact the Warden did leave for his home in Carlisle one morning at 2 a.m. after staying, at his wife's request, to help the Foreman finish a tricky job.

Hard work? Yes, hard and tiring, but great fun, and amply rewarding, with much laughter and leg-pulling, and all of us learning something. Not least, we came to know and appreciate one another. Those who helped will always have happy memories of those busy days, and will greet one another with a special smile, remembering. The Huts are the home of the Club, the setting for great talks and discussions and the making of friends — perhaps the greatest single factor in the enrichment of Club life.



M. R. FitzGibbon

THE SOUTH FACE OF THE OBER GABELHORN

THE SOUTH FACE OF THE OBER GABELHORN

J. S. Hud dart

There were those amongst us who thought an off-day was quite a good idea, but that thought, pleasant though it was, could not be taken too seriously. After all, circumstances were very much against it. We were nearing the end of a fortnight of almost perfect weather in the midst of one of the worst seasons of recent years, and had put off our day of rest for the inevitable break. Now it looked as if the weather might conceivably remain fine to the end, so we had no choice. We simply had to show our gratitude and do one last climb together. After all, we argued, we could always rest in the train on the way home. (As it happened the train journey during the French railway strike was considerably more arduous than any mountaineering we undertook, but that is another story).

All this was going through our minds at the Rothorn Hut after a traverse of the Zinal Rothorn. As usual, we had carried up three days' supplies and, having done the best route in the neighbourhood that was within our capabilities, had decided that anything else from that hut would be an anti-climax, thus making necessary another change of hut. On this principle we had visited four huts in ten days and were not a little tired of 'hut-bashing.'

There were three suggestions for our last climb — one of the great ridges of the Weisshorn, the Zmuttgrat or the south face of the Ober Gabelhorn. The first was soon rejected because of the amount of energy required for going down to Zermatt and up to the Weisshorn Hut on the same day, and because we had already done our share of that type of ridge. As the other two alternatives had to be done from the Schonbuhl Hut, which could be reached without descending to Zermatt, we could, therefore, leave our decision for the morrow.

The path from Trift to the Schonbuhl must be one of the most pleasant in the district—at least it seemed so after the dust of the Rothorn moraines. After a short rise from the hotel it contours round a hillside bright with flowers and grazed upon by unusually musical cows and goats, augmented this time by a few sheep, each type of animal having its own distinctive bell. The views over towards Monte Rosa and the Breithorn are also particularly inspiring. All this, however, was spoilt towards the end

by a sudden steep descent to the Zmutt valley and an equally steep ascent to the hut. Speaking personally, no view, however beautiful, can compete with the awfulness of a steep hut path, and I soon slipped into that negative frame of mind which can only be terminated by the supreme joy of arrival. Applied to mountaineering in general, Robert Louis Stevenson's famous maxim 'To travel hopefully is better than to arrive,' is very true, but not where a hut path is concerned.

As we sat outside the hut that evening, the Matterhorn seemed very near, and it may have been the steady roar of avalanches pouring down the north face that finally decided us against the Zmutt. After all, there had been snow on two recent nights and we knew very little about the prevailing snow conditions. Perhaps the Galeries were not the place to start finding out. No, a rock climb was the thing for us.

So it was that the small hours of the morning found us retracing our steps down the valley, bound for the Ober Gabelhorn. Regarding the south face of this mountain, Kurz waxes almost lyrical. He says that technically it is perhaps the finest climb in the Zermatt area, adding, however, a solemn warning in italics—*mais elle est tres exposee aux chutes de pierres!* It was probably due to this warning that the face had been done so little by British guideless parties. However, we had ascertained from no less reliable a source than George Band that there were, in fact, no stonefalls during his ascent the previous summer, and we found ourselves that, apart from those dislodged by our own party, only one stone was heard all day. It is true that this one came fairly close and made a most disgusting noise but the danger from this source was certainly very slight.

At the point where we left the main Zermatt track for the Arben valley, we were able to unburden ourselves of a large part of our loads with unmixed relief. The approach to the mountain is long (five hours from the hut to the foot of the rocks) and although undoubtedly tedious, is made bearable by the variety of terrain covered. First, grass slopes lead to a track along the crest of a beautifully symmetrical knife-edged moraine, which stretches onwards and upwards for a very long way. Then follows a little barrier of very smooth glaciated slabs, a steep tongue of dry glacier where crampons were very welcome, then alternate patches of scree, rocks and neve to a final scree patch where we elected to leave more equipment, such as crampons,

and travel comparatively lightly up the climb. We were to be on two ropes, John and George on one, Arthur and myself on the other. Each party had one axe and one sack containing the usual essentials.

It was now full day and we were able to take stock of our surroundings. From our position at the foot of the face it must be admitted that the climbing did not look at all difficult, but then it very rarely does in the Alps, and we did not feel over confident on that score. Then there was the weather. It was not at all a promising dawn — the sun rose late over a bank of cloud, and moreover these clouds had a somewhat ominous pink tinge. More than one member of the party could be heard murmuring darkly about red sky in the morning. However, we agreed that there was plenty of time to talk of retreat later. Accordingly, we began the assault. First we had to find the shallow couloir which apparently formed the main highway up the face. This lay well to our right and was reached by traversing across the upper slopes of *néve* immediately below the face, with occasional excursions on to the actual rock. On this section I recall rather an amusing stance where I stood on a ledge on the back wall up to my neck in *bergschrand*. Once the couloir was located the going was extremely rapid. It was beautiful rock, very easy, and for the most part we moved together. Gradually, however, the difficulties increased and we began to lead through on the full 120 foot length of rope, still moving very quickly.

It was towards the end of this early period of fast movement that we experienced our first minor setback. So far there had been almost a surfeit of belays and certainly plenty of stances, but quite suddenly I found myself in the middle of a very smooth section, somewhat reminiscent of the Scafell Pinnacle face, with neither stance nor belay within twenty feet, and with ten feet of rope left. Being extremely loth to descend, I cast about, and spied two pseudo-pitons lurking together in a crack well to my left. Reaching these pegs was probably as hard as anything on the climb, but I managed to stand on them and tie on to a small spike above while Arthur led through to a better stance. I can only suggest that the instigator of these poor imitations of pitons had been caught like myself, because the rocks both above and below must have been almost impossible to climb.

After this, matters remained fairly complicated. We tended to move less together, and finding the easiest way became a

matter of first importance. There seemed to be a great many minor overhangs usually overcome by means of vast, knobbly holds which looked most unsafe from below, but which proved perfectly sound on closer acquaintance. The climbing scarcely reached the severe standard, except when one was carrying the sack and the ice-axe discovered the overhangs first, but was fairly continuous for this stretch, which consisted of a rising traverse to the right. It was at the end of this section, which is probably what Wenzel, in Volume I of '*Les Montagnes du Monde*' calls 'le pilier central,' that we heard some unmistakably English voices high above us on the Arbengrat. Hearing our shouts they peered over, and with awed voices, enquired who we were and what on earth we were doing down there. On hearing of our connections with the Cambridge University Mountaineering Club they gave us a typical 'that accounts for it' farewell and went their ways. At the time we could not understand their surprise, as the face as a whole seemed neither steep nor difficult. It was not until we saw Wenzel's illustrations to his article that we realised how exciting it must look to a non-combatant.

Soon we came to a well-marked terrace lying immediately below the final section, which may be overcome by several variants. At this point it began to snow, but as the 'easy way off' by a snow couloir looked most unpleasant, we carried on with a more or less direct ascent. This, though it looked hard, was found to be incredibly easy — it was not even necessary to waste time in clipping on to the pitons which sprouted from the rocks in great numbers. They had been inserted in the most ridiculous places and to use some of them would have materially increased the standard of climbing. This final section, a kind of shallow twisting chimney, as I remember it, came out on the ridge a short distance below the summit. It had taken about four hours from the foot of the rocks, just as the guide book had said it would. The climbing on the upper section of the Arbengrat is wholly delightful and we rushed along under improving conditions to the wonderful summit. Here my non-smoking companions generously allowed me my first relaxed smoke of the day, and summit photographs were taken à la Tensing. The view was strictly limited by local cloud, and as conditions were so obviously unsettled a prolonged stay was deemed inadvisable, and we began the descent of the Arbengrat.

Almost immediately a hailstorm was upon us and with it came

my first experience of an electrical storm on a high ridge. To me it all seemed most uncanny. Before there was any thunder and lightning, the high points of the ridge, together with our axes, were sizzling and humming, and when standing on the crest we experienced that unusual phenomenon of 'bees in the bonnet.' Crouched in traditional style as far below the ridge as possible (about three feet in my case) we were able to watch, in comparative physical comfort but considerable mental unrest, the storms advancing and receding about the surrounding peaks. Luckily our mountain only seemed to catch the minor squalls, but others, particularly the Dent Blanche and the Matterhorn were really bombarded. A vote of confidence was passed in the member of the party who had vetoed the Zmutt, and after some time we were able to continue. By-passing the Grand Gendarme we made steady but not unduly rapid progress along the hail-covered ridge to the point where one leaves it for the descent to the Arbengletscher. This we found after only one false alarm—others have not been so fortunate and have got into serious trouble, as the route is scarcely obvious. Once the correct way was found, we speedily lost height and our upper cache of equipment was reached.

By now we were feeling very tired, as apart from the enforced rest on the ridge we had been going almost continuously for over twelve hours. However, we had still a long way to go, so after eating most of the remains of the food, on we went down the néve, down the scree, down the easy rocks — then up the easy rocks again with much gnashing of teeth as they were by no means easy at the bottom — down the glacier and down the moraine. For this last we must claim an all-time record. It must have taken at least an hour of laborious slogging to ascend, and we bounded down it in something under ten minutes. And so we came, 'a little warm but not at all astonished' to the rucksacks and to the race against the gathering storm down the track to Zermatt. We had dodged the worst of the weather, but we were not to escape it all. By the time we reached the fleshpots we were nicely damp, but after a fortnight of well-nigh perfect weather you expect a little rain. And anyhow I was going home next day—I didn't care if it snowed. As a matter of fact, it did.

NOTES FROM A LITTLE-KNOWN COLERIDGE

A. P. Rossiter

' *Two loves I have, of comfort and despair* ' (Shakespeare)

Coleridge's interest in the Lake District has dropped out of notice to such an extent that many must have wondered why he should ever have been described as one of the Lake Poets or 'Lakers.' The myth that Wordsworth 'made' the Lake District (even if he didn't exactly *invent* it), together with the left-unpublished state of most of what Coleridge did write on the subject, has given the impression that there is nothing to know, or that, if there is, it is uninteresting.

It is time that that misconception was disturbed. Whether you care about Coleridge or not, it is often illuminating to see what could be noticed in, and felt about, so inexhaustible a part of England some 150 years ago, when its secrets were the prerogative of a few; and the more illuminating when it comes from the spontaneous jottings, in notebook or letter, of a man with the gift of words, and, besides that, some slight claim to be called the earliest of English rock-scramblers.*

It is possible that one reason for our ignorance of Coleridge's impressions is that literary people have lacked interest in mountains; but it is also true that those impressions were so often tied up with his love for Sara Hutchinson (Mrs. Wordsworth's sister) that the demands of Victorian discretion made editors and even scholars pass by what they would have published if only Sara had never existed. For Coleridge was unhappily married; and four years after his marriage—to be exact, between 27th October and 25th November, 1799—he fell in love with another woman, and, through her, with a world of lakes, mountains, clouds, lights and waterfalls, which was to remain intimately attached to his thoughts of her for the next twelve years of his life.

The story can be pieced together only from the complete survey of his letters, his poems and his unpublished notebooks (mainly in the British Museum) from which E. H. Coleridge took the materials of *Anima Poetae* (1895) and Miss Kathleen

*The title belongs, I think, to the Captain Brown who climbed Pavey Ark by Jack's Rake in the 18th Century. A later Guide calls it, 'a hanging rock, 600 feet in height . . . (which) nods awefully to the passing traveller.' In other words, Brown was a very bold fellow.

Coburn many of those of *Inquiring Spirit* (1951). My intention is not to tell it, but only to say a little about Coleridge as observer of the English Lake District; and perhaps to hint what new ideas may be current when Miss Coburn's edition of the early Notebooks is at last published.

'The story begins ' (as they say) in the autumn of 1799. Travelling from Bristol with Cottle, Coleridge was with Wordsworth by 26th October, at Sockburn-on-Tees, the home of the Hutchinsons. On the next day the three men left and travelled in a leisurely way towards the Lakes, meeting John Wordsworth (the sailor brother) on the road. Apart from a glimpse of Wordsworth feeding gobbets of bread and butter to a fighting-cock, the poet does not appear in the hasty scribbles of Notebook 5; but we know that Cottle gave up, and that the two poets were at Grasmere from 1st November till the 8th, when they started a tour together. The tour took them through Keswick, past Bassenthwaite, and by the Whinlatter Pass to Lorton: perhaps to Cockermouth; and on 11th November they were in Buttermere, where Coleridge saw Scale Force—a scene he was, years later, to regard as particularly associated with Sara, though exactly *when* he was there with her remains uncertain. They crossed to Ennerdale by Floutern Tarn, and spent the night of the 13th at Thomas Tyson's at Wasdale Head. ' Only two Funerals in the whole year at Wasdale. Something affecting may be made of it.' So he jotted; but as with so many other notes for what might have become Lyrical Ballads, nothing ever was ' made of it.' The strenuous part of the tour ended with crossing Sty Head after heavy rain, the brooks in their fury and white ' tapes ' down the fellsides; and soon Coleridge was on his way alone — back to Sockburn, after some days at Pooley Bridge. His impression of Castle Rigg is one of his more poetical notes :—

' Mile & yi from Keswick a Druidical Circle—on the right the Road & Saddleback, on the left a fine but unwater'd vale walled by grassy Hills & a fine black Crag standing single at the Termination. Ascending before me—i.e., towards Keswick the mountains stand one behind the other, in orderly array as if evoked by & attentive to the assembly of white-vested wizards.' (Notebook 5, p. 29).

What happened at Sockburn is partly matter of inference. His poem *Love* had its origin there, as its incidental details show. The pocket-book he was using at the time does not mention Sara by name, but it holds the line of verse, ' The long Entrancement

of a True-love's Kiss.' About four years later he rewrote some of these notes in another book (No. 21), and there this verse reappears, and with it, under a completely deleted note dated 27th October, 1799, another line:—'Ten kisses short as one, one long as twenty.' *Between* the two, a note which runs off into Latin tells of his standing round the fire with the Hutchinsons, holding Sara's hand unseen . . . 'and then, for the first time, love struck me with a light arrow, but alas, poisoned and irremediable.' It refers to Sunday, 24th November, and we draw what conclusions we please—romantic or head-shaking.

The next phase begins with his moving house to Keswick. On 24th July, 1800, the Coleridges were settled (if that is the right word) in Greta Hall. Just before this he had been ill for a fortnight at Grasmere, but this had not prevented him from visiting Dungeon Ghyll, where he noted:

'the stream widening from a foot to a yard and a half, as it widens varying from a vivid white to a blue thro' all the intermediate shades . . . plummy ferns on the side, and over the second pool . . . the light umbrella of a young ash . . .'

The note is illustrated with a crude little sketch of the jammed chockstones.

It may be doubted whether Coleridge assisted in furniture-removals. The day before they moved in he walked to Watendlath with his landlord, Jackson, and acquired a lively little impression when the latter asked the way of an old woman who was carrying in hay, not much assisted by four of her nine grandchildren :—

'Which way to Watendlath? — Up the Gap — a gay canny road. How far? — two miles and more. Is there much to climb beyond the highest point we see? — As much again before you get on a level — Tis a gay canny clim — You may get there in, an hour — Iself could ga there in an hour who's eighty and over.'

(No. 5J4, p. n).

At Keswick began a long and often very detailed exploration of the Lake District. He had been contemptuous of 'Ladies reading Gilpin's book while passing by the very places instead of looking at the places' . . . and though there are times when the 'Picturesque' of the past century is more in his eye than it can ever be in ours, the modern climber will rejoice at the sound morality of 'Catch hold of the (???) as you climb, not to sus-

tain but balance ' (5)4, p- 55). I fear that the illegible word is probably not 'holds ' but 'boughs,' and I am fairly sure that the note is given a homiletic turn by the addition 'Moral use'; but it does not alter the impression that S.T.C. had the right idea.

Experience gave him some other right ideas which are decidedly 'before his time.' The long, usually solitary walks in which he explored the area between Skiddaw and Carrock Fell in the autumn of 1800 were only the beginning of intermittent adventurings, of which the most remarkable is his nine days' walking-tour of August, 1802, on which he climbed Scafell*. By the spring of 1803 he was writing on footgear with the authority of a man who knows his wants :—

'Shoes, soles at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick — the upper leather 3 quarter galoched. Nails of tempered Steel must be provided, the points screws; their heads near $\frac{3}{4}$ an inch diameter, must be cut into the form of a square pyramid, which will have 2 parts in consequence of the notch cut into each for the Screw-driver to fix them into the Shoes. 12 of these nails must be put into each sole, 7 round the forepart, & 5 round the Heel as near the edge of the Sole as possible without endangering the bursting of the Leather. The interval between the nails ought to be filled up with common large-headed nails, so close that their heads may touch each other.'

I don't suppose that these contrivances were ever made for him, any more than his frequent notes for ballad-poems ever got into verse; but here, surely, is the principle of the Tricouni —and a long time before the invention of the Clinker.

From his first impressions in the late summer of 1800 until the end of 1803, when he departed as he had come, over the well-known road by Dunmail Raise to Grasmere, his eye and notebook were most frequently exercised on the ever-changing appearances of Skiddaw, Bassenthwaite and Borrowdale. No writer has more often or more sensitively recorded the effects of sun and cloud, the unanticipated beauties of rain and storm, and the evanescent panoramas of the night-sky. His habitual sleeplessness made him a constant companion of the visiting moon, the tracking deepset stars; and the poetic sky-scapes of *Dejection, an Ode* (1802) are the same in origin as many others 'taken down' as you might say, in his disjointed impressionistic prose, from his study-window at Greta Hall.

*See my letter in *F. & B.C.C. Journal*, 1952, p. 198.

'August, 24 (1800)—Sunday Evening, walked to Lattenrigg with Sara & Hartley—the sun set with slant columns of misty light slanted from him: the light a bright Buff: Walla Crag purple red, the Lake a deep dingy purple blue: that Torrent Crag opposite Elderseat a Marone. But the clouds!—That great Egg, almost 1/20 of the whole Heaven in appearance—a fine *smoke-flame*—beyond a huge flight of steps, a Temple—the helm on Skiddaw, in that semicircular Hollow a bridge of clouds over the bend of the circle . . . and the blue sky-seen under it. The Helm itself a well defined ridge of lead-color'd Clouds.

As we turned round on our return, we see a moving pillar of clouds, flame & smoke, rising, bending, arching, moved in swift motion — from what God's Chimney doth it issue? — I scarcely ever saw in the sky such variety of shapes, & colors, & colors floating over colors.

Solemnly now lie the black masses on the blue firmament of—not quite night—for still at the foot of Bassenthwaite there is a smoky russet Light—Tis 9 o'clock.' (Notebook 21, p. 14).

'Sept. 29, 1800—after a most tremendous storm & Hail, the lower Half of the Lake bright silver — over it & intercepting Borrodale a *thick palpable Blue* up to the Moon, save that at the very top of the blue the clouds rolled lead-colored—small detachments of these clouds running in in thick flakes near the moon & drinking it's light in amber & white. The Moon in a clear azure sky — the Mountains seen indeed and only seen. I never saw aught so sublime.'

(Notebook 5J-2, p. 55).

It would be a mistake to attempt to diminish the importance of the influences of Wordsworth and his sister in making Coleridge aware of Nature. None the less, it is surprising how his thoughts of and his meetings with Sara Hutchinson are intertwined with his perceptions, how often a poetic life in his words seems to come and go with her. It is not merely a coincidence, I believe, that his earliest note on a waterfall as the perpetual renewal and rebecoming of a form, in a ceaselessly changing substance, is only a day after their first meeting, and that above his impressions of another fall he should write, 'The sunny mist, the luminous Gloom, of Plato,' both in his hurried scribble of 1799 and in his rewritten version of 1803 :—

'Mist steaming up from the deep chasms or intervals of the mountains, as from a huge caldron—Waterfall, I gazing long & steadfastly, rolled like the segment of a wheel, the black rocks gleaming thro' it — amid the roar a noise as of innumerable Grasshoppers, or a manufactory of spinning wheels.' (No. 21, p. 98 — from No. 5).

He was to leave Keswick and the Lakes and pursue to Malta the phantasm of physical health. His images of tumultuous water

tain but balance ' (5)4, p- 55). I fear that the illegible word is probably not 'holds ' but 'boughs,' and I am fairly sure that the note is given a homiletic turn by the addition 'Moral use ' ; but it does not alter the impression that S.T.C. had the right idea.

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Perpendicular that it would have *appeared* to fall, but; it is indeed so fearfully savage, and black, and jagged, that it tears the flood to pieces. And one great black Outjutment divides the water, and overbrows and keeps uncovered a long slip of jagged black Rock beneath, which gives a marked *Character* to the whole force. What a sight it is to look down on such a Cataract. The wheels that circumvolve in it, the leaping up and plunging forward of that infinity of Pearls and Glass Bulbs, the continual *change* of the *Matter*, the perpetual *Sameness* of the *Form*—it is an awful Image and Shadow of God and the World.

For most modern fellwalkers, waterfalls are like damns to Bob Acres : they have ' had their day.' They represent picture-postcards rather than symbols of the mystical harmony of the universe. But if we think Coleridge a little naive when, somewhere near Floutern Tarn in 1802, he looks back at Buttermere and jots down, ' I turn & look behind me — What a wonderful group of mountains — What a scene for Salvator Rosa!' It may still be with some envy : the envy we can still feel for those who are seeing a new world for the first time and striving to find words to catch its unapprehended, almost uncommunicable impact. If our taste is for rocks and stones rather than falls, even familiarity cannot quite deaden what Wastwater offered on 4th August, 1802:—

' O what a Lake—I am sitting at the foot almost—for three miles the Screes form its right bank, a facing of naked Rock of enormous height, and two thirds of it's height downward absolutely perpendicular, & then slanting off in Screes, steep as the meal out of the miller's grinding Trough or Spout —• But in the middle of the Lake the Screes commence far higher up & occupy two thirds of the height, in the shape of the apron of a sheet of falling water (or a pointed Decanter, or tumbler turned upside down) or rather an outspread Fan. — It is of a fine red streaking in broad streaks thro' stone Color, and when I first came, the Lake was like a mirror, and conceive what the reflections must have been, of this huge facing of rock, more than half a mile of direct (perpendicular) height, with deep perpendicular Ravins from the top two thirds down — other Ravines slanting athwart down them •— the whole wrinkled & Torrent-worn and barely patched with Moss — and all this reflected, turned in Pillars, & a whole new-world of Images, in the water.'

(No. 2, p. 10).

This, with most of the first five days of his ' circumcursion ' of 1st-9th August, was written up in the journal-letter which he sent to Sara in instalments. Smoothness and punctuation apart, there was not much to add to the immediate attempt to catch his impressions in words; any more than in his snapshot of the

Pinnacle, as seen from one of the rock-towers above Deep Ghyll :—

' But O Scaffell, thy enormous Precipices. — Just by the hollow Stones are two enormous Columns — I am no measurer. They were vaster than any I have ever seen, & were each a stone Mountain. — They could not be less than 250 yards high for they reached half way or more down into the vale.' (No. 2, p. 17).

Coleridge at the age of thirty had discovered a genuine and original taste for dangerous scrambling. Part of his letter about Moss Force shows how he knew that particular enjoyment of scenery which is the climber's special award :—

' I . . . climbed up by the waterfall as near as I could, to the very top of the Fell /but it was so craggy, the Craggs covered with spongy soaky Moss, and when bare so jagged as to wound one's hands fearfully, and the Gusts came so very sudden & strong, that the going up was slow, & difficult & earnest — & the coming down, not only that, but likewise extremely dangerous. However, I have always found this *stretched & anxious* state of mind favourable to depth of pleasurable Impression, in the resting Places and *lownding* Coves.'

—It was, as the old lady of the road to Watendlath would say, ' A gey canny clim.' Nor was this the only occasion when the sense of strain and danger brought the whole mountain scene to a more vivid existence in his mind. But apart from that journal-letter and several incidental passages in his correspondence, his impressions remained in his Note-books. He never even began the work he planned on the Dunnerdale Fells during his 'circumcursion' of 1802 :—

' Here it was seated on this mount on Saturday, August 7, that I resolved to write under the name of the Soother of Absence, the topographical poem which I had long mummel'd about in my mind, & the day before thought of under the name of the Bard of Helvellin or the stone Hovels . . . ' (No. 2, p. 26).

' Soother of Absence,' in fact, became a heading for notes for poems on love—poems for Sara, which he never wrote. After a period of extreme absenteeism (from both the Lakes and Mrs. C.) he was comparatively settled from May, 1803, till August and again from September until 20th December, when he left for Grasmere on the journey which was to take him to Malta from 1804 until 1806.

In this last stage, including the weeks he spent at Grasmere as

a result of his falling ill immediately on his arrival, the enthusiasm of his earlier notes returned to him. It was as if he needed to take abroad in words as much of the country as he could catch; and in this October, his mind very naturally going back to the beginnings of the love for Sara, he wrote up and enlarged some of the scribbled jottings of 1799.

Two poignant little trifles suffice to suggest the unhappy happiness which was intertwined with so many of his feelings for nature, above all for that Joy which he associates as much with true feeling for the one love as the other :—

' This is the day quo primum—vidi! Let me try for a Song.'

The name is rubbed out. The note before is dated Oct. 26, 1803, and 3 o'clock in the morning; the note after is of October 27th. We need not look far to explain ' when first I saw——.' Nearly all the rest is suggested by the hasty scribble in another notebook, apparently written between April and June of this same year, 1803 :—

' Why we two made to be a Joy to each other should for so many years constitute each others melancholy—O! but the melancholy is Joy.'
(No. 8, p. 54).

The poet in him was dead, to revive only once again, and that at the touch of Wordsworth. But the time may come when the Note-poet of the notebooks is recognised as the most sensitive apprehender of the Lakes who has ever left ' pieces of his mind ' to acuminate the senses of the future.

PENNINE SUMMITS

Harry R. Preston

Some years ago when I had bagged the Lakeland 2,000 ft. tops I came across the late W. T. Elmslie's list of the two thousand footers of England in the 1933 Journal and, although his list included several points that are not true summits, I decided to try and tick off the lot. His long list of 170* Pennine tops seemed rather discouraging as at that time I only knew the Lakeland hills well and felt the Pennines would be very dull and monotonous and that my task would consist of a great deal of wearisome plodding through rough heather and wet peat. I must admit that I was to a great extent correct in my assumption but it was not very many months before I discovered the charm of their solitude and the wide views over miles of uninhabited countryside.

It was 1938 before I started to collect the Pennine Hills in real earnest and it was not until 1945 that I walked up my last summit in the range, Chapel Fell Top, consequently I had to make many of my visits during short war-time holidays when petrol was not available for private purposes and trains were few, over-crowded and unpunctual.

The two thousand foot tops are not uniformly spaced along the whole of the Pennine Chain but in groups which may conveniently be divided into five main sections (Elmslie's list shows seven but he sub-divided the Yorkshire and Durham sections). In the south there are the nine tops of the High Peak. There are no more for over forty miles until the Aire Gap has been passed when there is a widely spread group of forty-two, mostly situated in the West and North Ridings of Yorkshire. This section is bounded on the north by Stainmore and the Scotch Corner-Penrith road.

The third group is that of the Great Pennines, great in area as they extend over two hundred square miles undivided by any through roads, and great in size including as it does Mickle Fell, 2,591 feet, the highest point of Yorkshire, and Cross Fell, 2,930 feet, the summit of the Pennine Chain. Elmslie's list included over seventy tops here though some are not true summits and in point of fact are places where the surveyors set up their instruments. I have been informed that an inscribed stone is buried below plough level where each of these heights is marked on the map.

*Now 171, see *Journal*, Vol. XIV, page 161.

As an offshoot of this extensive area there is, north of the Penrith-Alston road, a small group of six tops ending at Cold Fell, the most northerly 2,000 ft. summit. Finally there remain thirty-nine tops to the east along the borders of Cumberland and Durham, the highest point being Burnhope Seat 2,452 ft., a few hundred feet above the summit of the Middleton-in-Teesdale to Alston road.

The 1926 Journal contains a very useful article by H. V. Hughes on the Yorkshire summits well worth reading by any member who wishes to visit these tops. I was very conveniently domiciled in 1938 for this purpose and in fact bagged many of them on Saturday afternoons in the summer months when petrol was plentiful (and cheap) returning home to Hest Bank by seven or eight in the evening with another one or two tops duly accounted for. On these short days, of course, full advantage was taken of the height reached by many of the dale roads which rise to sixteen or seventeen hundred feet, the car being left at the highest convenient point.

At the beginning of 1940 I had only four tops left in this group and completed them on a Sunday in February of that year. When my companions and I arrived at the Littondale road, above Settle, we felt we were on location for the filming of Chaplin's "Gold Rush," for as far as we could see men were digging out the snow that blocked the road to a depth of eight feet and our car journey to Blishmire House was made in a narrow cutting with walls much higher than the top of the car. Once we were walking away from the road the moors were practically clear as the snow had drifted and been held by the walls on each side of the road.

The summit of the main road from Penrith to Alston (A.686) is a convenient high level start for the Northern Pennines and there are four tops that can easily be reached by following the boundary fence, at first over rough grass and then over the inevitable peat. The worst of this is left behind when the last rise to Grey Nag commences. Cold Fell is better visited from the north as it would mean a considerable amount of bog trotting if it was included with the other summits of this group.

Peat is, of course, very plentiful on all these hills, but usually the crevasses and bogs are not found higher than the 2,000 foot contour. Many of the summits over that height are grassy and quite pleasant for walking, although the tops just a few feet above that contour, are often very difficult to find amidst the peat hags.

Kinder and Bleaklow which do not rise above 2,100 feet are the most notorious examples of peat-covered mountains.

Mickle Fell, 2,591 feet, is a grassy summit and a convenient way can be found (or rather *might* be, as I am not sure how much of this area now comes into the Warcop tank range) from Hilton, near Appleby, by following the track through the valley for about two miles and after passing the old mines, turning east to the 2,249 ft., 2,146 ft. and 2,252 ft. tops of Hilton Fell and continuing to the big end of Mickle Fell. This is quite a good 'hard' route and avoids most of the peat hags. It will be necessary, however, to return the same way unless Mickle Fell be traversed as far as the 2,247 ft. cairn, when the south east spur can be followed to the Fish Lake and Grains o' the Beck, seven miles from Brough. The direct descent south to the highest point of the main road is better avoided as it is the roughest three miles walking in the whole of the district.

High Cup Nick lies a mile or two north of Hilton. This great cleft is a most unexpected sight amongst these moorlands. W. A. Poucher's photograph facing page 348 of the 1950 *journal* shows the sweep of the south side of the amphitheatre. If possible the Nick should be approached from the east, preferably on the 'classic' walk from Langdon Beck to Dufton when, after the long pull up from Birkdale, the surprise is the greater.

Most of my visits during the early part of the war were day-trips either in the autumn or early spring when the bogs were frozen and the walking much easier than when I stayed at Dufton in August, 1941. This Westmorland village with its houses built round the village green is a very good centre for exploring this group of Pennines. A car is an advantage but by no means essential and there are many good tracks leading to the tops. At this western edge the slopes are steeper than the approaches from the east. The best centres at that side are Langdon Beck and Alston, Middleton-in-Teesdale being a little too far south for the bigger hills.

In 1941 the Radar station had not been built on Dun Fell and the road to the Silverband Mine was not in good condition in the higher parts, so I left my car at an old quarry about the 1,000 ft. contour and walked along the road to Green Castle and east across the heather to the 2,108 ft. cairn of Knock Fell above Moor House. For the first time for a week the skies were clear and I spent at least two hours over lunch and a sunbathe before crossing the stream to Hard Hill and turning west again. As I

walked up the long spur to the summit of Great Dun Fell a Golden Plover ' piped ' me along for over a mile.

Cross Fell can easily be reached from Kirkland Church and there are several 2,000 ft. points around the main plateau. Bullman Hills, 2,002 ft., are two little limestone knolls perched above an expanse of bare peat. There are many old mine workings amongst these hills and one or two open shafts that would be dangerous in the dusk. The tops that lie to the north of Cross Fell can be conveniently bagged from the summit of the Penrith to Alston road. The day I collected six of these was one of the many when I have had to rely on my compass, as although the tops were quite clear when I set off, heavy clouds rolled up from the west and I was soon in the mist and rain. These moors are very good practice grounds for walking by dead reckoning and at times I have had quite a lot of enjoyment with the aid of the map and protractor the night before, working out the bearings from one cairn to another and then testing them on the ground the following day.

The afternoon of Good Friday, 1942, found me on the way to Langdon Beck. Once again the snow had just been cleared away from the roads but quite a lot remained on the moors and the going was extremely tiring, especially on one stretch of peat hags filled with wet snow. I was very pleased when I crossed the stream forming the county boundary and could sit on the Cumberland stones of Bellbeaver Rigg to eat my sandwiches. As I returned along the rough road above the Tees I passed a mine that was still being worked and I thankfully accepted a lift in the engineer's car over the last two miles of the road that now had a tarred surface. A fortnight afterwards I completed this section and, on the last occasion I could use my basic petrol, I went to Nenthead and bagged Slate Hill and the road summit 2,056 ft. There are three metalled roads in this part of the Pennines that rise to over 2,000 ft., two main roads and a rough one which reaches 2,212 ft., higher than the Cairnwell or the Pass of the Cattle, Ross-shire.

At Easter in 1943, and again in 1944, I was at Alston, a good centre for the long stretches of tops between Cumberland and Durham. Here the summits are much flatter than many other Pennines, consequently they are covered with peat. In some places the going is comparatively easy, but there are many stretches deeply crevassed which are called locally ' brocks.' I do not know whether this term is used only in Durham, but I first

heard the expression from a shepherd at Langdon Beck. It is a very apt description of the type of ground where progress consists of a step, jump and a slither and half a mile of the map can take over half an hour on the ground.

Noon Hill, one of these flat-topped summits was a mass of Cloudberry flowers when I spent my 1944 holiday at Langdon Beck. This time I found a bicycle very useful in covering the unavoidable miles of road to reach some of the outlying tops. It was whilst mending a puncture one afternoon that I learnt from a farmer how he found his way when caught in the mist on these hills. The prevailing wind being south-west the bents and rushes inclined to the north east and he found this a sufficiently accurate indication to bring him down to the right valley.

The Derbyshire two-thousand footers are in two sections, three summits on Bleaklow and the remaining six on Kinder Scout. Four of the latter points are at the edge of this immense plateau and the other two, including the summit, are less than a mile from the perimeter. Higher Shelf Stones, 2,039 ft., is an outlying top of Bleaklow. The other two tops are two miles apart, lying at either end of the highest ridge of this great mass. There is only one foot difference in the two heights, Bleaklow Head 2,061 ft. being the summit.

I did not visit Derbyshire until very late in my Pennine wanderings as I understood these hills were very strictly preserved and V.E. Day had come and gone before I left the Edale path above Tunstead House and climbed towards Kinder Low. My companion, a member of a kindred club, had advised an early start to avoid the keepers who were usually not active until the first train from Manchester had arrived at Hayfield after nine o'clock. Unless we were spotted when crossing the edge of the plateau we could not be seen from below. The peat groughs below the northern edge are the deepest I have ever seen and there are no comparable ones at the northern end of the Pennine Chain. On the May Sunday we were there the keepers must have been nodding as we saw over fifty other trespassers before we dropped down to the right-of-way track in William Clough.

The following Tuesday I arrived at Glossop in the pouring rain and had a lonely walk along the Doctors Gate track which I left near the summit, turning north above Crooked Clough. The mist had lifted slightly as I reached Higher Shelf Stones and I took a compass bearing for Wain Stones. There were still more

' brocks ' between these two tops and as the rain had now stopped I ate my sandwiches before plunging through the peat and into the grey mist. I suppose the nearness of Manchester and Sheffield caused the griminess of the mist, which was more like a town fog than the clean white mists of the northern hills. Shortly after I set off again the clouds lifted and remained clear of the tops for the rest of the day. This, however, did not make much difference to my view from the summit ridge as all I could see were the upper portions of the sloping moors, a row of wooden stakes, expanses of bare peat and, far ahead, the group of rocks marking the distant summit. I returned down Yellow Slacks and reached the bus station with only two minutes to spare before the last bus left for Hayfield.

One evening early in 1944 I was looking at the half-inch map of Teesdale and noticed a 2,000 ft. summit on the borders of Durham and Northumberland that was not included in the list of the tops. I wrote pointing this out to the late W. T. Elmslie and as he stated in the 1945 *Journal* this was recognised as the 348th English 2,000 ft. summit. I walked from Wearhead to this top in February, 1945. It is a point in the continuation of the ridge above the Nenthead-Weardale road and is within two miles of the east top, Stangend Currick, 2,075 feet.

After visiting Derbyshire I had only four tops left in the Pennines and I completed my task on Sunday, the 29th of July, 1945, by visiting three summits, including the most easterly Pennine top, Outberry Plain, then motoring further up Teesdale to another road summit, 2,056 ft, I walked across a mile of moor, once again over a mass of peat hags, to the 2,294 ft. point of Chapel Fell Top, two miles north-east of Langdon Beck. Alexander the Great is said to have wept because there were no more worlds to conquer and although I shed no tears I had a genuine feeling of regret that there were no more 2,000 ft. Pennines to visit.

There are some tops I do not feel are worth ascending a second time, but amongst the hills north of Stainmore there are many that give a feeling of space and solitude greater than any other mountain district south of the border. Even if the Pennine Way becomes as popular as Sty Head on a summer Sunday afternoon there will still be many quiet places to be found among the lonely miles of these Great Pennines.

DAYS AND NIGHTS ON MONT BLANC

Desmond Stevens

Arriving in Chamonix, alone in 1952, I encountered Tony, an undergraduate who, unfortunate in his choice of companions, had been forced to retreat from the Refuge Bivouac on the Col de la Fourche without fulfilling his intention of attempting the Frontier Ridge of Mont Maudit. We exchanged experiences, summed each other up, and agreed to stay at the Requin Refuge next day. A sleepless night was spent in the crowded hut, and it was with feelings of relief that we ascended the Geant seracs during the following morning.

The way to the bivouac on the Fourche lies up the steep north flank of the Frontier Ridge, which is considered to be one of the chief difficulties of the Brenva Route. We crossed the rimaye easily and made our way up a runnel in the snow slope for perhaps 150 feet. Our immediate objective lay some yards to the right—a slim rocky rib leading upwards to the crest of the Frontier Ridge. Here one had to cut ice steps. The rib led easily on to the summit ridge and we were soon gazing with awe at the enormous precipice of the Eckpfeiler Buttress.

We turned left along the ridge and soon reached the tiny Nissen Hut (12,070 feet), perched on a narrow platform, from which the climber is delighted with an extensive view of Mont Blanc. The afternoon was young, thus we had ample opportunity to study the Brenva approaches; and our climb for the morrow, the S.E. arete of Mont Maudit. We turned in early.

Setting out next morning at two o'clock, we progressed speedily along the ridge until confronted by a narrow ice arete, and wasted time in trying to turn it on its southern flank. Clouds were gathering at the Geant gap, and the big mountain carried its tell-tale streamers. Should the route present any great difficulty, we would retreat.

We looked again at the ice ridge. To cut steps in the ice might occupy the better part of an hour. There was no time for refinements. I sent my companion across a cheval, following him almost immediately.

Upon reaching the base of the Great Buttress, Tony expressed a desire to eat and proceeded to devour fully one-third of our provisions. The way led somewhat to the right before ascending steep clean rocks to the left of the couloir which bisects the

buttress from top to toe. I imagine that this couloir is normally the key to the ascent of the buttress, an easy snow walk in good conditions. Now, after several weeks of fine weather, it contained much debris and ice. From the summit of the buttress a lovely snow arete of considerable length culminated in a fine snow boss.

We were now at the base of the Grand Gendarme which towered some 200 feet above us. To climb it direct would take too long. The alternative was an ice traverse to the left, similar in character to the Eastern Traverse on the Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis. We moved singly, for the first time on the climb. Mist swirled around us as we rounded the Gendarme. The face above rose steeply, yet proved easy to climb and we wandered at will, following the easiest route for some hundreds of feet, before gaining a further snow ridge. This proved shorter than its fore-runner and gave way to a steep buttress of lovely sound rock, which soon led onto the final snow ridge. This was icy, and required crampons.

We were moving much too slowly along the ridge and, to make matters worse, snow began to fall, limiting visibility to a few yards. On we pressed with the thought of escape uppermost in our minds. Soon we came in sight of the depression in the ridge from which we could descend to the tracked Corridor Route, leading to the Col du Midi, and safety. Mist still hovered about us and the occasional snow showers made the going hard. We lost perhaps 600 feet of height, by zig-zagging down the slope, avoided some large crevasses by a detour to the left, before making the short ascent to the shoulder of Mont Blanc du Tacul. Here new snow had almost covered the tracks.

The slopes leading from Mont Blanc du Tacul down to the Col du Midi provide, in settled weather, a pleasant snow walk. Due to the new snow these slopes now favoured avalanches. We descended with care. From time to time the mist cleared, and we were rewarded with a bird's eye view of Chamonix, nearly two miles beneath. A taut rope was maintained throughout the descent—the only safe mode was to kick, kick, kick, sound steps. At last we reached the easy un-crevassed slopes by the Col, and paused to take stock. It was mid-day. We had made good time over the route and reasoned that two hours' walking should bring us to the civilised pleasures of the Torino Hotel.

My next tour began a week later — the weather having been

atrocious since the previous climb. My companion, a student of nineteen summers, was inexperienced, yet brimful of confidence.

There was rather more ice on the wall leading to the Fourche, but the way was known and Blackamoor, my companion, seemed reliable. I therefore resolved that we should attempt the 'Brenva' the following day. Towards evening our attention was drawn to the plight of three Germans, stranded half-way up the 'Brenva.' They had our sympathy.

A party of three Frenchmen departed for Col Moore about one o'clock; we gave them an hour to gain the glacier before following. The angle of this side of the Frontier Ridge is rather less steep than that of the Geant flank — perhaps 40° — and is about 300 feet high. The upper two-thirds consist mainly of easy but loose rock. This we negotiated before venturing upon the firm snow slope. The rimaye proved difficult to cross.

A walk across the glacier preceded a steep pull up to Col. Moore. Four climbs commence from the Col, the Via della Pera, Route Major, the Sentinelle Rouge and Moore's Route (sometimes referred to as the 'Old Brenva'). The last climb is the finest route of its type in the Alps, and was first ascended in 1865 by a large British party, ably led by the guides, Jacob and Melchior Anderegg. Not until 1894 was this climb ascended by a guideless party. The estimable Mummery, with Hastings and Collie, succeeded after a forced bivouac. In a previous issue of this journal, the 'Old Brenva' was referred to as 'once one of the greatest climbs in the Alps, now a comfortable half-day outing.' In the writer's view this is nonsense and a gross libel on a first-class route.

We found the terrace up which 'Moore's Arete' commences and followed a line rather to the left of the ridge proper, always on the face. Although we moved together, our progress was painfully slow, owing to altitude sickness. We paused at the top of the arete to rest, and left behind some food. Then we were treading the delightful ridge which connects 'Moore's Arete' with the ice slopes which descend from the North East Arete of Mont Blanc. Some little way along the ridge where the 'Couloir Giissfeldt' and our route converged, we perceived a line of steps leading upwards from the couloir (no doubt those of our neighbour's involuntary bivouac of yesternight). By now they should be safe.

Our plight was rather different; three hours behind planned

time, with the major difficulties of the climb ahead. The final snow and ice slopes, 1,500 feet to the exit of the Col de la Brenva, rose before us. For a short distance the snow was in good enough condition to kick steps in, then it became thin with ice below, and steps had to be cut after clearing away the soft snow. A slow and wearisome business. Just then our French friends, high above, called to us. They were but half-way between the exit in the ice-cliff and ourselves, and also had made slow time over the route. We bethought ourselves of the Germans, and the discomfort of a bivouac and with regret turned to the descent.

The traverse across the Brenva Glacier proved most trying, due to the great heat. It was two bruised and bleeding climbers who crawled into the 'Fourche' that day.

That night we slept little. The nissen, originally designed to sleep seven, held two Italian parties with guides, a trio of Swiss, a Czech and some guideless French and ourselves. We left early, intending to persevere with the 'Old Brenva,' but soon returned because of the uncertainty of the weather. None of our fellows seemed inclined to move. Blackamoor and I, not wishing to retreat before attempting a climb, thought that we should look at the ridge of the Aiguille Diable. The descent from the summit is shorter than the way off from the Brenva Route. We discussed this with one of the guides, who quipped, 'one can always escape from one diable to the next.'

Descending to the Geant Glacier, my companion cut steps down most of the slope, whilst I held him throughout. Steadiness was our bulwark for our axes would not enter the ice, and we did not consider using pitons. The descent occupied nearly two hours of precious time. At the foot of the Fourche Wall, we made a cache by a prominent rock, and deposited much of our equipment, retaining only the bare essentials. We found that the guide book had been left behind, and concluded that for one day in our lives, we should have to be true mountaineers.

Easy snow slopes led to the base of the South West flank of the Diable Ridge. The conspicuous couloir which cleaves the face from top to bottom was first followed, but this we soon quitted for the easy rocks on the left. A couple of thousand feet of scrambling brought us to the Col du Diable, at a height of 12,960 feet. The vista towards Italy was impressive and the views of the Frontier and Brenva Ridges resembled those amazing

slopes one usually encounters, not in the Alps, but in Alpine literature.

Streamers on Mont Blanc confirmed earlier signs of coming bad weather. Sound judgment would have to be exercised should conditions turn worse. Blackamoor led the first Diable as a matter of course. I would have enjoyed leading the second pinnacle, but my friend was half-way up before I could make my wishes known. Here was a man in form, and for the remainder of the rock work I was content to follow, deriving much pleasure in watching his beautiful style and astonishing speed.

We now stood on the summit of Pointe Chaubert, and an amusing discussion took place, to decide who should rappel last. Blackamoor appeared to regard my 160 feet of nylon string (quarter inch diameter) as a joke, and eloquently presented his case. In short, that I should have sufficient faith in my own rope to descend last. This was unanswerable.

A series of long rappels brought us to the Breche Mediane. Down and to the left, a deeply cut chimney ascended heavenwards. We entered, and made good progress to within no great distance of the exit when, alas, we came upon much ice and verglas, making the finish virtually unclimbable. My comrade, who regards anything unclimbable as a challenge, wished to press the route, but I put my foot down and we rappelled down into the breche. Time passed and we considered the escape route. This appeared exposed to falling stones and a crisis was upon us. Blackamoor probed the wall to the right with the eye of a man determined to perform great deeds, and finding a weakness in the rock, led out 80 feet of rope. His stance overlooking the glacier, another world far below, was wonderfully exposed, and upon reaching it I almost shed my skin in apprehension. A long, evil looking crack led upwards to an overhang. This was ascended and I was duly fixed to a piton. The stance was sketchy, of small blocks, and below an overhang. Blackamoor had just started to traverse a delicate slab when, with a noise like thunder, my stance disintegrated and fled down the crack, heading for the glacier. The piton held. My companion crossed that slab like a streak of lightning and was fast hauling in the rope from the safety of a deep fissure. I felt the rope tighten, bade the piton farewell and joined my friend at a belay of wonderful proportions.

The wall above overhung. To the right parallel cracks gave

way to a sentry box, the only weakness in the wall. Here, if anywhere, the route might go. Blackamoor spent some minutes making friends with the holds before descending to the belay. I handed him hammer and piton, and fed him with raisin chocolate. His eyes pleaded for more, but I sternly shook my head and pointed aloft — 'afterwards!' He led the pitch without more ado, using one piton. 'Rather nice, not much harder than Curving Crack on Cloggy,' were his comments, as I prepared to follow. I almost fell off with fright. Nevertheless, taking my courage 'tween my teeth,' in the interests of the party, I assaulted the face and, aided by the rope and encouraged by my friend, joined him on his ledge. An airy ridge brought us to the summit platform. Blackamoor had the rappel sling placed and pointed to an open chimney with an authoritative air 'the 25 metre rappel!' Down I went until 30 feet from the bottom my lifeline stuck. 'Lower the d— rope,' I howled, 'I'm choking. Indeed mine was a most unenviable plight, for the cliff afforded no purchase for my feet. At long last, the rope became free and I pendulated down to the breche.

We moved together towards the summit of 'Carmen' our fourth Diable; severe climbing with no frills. Snow flakes were falling as we prepared our rappel sling on the top-most pinnacle of the Aiguille. We roped down its West Face to the breche which lay between our rock and the parent mountain. By-passing 'L'Isolle' the fifth and last Diable, we toiled up the last few hundred feet of height to the summit of the mountain.

The weather was still not dangerous, but it could easily deteriorate and make things awkward. With the mist swirling about us, we achieved the summit cairn of the East Peak and were blessed with a lovely view of the Chamonix valley. The setting sun filled us with wonder and tempered the awful cold and loneliness of the place. Skirting the western summit, we descended the snow slopes leading to the ice-cliffs which threaten these northern slopes of Mont Blanc du Tacul. Finding no tracks it was necessary to force a way over to the right, where part of the cliff had collapsed, leaving a steep staircase of avalanche debris. Inclining left down the face, we ultimately found faint tracks leading towards the Col du Midi. The crevasses gave us no trouble and, in the gathering gloom, we felt our way up the ladder leading to the refuge. Snow fell during

the night, and the weather did not improve for the rest of the season.

I returned the following summer accompanied by Charles, a newcomer to the Alps. Clouds hung low, threatening the valley with rain. No big route had been climbed, indeed few of the standard climbs had been ascended. We thus settled down in Chamonix to await some improvement in the weather and to catch up with our reading. It was not until four days later that the weather cleared, and on a morning full of promise we went up to the refuge on the Col du Geant.

The following day we traversed the Tour Ronde, and descended to the East Bay of the Brenva Glacier. The long approach to the Fourche bivouac proved rather trying under the burning sun. Our aim was to establish a good line of 'bucket' steps in order to facilitate a speedy descent next day. We endured the usual sleepless night and were prepared to move soon after one. It was some time, however, before we left the hut, as an earlier party had difficulty in descending. Once on the snow we moved quickly and were soon treading the narrow crest of Col Moore. We decided to attempt the 'Sentinelle Rouge,' the Brenva Face route which enjoys a reputation as an ice-climb. We overtook the early party and wished them well before going our respective ways—they for the Great Ridge of Route Major, ourselves towards the 'Red Sentinel,' that great rock beneath which the pioneers bivouacked during the first ascent.

The vertical distance we had to ascend was the difference in height between Col Moore (11,415 feet) and the summit of Mont Blanc (15,772 feet)—rather more than 4,000 feet. Below Col Moore, the face falls to the West Bay of the Brenva Glacier, thus the actual height of the face approaches 5,000 feet. Our line of ascent lay up snow slopes at a nice angle rather to the right of a shallow couloir. Long bouts of step-kicking, followed by scrambling, brought us to the shelter of the Sentinel Rock (12,500 feet). We rested and discussed the merit of further progress. Dawn had long since passed and for complete safety from objective danger we should have achieved the Twisting Rib, 900 feet higher than our present position. A fall of ice — fragments in the couloir to our left (facing the mountain) gave us food for thought. Charles was reluctant to abandon this great climb without a struggle and left the decision 'forward' or 'retreat' to me.

I quickly descended into the couloir, nicked steps in the ice-runnel and ascended to safety high up on its flank, before belaying my axe in the snow. My companion, protected by the rope, crossed the couloir at a run. So far so good. From the Sentinel Rock we had noted two ways of crossing the lower rocks of 'Mummery's Rib.' Unfortunately we chose the lower traverse, which involved us in some awkward moments with loose rock and falling stones. On the far side of the rib, we laboured up steep snow slopes, keeping close to the rocks of 'Mummery's Rib,' and well away from the tell-tale grooves of the 'branch couloir' away on our left. These slopes seemed interminable, and the blazing sun added to our languor.

On reaching a height somewhat higher than the foot-rocks of the 'Twisting Rib,' we commenced to traverse the branch-couloir. This latter consists of a series of shallow drainage runs (extending for 200 feet) into which the residue from the cliff above descends. Some of the drainage runs were several feet deep, and of ice. Charles would belay my rope around his axe, whilst I cut into and then out of the ice run, and so on to less dangerous ground. When I had belayed, Charles would join me. This manoeuvre was executed with speed, with one eye on the cliff above. We were both impressed with the length of this traverse and the degree of exposure. Once on the 'Twisting Rib,' friendly rocks led to a resting place where we made tea and relaxed. We were now committed to the climb, and perhaps half-way up our route. With all objective dangers behind us, we looked forward to a pleasant ascent.

Refreshed by our sojourn, we rose to resume combat with this intriguing mountain. Mist now obscured the valley view. The rib went easily, until steep rock forced us over to the right into an open chimney containing ice. Here we moved singly. Easy ground above enabled us to progress, carrying coils. Higher we experienced an anxious moment when Charles almost parted my company forever, attached to a large piece of the mountain.

We were now at that part of the climb at which, according to Professor Graham Brown, an easy staircase gives access to the upper snow slopes. Mist made the route-finding difficult. I thus led away and upwards to the right, until an overhang forced me to traverse to the left. A strenuous pull up with the snow field above—quite the hardest rock work encountered so

far on loose rock. Visibility was down to 50 yards. Above frowned a steep buttress of rock forbidding further progress. Away to the right a way might be found between a smaller buttress and the unknown further right. We thus moved together, diagonally right and upwards, kicking good steps in the snow. Our position above the precipice was one of high exposure and a suggestion of ice beneath our steps made great care essential. Thus we moved one at a time. The mist cleared momentarily, showing the valley 10,000 feet below. Little could be seen of the aggressive ice-cliffs which threaten the slopes to the North. The little buttress appeared to offer a way. Reaching its base, below a steep crack, I brought up my companion for support. The rock was covered with verglas and we retreated half-a-rope's length before traversing to the right. The depth of snow diminished, and steps had to be cut in the ice. A few rocks provided temporary respite, but gave way to a long and steep ice-slope. We donned our crampons. Some 25 feet from the rock I hammered Charles to an ice piton before continuing cutting. Thirty to forty feet from him I banged in my last peg, attached a karabiner for protection, and cut away to a rocky ledge 25 feet further on. Charles came across the traverse like a veteran, collecting the ironmongery en route.

We were now round the corner and could view the face to better advantage. The general angle of the face had receded to about 40°—mainly ice, with small rocks protruding, giving no anchorage whatsoever. Although one could wander almost at will, the going was always awkward and one could not relax. Further progress to the right seemed inadvisable, for the ice-cliffs, though unseen, threatened danger. We had no option but to strike upwards towards the summit. On a little-known cliff, in heavy mist, and with not much daylight left, we felt very much alone.

We climbed together using our crampons and the pick of our axes — true crampon work. Occasionally we would stand on rock, but rarely did it offer handhold. Perhaps 300 feet of such work brought us onto good hard snow, and we kicked steps aloft with lighter hearts. On and on, the slopes seemed everlasting. Away on the left a slim rock rib led upwards into the void. We were now on a broad snow slope and imagined ourselves close to the summit. More ice—and a traverse left led to easier ground.

Mist had shortened the hours of light greatly. At this point a

crevasse barred our path. Surely the Calotte of Mont Blanc was to hand! Somewhat demoralized, my companion was growing mutinous and delivered an ultimatum. 'Either we reach the top in two rope lengths, or we sleep in the crevasse.' Alas, no summit did we see. Charles had once read in a book how jolly and warm crevasses were, even in the coldest blizzard. Though sceptical I thought it best to humour him and together we attempted to transform the crevasse into a habitable cave. For ages we toiled, but the crevasse possessed an insatiable appetite and we failed to establish a secure bottom. Charles crouched within for a time, but one look was enough for me.

The night, though long, did not prove too uncomfortable and we watched the approach of dawn with little enthusiasm. Soon we resumed our step kicking up those seemingly endless slopes. My friend soon grew enthusiastic and pressed to the fore. The angle eased and we stepped onto the easy-angled North East ridge. Mist confined our view to a few yards, but by keeping the Brenva slope on our left, we advanced a hundred feet or so to the highest land in Europe.

I took a compass bearing and picked up faint tracks leading towards the Bosses arete. Down the ridge we struggled against the storm of wind and driven snow, keeping the rope taut throughout. The Vallot Refuge (for which we were making) is situate 1,500 feet below the top of Mont Blanc, on the Bosses Arete, and is hard to find in mist. The ridge flattened into a plateau and the tracks grew more distinct. Could we have over-shot the hut? As if in answer to our thoughts, came the happy laughter of youth through the mist. A party of youngsters emerged, bound for the summit. We were safe. The hut lay but ten minutes' stroll back along their tracks. We bade them farewell and soon staggered into that metal box which has saved so many lives. Willing hands came to our aid and helped to release our boots. No frost bite, thank God! Steaming mugs of coffee, from our Route Major friends — how kind of them! They had arrived shortly before dawn.

Soon they departed for the valley, leaving us to ourselves and our thoughts. Outside it snowed. We dozed and slept for a day and a night before going down to Chamonix by way of the Grand Mulets. The teleferique was out of action and, like the pioneers, we descended to the valley on foot.

THE SALVING HOUSE

F. H. F. Simpson

In the last *journal* the Editor was kind enough to notice in his Editorial my record of the opening of Birkness, and I had no choice but to accept his invitation to 'cover' the 1953 event. Encouraged by the published compliment I set about unearthing something of the history of our fourth Hut building and presently found myself engaged in considerable correspondence. It soon became apparent that many of the people who might have given me valuable information had died within the past decade.

The Clerk to the Cockermouth Urban District Council kindly arranged for a search of his authority's records, but these unfortunately, did no more than note the presence of the building. Graham Sutton, who has accumulated such an extensive knowledge of the District denied any knowledge of its history but disclosed considerable familiarity with the process which gives the building its name. He explains that the primary use of the building was abandoned largely as a result of the growth of modern methods of caring for the Herdwick flocks. In former times the sheep were saved from mid-October to mid-November, the operation thus corresponding to the present day 'last-dipping.' Four quarts of tar and sixteen pounds of butter saved thirty-five to forty sheep at a cost of sixpence for each sheep. The wool was parted and the sauve worked in with thumb and fore-finger, in parallel, until the whole fleece was treated. A good man did ten to twelve sheep a day and was paid twopence for each sheep. This process was not replaced by any system of dipping until about 1840.

While the farmers had the choice, sauving was locally preferred to dipping — for Herdwicks at any rate — and did not disappear until 1905 when the Board of Agriculture made dipping against scab compulsory. From this it may be inferred that sauving was also a measure against scab. Graham Sutton mentions that Rawnsley had stated that it was done to waterproof the fleece against winter storms, and while admitting that Rawnsley was usually correct, adds that it might be assumed that the natural grease of the wool would have been sufficient. The wool manufacturers were, however, glad of the new methods, because the wool cleaning process was cheapened and simplified. Graham Sutton explains that either 'Salving' or 'Sauving' is

correct. Even today the shepherds use the latter, and another form, 'Sarving.'

Neither Captain Badrock nor Ernest Plaskett — once of the Post Office, but now residing in Keswick — were able to give me any relevant information, but helpfully suggested further lines of enquiry. I had naturally turned to the Club's old friend, Fisher Jopson, now living in retirement in Threlkeld, and he, though by no means in good health, sought the aid of his sister, Miss Ethel Jopson, in writing to me. His first recollection is of the stories told by his mother of her own childhood, when the Salving House was a playground for the youngsters of Rosthwaite when not in normal use. In those days, and in Fisher's youth, the doors opening upon the roadway were never locked, and the children made the most of this freedom.

It was not until salving fell into disuse that the building was put to various casual uses; Fisher comments that it 'made a good flop-house for the drunks ' who were always sure of a bed of straw upon which to sleep off their excesses. Members of this Club who have tried to negotiate the natural hazards of the Borrowdale road in pitch darkness, when in full possession of their faculties, will be the first to acknowledge the prudence of the Borrowdale bon viveurs. Fisher identifies the Rosthwaite building as only one of several devoted to salving. The work was also done in a building adjoining Thorneythwaite, in another at Seathwaite, and in separate buildings in Stonethwaite and Seatoller.

At Miss Jopson's suggestion I sought the help of Mr. William Nuttall of Mountain View, whose home was for many years a cottage in the village, which is now a shop. He says that originally the interior was not entirely open as we found it when the café closed. The end nearest 'Knocka ' — the home of Miss Dalglish — was enclosed by a strong fence, reaching up to the cross beam. Above this was a loft in which hay was stored except when the space was required for the temporary stowage of the wool clip. Round the walls were low racks in which hay was placed within easy reach of young lambs so that they might learn to appreciate this form of food. A former tenant of Kiln How used to winter heifers there, and included for a time among the stock a red Highland bull, with such a spread of horns that he is said to have turned his head sideways when negotiating the narrow doorway. He was much respected by the local small boys.

Another four-legged occupant was a billy-goat, one-horned and malodorous, and something of a character. Mr. Nuttall tells a story of a Welshman who entered the Salving House on a dark night, to be mildly challenged by the goat, which stood on its hind legs and placed its forefeet on the intruder's shoulders. The latter, under the impression that he was face to face with the tenant of Kiln How, addressed him by name and offered him sixpence if he might be allowed to go home quietly. Unfortunately no record survives of the manner in which the goat dealt with the situation.

In Mr. Nuttall's boyhood one regular visitor was a man called Hyves or Ives, an enterprising higgler, who set up a stall for the sale of ornaments, crockery, household gadgets, indeed anything which sold readily. The building was put to many other uses; cockfighting, treacle bun eating contests, rowdy stag-parties, gatherings associated with Church festivals, and nocturnal gambling sessions were frequent incidents in the last decade of the nineteenth century. One presumably annual affair, known as the 'Borrowdale merry night' brought most of the available accommodation in Rosthwaite into cheerful and noisy use.

One final matter — we are reminded by Mr. Nuttall of the presence on the roof between the Salving House and 'Knocka' of a stone finial marked 'B.B.1837' and we are advised to preserve it. If the author of the new Borrowdale guide can prove a previous incarnation, or alternatively a present age of 117 years, preservation is clearly justified.

Now, as to the activities of the twelve months ending at Whitsuntide, 1953, and in particular those of Monday, 25th May. Within a year of the opening of Birkness the Salving house was almost ready for occupation. The report on the proceedings at Birkness expressed admiration at the results of the skill of the amateur workpeople. It is necessary to record the same sentiments following the establishment of the Salving House. Our four huts are monuments to our masons, carpenters, plumbers, painters and handymen, who have now earned a holiday, and new recruits have the chance of carrying on where they left off, by keeping our buildings 'in good and tenantable repair.' The law has much to say on the interpretation of this classic phrase. Hut Wardens are, however, less perplexed by theory and have their own translation which they expect hut users to adopt.

The 1953 Whitsuntide Meet in Borrowdale began like so many of its predecessors. The song of the chaffinch rang in the woods round Longthwaite. From every quarter came the sardonic voice of the cuckoo. Insects fussed in the creeper over the farm doorway. Up sprang the young green bracken fronds, up went the tents; out came Lawson Cook's red stockings.

Sunday brought a brazen sky and fierce sun. Inside the new hut there were pockets of confusion in an otherwise orderly dwelling, where finishing-touch teams worked swiftly. An endless afternoon tea party proceeded before the door. Ernest Wood-Johnson and his family squared up the yard with spades and axes. Dick Flint worked on a jig-saw of small stones to level a hole below the newly painted gate. Leslie Somervell wandered like an uneasy ghost, touching up paint here and there. It was an impressive scene, and in the centre of it all sat the Minister of Works, Harry Spilsbury, relaxed over tea. Those of us who came to look comforted ourselves that there was little room in which extra labour might have functioned.

Dawn on Monday came with a hot blustering south wind and turbulent cloud. Thunder grumbled in the west. Your reporter made his way by the lane to Rosthwaite, slowly, amid bluebells and companionable gnats. A crowd was gathered at the hut. A cheerful but unnecessary fire graced the common room stove and the temperature rose steadily. Lady members in the kitchen completed the setting out of a variety of cakes, tarts and sandwiches, hindered from time to time by hungry males bent upon sampling these provisions. The vanguard of the long threatened thunderstorm appeared simultaneously across the Sty, Honister and Lobstone Band, sweeping in a grey curtain into the dale and driving us inside. A tropical downpour proved the soundness of our roof and drenched holiday-makers besieged the bus service. The storm entertained us with its brightest lightning strokes and theatrical roars of thunder and shortly before the appointed hour A. B. Hargreaves, the President arrived, wet but beaming. A space was cleared in the corner of the common room and the President selected a chair on which to stand, but was prevented from so doing until Edward Wormell had, with pardonable solicitude for his furnishings, protected the seat with brown paper. The President mounted briskly on the chair and surveyed the close packed assembly over the top of his spectacles. He was at once illuminated by a brilliant flash of lightning. It was,

he said, gratifying to see such a large Club gathering which recalled the Thorneythwaite meets of happy memory. He had received many messages of greeting and congratulation from members who were unable to attend. We had gathered in order that these new headquarters might be formally opened.

The President next extended a sincere welcome on behalf of the Club to our friends in the village then present, including Captain Badrock who had let us have the building. He wished them all to know how delighted we were to have at last a base in Borrowdale. Our purpose that afternoon was to open officially this fine new hut of which we should be very proud indeed. Before proceeding however, he had another task to perform, equally pleasant. Among us was Dr. T. R. Burnett to whom he had something very special to say, which would come as a complete surprise to him. When he had assumed the Presidency from him the previous Autumn, he had ascertained that several members of the Committee shared his feeling that something should be done to mark the Club's gratitude to T. R. Burnett for outstanding services. It was then decided that a small presentation should be made to him at the first convenient opportunity, and this, our largest gathering since the Annual Dinner, appeared to him to be a very suitable occasion. The President, recalling that Dr. Burnett was unique among members not only as one of the oldest and most senior, but because he had served two terms as President, produced what he described as a special badge, chosen by the Committee at Mardale the previous March. He explained that it showed the Club emblem in enamel and gilt, and was supported by a scroll referring to the recipient's double Presidency and Honorary Membership. The President stepped down from the chair and handed over the badge.

Dr. Burnett, who displayed unmistakable signs of emotion during these proceedings, spoke with difficulty and apologised to the Hut Warden for making a footprint on the chair. It appeared that he had unknowingly been making marks in a lot of places. He had had a number of surprises in the past but none so great as this. He could not imagine what we had been thinking about in preparing this demonstration nor could he understand the gratitude which it was designed to record. He was too overcome to do anything more than to express his thanks and to ask to be allowed to get down from the chair. These

remarks were greeted with warm and prolonged cheering and applause and a particularly vivid display of lightning.

Resuming his address the President explained that he was keeping Mr. P. D. Boothroyd, the official opener until the end, and he would next call upon Leslie Somervell, Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Experts who planned the difficult alterations, to outline the history of the acquisition and reconstruction of the building. Somervell climbed into the makeshift pulpit and told us that we were only in the Salving House that afternoon through the vigilance and prompt action of Peascod, who discovered that the property was in the market. After many years of enquiry in Borrowdale we were suddenly presented with a choice of two buildings for conversion. The Members had confirmed the option to buy the Salving House. The purchase money had been given or loaned to the Club by a group of members and negotiations with our friendly neighbour, Captain Badrock went through smoothly. Smoothness had in fact been a feature of everything connected with this venture. Was it an abstract survival of the salve of butter and tar with which bygone generations of sheep had been treated? Within twenty-four hours of the Club's resolution to proceed a very cold afternoon was spent by Arthur Millard, our architect member, in the company of six opinions all in extreme conflict on the most suitable way to place a quart in a pint pot. So successful was Mr. Millard with the warring opinions and the demands of the Planning Authority, that by the time Harry Spilsbury had practically stolen three or four hundred feet of mahogany for bed posts, Messrs. Hodgson had been appointed contractors and had arrived on the scene. The first building operation was the smashing of the skylight in the men's dormitory just before the November snowfall. The last operation was its repair. The second operation was the construction of a window in the common room which the Committee had reluctantly rejected on the ground of expense. On their first visit the Committee observed its completion with delight, an emotion shared even by Dick Plint. Plint had conducted the negotiations and correspondence, and proved his versatility as one of the most capable left-handers in the working party. The other left-hander not only saved up days of holiday for work but by judicious scouting in the Liverpool area secured much equipment including the Club's most luxurious mattresses, at prices which made the Treasurer's spirits rise with each purchase. Undoubtedly the most generous

contribution by Harry Spilsbury had been the freedom of his precious tool kit which he had thrown open to all who had volunteered for work. The speaker felt sure that all members of the working team would endorse his view that but for Spilbury's personal efforts, quite apart from his foremanship, the hut would not have been opened this year.

The volunteers had been many, too many to mention individually, though it was perhaps not out of place to name Ruth Spilsbury whose smile was not excelled even by the meals she provided, and Joan Kendrick, always engaged in the most tedious job which no one else would tackle, and Phyllis Wormell another cook, whose dishes never tasted of the paint she deserted to prepare them. Somervell suggested that after the President and P. D. Boothroyd the opener had signed the Hut book, forty lines be left for the signatures of those whose labours in the past four or five months had made the Borrowdale quarters take shape.

In conclusion, Somervell thanked Arthur Millard on behalf of the Committee and the Club for his time so freely given, his plans, his advice and friendly supervision and remarkable patience throughout the growth of the Salving house.

Somervell disappeared in the crowd amid more applause, and the President reappeared on the official perch. He said that he wished, while the details of Somervell's remarks were fresh in the listeners minds, to stress the continuing need for financial contributions towards the capital cost of the enterprise and gifts in kind in extension of the equipment of the Salving House. The President then applied himself to that for which we were all waiting — the ceremonial opening by Mr. P. D. Boothroyd, performed from the inside, in view of the prevailing weather conditions. Mr. P. D. Boothroyd needed no introduction. He had been asked to open the new Hut because of his seniority in membership, his family connection with the Club, and his great generosity towards all our hut projects. He was in at the start of the hut movement in this Club, and a Vice-President at the time of the controversy as to whether or not Brackenclose should be built. To men like him the younger generation should be indeed grateful.

Mr. Boothroyd was then invited to occupy the chair, but turning away and bidding us 'wait a minute,' he pressed through the crowd out into the rain and closed the door. The key rattled in the lock and the opener stepped inside to a

crackling thunderclap; he was accompanied by a quantity of fine spray, no less effective than the traditional howling wind and flurry of snowflakes. In a loud voice he declared the Salving House open.

We cheered him as he climbed nimbly on to the chair. Mr. Boothroyd said that the performance of this ceremony delighted him, and he would always recall the occasion with pleasure. Having the largest family membership in the Club had been a constant source of happiness, and he trusted that membership brought us equal satisfaction. Brackenclose had been established sixteen years. None had given a thought to Club huts in the years before. How fortunate we now were and how great a debt we owed to the wardens and working parties. He was last in the new hut at the previous Dinner Meet and was amazed at the transformation. It was an interesting time for the mountaineering fraternity just then for the final assault on Everest was at hand, if not being actually undertaken at that moment. We remembered with pride that two of our members were actively engaged and had climbed from our huts. We prayed that the team would succeed. If their attempt were not to be so crowned we hoped for their safe return. In conclusion, Mr. Boothroyd thanked the Committee and the President for asking him to take a leading part on that memorable occasion. The speaker was loudly applauded.

The President thanked Mr. Boothroyd for his friendly and apt remarks. Our sincerest thanks were due to him for braving the elements and performing the opening ceremony so pleasantly. He declared that we all wished the greatest of good luck to the Wardens, Edward and Phyllis Wormell, with their new charge, and happy climbing to the users of the Salving House. His final pronouncement was that there be an end to speech making and an immediate brewing of tea.

A watery sun gleamed through the trees; we stepped out into the yard among puddles. An endless procession of cups of tea came from the kitchen, plates of cakes and other confections circulated perilously near upset in the stirring crowd, vanishing like frost in morning sunshine. Visitors signed the book, made gifts to the reconstruction fund, and moved out into the open for a closer examination of Burnett's special badge. The Wardens, each equipped with a buttered bun, surveyed the scene with quiet satisfaction — as well they might.



OPENING OF THE SALVING HOUSE, 21 MAY, 1953

Left to Right : A. V. MILLER, L. W. SOMERVILLE, P. D. BODD, F. WORMELL, T. R. BURNETT,
 H. P. SPILSBURY, R. SPILSBURY, A. B. HARGREAVES, T. C. JUSTICE-CHANT, A. E. WORMELL,
 Behind : J. KENDRICK AND W. KENDRICK *

F. W. Simpson

WHO SAID THERE'S SKI-ING ON HELVELLYN?

Nancy Smith

The coldest day of the year, maybe. Ice-bound roads everywhere and a mere sprinkling of snow on the hills. Were they ski-ing on Raise? I rang up Phil and Edward to find out. They always know the answers to important things. Burr! Burr! No reply. They were out. They wouldn't be climbing in such weather, not they! so they must have gone off ski-ing, on Helvellyn or Raise. Saturday night about midnight I was kneeling on the rug, warming my skis by the fire, and rubbing on the black resinous nostalgic-smelling wax with a warm iron, and dripping the stuff all over the place. Rumour had it that Kirkstone Pass was blocked with snow, so there must be ski-ing somewhere.

Up early and off, on a beautiful sunny morning, icy cold and the temperature around 18°F. There were no car marks up Kirkstone Pass, a little snow, but no difficulty. Over I went to Patterdale and the first turning left after that. I looked at the map, as a sort of formality, but the morning was too magical to concentrate. There was hardly any snow, even on the highest hills, I just had a wee glimpse before the clouds came down and it began to snow lightly, but enough to reduce the view to about thirty feet. There was no one about, to help or to hinder, so I set off! up a path, leaving my skis and sticks behind, and thinking it was a grand day for the hills anyway. Soon I became aware of footprints in front, someone was making my track for me. As usual, the footprints were too far apart for comfort, they always are (except for A.B.'s), for my legs are short and men's legs are long. There was a man ahead of me: must be a climber, for he was walking on No. 7 Tricounis. Would I catch him up? It was cold and windy and snowing and so I was going fast, but the path was icy and I slithered and often fell on my smooth rubber-soled ski-boots, useless for climbing. Now and again I had a glimpse of things through shifting mist and snow showers: just the day for a Brocken Spectre, I must find one. I saw a small black figure away ahead of me, now high up on a ridge and I plodded along behind. They were pleasing footprints, light and airy, and they picked out just the route that I would have chosen, apart from some icy bits that I couldn't manage in my stupid ski-boots. The way grew rockier and steeper and more

icy, more like a ridge, even a bit exposed. Really I was a silly, I could at least have brought a ski-stick with me and pretended it was an ice-axe.

Suddenly I caught up with a real Alpine party, properly equipped with ice-axes, climbing boots and roped-up. They gazed at me critically and I felt like a tripper in high-heeled shoes ought to feel like at the Jungfrauoch but seldom does. I apologised lamely and said I had hoped to ski, and pressed on ahead of them.

The lively footprints that had lured me on were lost. Where were the lead-mines I'd been told to find? Why was it so rocky and exposed? I was clambering over pinnacles and icy rocks by this time and a frozen lake appeared below me on the right just for a moment. I jumped off a pinnacle, slid backwards rather precariously, and was confronted by a rounded plaque in memory of so-and-so who had died here while following the fox-hounds. Funny, I'd seen that before, where could it be? Yes —• Striding Edge. How on earth did I get on Striding Edge? I never meant to! Wasn't at all prepared for an alpine expedition and it was so cold. Then it cleared, and the sun shone and Helvellyn was there, white and icy in the distance and my ridge going straight for it, and there, dancing from pinnacle to icy pinnacle was the little black maker of my fairy footprints . . . further away now, for I had to take such care with my so slippery feet on all the ice and snow about.

For me, of course, climbing comes first and so I suppose without conscious thought, I had taken first the car and then myself entirely the wrong way and come to a real climb and I didn't care a damn if they were ski-ing on Raise, not now that I had left my skis behind. This was far better, the footprints leapt over big gaps, and trod on sloping ice. He must be a tiger, for he scorned an ice-axe. I potted along the ridge and was glad to be alone, glad that no one was there to see my ignominious slithery progress, on hand and knees. Now it was a real climb as all good climbs should be, bringing out that little bit extra that one always asks for, and with the issue in doubt right to the very end. At the end of the ridge was the steep part up the final shoulder of Helvellyn, with a cornice on the skyline. How on earth would I get over that cornice? Ah well, not to worry, wait till I get there. His footprints approached an icy patch of hard hard wind-slab at a steep angle and the wee Tricouni scratches

were barely visible on its surface. I trod on this and immediately fell off, impossible for me. I crawled round the edge of it. A howling, bitter, buffeting icy wind hit me now, numbing ears, nose and fingers even inside thick mittens, making the exposure still more fearsome. Oh for an ice-axe or a comforting rope from above. But my maker of footprints had long ago disappeared over the summit. No one to be seen in all those vast and lonely hills, only the footprints so I followed them, on and up, there was nothing else to do. There were wee little boot scratches in the hard wind-slab, leading straight up and over the cornice. I stood and shivered at the bottom: was it the bitter wind or was it cold sweat? No matter. I felt in my pockets, toffees, chocolates, bread, honey, camera, ah, a penknife, a lady's penknife, absurdly small. Be rash! have a go, but will it go? Kicking the stuff merely bashed my toes and made no impression. I carefully chopped out little cubes of ice with the penknife. Six little cubes and I could put one toe in. Ridiculous this, foolhardy, too. All my long and hard-won experience said 'This is not justifiable! What would the Fell and Rock say?' No use to talk to me, this was no ordinary day. I went on chipping away with my wee penknife at the vast shoulder of Helvellyn. Surely the steps were too hard ever to break away. I slipped . . . instinctively I shoved my penknife into the ice up to the hilt, pretending it were a proper ice-axe, but the daft thing bent at the hilt, spoiling the illusion. Stupid things penknives. The cornice was only about eighteen inches high (pity one has to be honest) but it meant a great big step for a little one and I had to dig a big handhold to haul myself over, and the prospect below was appalling. I could never go down there again if I failed to get up. A few more steps and I was over the bulge.

Swirrel Edge had its moments, too, but at least one slithers in the right direction on the way down. A couple of climbers met me near the bottom and asked me the time. Twenty-past two. Can't be! It seemed like . . . well it was timeless. Only three hours? Never! My skis were waiting for me in the car. Oh, yes, I forgot, Valerie wanted to know the condition of the snow on Helvellyn, for ski-ing, of course. I'll tell her! The folk at Raw Head had found a little field just opposite Chapel Style, and had been ski-ing there all day, now it was sunset. Ah, well, Vive le Sport.

FIRST ASCENT

To Bentley Beetham, Pioneer of Roc\ Climbs

Here now stand I
Alone with Earth and Sky.
This narrow ledge, laboriously gained,
Has never known the tread of human foot;
For me alone
The handholds of this virgin crag were put
And so remained;
No other man
Has touched the lichen on this ancient stone
Since Time began.

This is no Peak
Aloft among the snow;
No friendly folk will wait with bated breath
For my return;
'Tis my concern—
A hundred feet or so
Is all the hazard that I have with Death
And all I seek.

Yet here I stand;
No matter who has title to the land,
Nor who may follow in the marks I make,
No man can take
From me this moment when, in Time and Space,
I own this place.

Whence come these thoughts? I know that they were born
Long years 'ere Whymper trod the Matterhorn.

JOHN C. LYTH.

ROCK-CLIMBING IN IRELAND

J. P. O'F. Lynam

Six centuries ago, Ireland consisted of 'The Pale' round Dublin, the supposedly civilised area where the English law ran, and the remainder of the country where the Irish governed themselves in peace. There is today a similar, but by no means analogous, territorial division in the mountains of Ireland.

Along the east coast, within a short distance of Belfast and Dublin, are the Mourne and Wicklow Mountains. These are both 'civilised' ranges; they have a Club Hut apiece, and several Youth Hostels; they are within easy range for a short weekend or day visit; and the climbing is on well-known crags, provided with scratched routes and guide books. In the Mournes, most of the routes are short, on the weathered granite summits, but a few good long climbs have been made. Around Dublin, on the coast are the quartzite stacks of Ireland's Eye, and the slate pinnacles of Bray Head, while within forty minutes' bus ride of the centre of the city is Dalkey, a quarry disused since the 1830's, which contains over seventy short climbs on smooth granite. The cliff is only 60-100 ft. high, but it is a wonderful training ground, and a favourite spot on summer evenings after work. In the Wicklow Mountains proper are the granite cliffs of Luggala and Camaderry. Luggala has some fine climbs of 300 ft. and more, but it has not proved as popular as Camaderry Mountain, on whose crags are the finest climbs in 'The Pale.'

Camaderry Mountain is situated near Glendalough, thirty three miles from Dublin. It overlooks the Upper Lake and Vale of Glendalough, and presents a rocky face from the head of the lake westward. Climbs have been made on several of the buttresses and slabs, but the greatest number are concentrated on a steep buttress (Twin Buttress) nearly a mile west of the lake. It is easily recognisable by its two wings, which are separated by a slabbv, and usually wet, apron. The rock is granite, steep and smooth-looking, but provided with just enough holds to encourage and inspire the leader. It is a crag for experienced climbers—the few climbs below the Severe grade are neither typical nor good, while the harder climbs are of sustained difficulty, with technical severity and exposure evenly matched. Like all Irish crags, it was once covered with vegetation, and though much remains, the climbs themselves are all clean. It is a delightful crag to climb on; it faces south, onto one of the most beautiful

valleys in the country, and being well below 2,000 ft., it is well sheltered. It is about as far from the nearest pub as is Gimmer from the Old Dungeon Ghyll.

The most obvious landmarks on the West Wing are the Scimitar Crack and the forked gully to its left, called Quartz Gully. Taking the climbs from west to east, there is first *Garden of Eden* (130 ft., Severe) right round to the left, on the west face. It takes a steep clean crack to the left of a deep re-entrant, and then goes left up a chimney. There is also a harder direct finish. *Deirdre* (200 ft., Exceptionally Severe) goes directly up the smooth steep corner between the south and west faces; a little to the left, up a grooved slab, is *Expectancy* (90 ft., Severe). *Folly* (140 ft., Severe) is a rather messy route starting from the pinnacle between *Deirdre* and *Quartz Gully*. *Quartz Gully* (220 ft., Mild Severe) was the first route on the crag, and remains a fine climb; the left fork is taken, and the hardest move is to enter this.

The *Scimitar Crack* (250 ft., Exceptionally Severe) is a very exposed and unrelenting route, with its hardest moves high up; it is still a little vegetated. Starting a little to the right of the crack, crossing it, and finally from Nightmare Ledge, curving back to meet it at the top, is *Prometheus* (250 ft., Very Severe). The crux of this climb is the overhanging crack above Nightmare Ledge. These two are superb climbs, of high quality, and wonderfully exposed. *Spillikin Ridge* is the corner bounding this wing on the east. The three overhangs on its upper part have never been led*, but *Fanfare* (220 ft., Severe) goes up to the Spillikin below the overhangs, and then heads diagonally left up to Nightmare Ledge.

On the East Wing there is firstly *Crial Uisce* (270 ft., Very Difficult) on the left edge of the wing. Then follow two routes, *Aisling* (300 ft., Very Severe) and *Forest Rhapsody* (350 ft., Hard Severe) which take parallel courses up the centre of the wing. *Forest Rhapsody* is the longest route on the crag, and the natural line up the East Wing. *Ruth's Chimney* (120 ft., Severe) is the square chimney to the right of *Forest Rhapsody*. The start is undistinguished, but the chimney itself is fine; the normal finish is by *Forest Rhapsody*. Eastwards from Twin

*This has now been climbed; it is Exceptionally Severe, very exposed, and of great technical difficulty.

Buttress is a series of slabs and walls, often damp and uninviting. One large slab set at a high angle, and usually streaked with moisture, flanks *Cuchulainn Groove* (160 ft., Very Severe) an exceptionally strenuous route, climbed before any of the Twin Buttress routes. The rib to one side has also been climbed.

The greater part of the mountains of Ireland lie beyond 'The Pale.' They are far from any big towns, and are mostly ill-served by trains or buses. The buses particularly cater for the farmer who wants to go to market, and to the mountaineer's chagrin he finds it possible to get to the mountains only in the evening, and back only in the early morning. However, this relative inaccessibility has its advantages; there is still great scope for exploration and for the making of new climbs—not artificial routes, but natural lines on untouched rock faces. Also, even at the holiday week-ends, the climber will not find the hills swarming with people, for Ireland is still in that happy stage when any rope-hung figure you meet is almost certain to be already known to you. As a natural result of this scarcity the climber will find that though the local people will quite certainly think him mad, they will make him very welcome.

Extending across the south of Ireland are a series of ridges of Old Red Sandstone, which form the Comeragh, Knockmealdown and Galtee Mountains, and further west the same rock forms the complex ridges of Cork and Kerry, culminating in the Reeks. Great coums of black, unpleasant rock are common, streaked with damp, and hung with a profuse (and often interesting) flora, but here and there are to be found buttresses of purple grit, rough and dry, most satisfying for climbing. Kerry, being a tourist centre, has better transport than most areas, but a cautious approach is advised, and Killarney, fortress of stage-Irishry, of jaunting cars and pony men, of shillelaghs and leprechauns should be avoided at all costs. Fortunately the aura of tourism does not spread far, and Carrauntoohil on a Bank Holiday is little more crowded than Scafell on a spring weekday. The climbing in the Gap of Dunloe (which is good) is, however, within the aura, and even if the climber is strong-minded enough to refuse the pony which will certainly be thrust upon him at Kate Carney's cottage, he will not enjoy having a large audience at the foot of the crags.

The mountains of the west and north-west are more promising. Here are the oldest hills of Ireland, composed of the

Dalradian rocks which form large parts of the Scottish Highlands. They are wild, bleak hills, with flanks of bare rock running down to deep boggy valleys. In Donegal the mountains of granite and quartzite are very inaccessible and almost untouched as far as rock climbing is concerned, except for the Poisoned Glen. Better known is the area on the borders of Galway and Mayo, in Connemara and Murrisk. In Murrisk, the climbing is mostly on gritstone, which is often vegetated and damp, and the area has received attention mainly because of its proximity to the Twelve Bens.

The Twelve Bens of Connemara, a group of quartzite cones rising abruptly from a flat plain dotted with lakes, contain the finest long climbs so far found in Ireland. Much of the exposed rock lies at an easy angle, but in the south wall of Glen Inagh it steepens to form a cliff a thousand feet high and more than half a mile long. The rock is nobbly, white and clean, with a polished surface, requiring a technique of its own which it often takes a little time to acquire. The crag is steep and in its central part almost unbroken; on the harder climbs pitches are long—averaging eighty feet—stances are small, and belays not always comforting. The crag is often wet, and tricouni-nailed boots are the most generally useful footwear. The crag is about an hour's walk from the Recess-Kylemore road, and rather less than five miles from the nearest bus. There is a fair camping ground where the road crosses a stream at the mouth of the glen.

Looking south across Glen Inagh, the left end of the crag lies halfway between Ben Corr and Ben Corrbeg. Here is a broad, three-stepped ridge separated from the rest of the cliff by a deep gully. This ridge is *Meacan Bui* (940 ft., Difficult), a classic climb, and an excellent introduction to the crag. Beyond the gully is *Feothadan* (1,275 ft., Difficult) following an ill-defined rib, and then the cliff is broken into three tiers by two ledges. From the lower ledge, about 100 ft., right of *Feothadan*, starts *Discrepancy* (500 ft., Mild Severe), which goes straight up the steep middle tier and continues above the second ledge to the top. A little further right is *Hypotenuse* (260 ft., Very Difficult) which joins *Discrepancy* below the upper ledge.

Further right the two ledges and walls fade out, and there is a continuous sweep of slabs from top to bottom of the crag. Here lies *Caveman's Delight* (1,110 ft., Very Difficult). Beyond there is a vertical crack down the whole crag and then Central

Buttress stands out; on this buttress is *Seventh Heaven* (1,050 ft., Hard Severe), probably the finest climb in the country. It is not technically as hard as some of the Camaderry routes, but its exposure, its length, its long lead outs, its small stances and smaller belays combine to make it a route of high quality, and a very serious undertaking. The start is at the foot of the buttress, on the left, and the line goes more or less directly up. A little on the right side of the buttress, a hundred feet beyond, is *Great Central Route* (1,000 ft., Severe), which leads up to a grassy balcony just below the top of the crag. Beyond Central Buttress is a grassy gully, which forms the start of *Unfinished Symphony* (420 ft., Severe); this route, only climbed once, awaits its proper finish, as the discoverers had to traverse off to the right to escape benightment. There follows a buttress marked by a red overhang, which is surmounted by *Surplomb Rouge* (1,400 ft., Severe). More broken rocks succeed, leading round to the steep face below the col between Ben Corr and Ben Collaghduff—the Devil's Col. This face is slit by a diagonal crack sloping up to the left. *Devil's Drainpipe* (750 ft., Just Severe) runs up the slabs just left of the waterfall, and continues up the crack. It is a natural route, with only one severe section. Starting to the left of the Drainpipe, crossing it, and going straight up just left of the waterfall is *Bartof* (600 ft., Severe). Beyond, the cliff tails off into heathery slopes.

I hope that this brief survey, and the rather more detailed descriptions of two typical yet contrasting crags, may have given some idea of what is to be found in Ireland. Exploration is proceeding slowly; there is probably one rock-climber in Ireland for every thousand in England, and the several hundred routes in the country are almost entirely the work of a score of climbers, while the many Severses and Very Severses have been made by half that number. Hart, O'Brien and Winthrop Young did much pioneering, but they did not leave many records, and it is possible that the credit for first ascents attributed to more recent climbers may really belong to them. Young and O'Brien certainly climbed on Ireland's Eye and Luggala, and Hart must, at any rate, have looked at most of the crags in the country. Between the wars, except for forays from England, little was done, and it is true to say that rock-climbing on a large scale, with systematic exploration and recording of climbs, began with the formation of the Irish Mountaineering Club in 1948.

There is a fair amount of literature, not all easily accessible. Some surveys of particular districts have been published in the I.M.C. Journal, which has latterly also listed new climbs; and there are duplicated rock-climbers' guides to Dalkey, Ben Corr (out of print) and Bray Head, and a general mountaineering guide to the Twelve Bens. It is hoped to publish Camaderry and revised editions of Dalkey and Ben Corr shortly (all these are in our own Library). In addition there are typescript guides to Luggala and Ireland's Eye, and a scrap book with much miscellaneous information; these may be consulted in the I.M.C. Library in Dublin. Of books concerned with mountaineering in general, 'The Mountains of Killarney,' by J. C. Coleman, and 'Mountaineering in Ireland,' by C. W. Wall, are good, and Hart's contribution to Haskett-Smith's 'Climbing in the British Isles' is still useful. Ordnance Survey maps are poor; there is not enough demand for good one-inch maps to make it economical to print them. Instead one makes do with layered half-inch maps, not very up-to-date, supplemented if required by the old hill-shaded 'black' one-inch (there are, however, special area one-inch contoured maps of the Mourne, Dublin and Wicklow Mountains, and The Reeks). All these are printed on a thick paper which turns to pulp after half-an-hour's rain; linen-backed maps are not sold, but presumably if everyone has to buy new maps every time it rains, it will not be many years before the Survey can afford to publish a new edition.

On Camaderry and Ben Corr I have stressed that pitches are long and belays and stances often poor; this is true of the harder routes on most of the granite and quartzite cliffs of the country, and since most of the climbing has so far been on these two kinds of rock, the average Irish climber is probably more addicted to pitons than his English counterpart. In stressing these points, I do not wish it be thought that there is no easy climbing in the country; on the contrary, there are many fine Difficult and Very Difficults both within and without 'The Pale.' Grading standards in general are perhaps a little higher than in the Lake District.

Anyone visiting the country to climb should certainly contact the I.M.C; visitors are still rare, and the Club will be very glad to show off the virtues of the climbing near Dublin or Belfast.

FELL & ROCK MEMBERS ON EVEREST

Speaking at the Annual Dinner in 1952, Mr. W. H. Murray referred to the prominent part members of the Club had taken in Everest expeditions, and at the 1953 'Everest Dinner' the President (A. B. Hargreaves) spoke on the same lines. Both speakers mentioned the names of those who had taken part in pre-war expeditions, but subsequent research has established that a few omissions were made on each occasion. It therefore seems opportune to give here what is believed to be a complete list of past and present members of the Club who participated in the long series of expeditions extending over the years 1921-1953, including those which were primarily for reconnaissance purposes. We hope that this brief summary may be of service to future Club historians, as well as of interest to present members. Except where otherwise stated those included are members of the Club at the present time. Ed. F. & R.C.C.J.

HAROLD RAEBURN was a member of the 1921 Expedition of which Howard Bury was the leader, this being the first reconnaissance of the approaches to the mountain from Tibet. He was elected to the Club, as an Honorary Member, in December, 1920, and died in 1926.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL The Hon. C. G. BRUCE was leader of the first assault expedition in 1922, and initially of the next expedition in 1924. On this occasion he was taken ill during the journey through Tibet, and had to return to India, the leadership being taken over by Major E. F. Norton, General Bruce was elected an Honorary Member of the Club in October, 1924. He died in 1939.

MAJOR-GENERAL E. F. NORTON took part in the expeditions of 1922 and 1924, and in the latter he succeeded to the leadership at an early stage, as noted above. He attained the height of 28,000 feet without oxygen in 1924. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Club in October, 1924.

DR. T. HOWARD SOMERVELL also took part in both the 1922 and 1924 expeditions. He accompanied Norton on his climb to 28,000 feet in 1924. At this time he had been a member of the Club for some years, having been elected in 1915. He became an Honorary Member in October, 1922.

DR. ARTHUR W. WAKEFIELD was a member of the 1922 expedition, the first which aimed at reaching the summit. He was an original member of the Club, and one of its earliest Vice-Presidents (1907-1908). He was elected an Honorary Member in October, 1922, and became President, 1924-25. Dr. Wakefield died in 1949.

BENTLEY BEETHAM was a member of the 1924 expedition. He joined the Club in 1919, was made an Honorary Member in October, 1924, and was Vice-President, 1938-39.

N. E. ODELL also took part in the 1924 expedition, and fourteen years later in that led by Tilman in 1938, the last of the attempts on the mountain from Tibet. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Club in October 1924, at the same time as Bruce, Norton and Beetham.

DR. C. RAYMOND GREENE was medical officer to the expedition of 1933 led by Hugh Ruttledge. He joined the Club in 1920.

J. L. LONGLAND took part in the 1933 expedition, of which he wrote an account for the *Journal* of that year. He had been a member of the Club since 1926.

ERIC SHIPTON was a member of the 1933 expedition, and two years later was leader of the small reconnaissance party which went to the mountain in 1935 to investigate possible new approaches and other problems. Next year he was in the second expedition led by Ruttledge, and again in 1938 that led by Tilman. In 1951 he was leader of the reconnaissance of the approaches from Nepal and the Western Cwm, and thus took part in no less than five Everest expeditions extending over a period of nineteen years. He was a member of the Club from 1929 to 1941, and in September, 1953, was re-elected as an Honorary Member.

FRANK S. SMYTHE took part in the 1933, 1936 and 1938 expeditions, and in 1933 reached over 28,000 feet. He became a member of the Club in 1935, but resigned about two years before his death in 1950.

G. W. WOOD-JOHNSON was with the 1933 expedition when he was largely responsible for transport arrangements. He joined the Club in 1919.

PETER LLOYD was a member of Tilman's party in 1938, the last of the pre-war expeditions. He joined the Club in 1943.

BRIGADIER SIR JOHN HUNT was leader (as Lt.-Col. Hunt) of the first British assault expedition from Nepal in 1953, when Hillary and Tensing reached the summit on 29th May, and thereby ended the long series of reconnaissances and assaults on the mountain, which had extended over a period of twenty-three years. John Hunt joined the Club in 1935, and was elected an Honorary Member in September, 1953.

ALFRED GREGORY was a member of the successful expedition of 1953. He joined the Club in 1944, and was elected an Honorary Member at the same time as Sir John Hunt and Eric Shipton.

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

Peter Moffat

There has been no decline in the number of new routes done last year, and it has not been possible to include many of the less important ones, mainly on Raven Crag, Langdale.

LANGDALE

RAVEN CRAG, WALTHWAITE

GIRDLE TRAVERSE 310 feet. Very severe. First ascent 25th October, 1953. A.C.C., A.B., R.M.

- (1) 100 feet. Up route r to about 15 feet from the top, when a delicate move is made round the arete on the right. Carry on horizontally right to stance and belay, on the right edge of Walthwaite Crack.
- (2) 90 feet. Descend into the groove on the right and swing down on the branch of a holly tree to the junction with Walthwaite Chimney. Descend this and reverse the traverse into the foot of the groove and cross over a vegetious pitch, to stance and belay on its right.
- (3) 40 feet. Continue traversing right and along the traverse of Route II, from the end of which a short descent down a little corner leads to an awkward sitting stance with belays low down. (Top of overhanging groove, pitch 2 of Deuterus).
- (4) 80 feet. Re-ascend the little corner up right, on pitch 2 of Deuterus until it joins Protus. Ascend the final groove of the latter.

GIMMER CRAG

DIGHT 100 feet. Very severe. First ascent 3rd October, 1953. R. Moseley, R. Greenall.
'Starts from 'The Bower' on The Crack of which it is an alternative finish. Exposed.

- (1) 50 feet. Climb up a few feet until a long step out to the left can be made to good footholds. Move up to the left mantel-shelf into a sentry-box and climb crack on left to the overhang, avoiding a large loose block. Step right to small ledge and belay for line only.
- (2) **50 feet.** Climb up to the first overhang on the right and make a very difficult pull into the groove above, up this until more overhangs bar the way. Climb round the left one and up another groove on improving holds to top.

RAVEN CRAG

NUTCRACKER CLEFT

220 feet. Very severe. First ascent 1952. V. Ridgeway, P. J. Greenwood. (Alt. leads).

Starts 20 feet to the right of Savernake below a steep overhung groove.

- (1) 30 feet. Climb the broken rocks to the right of a heather-filled gully. The rock steepens and a traverse is made to the left to poor stance and doubtful belay in a groove.
- (2) 50 feet. The overhanging groove above is climbed until a strenuous move to the right gives access to a sloping heather shelf and doubtful running belay. The overhanging crack in the corner is climbed (strenuous) to the slab above (avoiding large detached flake). Traverse right and ascend the slab on small holds to sloping grass ledges and large block belay.
- (3) 63 feet. The broken rocks above lead to the bottom of a short steep wall which is ascended to a bilberry terrace. Move right and belay beneath an overhanging chimney.
- (4) 35 feet. Climb above the belay and traverse left below the chimney until it is possible to move back above the overhang. The chimney is climbed on good, but doubtful, holds to meet Savernake at the Split Blocks.
- (5) 40 feet. Climb over the block and up the wall above on good holds to the top of the crag (this is the left-hand wall of Knee-wrecker Chimney and uses the last 15 feet).

HOLLY TREE DIRECT

225 feet. Very severe. First ascent 27th July, 1952. H. Drasdo, E. Mallinson. Starts

just to the right of the Original Route and takes long groove leading directly to the holly tree.

- (1) 30 feet. Easy scrambling up grass in the left-hand corner to a good ledge below a steep corner crack.
- (2) 50 feet. Climb the crack using large flake on left wall with care. After about 35 feet step on to the grass on the right and climb up to a large bollard on the terrace below the groove proper.
- (3) 70 feet. Climb up on the left of the main groove for 15 feet on good holds. The recess in the groove above the first overhang is gained by a short, delicate traverse across the smooth rib. Pull out on to the right-hand rib on good holds and climb the groove, which steepens. A piton is reached after a few feet and a sling may be attached as a foothold. Good holds are reached for the pull-over and the groove deepens to form a chimney. Move on to the wall on the left and ascend trt stance behind the holly tree.
- (4) 45 feet. As for Holly Tree Traverse. Climb the wall on the right of the gully to a rock ledge below a right-angled corner.
- (5) 30 feet. As for Holly Tree Traverse. Climb the right-angled corner on good holds to finish.

BRADLEY'S DAMNATION 150 feet. Very severe. First ascent 14th September, 1952. P. Woods, P. J. Greenwood (alt. leads). Some years previously by J. Bradley on a top rope. Starts up easiest line on the steep buttress between Middlefell Buttress and Raven Gully, and is marked by a large pinnacle.

- (1) 30 feet. Ascend the rocks above the pinnacle on good holds to a small stance and flake belay beneath a steep corner.
- (2) 80 feet. Climb the corner direct until a move left brings a good hold to reach. (Running belay). Ascend the rib above until one can move right on to steep grassy slabs. Ascend the slabs to the tree which gives access to a bilberry ledge and belay.
- (3) 40 feet. The wall above leads to a large terrace and junction with Middlefell Buttress.

MENDES 160 feet. Very severe. First ascent 7th February, 1953. P. Woods, J. R. Sutherland. (alt. leads). Starts 30 feet to the right of Bradley's Damnation, beneath a low prominent overhang. Climb takes obvious line of an incipient groove with crack and starts to the right of the groove.

- (1) 40 feet. Up to the overhang and traverse left until the groove above can be climbed (the crack above the loose! block can be climbed by using combined tactics). Good loose spike belay on right.
- (2) 95 feet. Right from the belay and ascend the face above on small, but adequate holds until a strenuous pull-up gives access to the slab above. Belay at tree on Bilberry Ledge.
- (3) 25 feet. Right to a pleasant overhang and ascend the rocks above, to belay below the large ledge of Middlefell Buttress.

M. & B. TRAVERSE 230 feet. Very severe. First ascent 2nd January, 1953. P. Woods. Starts 30 feet to the right of the Original Route, and runs up the right face of the prominent arete, turning the overhangs on the right.

- (1) 70 feet. Ascend the arete until a step right gives access to a steep face wide lichenous rock. Large spike belay on right.
- (2) 25 feet. Move left and ascend to corner by means of two mantelshelves. Large belay on left beneath overhang.
- (3) 20 feet. Traverse right on loose vegetatious rock under overhang. Move into the vegetatious grooves. Poor spike belay.
- (4) 65 feet. Climb the groove and hence the steep arete until a traverse to the right gives access to the upper pitch of Bilberry Buttress.
- (5) 50 feet. Last pitch of Bilberry Buttress.

JAUNDICE 185 feet. Severe. First ascent 30th May, 1953. P. J. Greenwood, M. Watson. Starts just to the left of Bluebell Gully at a small chimney above which a grassy rake leads to the top of the crag.

- (1) 25 feet. Climb the chimney to a grassy stance and belay on right below a steep rib or slab.
- (2) 75 feet. Climb above the belay until the slab steepens. A move left is then made on to a small sloping grass ledge. Traverse back right where a series of awkward moves lead to a stance and good tree belay.
- (3) 85 feet. Traverse left and ascend a rock gangway behind the large tree into the corner. Climb the corner to the top of the crag, which gradually gets steeper until it forms an overhanging crack at the finish.

RAVEN CRAG, FAR EAST BUTTRESS

JERICHO WALL 130 feet. Very severe. First ascent 6th July, 1953. P. Woods, F. Carr (alt. leads). Starts 30 feet left of Babylon up a series of obvious ledges and passes almost directly up to two prominent holly trees.

- (1) 50 feet. Ascend the ledges to a stance at the first holly tree. Belay.
- (2) 15 feet. Climb the crack behind the holly tree and the face behind the second holly tree to a bulge with a huge curving crack. Belay to tree.
- (3) 50 feet. Enter the crack by a layback move and ascend to a ledge overlooking Babylon pitch 3. Descend slightly and hand-traverse up to the holly tree on Babylon.
- (4) 15 feet. Finish up Babylon.

WHITE GHYLL

NOT AGAIN 155 feet. Severe. First ascent 9th July, 1953. T. Parker, M. Dawson, A.C.C. Starts a few feet left of Inferno, at a dirty groove.

- (1) 70 feet. Ascend the groove for 15 feet until a slab is reached. Continue up the slab to a platform with a large block belay.
- (2) 15 feet. Diagonally right to the foot of the main groove on Inferno.
- (3) 30 feet. The obvious twin cracks on right of wall lead to stance and belay below overhang.
- (4) 40 feet. Move round the corner on the left to a small withered tree on the wall. Continue directly upwards, or more pleasantly, traverse right above the overhang and finish up the arete.

LAUGH NOT 120 feet. Very severe. First ascent 17th October, 1953. J. Brown, R. Moseley, T. Waghorn. Starts 20 feet right of Do Not, after scrambling up to a stance and perched block belay.

- (1) 70 feet. Traverse across and descend to the traverse of Do Not. Surmount the small overhang and continue up, using finger-jams in the thin corner crack and very small holds on the right wall. Stance and belay behind tree.
- (2) 50 feet. Climb the crack on the right wall and at the top make an awkward mantelshelf movement to the right to gain the crack in the overhang (chockstone for running belay). The arete is then reached by leaning right across on the rope from the runner. An easy groove then leads to a tree belay. Easy scrambling leads to top.

EASEDALE

DEER BIELD CRAG

THE PENDULUM 115 feet. Very severe. First ascent 31st May, 1953. R. Moseley. Starts at an obvious break across the overhanging wall at the left end of the crag; in the corner at the left edge of the wall.

- (1) 30 feet. Up the corner for 15 feet, then out to a small rock ledge up on the right. Small belays.
- (2) 45 feet. Traverse across the wall to the right. The first holds are approximately 6 feet away. They are reached by throwing a rope over a piton above the overhang, and swinging. Continue to the groove. Up this to a stance on the right.
- (3) 40 feet. Step round the arete and mantelshelf on to a flake. Step left and continue to the top.

GIRDLE TRAVERSE 320 feet. Very severe. First ascent 18th October, 1953. D. Whillans, R. Moseley. Starts at the foot of the vegetated corner at the extreme left of the crag. The standard is well maintained.

- (1) 30 feet. Up the corner for a few feet, then out to a small rock ledge up on the right. Small belays.
- (2) 45 feet. An obvious traverse starts a few feet away and crosses the wall on the right. It is reached by throwing the rope over a piton above the overhang and swinging. Continue to an overhanging groove, up this to a grass stance up on the right.
- (3) 45 feet. Step round the arete on the right and on doubtful rock, traverse into Dunmail Crack. Descend to stance and chockstone belay.

- (4) 30 feet. Descend to the large ledges. Belay.
- (5) 20 feet. Step easily across the crack and descend to a rock ledge on the far side. Stance and belay.
- (6) 25 feet. Step right and mantelshelf on to the wall to gain a sloping ledge at the top. From this a short but overhanging crack on the right leads to stance and belay. (1st crux of Deer Bield Buttress). An alternative is to miss the wall for a strenuous groove on the right.
- (?) 55 ~~feet~~ Up the groove taking a right-hand branch, a few feet from the top of the pinnacle make a long stride across and up its right edge to the top. Belay.
- (8) 40 feet. Descend a few feet and with a long reach traverse right to a V chimney, undercut at its base. Up this to stance and belay.

Pitches (9) and (10). As for Deer Bield Chimney.

THIRLMERE

CASTLE ROCK OF TRIERMAIN

TURRET WALL

190 feet. Very severe. First ascent 7th September, 1952. E. Lomas, P. Wittwell.

Starts 20 feet to the left of Direct Route, at the foot of a large open groove.

- (1) 35 feet. Traverse diagonally right to the overhanging rib, which is climbed on small holds until a large flake facilitates a pull up on to a series of large ledges. The next 15 feet is climbed by a series of ledges to spike belay.
- (2) 20 feet. Traverse left on a good ledge to a large holly bush. Belay.
- (3) 40 feet. The overhanging groove and a crack above is climbed on small holds to a ledge and tree belay.
- (4) 90 feet. Continue diagonally right by a series of small ledges until a vertical wall is reached. The last 20 feet is climbed on good holds up a slab.

TRIERMAIN ELIMINATE

210 feet. Exceptionally severe. First ascent 15th March, 1953. D. Whillans, D. Cowen,

J. Brown. Starts just right of Harlot's Face, and uses the same stances.

- (1) 60 feet. A rising traverse to the right to a tree-covered ledge, then up the groove on the left. Stance and belay below the overhanging groove.
- (2) 50 feet. Ascend the groove direct, by way of a little chimney, to stance and belay. Extremely strenuous. Several running belays can be used.

Pitches (3) and (4). As for Harlot's Face.

SIDEBOARDS ROUTE

Severe. First ascent nth July, 1953. P. Jenkinson, W. Bunting. Starts 20 feet left of

stone wall.

- (1) Follow slab and crack on good holds until it is possible to traverse left to a large ledge in front of an obvious window.
- (2) Climb on belay block, and traverse diagonally right into groove and over bulge. Belay behind holly tree. Use of piton reduced difficulty of bulge.
- (3) The broken crack behind the holly tree is climbed until a step right can be made over an arete. Continue on poor rock until a large grassy ledge on the left can be attained. Belay on rock behind two trees.
- (4) Traverse right from ledge for 25 feet on good clean rock, then ascend vertical wall on excellent holds to finish.

RAVEN CRAG

GENESIS

220 feet. Ver\ severe. First ascent 28th September, 1953. H. Dresdo, P. J. Greenwood (alt. leads). A very steep grassy rake leading to a long corner crack divides the main face from the right-hand buttress. The route takes the most obvious line up the centre of this buttress. It starts 20 feet right of a tall fir, at a bulge below a formation of ribs and grooves.

- (1) 40 feet. Pull up over the bulge and climb rightwards up insecure vegetation to a stance and belay in the groove between a small rowan tree and a square cut overhang.
- (2) 40 feet. Move right and, using the pillar beneath the overhang, pull on to the right-hand wall. Continue up the corner on good holds. A short crack leads to a good stance and thread belay.
- (3) 40 feet. Step into the recess and climb the corner until a step on to the right wall can be made. Pull on to the top on the right to gain a fine bilberry ledge below a steep wall. Flake belay on the wall down to the left.
- (4) 40 feet. Starting just to the left of the highest point of the ledge, the wall is climbed bearing slightly leftwards. It has good holds, but is mossy and very steep. Tree belay.
- (5) 40 feet. Scramble rightwards to a small tree at the right-hand end of the ledge.
- (6) 20 feet. The little chockstone chimney leads to the final terrace.

EXODUS

280 feet. Very severe. First ascent 4th October, 1952. A. Beanland, M. Dawson, E. Leach. The climb goes up the left-hand end of the rotten and broken steep wall on the left of the great cave, which is the dominant feature of the crag. From the base of the crag a large terrace slants up to the left.

The climb proper starts at the top of a steep vegetable pitch in the terrace; to the left of a vegetatious gully, a sycamore and ash grow together.

- (1) 35 feet. Climb up to the right to a bilberry ledge and cross the bracken-filled gully to an ash tree.
- (2) 35 feet. Scramble up the grassy bank behind the tree to a nose of rock which forms the right-hand side of the gully. The nose on its right-hand side, and a horizontal traverse right lead to a grass ledge. Small belay on wall behind.
- (3) 10 feet. The little wall. Belay for line at the start of a ledge to the right and a little lower than the point of arrival.
- (4) 70 feet. Climb the overhang above until a step left can be made, then traverse left for 6 feet to a large foothold. Climb directly above into a little corner. Escape by the narrow slab on the right to a large grass ledge. Thread belay a little to the right.
- (5) 40 feet. Ascend the wall directly above to a grass ledge and block belay.
- (6) 70 feet. Climb the bracken scoop, a few feet to the right of the belay; leaving it soon for the arete on the left, which is climbed to a small square stance. From a resting place a little higher a move left is made and the left wall of the arete climbed, until an awkward mantelshelf leads to a small rock ledge on the right. Climb over the blocks to a huge grass ledge. Small belay high on wall above.
- (7) 20 feet. The wall above leads easily to the top.

NEARAPOLIS

270 feet. Very severe. First ascent 9th May. 1953. P. J. Greenwood, J. W. Bradley.

Starts below the left-hand side of the great cave, at a small chimney some 30 feet to the right of the grassy terrace which marks the start of Exodus, and takes a diagonal line rightwards above the large overhangs.

- (1) 20 feet. Move out left and up to a small tree, an awkward move takes one on to the steep vegetatious wall. A short traverse left then back right leads to a corner crack, and so to an arete which is ascended to a small ledge. The ledge can be reached by a direct ascent or by moving round to the right.
- (2) 45 feet. The overhanging groove above is climbed to a small ledge but no belay (there is a piton in the groove). Continue up the easier groove to a small grassy stance and belay high up on the wall.
- (3) 40 feet. Climb diagonally rightwards up the steep rock until a short overhanging section leads to a small ledge, and belay.
- (4) 50 feet. A large bollard on the skyline is the next objective and is gained by a 20 feet traverse right and then ascending the steep wall to below its left-hand side. Move right where good flake handholds lead to a small ledge with a good stance and belay above.
- (5) 40 feet. The crux. CHmb above the belay until a move right can be made. Ascend the wall to a small recess (running belay).

Make a strenuous move leftwards and ascend the overhang to the ledge above, grass being the only available hold for the pull over.

- (6) 75 feet. The open groove above is climbed on sufficient holds. It is best climbed on the right-hand side near the top until a short overhanging chimney finishes the climb.

ANARCHIST 220 feet. Hard severe. First ascent 6th June, 1953. P. J. Greenwood, R.M. (alt. leads). Starts midway between the great cave and Genesis below the obvious incipient rake or gully. Scramble up the steep grass to a little chimney and a small tree, belay at its foot.

- (1) 100 feet. Climb the chimney to the overhang and make a large stride leftwards into a steep groove. Ascend the groove until a move left leads to a grass stance and small trees. Traverse right on to the arete and ascend to a large tree, belay.
- (2) 60 feet. Step across the grassy gully and climb the left-hand side which leads to a thread belay below a crack.
- (3) 60 feet. Climb the crack to the top of the crag. It is well protected.

COMMUNIST CONVERT 125 feet. First ascent 9th May, 1953. A.R.D., D. Hopkin (alt. leads). Takes a line from the great cave up the right wall and traverses right to the top of the pinnacle.

- (1) 35 feet. From the right-hand side of the cave climb the wall to the overhang, then traverse slightly right to the corner of the buttress. Stance and belay.
- (2) 60 feet. Traverse round the corner into an open groove and then diagonally up (piton) to a narrow ledge (piton). Mantelshelf and move right to a grass ledge and belay.
- (3) 30 feet. Step down slightly and traverse horizontally right to a slab, up this to a small tree beneath an overhang. Right again into the corner crack and climb the overhang to the top. Stance and belay.

DOVEDALE

DOVE CRAG

DOVEDALE GROOVE 200 feet. Very severe. First ascent 4th May, 1953. D. Whillans, J. Brown (alt. leads), D. Cowen. Starts about 100 feet left of Hangover in a shallow groove about 100 feet high, terminating in an overhanging crack. The route follows this, then breaks left along grassy ledges.

- (1) 75 feet. Start the groove by standing in a sling. Continue direct to stance and belay at the foot of the overhanging crack.
- (2) 60 feet. Climb the crack until it is possible to move out left on to the slab. Continue up the groove above, step out right at the

- top. Climb the short slab to a large grass ledge. Stance and belay.
- (3) 65 feet. Continue up the grassy ledges, past a large birds nest, climb the narrow slab on the left. Easy scrambling leads to the top.

BORROWDALE

GOWTHER CRAG

LODORE BUTTRESS

200 feet. Very severe. First ascent, H. Drasdo, A. Beanland. Starts in a groove below the left hand, and lowest of three large yew trees which form a triangle on the steep right-hand side of the face.

- (1) 50 feet. Up for 5 feet and on to the rib on the left and continue across to a detached block beneath a steep undercut groove. Climb the groove to the yew tree.
- (2) 40 feet. Move diagonally up and right on steep grass and loose rock to a narrow terrace below a slanting chimney with a hanging insecure-looking right wall. A few feet further right are some blocks and a large bollard.
- (3) 35 feet. From the block climb on to a small ledge on the right and step delicately over these perched blocks. Then leftwards to a recess containing a withered tree.
- (4) 40 feet. Traverse round the vertical rib on the left until it is possible to step up to easier ground on the right of the tall pinnacle. Flake belay.
- (5) 35 feet. The deep clean chimney on the left leads to the top.

BOWDER STONE CRAG

THOR'S ENTRANCE

130 feet. Very severe. First ascent 6th December, 1953. R.M., A.C.C. Starts round the corner to the left of Bowder Stone Pinnacle; by two tall trees. About 15 feet left of the toe of the buttress.

- (1) 30 feet. Up by rock and trees to a ledge with thread belay.
- (2) 20 feet. Climb the crack above the belay, or a thinner crack further to the left. Both are steep and have awkward finishes. (Junction with Bowder Stone Pinnacle, top of pitch 2).
- (3) 80 feet. Ascend the V-groove above to a rotten step at the top, then move left steeply, round a bulge and up a steep groove. The angle eases and pleasant slabs lead to the top.

BUTTERMERE

EEL CRAGS

JEZEBEL

140 feet. Very severe. First ascent July, 1951. W.P., S.D. This route lies on the steep upper wall (Terrace Wall) of Miner's Crag, and starts below the obvious right-angled corner which cuts through the upper cliff to the left of Route 1.

- 11) 70 feet. From the ledge below a buttress climb up and into a groove which leads by awkward movements to a grass ledge and belays below a corner.
- (2) 70 feet. Up the corner and over a holly tree. Above the tree a few difficult moves lead upward to good footholds in the corner of an obvious traverse on the steep wall on the left, and ascend the outer edge on good holds. Rock needs care.

SHEEPBONE BUTTRESS

LARGO

110 feet. Severe. First ascent 13th September, 1953. S.R.J., H.I. Starts at a cairn

20 feet to the right of the west point of the buttress.

- (1) 30 feet. Climb the short rib and then up the wall to the right, followed by a chimney to stance and belay.
- (2) 20 feet. Ascend the green chimney, passing a doubtful pinnacle on the left in favour of a stance 10 feet higher with belay above.
- (3) 40 feet. The steep rib is climbed to a scoop, the exit from which is made by ascending as high as possible and then moving left on to a small platform. Step back into the crack and continue up to a good stance and thread belay below the grass terrace.
- (4) 20 feet. Traverse right for 6 feet and ascend the wall on awkward holds.

LONG SLEDDALE

BUCKBARROW CRAG

WATERFALL BUTTRESS

185 feet. Very severe. First ascent 5th May, 1953. E. Lomas, J. Townsend. Starts to the

right of the lower crag.

- (1) 15 feet. Climb the overhanging crack to a small belay on the right wall.
- (2) 70 feet. Step round the rib on the left and ascend the twin-groove. The buttress eases in angle until a ledge is reached, with flake belay.
- (3) 100 feet. Traverse right by a series of small ledges for 15 feet, then ascend the wall above. The rock here is very brittle.

KEY TO INITIALS

A. Brooks

A. R. Dolphin

R. Miller

A. C. Cain

H. Ironfield

W. Peascod

S. Dirkin

S. R. Jackson

THE SCOTTISH MEET— 18th-28th May, 1953

W. G. Stevens

I have been fortunate enough to take part in all the Club's Scottish meets from 1946 onwards, and I have thoroughly enjoyed every one of them, but that at the Inchnadamph Hotel last year I shall remember as one of the happiest of the series, and I think that other 'regulars' will fully agree with me. The conjunction of good weather, most agreeable quarters and the singular charm of the district contributed largely to this happy state of affairs. To me and to some others of the party it was new ground, with many unfamiliar aspects and beauties. Not only were we able to explore some of the typical West Sutherland countryside and coast, but close by we had that curious limestone tract, with its crags, potholes and underground streams, recalling the more familiar Craven and Peak.

It so happens that the 1952 *journal* contains an article on Sutherland by R. W. Eldridge which does full justice to its strange hills in their setting of heather, bog and countless lochs, and to its friendly people. In the same issue W. A. Poucher gives an account of one of the district's most attractive peaks, Stac Polly, just over the Ross-shire border, so that there is no need for me to describe our surroundings further.

Unfortunately five or six members were prevented by illness or other causes from joining the meet, and the party was reduced to fourteen all told. J. B. Meldrum was given a special welcome as the only newcomer to the Scottish meets. R. T. Wilson was again the leader, but somewhat tarnished his high reputation in this capacity by a most reprehensible lapse — to wit, arriving twenty-four hours late at the scene of operations. He was travelling in company with Mr. and Mrs. Hirst, who were thereby also implicated. When they did reach Inchnadamph an official enquiry was held and it transpired that the delay was due to a mistake over the starting date. However, the Court of Enquiry became helpless with laughter on hearing the account of the party's arrival at a Pitlochry hotel en route, and the rejection of their claim for rooms (which had been in fact booked for the previous night), followed by a retreat to another hostelry where an examination of their papers revealed the error to be their own. So all was forgiven and the leader took up his duties to a hilarious start.

It is, perhaps, heresy to suggest that the care-free spirit of the meet was in part due to the fact that there are no peaks of 3,000 feet or upwards within reasonable distance of Inchnadamph, with the exception of Ben More Assynt and its subsidiary tops. Apart from ease of approach, this is by no means the most attractive mountain of Assynt and it was in fact 'ticked off' on the second day of the meet, and the proprieties thereby satisfied.

The first day had been devoted to Quinag, a deceptive mountain looking so compact from the hotel windows, but with ridges and tops proving widely spread on closer acquaintance.

On the evening before Suilven was visited there was much discussion as to whether it should be approached from Glen Canisp Lodge or from Little Assynt. The latter was properly decided on as giving more walking and less motoring. Next day was probably the most energetic of the meet, and apart from a few sharp showers the weather helped to make it a most enjoyable one. Every one in the party reached the main top of Suilven, and some did the whole ridge. Coming back the party became strung out in one's and two's, and many made a brief halt in Glen Canisp where Burnett had considerably left his tea-making equipment. Looking back to Suilven every detail of its northern face was sharply brought out by the evening sun, in striking contrast to its dull grey appearance in the morning. The long stalkers' path to Little Assynt was resumed, and dinner was late that evening. In the middle of it someone exclaimed, 'Where's _____', and it was realised that a Past-President was missing. A hasty consultation established that he had last been seen in Glen Canisp. To describe subsequent events would take undue space here; suffice it to say that the missing member turned up very weary, but otherwise intact, soon after 9 o'clock, having taken the wrong turning in the Glen, and finally made his way direct to Inchnadamph over trackless and very rough country. Meantime two search parties had left and it was nearly midnight before all had returned. The leader (hastily joining the first party) had distinguished himself by walking six miles of rough track, through bog and across streams, the last part in gathering darkness, shod only in bedroom slippers!

Stac Polly provided another grand day, much less strenuous as the road gives such a near approach from Loch Lurgain, and with no evening alarms and excursions. A previous wild night of rain and wind was unpromising, but the day turned out the

warmest and sunniest of the week, one made for dallying in the heather or on the tops. A tentative suggestion had been made that Cul Beag should be added to the day's bag, but nothing more was heard of this.

One or two days were spent exploring the coast north and south of Lochinver by car and on foot. At many of the Scottish meets the party (or most of it) has become water-borne on one day at least, and this tradition was honoured at Inchnadamph. The original scheme was to explore the recesses of Loch Glencoul by motor launch from Kylesku, but this fell through. Then John Appleyard arranged for those who were so inclined to go out with the salmon fishermen off the coast near Clachtoll, and one morning eight members rose early and left the hotel long before the usual breakfast time. Unfortunately the sea was so rough that the boats could not go out, and the party had to content themselves with touring the coast road on wheels. Not to be defeated Raymond Shaw had the bright idea of a visit to Handa, a small island off the coast near Scourie, noted for its cliffs and sea birds. Thither the whole party proceeded next day, and in due course crossed the three miles or so to the island by motor boat, and were landed on its rocky shore. After a welcoming downpour several pleasant hours were spent in exploring the island and watching the great hosts of birds on its western cliffs. In the meantime the wind had risen and a fair sea was running, so the boat had to make two return trips, both subjected to a good tossing.

More could be told of some of the 'side shows,' of fishing in a nearby lochan, of visits to the caves high above Allt nan Uamh, once occupied by prehistoric man, of after-dinner demonstrations of water divining (not to mention location of precious metals), and of an informal sing-song one evening when the vocal efforts of Cook, Hirst and Pape, assisted by Shaw at the piano, were supplemented by Marsland's recitations, one of which had the appropriate refrain—'Uppards!' The last day of the meet was very stormy, **but** so much had been accomplished that its comparative inactivity was not unwelcome, and everyone started for home next day with the happiest memories of Sutherland.

IN MEMORIAM

ARTHUR RHODES DOLPHIN, 1944-1953

Arthur Dolphin was killed on 25th July, 1953, while descending from the Dent du Geant. He and a Belgian climber had completed the ascent of the South Face and were traversing the easy rocks to the Col Rouge, unroped, when Arthur must have slipped on ice. He was out of sight of his companion, but his injuries shewed that death must have been instantaneous.

An outstanding leader, Arthur combined a zeal for worthwhile endeavour with an ingenuous, almost humble nature. His own brand of humour was always attractive, if at times outrageous; it prompted him to call one of his best-known discoveries 'Kipling Groove' because it was 'ruddy 'ard.' At twenty-eight he was already a veteran in achievement, and it was natural that he should receive frequent requests for lectures and contributions to Club journals: it was also typical of him that he should find these expressions of personal experience more onerous and intimidating than any first ascent. Yet his work in these fields, especially his labours for the new series of Club Guides, was as stimulating and useful as it was painstaking.

In the hills of his native Yorkshire he learned as a young boy to walk great distances, climb safely and brilliantly on gritstone and explore the labyrinths of the pot-holes, all with equal zest. He made Almscliffe almost his own crag, so much so that when the Guide was eventually written, only he was in a position to describe the net-work of routes there. To watch him walk up Frankland's Green Crack or tackle the fierce 'hand-jams' of Wall of Horrors was a supreme lesson in technique. Yet very often his days were spent ungrudgingly in guiding novices up the easiest of climbs, or perhaps in helping other members of the Gritstone Club to prepare some caving equipment.

It was inevitable that Arthur should graduate to the Lake Country, where he loved the hills as much for their peculiar beauty as for the opportunities they offered on the crags. As a boy of fourteen, he was already leading such climbs as the Great Central Route on Dow and making long expeditions by himself. An eagerness to improve on established ways by finding direct variations was, for him, the initial spur to pioneering new routes; perhaps in consequence such early discoveries as the Demon Wall on Gable suffered from overmuch artificiality, but in 1945

he produced, in Nocturne on Gimmer, a climb that was not merely difficult but aesthetically pleasing. There followed a spate of climbs, enough to fill a Guide-book in themselves and culminating in two really hard expeditions on Scafell's East Buttress; of these, the overhanging chimney of Hell's Groove had offered a challenge to all who climbed on the crag, but can hardly have seemed feasible. Another 'last great problem,' the buttress of Deer Bield, really seemed to justify the use of pitons if it were ever to be solved. For Arthur it was a straightforward route, climbed without undue fuss—or pitons.

Too few weekends could be spent in Wales and the weather always demanded the use of 'nails.' Arthur, however, was not one to be fastidious about footgear and his ascents of Lliwedd's Central Gully — a series of rickety overhangs — and of Pedestal Crack Direct on Clogwyn D'ur Arddu were especially notable. The latter crag was naturally a great attraction for him, but for at least three of his friends his most memorable feat there was on the Great Slab one wet, wintry night. A most unpleasant bivouac seemed unavoidable until Arthur ran out 200 feet of rope in complete darkness up unknown rocks and somehow brought the party up.

It was in the Alps, however, that Arthur hoped to reach the peak of form and it was a severe disappointment when he found himself prone to chronic mountain sickness. Sheer will-power took him, almost always in the lead, up the Zmutt ridge of the Matterhorn, the Mer de Glace face of the Grepon (both in his first season), the S.W. ridge of the Pelerins and the N. ridge of the Aiguille du Peigne besides many of the classic climbs round Zermatt and Chamonix. He had hoped for a chance on Everest, but his weakness at high altitudes was too strong a barrier.

For many an almost legendary figure has been lost to the climbing world. All Arthur's friends will think of that pale-faced, rather ungainly Yorkshireman, the sporting son of a great cricketing family, and will recall wonderful days and stirring events.

J. W. COOK.

WILLIAM MCNAUGHT, 1920-1953

Will McNaught, who died on 9th June, 1953, was one of our London members whose enthusiasm for the Lake District dated back to the 1890's. The son of Dr. W. G. McNaught, a well-known figure in the world of English music half a century ago, Will inherited his father's gifts, and followed him as Editor of the *Musical Times*. A Londoner born and bred, educated at University College School and Worcester College, Oxford, he was an excellent mathematician, whose puzzles intrigued the readers of *The Listener* for many years, and in a life devoted to journalism he served as musical critic on various papers, including the *Morning Post* and the *Manchester Guardian*; he also wrote one or two minor works and did a certain amount of broadcasting. During the 1914-18 war he served in the R.A.M.C.

His mountaineering began with extensive and repeated visits to the Lakes, in the company of T. C. Ormiston-Chant, with whom he climbed regularly for many years, their explorations extending to Snowdonia and the Grampians over fifty years ago. Fell walking soon gave place to rock climbing, first up the old familiar gullies then on the fine courses of that period, like the North Climb and Moss Ghyll. Resembling Ashley Abraham somewhat in build, he was a good cragsman and enjoyed leading within his standard; on harder climbs (above V.D.) he was a steady, imperturbable second, whose genial wit was always an inspiration to his party.

He had a remarkably wide knowledge of the Alps and his qualifying list for the Alpine Club, to which he was elected in 1926, began with Monte Cristallo and the Ortler in 1911. He organised several Alpine Meets for the Climbers' Club and served on its Committee from 1931 to '34.

Will never married and in later life became almost a recluse. For him the end brought relief from many months of suffering, but to those of us who enjoyed his friendship the great hills can never be quite the same.

H. R. C. CARR.

(I am indebted to T. C. Ormiston-Chant for help with this note.)

W. R. B. BATTLE, 1945-1953.

The many members of the Club who knew ' Ben ' Battle must have heard with unbelieving shock the news that he had been drowned while on a Canadian expedition to Baffin Land. Ben's whole heart and life were in the mountains and exploration, and that he, a fine swimmer too, should be thus taken from us is indeed a cruel blow of fate.

Ben went back to Leeds University after the war to read Geography. For his degree he chose to write a thesis on corrie-formation, and in the summer vacation before his final year organized and led an expedition to East Greenland (sponsored by Leeds University, the Royal Geographical Society and the Gino Watkins Memorial Fund) to make glaciological observations. His organization of this expedition and its results had their reward in recognition by the R.G.S. and in research work at the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge. Every summer and sometimes at Easter also, from 1948-1951, Ben was out in Greenland, the Jotunheim or at the Jungfrauoch, climbing down crevasses and bergschrunds, measuring and photographing glacial structure. In 1952 he was awarded a Carnegie Senior Research Fellowship at McGill University, and this was increased for 1953. It was while on an expedition of the Arctic Institute of North America in the summer of 1953 that he was killed.

To Ben this work was his life and into it he put all his vast energy. But he devoted himself utterly to any task he had, to any friend he was with, and he had many, for friendship with Ben was immediate and lasting. He had an integrity of character that could be seen as much in the firm belief he held during the war as in his determined following of a route to the limit. This strength of purpose was joined to a great capacity for physical endurance. What a tower of strength he was on the hills! There come to mind tough days beating bad weather down from the Cairngorms, when Ben's laughter kept the party going and made some welcome bothy echo. Yet how inadequate is language to describe that deep infectious chuckle that we remember so well. Easier to tell of the arguments lasting into the night, on some geographical theory, or some new type of pemmican. Ben's interests were wide and his mind never lazy, evoking always a positive attitude in his companions. The days one spent with

him in the mountains remain a joy not least for the memory of such talk.

To his wife, Bar, his companion on many of his expeditions, will go the sympathy of all the members of the Club who knew and loved them both. We last saw them in Cambridge as they were setting out for a New World full of promise and adventure. Ben won all he could from life by putting all he had into it. We are all the poorer for his death.

EDWARD WORMELL.

Mrs. LUCY M. DYDYNKA, 1920-1929 and 1942-1954.

Mrs. Dydynska was the third daughter of the late Herbert B. Bowen and Laura A. Bowen, of Ollerenshaw Hall, near Chapel-en-le-Frith. She met Henrik Dydynski when he came to Manchester, but they returned to his Polish estate after several years in Russia. Her early aptitude for tobogganing led to ski-ing holidays, in South Poland and the Carpathians, during the years spent in the land of her husband's relatives. Her first few days of apprenticeship at Whitsuntide, 1920, proved to us that she was instinctively a Rock Climber. Lucy had complete confidence in her companions, strength in reserve at all times, and a natural gift for finding holds and handling her share of the rope.

Her first recorded Lakeland climb was S.E. Gully, Great End, followed in two days by Arrowhead (Direct) and weeks of many climbs with some of the Club's most experienced members. The Gimmer Climbs, including Ash Tree Slabs and D Route appeared easy to her. The Great Gully, Craig-yr-Isfa, was her finest achievement, because it was nearly dark when she, L. Halliday, W. McNaught and Violet Pillely joined me above the great cave pitch; 12th August, 1920. The top of the gully was reached at 11-30 p.m., and P.Y.G. at 5 a.m. After resigning in 1929 she rejoined the Club as a Life Member in 1942. She died on 12th June, 1954, at Tunbridge Wells.

T. C. ORMISTON-CHANT.

ELIZABETH ANN EMERY, 1950-54.

Betty Emery came to mountaineering rather later in life than most of us, and though she had walked the hills for years, it was not until 1948 that she climbed her first big peak, Kilimanjaro,

in the course of a short visit to East Africa. She came out to the Dolomites in 1950, at the instance of Will McNaught. It was her first experience of exposed routes, though she had done a little preliminary training with John Poole on Lliwedd. She climbed with remarkable coolness, indeed immediately showed all the qualities of a potentially great mountaineer for she could add to her utter fearlessness, strength and endurance, and, above all, a glowing enthusiasm. For her, the mountains indeed evoked 'sentiments of ecstatic wonder.'

The next year, from Belalp, she experienced her first season on the high snows of the Alps and it was enough to bring the conviction that there, before all, was the prospect of personal fulfilment and inner content she was seeking.

In 1952, with an Oberland guide, she undertook the great traverses of the Dent Blanche by the Viereselsgrat; the Rothorngrat; the Gspaltenhorn by the Rote Ziihne. Her 1953 season was even finer. After repeating the Rothorn and Obergabelhorn, the latter with the descent of the Arbengrat, she traversed the Matterhorn, by the Zmutt and Swiss ridges; and the Weisshorn by the Schalli and North ridges. She also traversed the Beitschhorn guideless, and led an ascent of the Finsteraarhorn.

She delighted in her growing powers, and set herself to train and practise as much as possible, at Harrison Rocks and in rare and treasured visits to Lakeland or Wales.

Very few people knew that she had driven an N.F.S. car in the London Blitz, and almost none that she had been awarded the B.E.M. for 'conspicuous bravery on many occasions.' She was very kind. She took great trouble to help the two boys of Johann Demetz, first Toni (who died so tragically on the Langkofel) then Albert, when they came to England to learn the language.

She went to Scotland at Easter with a party of friends, as a training for what was to be her first guideless season in the Alps. She fell to a considerable distance when leading a difficult step on the direct ascent of the Tower, and died without recovering consciousness.

She is a great loss not only to us, as an active and popular member of the London Section, but also to the Ladies' Alpine Club, on whose Committee she served.

C. DOUGLAS MILNER.

SIR WILLIAM ASCROFT, 1912-1954.

Sir William Ascroft was prominent in Lancashire's public life, and throughout his working years—he was born in 1877—spent his free time at The Wyke, Grasmere. He joined the Fell & Rock Club in 1912; from 1930 to 1951 he was chairman, and the first chairman, of the Lancashire Branch of the C.P.R.E.; and in 1934 wrote the constitution for the Friends of the Lake District, of which he was the first honorary legal advisor. The cause of preserving the beauty of our countryside—one among his very many public-spirited, non-professional interests—owes much to him both in the Lake District and Lancashire.

H. H. SYMONDS.

J. E. JACKSON, 1943-1954.

Eric Jackson was one of those exceptional beings whose articulate enthusiasm for the mountains gave him a wide circle of friends. His experience of orthodox and unorthodox travel coupled with his love of mountain country enabled him to share the enjoyment of those who, with greater fortune in health, had carried out the long expeditions which were denied him. Ill-health never quenched his spirit nor deterred him from climbing, however — even though it could not be on the giants, and though it meant going alone, and in his own time: within his range he achieved much. His late-found delight in Norway and its people, among whom he had many friends, was a joy to which, in the brief period of great happiness at the close of his life, he introduced his wife.

Eric was a charming host: something epicurean in his character made him take particular pleasure in detecting and gratifying the gastronomic weaknesses of his guests. Generous in disposition and of a rare friendliness, he is very sadly missed by those of us who had the privilege of his friendship.

RUTH PICKERSGILL.

G. H. HICKLINC 1938-1954.

E. RIGBY 1920-1952.

Mrs. A. RUSSELL 1920-1953.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

Muriel Files

The first meet of the Club year, 1952-53, was held at Brackenclose in late November. The weather was perfect, being dry and sunny with severe frost and a sprinkling of snow on the tops, and no doubt it was appreciated by some lucky people, but there is no information about their activities.

1953 began in what is becoming the traditional way, with full houses both at Raw Head and the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel. The welcome from the host and hostess at the hotel was as warm as ever and they excelled themselves, if that were possible, in the provision of good cheer. New Year's Day was a disappointing one for the energetic, but thereafter they were rewarded with warm sunshine and snow on the hills, conditions being ideal for climbers, walkers and skiers alike. An exception must, however, be made in the case of one disillusioned officer of the Club who found that he was in search of buried treasure. There were two interesting lantern lectures, one by Alf Gregory on the expedition to Cho Oyu and the other by Derek Maling on his experiences in the Antarctic, and New Year's Eve was the occasion for the usual merriment, some variety being provided by the enthusiasts for Scottish dancing who were, however, rather hampered in their efforts by a dearth of records and the absence of an amplifier.

The Mardale meet in March was fortunate in a number of ways. It was the ideal sort of weather one always hopes for at Easter and seldom gets, material comforts were amply supplied by the Haweswater Hotel, and in addition to excellent hill-walking in this less well-known district, the members of the meet had the interesting experience of being shown over the Manchester Corporation dam by the resident engineer. The dam is of the hollow type, and the walk through its cavernous interior provided an unlooked-for thrill. By Easter, not perhaps surprisingly, winter had reasserted itself. Blizzards alternated with sunshine, and walking was the chief activity; but there was also some climbing from each of the huts and the Easter meet seems to have been a great success at Brackenclose, Raw Head and Birkness alike.

Maintenance meets took place as usual at each of the three huts. At Raw Head in February there was a record-breaking attendance and good work was done, but at Birkness and Brackenclose there were only six and seven helpers respectively.

As Birkness still retained a good deal of its original glamour, the cleaning squad adjourned on Sunday to the Salving House, which was due to be opened a month later, and where much remained to be done. Brackenclose, unhappily, had short measure for a different reason. On Saturday evening word was brought of the fatal accident on Central Buttress to Gunther Franz of the Keswick Mountain Rescue team, and the maintenance party, some of whom had not even brought boots, spent the night bringing him down.

The Whitsuntide meet in Borrowdale was, of course, memorable for the opening of the Salving House by Mr. P. D. Boothroyd. For many it was a week-end of very hard work, and paint brushes and carpenter's tools were in evidence on Whit Monday up to the moment of opening, which, in keeping with the waywardness of the weather was interrupted by a thunder-storm.

By contrast, the June meet at Brackenclose was greatly favoured, the weather being perfect although there were few present to take advantage of it. These fortunate people, however, made the most of the conditions on Scafell, Gable and Pillar, while the presence of the warden ensured that some useful work was done at the rear of the hut. From the point of view of its declared purpose, the novices meet at Birkness in July could hardly be described as a success, but the one novice was well supplied with instructors and the meet appears to have been a pleasant one.

For some years the Welsh meet has been the Cinderella of the meets both on account of the weather and because of lack of support. For a change, August Bank Holiday week-end, 1953, was remarkably fine and the attendance was very gratifying, sixteen members and guests being present at Glan Dena. It could fairly be said that this was one of the year's most popular meets as well as being the best Welsh meet for a long time.

It would hardly have been reasonable to expect fine weather for each of the 1952-53 Brackenclose meets, and the August meet was the exception. The Needle was apparently the most ambitious expedition undertaken, and, conditions being what they were, it was, to say the least, unfortunate that the drying room stove was under repair. The meet broke up on Monday on one of the wettest days for years. The September novices meet at Coniston shared this spell of bad weather and was literally a

' wash-out.' The rainfall during the late summer and early autumn was very heavy indeed and made up for the first three months of the year when there was little rain or snow. Late in September five inches of rain fell in Langdale in twenty-four hours and the beck burst its banks. The volume of water descending the hillsides caused considerable alarm to the inhabitants, and water flowed in through the back door of Raw Head Cottage, piling the mats against the front door so that when the builders arrived to do some repairs they had great difficulty in entering.

After this the weather relented, and the last month of the Club year turned out to be one of the finest. The Eskdale meet, discontinued for a few years owing to lack of support, was revived in October with great success. The attendance was not large and most members of the meet were fell walkers, but everyone was keen, and, encouraged no doubt by the superb weather, they made some good expeditions. On Saturday a party of seven had an excellent walk over the Crinkles and Shelter crags, emerging from mist into warm sunshine just below Three Tarns. On Sunday, led by the President, the walking party made a circular tour via Upper Eskdale, Esk Buttress, Narrowcove, Broad Crag, Scafell Pike, Mickledore, Lord's Rake, West Wall Traverse, Scafell, Slight Side and Cow Cove, still enjoying wonderful weather and fine views. It was extremely warm, and in answer to an unasked question the President explained that his collar and tie were part of a plan 'to get a sweat on.' Those who had elected to go to Gable to climb repented greatly, queuing being the order of the day there. The amenities of the Burnmoor Inn were much appreciated and this meet made a most pleasing end to the Club's outdoor year.

ANNUAL DINNER, 1953

A. H. Griffin

The forty-first Annual Dinner of the Club, held in Everest year, will long remain for many of us the most successful we can remember. It was certainly the best attended — a number of members and guests having to dine in the George Hotel and crowd into the Royal Oak afterwards for the speeches — and we had with us the leader of the successful Everest expedition (Sir John Hunt), one of its outstanding members (Alfred Gregory), the pioneer of the South Col route (Eric Shipton) and a prominent personality from an earlier expedition (Jack Longland).

But before we could settle down to the roast Cumberland chicken and the speeches there was the Annual General Meeting of the Club, conducted with precision by the President, A. B. Hargreaves, who paid a tribute to the Salving House working party and the now dissolved Huts Sub-Committee. One of our oldest hut users, T. R. Burnett, made an appeal to members not to waste so much Calor gas. After his re-election (proposed and seconded by F. H. F. Simpson and J. R. Files) the President congratulated our Honorary Secretary upon her marriage and the Honorary Editor upon his timing of the publication of the *Journal* so adroitly (it came out a day or two before the meeting). He then proceeded to talk about meets in general and the forthcoming Skye meet in particular. During the discussion which followed G. Barker offered to organise unofficial meets in North Wales and D. J. Cameron, hoping to solve the difficulty of holding successful meets at Coniston mentioned the forthcoming sale of premises in the village which could perhaps be converted into a hut; he thought the building might go cheap as there was a burial ground attached! The meeting ended with a light-hearted discussion as to whether or not a club tie was desirable.

When the usual excellent meal had been consumed the fortunate diners in the Royal Oak drank the customary toast to 'Absent Friends' and were informed that their fellow-members in the 'George' would be drinking the same toast at the same moment. I understand that the irony of this situation was fully appreciated by some of the absentees in the 'George.' By the time Eric Shipton was ready to propose the toast of the Club the dining room of the Royal Oak was as full as it is ever likely to be again, and even the window ledges were packed. The President informed us that there were more than 350 people in the room, including nearly 240 members of the Club.

Right from the start Eric Shipton embarked on what he described as his 'old hobby horse.' The climbing of Everest, he said, marked a very definite cross-roads in the history of mountaineering, and even in the 1930's they had felt that the sooner the mountain was climbed the sooner they could get back to 'real mountaineering.' Future generations, he thought, would regard 1953 as the beginning of the Golden Age of Himalayan and Central Asian mountaineering and this development would certainly influence mountaineering as a whole. One field of enterprise in which he thought young climbers could indulge in this new Golden Age was the extension of the technique of simple travel. For instance, he had

worked out the details of one possible expedition which would only cost £2.0 per head from rail-head and back again — for three months. He had taken part in expeditions of almost every type, from those of the 1930's when they had everything, including cases of champagne, to others when they had to deny themselves cups of tea on Indian railway stations and when they were without even the luxury of a spare shirt. Looking back on all these expeditions he realised he had certainly got most pleasure out of the small ones. All the classic journeys of the world had been simple, not only in conception but also in execution. Good journeying was very much the same as good climbing. The simplicity of approach was supremely important and people should be encouraged to run their own expeditions rather than 'tag on to some committee-run expedition.' He did not think the difficulty of getting into some countries was any greater than before, and they did not know what new fields might open up. It was the responsibility of the great climbing clubs — including the Fell and Rock — to foster the right spirit in mountaineering and to carry on the traditions set up by the pioneers.

In reply the President referred to the fact that the Club had elected to honorary membership Eric Shipton, Sir John Hunt, Alfred Gregory and also John Appleyard who had given eminent service to the cause of mountaineering by thirty-two years work as Committee member, Honorary Secretary and President.

The President said that before very long he believed that other members of the Club — Hunt and Gregory were both old members — would be making expeditions to the Himalaya. Bentley Beetham had been there again, but an unvaried diet of porridge and rice had finally proved too much for even that tough veteran. We had all been excited by the great news from Everest and it was fitting that we should remember that the Club had been strongly represented on previous expeditions to the mountain as well as on the last. Undoubtedly the successful ascent of Everest and the safe return of the whole party had been largely due to the brilliant, steady and determined leadership of Sir John Hunt. In addition Alfred Gregory had gone very high, had done a terrific amount of work and had more than fully justified the confidence of those officers of the Club who had put his name forward.

The President referred to the difficulty they had experienced in coping with the biggest annual dinner attendance they had ever had. Unless they had excluded all private guests, held the dinner in some town with a bigger room outside the Lake District, or perhaps postponed it until the summer when they could stage it in a marquee, it was difficult to see how they could have avoided the overflow dinner at the 'George.' At any rate no member who had applied to attend the dinner had in the end been turned away. The difficulty over numbers had been one of the penalties of allowing themselves to become such a large club. The previous year he had deplored the tendency of the Club to become an association with the hut and hotel users separate, but some success had rewarded the efforts made to change this trend. There was still a very small minority of hut users whose conduct resulted in the huts being spoiled for others. The Committee intended to be 'tough' about this.

The President asked that the younger members who were doing the best climbing nowadays should let the rest of the Club know something of their activities through the medium of the hut log books or the Journal. Compared with other clubs with a smaller membership he thought the Fell and Rock was a little shy. He ended by paying tribute to two 'master rock climbers'—George Bower and Arthur Dolphin — who had died during the year.

Proposing the toast of 'Guests and Kindred Clubs,' Jack Longland, in a delightfully witty speech began by referring to the President who, he said, managed to hide under a veneer of business hard-headedness and efficiency an extremely romantic nature. After several sallies against some of the leading climbing clubs, Longland pulled the leg of Alf Gregory — 'the only travel agent in history who had organised his own journey to 27,900 feet.' Gregory, he said, had arranged for the rest of the expedition to go out by sea and land, but he himself had gone by air, thus saving himself a great deal of time and discomfort! His magnificent carry to the highest camp was a feat never previously accomplished by a European mountaineer. In addition, Gregory had shown that an Oxford accent was no longer an indispensable piece of equipment for getting to 28,000 feet.

He thought that Eric Shipton, the pioneer of the new approach to Everest, and John Hunt, the man who got his party to the top, were not only great mountaineers but fine and generous characters as well. The history of their relationship belonged to the best traditions of British mountaineering, where the game itself was more important than the players in it. Shipton was the genuine explorer who wanted to see what lay round the corner. He was the sort of man who left the house after breakfast one morning and came back rather casually about three years later. That was 'the technique of simple travel.' It was certainly in the tradition of Nansen, Freshfield and Longstaff. Shipton possibly looked on Everest as 'rather a tiresome and slightly vulgar objective,' but when the record of 20th century mountaineering came to be written he would be regarded as a great mountain explorer and a great mountain writer.

Longland said he could recall no moment in his life quite so exhilarating as when the Everest news came through on Coronation Day morning. He thought that they could feel proud about how well the job had been done. The French had made a mess of their descent from Annapurna, the Swiss had failed to get enough equipment high enough on Everest at the right time, and the German expedition to Nanga Parbat had ended with constant bickerings and threats of court actions. 'In contrast,' he said, 'Hunt's party walked efficiently and quietly to the top of the world in exact conformity with the plan made in England months before, without a single toe or finger top being lost!' This magnificent feat had been made possible because of Hunt's devotion to the job in hand and his trained and disciplined mind. The leader had had to weather a series of crises but he had never lost his head and had never let go of the basic essentials. He was a very great leader they were all proud to salute.

In his reply Sir John said he believed there was room for both types of expedition in the future — the large and the small. With the funds 'now rolling in' he hoped that there would be opportunity not only for

individual enterprise but also for big expeditions. The biggest peaks, he thought, required big expeditions, and they could not avoid the challenge of the bigger peaks which still remained unclimbed. They had indeed reached the Golden Age of British mountaineering in the Alps but they should not rest on their laurels.

So far as he and his party were concerned he felt they were rapidly going downhill. They seemed to have become a curious mixture somewhere between variety artistes and Royalty, and only the other day he had been asked to crown 'the Beauty Queen of Football.'

Sir John pleaded for a sense of proportion in our approach to mountains. 'We must remember,' he said, 'that Man's relationship with mountains is not merely one of stern and bitter struggle. There is much more in it than rubbing our noses against vertical rock. We must not forget that mountains are not merely enemies to be conquered, but solace for the soul.'

In conclusion Sir John congratulated the Fell and Rock Climbing Club on being a club 'which not only breeds fierce young tigers, but also provides a place for the more domesticated cat.' His modest assessment of the Everest expedition — almost his only reference to it — delivered as he was about to sit down, was that they had only 'finished off a job which was more or less finished before we started.'

This ended the official part of the evening, the speeches having been separated as usual by the performances of Hirst and Spilsbury perched on a table at the far end of the room. To their normal amusing repertoire was added a topical number which went very well to the tune of 'Widdicombe Fair,' the chorus ending 'Ed Hillary, Tensing and all . . .' The unofficial part of a grand evening continued, in some cases, until long after midnight and, despite shocking weather conditions, members were out on the fells—and one or two on the crags—the following day. Most people were back at the hotel early enough to hear Shipton give a talk, illustrated with slides, on the Everest story up to 1952, and it was a pleasure to ordinary mountaineers to listen to the lecturer quietly discussing with Hunt (seated in the audience) the respective merits of big and small expeditions. But the weekend was not yet over, for after dinner we spread ourselves all over the lounge and listened to the full story of the IQ53 expedition from Hunt. The wonderful tale was most graphically illustrated with coloured slides, many of which had been taken by Gregory, and at the end of his story, told with typical modesty, Hunt answered all our questions with patience and humour. So finished perhaps the outstanding social weekend in the history of the Club—the after-glow of a great adventure which can never be repeated.

ENVOI

Air—' The Contemplative Sentry ' (Iolanthe)

When Wakefield was a tiny boy,
 Bad habits rapidly he fell into;
 His leisure time he did employ,
 On Scafell, Gable and Helvellyn, too.
 And when he went to Labrador
 No peace had he, for he could never rest
 To think no human foot before
 Had trod the summit of Mount Everest.

Chorus:

So let each one rejoice with zest,
 Fal lal la, Fal lal la,
 As Wakefield's hand he proudly shakes,
 Fal lal la, la!
 That the Alpine Club, which does its best
 (And very seldom makes mistakes),
 When it wants to conquer Everest,
 Selects a climber from the Lakes.
 Fal lal la, la!
 When it wants to conquer Everest,
 Selects a climber from the Lakes.
 Fal lal la.

Now Somervell, you'll not deny,
 Has powers of one among a million;
 In fourteen hours he conquered Skye,
 From Sgurr-nan-Eigg to Sgurr-nan-Gillean.
 He's vanquished nearly every peak
 In Switzerland, if what they say is true;
 And off he goes on Friday week
 To polish off the Himalaya, too.

Chorus:

So let each one rejoice with zest,
 Fal lal la, Fal lal la.
 As both their hands he proudly shakes,
 Fal lal la, la!
 That the Alpine Club has done its best,
 And this time has made no mistakes,
 It means to conquer Everest,
 So it's got two climbers from the Lakes.
 Fal lal la, Fal lal la.
 It means to conquer Everest,
 So it's got two climbers from the Lakes,
 Fal lal la.

JOHN HIRST.

b'ung at Fell & Hock Meet at Coniston, 11th February, 1922, when an informal dinner was held in honour of Dr. A. W. Wakefield and Dr. T. Howard. Somervell, just before their departure on the Mount Everest Expedition.

EVEREST, 195:1.

A party of climbers set out for a stroll,
 Fed up with failure, defying defeat,
 A snow-covered hill in Tibet was their goal,
 One John, two Toms, two Mikes, two Charles's,
 Two Geordies, one Alf, one Wilf, one Welsh Pugh,
 Ed Hillary, Tensing and all,
 Ed Hillary, Tensing and all.

Two come from down under, eleven do not,
 Fed up with failure, defying defeat,
 And one likely laddie resides on the spot,
 One John, etc.

The wind whistled cold on the heights of Nepal.
 It hailed and it snowed—did they suffer cold feet?
 Such details as these did'nt matter at all,
 To one John, etc.

One Charles and one Tom made a reconaissance,
 Fed up with failure, defying defeat,
 And they might have got up if they'd taken a chance,
 One John, etc.

Then Ed and the laddie who lives on the spot,
 Fed up with failure, defying defeat,
 Ascended the hill at the very first shot,
 One John, etc.

Then Ed this obscure observation let slip,
 Fed up with failure, defying defeat,
 ' We've knocked off — that small illegitimate pip.'
 One John, etc.

Their performance has thrilled every true mountaineer,
 Fed up with failure, defying defeat,
 And two are our members—they're both of them here,
 One John, one Alf, two Toms, two Mikes, two Charles's,
 Two Geordies, one Wilf, one Welsh Pugh,
 Ed Hillary, Tensing and all,
 Ed Hillary, Tensing and all.

All the Lords of the land have succumbed to their spell,
 Fed up with failure, defying defeat,
 And our good Queen Elizabeth said, ' You did well,
 Sir John Hunt, Tom Bourdillon, Tom Stobart,
 Michael Westmacott, Michael Ward,
 Charles Evans, Charles Wylie,
 Alf Gregory, Wilf Noyce, Griffith Pugh,
 Sir Hillary, Tensing and all,
 Sir Hillary, Tensing and all.'

EDITOR'S NOTES

The year 1953 was a notable one in Club history, including as it did the opening of the Salving House, the 'Everest' dinner, and the acceptance of Honorary Membership by Sir John Hunt, Eric Shipton, Alf Gregory and John Appleyard, all of whom have assuredly, in the words of Rule 10, 'rendered eminent service to the cause of mountaineering.' These events are so fully covered elsewhere in the *Journal* that I feel that further comments in these notes is not called for.

The 'Letters from Everest' printed in this issue tell a story that is now familiar, at least in its main outlines, to most readers of the *journal*. But the letters recount the progress of the venture with a freshness, and difference of outlook from previously published accounts, as they deal with their writer's feelings, as well as with the facts. With one exception—the letter from the South Col—they are extracts from letters written by the leader of the expedition to his wife, and I am very much indebted both to Sir John and Lady Hunt for allowing me to publish them.

The Jubilee of the foundation of the Club is fast approaching. A year or two ago two Past Presidents were discussing this event and the question was raised as to whether the Club had in fact been founded late in 1906 or during the spring of 1907. It was suggested that some investigation should be made of the documentary evidence, so that the appropriate Jubilee year—and more important the date of the Jubilee Dinner—could be decided without question. Somehow I became involved in this, and as a fairly recent member who knew little about the early history of the Club, I found the search for evidence in the first and some later *Journals* of great interest. At a later stage the Librarian took up the matter with enthusiasm, and I was able to examine the first Committee Minute Book and other early documents. I made detailed notes of everything bearing on the subject, and these have been read by the principal officers of the Club. It was suggested that a resume should be published in the *Journal* for the information of members in general, and I had intended that it should appear in this issue. Lack of space has prevented this, but I hope to repair the omission next year. In the meantime I can say that my conclusion—which I think has been accepted by those who have studied the evidence—was that 1956 should be regarded as the Jubilee Year, and that the Annual

Dinner in that year will be the proper occasion for celebrating it.

The office of Assistant Editor of the *journal* has been revived, and I warmly welcome the Committee's appointment of Mrs. Muriel Files thereto. As a member of Committee and an active mountaineer Mrs. Files is closely in touch with the life and activities of the Club, and her assistance will be of undoubted value in assuring that the *Journal* is a faithful mirror of these. In particular she has undertaken to be responsible for an important but somewhat humdrum aspect of *journal* affairs, that of its distribution to members, subscribers, kindred clubs and the like; this will relieve the Editor of much detailed work.

For some years the *journal* contained a feature known as 'Club Notes.' This was dropped a few years ago as it seemed to have outlived its usefulness. On another page will be found a successor in the shape of 'Club Notes and Comments,' and this is intended to provide a place where sundry information about members' activities and other matters of interest can be recorded. Members of Committee were invited to send suitable items to the Assistant Editor, but the response has not been exactly overwhelming! Members in general are now included in this invitation and, if the idea is approved, I hope they will respond.

When I asked John Hirst if I could print his song, 'Everest, 1953,' in this issue, he made the happy suggestion that it should be preceded by 'Envoi' which he wrote in 1922, so as to bring to mind that in the first full-scale and final expeditions 'members of the Fell & Rock played an important part and were suitably hailed with wine and song.' 'Envoi' was printed in the 1922 *Journal*, but to many members this is not easily accessible, and I am very pleased to fall in with its author's suggestion.

I am indebted to Mr. P. Healy of the Irish Mountaineering Club for the photograph of Camaderry which appears opposite page 70 in this issue. This is a composite picture from three negatives, and I regret that for practical reasons I was unable to make use of three additional negatives covering the upper and lower parts of the ridge.

In his speech at the opening of the Salving House last year,

Mr. P. D. Boothroyd referred to the seemingly intractable problem of litter in the countryside, and especially on the fells. Action by Government or other authorities concerned seemed largely without effect, and while realising that he was preaching to the converted, he appealed to climbing clubs and their individual members to take what concerted action they could to mitigate the evil. This appeal deserves our strongest support, even if we seem to be fighting a losing battle. Judging by recent press reports, the attempts of voluntary wardens and others in the Lake District to bring home the nuisance to some of its perpetrators have not met with the success they deserved, but we must not cease to do all in our power to support and encourage such efforts.

W. GEOFFREY STEVENS.

August, 1954.

FELL & ROCK JOURNAL Vol. XVI (No. III, 1953).

We regret that an error occurred in the caption on the plate opposite page 298. This stated that the photograph of Edward Scantlebury was 'at Tarn Hows.' It was actually taken on the eastern side of Coniston Water near Peel Island, looking across to Walna Scar and Dow Crag.

The photograph of Pallid Slabs, Gimmer Crag, opposite page 285, was taken by C. Douglas Milner, whose name was inadvertently omitted **from** the **plate**.

CLUB NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Club was delighted to welcome Howard Somervell back to England late in 1953 and to learn that he was willing to accept nomination for the Presidency in 1954. His colleague on the 1924 Everest expedition, Bentley Beetham, is also in the news again, having followed his visit to the Himalaya by one to South Africa, where he is reported to have made a Shepherd's Crag of Table Mountain. Several other travellers among our members have also been active. J. M. Bechervaise was chosen to take part in the Australian Antarctic Expedition, while J. A. Jackson has been pursuing the Yeti as a member of the *Daily Mail* expedition; during this he met his brother, S. R. Jackson, who was visiting the Himalaya for the first time as a member of the Kanchenjunga Reconnaissance Expedition.

Rather nearer home, R. A. Tyssen-Gee, the energetic Hon. Secretary of the Club's London Section, has been showing great enterprise. Last year he visited Lapland and, amongst other activities, climbed Sweden's highest peak. This year he visited Sweden again to observe the total eclipse of the sun, a phenomenon only too familiar to stay-at-homes this summer. Our ever youthful member, Jack Blackshaw, also plans to visit Scandinavia, where, with his usual energy, he intends to take up ski-ing at the age of, shall we say, sixty plus. D. H. Maling has been exploring a rediscovered system of caves in Weardale, which has so far been penetrated to a distance of some 1 *yi* miles. Readers of the *Journal* may look forward to hearing more about the discoveries made.

Having climbed his last Munro in August, 1953, G. Graham Macphee has now recovered from the severe attack of 'Munro-itis' mentioned by G. H. Webb in his account of the Kintail meet in the 1952 *Journal*. By a happy conjunction he completed his Munros during his first year of office as President of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and we understand that his hundredth ascent of Ben Nevis was made during the same year. From North of the Border, too, comes a report, which Skye enthusiasts will be sorry to hear, of the death of Willie Macpherson, the shepherd who led so many rescue parties in the Coolin.

To come to more domestic matters, a pleasant function of the year took place at the Royal Oak, Keswick, during the Dinner Meet of 1953, when a presentation was made to the Honorary Secretary by upwards of forty members who have been closely associated with her as fellow officers and committee members. Nearly all of these were present when the President asked Mrs. Pickering to accept a set of dining chairs as a token of their regard. One of these chairs, the fine work of a craftsman who is also a member of the Club, was on view and bears the inscription:—

" Presented to Lyna Kellett to mark the occasion of her marriage on 4th April, 1953, by her colleagues in the work of the Fell & Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District since 1943."

It is a pleasure to the Club to learn that, subject to ministerial approval, the Lake District National Park Planning Board is purchasing Hassness, and that it is likely to be leased to the Ramblers' Association for use as a guest house. We shall welcome the Ramblers as our near neighbours and hope that future visitors to Hassness will enjoy its incomparable surroundings as fully as do our members and guests at Birkness.

LONDON SECTION, 1953

During the year the monthly walks have continued to be the main activity of the London Section, and they enable members to meet each other and explore London's countryside. No records have been broken as the length of the walk is chosen to suit all tastes, as some regard these expeditions as good training walks for higher climbs, whilst others prefer shorter distances. Continued support shows that these walks do fill a need of London members and thanks are due to the small number who are willing to act as leaders. We are always pleased to see visitors and members of kindred clubs.

The January walk led by M. N. Clarke, from Clandon along the Wey towpath to Send and Guildford, was a new route covered on a bright winter's day. Stella Joy's in February, followed by tea at Upton School, was, as usual, popular, following a delightful route through Windsor Great Park to Virginia Water in spring-like conditions. In March E. W. Hamilton led, by devious ways, a long walk in the Penn Country, from Gerrards Cross to Beaconsfield in good weather once more. Our traditional meet with the London Section of the Rucksack Club was further afield in Berkshire, starting from Cholsey and ending at Streatley. May once more found us at Beaconsfield with Stella Joy and Joyce Lancaster-Jones, and again that mysterious wood above Little Marlow made us lose our way and our train home (except one member who ran all the way to the station). It is very appropriate that beyond the wood lies the well-named Hard-to-Find Farm! Mr. and Mrs. R. P. Mears led us to the Surrey Hills in June. Pitch Hill is really a very fine summit, and many prefer it to Leith Hill, its higher neighbour. The route across Winterfold Heath to Holmbury St. Mary and Abinger Hatch, which we followed, is one of the attractions of this district. A hot July day for J. E. L. Clements' walk, an ambitious one from Watford to Chalford St. Giles, divided the party into fast and slow sections, the rearguard arriving at tea just as the leaders were finishing theirs. For the first time for a long while we tried an August walk and found that everybody is *not* on holiday during that month. The Walks' Secretary had twelve people out with him exploring Polesden Lacey (National Trust) and Ranmore. Ian Clayton was again unlucky with the weather in September on his walk from Lewes. It is believed that some abseil practice had been planned from a convenient chalkpit on the Downs, but on arrival at the chosen place a red flag was flying and the military about to open fire, so the leader was reluctantly forced down the easy path and the party was sped on its way with much shouting from below. After this it rained steadily but the tea subsequently provided by Mr. and Mrs. Clayton revived everybody. In October we started from Beaconsfield once more and M. N. Clarke led a new route through Autumn foliage to Burnham Beeches returning by Bulstrode Park. In November R. A. Tyssen-Gee led us from Leatherhead to Headley and Reigate. After tea W. A. Poucher showed us another fine selection of his coloured slides. This year 'Ireland' was the subject and Poucher illustrated his tour of the island with many exquisite seascapes and mountain views. Our thanks are due both to the lecturer and to Mrs. Tyssen-Gee for providing a room and tea.

Earlier in the year we had a very interesting lecture on Sweden illustrated with slides by A. H. Coles, and we have to thank Mrs. R. Pickersgill for obtaining a room in College Hall once again. We met several times for informal dinners at the Rossmore Restaurant but they proved less popular than before, perhaps owing to rising costs!

December, as usual, is the month of our Annual Dinner, and our Thirty-Third was held on Saturday, 12th December, at the Connaught Rooms with sixty people present. Dr. Hadfield was in the chair and one cannot imagine the London Section without him. L. R. Pepper proposed the toast of the Guests to which Hamish Mc.Arthur responded with a very witty speech. Dr. Graham Macphee represented the Scottish Mountaineering Club and Arthur Clegg the Cambridge Mountaineering Club. We were also pleased to see Mrs. Files who gave us some interesting details of the parent club's recent activities in the Lake District. R. P. Mears led the walk on the following day over the Surrey Hills which he knows so well.

Although this account deals with 1953 events, as we write these notes we cannot forget that two active members of the London Section, who were present on that evening of 12th December, are no longer with us. Eric Jackson died suddenly on 9th February of this year, after a brave struggle against illness, and Mrs. Betty Emery was killed at Easter in a climbing accident on Ben Nevis. Both are missed very **much** and we send our deepest sympathy to their relatives.

E. W. HAMILTON.

R. TYSSEN-GEE.