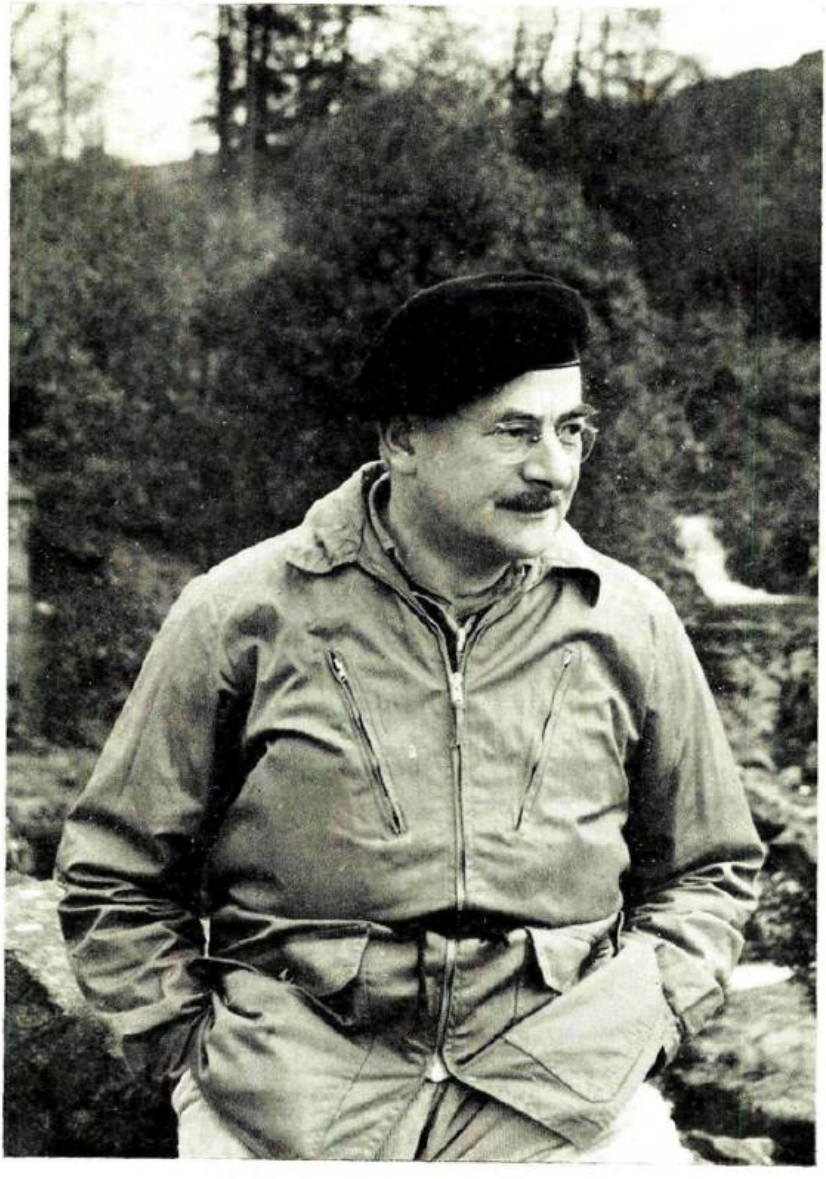

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THE ASCENT OF PUMASILLO

K. I. Meldrum

Pumasillo, 20,490 feet, is situated in the Peruvian Cordillera Vilcabamba, which takes its name from a deserted village some hundred miles north of Cuzco. Unlike the majority of the Peruvian peaks, which seem to be more or less isolated, Pumasillo forms the culminating point of a complex massif. On the advice of George Band, who was in Peru in 1956, the 'Cambridge Andean Expedition,' as we called ourselves, decided to attempt this peak. Band had been unable to reach its base due to his limited time in this area, but had brought back some photographs which were invaluable, as they enabled us to form tentative plans for a route before leaving England.

Simon Clark and John Longland, joint Expedition leaders, together with Harry Carslake, formed the Cambridge contingent. Ronnie Wathen, Mike Gravina and I were the outsiders. However, since Simon and I were the only members of the Fell and Rock, we could regard the others as outsiders in that respect at least. We had all been climbing together for a number of years, and so started the Expedition with the advantage that we knew each other's idiosyncrasies.

From Christmas to May we were fully employed in collecting equipment, arranging transport and the thousand and one other things that are necessary before an expedition is ready to move. At last on 20th May, 1957, Ronnie, Harry, Mike and I set sail for the other quarter of the world. Having resisted the temptations to jump ship at Bermuda and Cristobal, we arrived at Lima. Here we were met by the Second Secretary and several of the British community who greatly eased our customs problems. Our equipment had been sent on by freighter some weeks before, but in spite of the help given by the Embassy and the Peruvian Government, who had waived all customs duties, it still took a week before all our goods were cleared. During this period of heel-kicking we met Colin Darbyshire, with whom we had corresponded and who had agreed to come with us as interpreter and 'co-ordinator general.' Colin had been living in Lima for several years and had been on a number of expeditions to the High Andes.

Leaving behind the gay lights and late nights of Lima, we made our way by different routes to Cuzco, the capital of the old Inca civilization. Mike, who took half the equipment by lorry, was amazed by the endurance of the driver who drove

for sixty hours without a stop. As has been said, Peruvian drivers are among the best in the world: the bad ones have been eliminated long ago. Two days in Cuzco, just long enough to sort out the kit, and we were heading north. From 11,000 feet at Cuzco we dropped down to 3,000 feet at Huadquiña, the rail head. Here a completely different scenery greeted us. From the arid region of the *altiplano* we found ourselves on the borders of the humid unknown depths of the Amazon jungle. This country was soon to become known to us only too intimately as a hazard to be avoided at all costs. On the afternoon we arrived there, Ronnie and I experienced the sweltering heat, deep ravines and stony, steep tracks; for Mike (who was deputy leader until John and Simon arrived) decided that the two of us would be of more use looking at the country ahead than waving ice-axes behind the mules and encouraging them with *risqué* repartee. We covered the sixty kilometres to Tincoq in two days, making many useful friends on the way. The valley showed no signs of the drought prevalent throughout the rest of Peru, and the oranges, on which we frequently gorged ourselves, were to become the centre of many frustrated desires high on the mountain.

At Tincoq we were warmly welcomed and accommodated at the village shop, which was to develop into the Expedition rest centre during the next two months. We took advantage of the twelve-hour Peruvian night, and next day started our reconnaissance. From now on we were alone. We were trying to recognize any feature in the landscape so that we could organize a full-scale ' recce ' when the others reached Tincoq. In this we were successful. We climbed a col about a thousand feet above our bivouac and were rewarded by magnificent views of ' Nice Peak ' which was attempted by Band in 1956. On the north of this we saw the col from which he took the photographs that we had seen in England; it became known as ' George's Col.' But although we had recognized something, we were no nearer solving the problem of a suitable track for the mules. Feeling tired and satisfied we returned to Tincoq, where the others had just arrived with the mule train, a wonderful achievement considering the *mañana* doctrine of all Peruvians, and of muleteers in particular.

On the information we had brought, another ' recce ' which would last about five days was organized. Our time was limited

because Simon and John would be arriving soon, and we decided to save weight by dispensing with the luxury of a tent. For three days we travelled together, and on the fourth we caught our first glimpse of Pumasillo. Shrouded in clouds, it certainly lived up to its reputation of the 'Mystery Mountain.' Now that we knew exactly where we were to go, we split the party. Ronnie and Mike climbed a small snow peak, the last of the 'Nice Peak' ridge. This we called 'Nevado Ñu-Ñu' (17,500 feet). From the summit they were still unable to confirm a satisfactory route. Later they climbed 'George's Col' and were able to see Pumasillo face to face. Even this did not answer all the questions. It did prove, however, that if we were prepared to man-pack the equipment into this valley it would be possible to climb the mountain: but it would mean a delay of several back-breaking weeks. The five days out had taught us that Andean nights are extremely cold and long, and had impressed on us the necessity of being either fully prepared for a bivouac or of avoiding one altogether.

It was after this 'recce' that reports that I was lost appeared in the English press. I had arranged to return to Huadquiña by the Yanama pass to meet Simon and John and some of the others. The dense jungle and complex system of gorges prevented me from keeping this R.V.* and I returned to Tincoq. After my failure to appear for four days they became anxious and initiated a search. For the remainder of the Expedition enquiries after my health filtered through from England. I appeared to have spent several days in a crevasse and to have been lost in viper-infested jungle among inhospitable tribes — to mention only two of the garbled reports that reached us.

While Ronnie and Mike were searching at Huadquiña, John, Simon, Harry, Colin and I started the third and last reconnaissance. We decided that the easiest way of finding a suitable mule track would be to get into the Pumasillo basin over 'George's Col,' and then to seek an alternative route out. We encountered no serious difficulties in crossing the col and chose our 'bivvy' site as the searing heat of the day gave way to the bitter night. Next day we took a well-earned rest, using this opportunity to choose a base camp and to plan a route. Then we again split the party. John, Harry and Colin returned to Tincoq by a northern route. They went over a long glacier and dropped

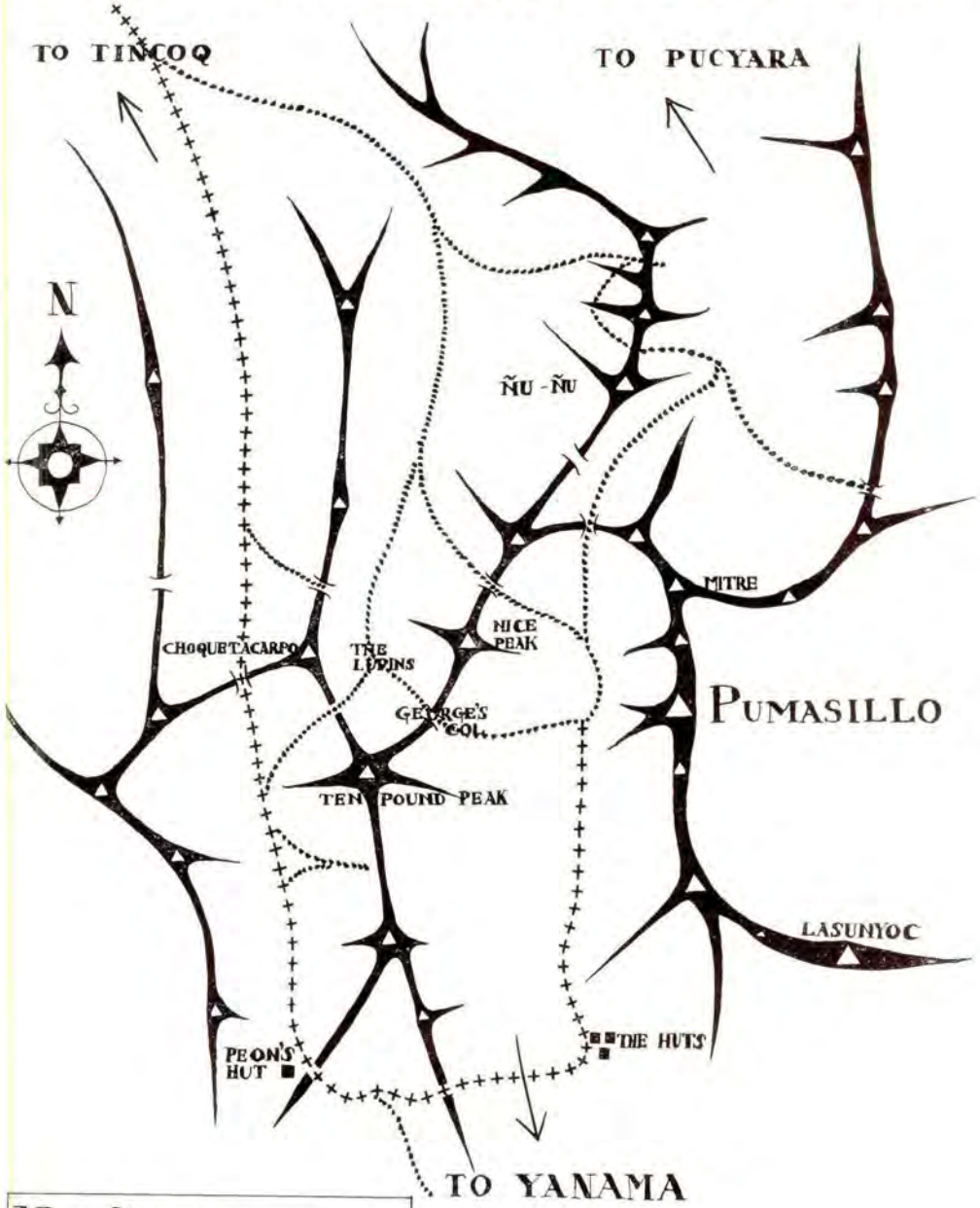
*Rendezvous to the 'over-fifties.'—Editor.

down to the ' Lupins Valley ' over a col (' Harry's Col ') to the north of ' Nice Peak.' This col was in no way suitable for mules, but it gave us an opportunity to increase our knowledge of the area. Simon and I took the southern route, which led down an open pampa to join the main Yanama valley after a series of impassable gorges. Before we reached these gorges we noticed a thin thread of path winding over a number of spurs in the direction of a previous ' recce.' This we followed and, after a day of alternate ups and downs, we eventually joined the track which we knew would lead us back to Tincoq without difficulty. By the time we reached Tincoq, two days later, Mike and Ronnie had returned from the search, having discovered that I had never been lost. It was fitting that the news that we had found a suitable mule track should coincide with the first time that the Expedition had been together since leaving England.

Such an occasion demanded some sort of celebration. This lasted two days and necessitated a day of rest afterwards, ostensibly to repack and reorganize but, in fact, to recover from the effects of an excess of Navy rum. We were unable to contract enough mules to take our ton of equipment and food to the base camp in one trip, so we arranged for the muleteer, a reliable man we thought, to return after ten days with the second load. This turned out to be a mistake, as the date fixed for the return trip coincided with the Day of Independence. Harry, Mike and Ronnie left Tincoq a day before us in order to continue the exploration of the country to the east of Pumasillo; meanwhile Simon, John, Colin and I took the thirteen mules over the 16,000 foot Choquetacarpo pass and round the spurs above Yanama to the base camp.

The base camp, which we had already selected, was now occupied and we had no complaints; there was running water and a plentiful supply of dead wood. The bad weather we had run into on the pass continued and gave us time to work out a plan of attack. Strangely enough, although we regarded this as very fluid, it materialized almost exactly as we had hoped. After two days of snow we put it to the test. First, we all took loads up to the top of the moraine, about one and a half hours away and some thousand feet higher than the base camp. In memory of the first and many subsequent Expedition meetings, we named these camps P.Y.G. and P.Y.P., after the historic Welsh pubs. The first camp on the mountain (P.Y.P.) had been established

THE PUMASILLO MASSIF



at 16,200 feet: it was placed within a few feet of the main west glacier and directly below a rock buttress that formed the continuation of the west ridge. Faced with the alternatives of the steep and rotten rock buttress and the equally steep icefall, we chose the latter.

Next day Simon and Mike found a way through the icefall and gained the ridge above the rock buttress, but lack of time prevented them from finding a suitable site for Camp I. Ronnie and Harry pushed the route a further six hundred feet up the ridge. There was a difficult corner to negotiate. This became known as ' Harry's Horror ' and involved a delicate traverse round a boiler-plate of ice. On rounding the corner, the views down to Yanama, which till then had been hidden, suddenly appeared in the misty haze of the distance. This was certainly no place to linger. Spurred by the fearful drop and the shortage of time they made rapid progress along the ridge to Camp I (18,200 feet). Here they pitched one of our Meades in a snowy dell a hundred feet below the ridge and almost as high as the Ice Flutings, which plunged down on the western side of the ridge above. The return, unladen, to P.Y.P. took only two hours. As John and I were preparing the evening meal the two tired figures appeared at the top of the icefall. Just in time. The friendly warm red glow of the summits was quickly changing to the cold purple of unreality, like the backdrop of an American musical.

On 20th July, while the others were ferrying loads to P.Y.P., John and I were toiling up the glacier towards Camp I. We made good time up the tracks left by the others on the previous day. A fixed rope had been arranged to safeguard ' Harry's Horror.' We eventually arrived at Camp I at 2 p.m. and during the remaining hours of daylight we tried to force a route along the ridge. Before we could reach this we had to climb a steep ice wall requiring several pitons. Our efforts were in vain. The ridge was knife-edged, and through a hole fifteen feet below the top we looked down on Yanama—still further below. The ridge continued like Spanish lace, weaving delicately towards the Bulge. Impossible. We returned to camp and discussed the alternatives. The only other route lay up the improbable-looking Flutings. Like giant organ pipes six hundred feet high and at an average angle of fifty degrees, they leered down at us, as if mocking our plans.

Unfortunately John now contracted double vision, and I was disappointed not to be able to attribute this to our Navy rum. It was probably a mild form of snow-blindness, the result of taking too many photographs without goggles. So as 21st July dawned we turned our backs on the problems ahead and returned to P.Y.P. On the way down we passed Simon and Mike who intended to 'recce' the Flutings that afternoon and to establish Camp II the next day. A little further down we met Ronnie, Harry and Colin carrying heavy loads up to Camp I and ready to support the Camp II party. Colin had been suffering from some minor intestinal trouble so returned to P.Y.P. with us. Later the same evening we saw two minute figures, Simon and Mike, reach the top of the Flutings. We exchanged unintelligible remarks across the three thousand feet that separated us, but went to bed with the certain knowledge that one more problem was solved.

Next day, 22nd July, Colin (now fully recovered) and I carried loads up the familiar route to Camp I, while John was regaining normal sight at P.Y.P. Passing the red marker flags we soon reached the camp. It was deserted, but there was a letter left by Simon saying that he and Mike would be trying for the top the next day, 23rd July. There was also an urgent appeal for more fuel and lemon crystals. Our eyes scanned the Flutings automatically. First we saw Simon and Mike zig-zagging within the narrow confines of one of the flutes. Even with crampons they were cutting steps, and towards the top they had to cut handholds as well. Ronnie and Harry followed with the heavy loads for Camp II. At frequent intervals they would stop, trying to find some shelter from the incessant barrage of ice chips that hurtled down from the party above. Colin and I watched this drama from Camp I for several hours. We felt rather like spectators of acrobats at a circus. The faint but familiar sound of metal hitting metal reached our strained ears. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the pair moved up the vertical ice chimney, swinging freely from the étriers. Not until we saw Simon on top of the Bulge could we drag ourselves away. Camp II was established at 18,900 feet.

It was while returning from Camp II that we had our narrowest escape. Ronnie and Harry were roping down from pegs below the ice chimney. Time was against them. As always seems to happen in such circumstances the rope jammed.

Not having enough time to retrieve it then, they decided to continue unroped for the next two hundred feet until they reached the fixed rope at the bottom of the Flutings. Half-way down Ronnie missed his footing in the gathering dusk. He fell. Unable to stop himself on the hard ice, he crashed down the remainder of the Flutings; shot a large crevasse overhung by the bottom of the Flutings and eventually stopped himself on a snow slope a few yards from Camp I. He was lucky to get away with only a badly sprained ankle.

It was not until the next day that we heard about this accident when John, Colin and I returned with the fuel and crystals. John took Ronnie's place, and with Harry formed the second assault team. Earlier in the day we had seen Simon and Mike moving above Camp II towards the summit and we were all anxious for news. At four in the afternoon we saw Simon appear on top of the Bulge like a red devil from a pantomime. Whatever else happened we had succeeded. Only the length of the Flutings separated us. Although difficult, conversation was still possible, but the only words we heard clearly were the frequent abuses, directed at our inability to hear, that punctuated the murmurous description of the route. Simon and Mike stayed at Camp II that night while we slept fitfully wondering about the days to come.

John and Harry started early and made rapid progress up the well-worn steps of the Flutings. Colin and I followed with the intention of fixing ropes along the whole length. After two hours of climbing we all gathered below the chimney, which was now liberally draped with pegs and étriers. Even when up this the problems were not over. The route now lay up south-facing snow which in the Andes is always soft and deep. By a magnificent piece of climbing Simon had carved a chimney out of this soft snow and, by using the ice-axe thrust up to the head, had been able to climb to the top of the Bulge. We noticed that the snow generally held together very well: where in the Alps it would certainly have avalanched, here it remained relatively stable. Simon and Mike, who were returning to Camp I, helped John and Harry over these difficulties and left a fixed rope from the top of the Bulge to the ice chimney. While they were doing this, Colin and I had fixed another three hundred feet in the Flutings. Altogether we had used about seven hundred feet of

fixed rope. Leaving John and Harry to the hazards ahead we returned to Camp I.

Ronnie had been exercising his foot all day and found that it would stand up to quite a lot. So, on the 25th, Colin, Ronnie and I followed in the tracks of the other two parties. With the help afforded by the fixed ropes we reached Camp II in three hours. At 4 p.m. John and Harry returned from the summit and, after giving us details of the route, continued to Camp I.

We started early next day, too early. Ronnie insisted that we must have porridge before we left. Since it took at least an hour to boil a billy-can of water, this meant getting up an hour earlier than was strictly necessary, but fortunately Ronnie can only enjoy porridge made by Ronnie: we did not mind lying in our bags watching him and later criticizing his efforts. We made good time cramponning in the hard snow of the early morning, then tackled the greatest difficulty of this section, the sixty foot ice wall. It required a technique similar to gritstone; jamming, laybacking on ice-axes and bridging. This led to an open area of soft snow below the final ridge, which was gained by another steep wall. The summit ridge itself, about five hundred feet long, was corniced on both sides and some parts were so thin that the first party had had to lower them by as much as five feet before they were safe. Bulge after bulge swept up to the ' Egg ' which, like a frozen soap bubble, clung to the ridge and afforded an ideal point for survey. Between the ' Egg ' and the true summit is the ' Mushroom,' vertical on its summit side. Access to this lay up a narrow steep gangway less than a foot wide. To reach the summit proper we had to descend to a small gap twenty feet lower and regain the height over snow-covered rocks. The protection available at this point was barely adequate. I belayed Ronnie from the top of the ' Mushroom ' while he lowered himself over the edge of the bubbly, crumbling ice, like a fly struggling on a giant piece of Gruyère cheese. For added safety Colin belayed me from the ' Egg.' Only steep snow-covered rocks separated us from the perfect cone of snow which formed the summit. Ronnie continued. After a cautious move over a loose section he was just below the top. Slowly he stood up, lifted his ice-axe above his head, and the flags of Peru and Britain fluttered for a moment. Suddenly the bubbles of the ' Mushroom ' cracked as if the cork had been drawn from a bottle of champagne to celebrate our achievement. To be marooned on a sinking

island of ice was no comfort to me, and we returned to the relative safety of the 'Egg.' The rope had been to the top, which was ample reward for our efforts, and Colin and I decided not to court danger further.

We started to fill in the gaps that still remained in our survey programme. Abney level readings showed that we were higher than everything else, with the exception of Salcantay, and only a few feet lower than that. On the way up we had been a little worried in case Lasunyoc*, the peak climbed by the Americans in 1956, would turn out to be higher. Although certainly 20,000 feet, it was considerably lower than Pumasillo. The survey also showed that there were several peaks over 19,000 feet in the area.

The return and evacuation of the camps went very smoothly, and on 28th July we were all at base camp again preparing a celebration dinner. The afternoon was spent shooting *viscacha*, a cross between a rabbit and a squirrel, which proved to be excellent when jugged. This, with six other courses, made a meal that none of us will ever forget. After this Gargantuan feast we rested for a week, writing letters and waiting vainly for the second mule train to arrive. At the end of the week our food supplies were running low, so we left Simon and Harry with the food that remained, to give them an opportunity of climbing some of the minor peaks around the Pumasillo basin should the weather improve.

From the west ridge of Pumasillo we had seen two very fine peaks, both in the 19,000 foot class, Nevadas Panta and Soirococha. They lay about thirty miles to the west near the village of Arma. After a brief pause at Tincoq, Ronnie, Mike and I took five days' food with us and set out to explore this region and, if possible, to climb the peaks. Unfortunately the weather in this area deteriorates rapidly at the beginning of August and we did not have an opportunity to get close enough to find out anything valuable, but these peaks, like those of the Pumasillo range, certainly deserve further visits.

*Spelt Lasuna by the Americans who referred to the whole massif as Pumasillo (*American Alpine Journal, 1957*)—Editor.

CLIMBING IN SOUTH INDIA

T. Howard Somervell

During the 1914-18 War I once shared a dug-out with a man whose motto in life—so he told me—was ' If you get to a place where there is no night-club, found one.'

I cannot claim that this point of view is quite my cup of tea, and I feel more like saying ' If you are in a place where there is no climbing-club, start one.' Anyway, when I arrived at Vellore in South India to teach surgery, and found there a number of granite rocks and a batch of medical students, it was not long before we had a climbing-club, although it had no name, no list of members and no subscription. None of its members had ever seen a rope until I produced one, but a number of them were good gymnasts, for most South Indian village boys can do a grand circle on the horizontal bar, can jump pretty nearly their own height, and can climb rocks with bare feet better than most of us westerners can with our favourite footwear, whatever that may be.

The rock of which nearly all South Indian hills are composed is good granite, reminding one of Chamonix in its firmness and texture. Many of the hills rise from the plain to a height of from one to three thousand feet, and consist of boulder-strewn slopes on their lower parts, crowned by red granite cliffs which assume many forms, from steep precipices quite unclimbable and almost holdless, to fortress-like formations, or needles not unlike some of the smaller Dolomite climbs such as the Cinque Torri and the subsidiary peaks of the Vajolet and Brenta groups. The most usual formation near Vellore is like a castle of huge size, and some of the hills are actually crowned by a man-made castle, the steep rock providing an almost unscaleable defence. Owing to the entire absence of frost, the rocks are not broken up as they are in the Chamonix district, and cracks are few and far between. Plants—chiefly thorny, and often cacti—abound in the gullies and more often provide an obstacle than a handhold. The chief snag about the faces of these rocks from the climber's point of view is that they are either too easy (almost walkable in rubbers) or too difficult (with no holds at all, and no cracks, or very few). But they are rocks, and most of them are climbable. And in seven years I have only once seen a snake amongst them. Best of all, the nearest climb (a good Very Difficult) is only a

mile from the hospital where I worked. My job was largely in the operation theatre and my assistant there was a male nurse called Chellappan who was trained at the hospital where I used to work in Travancore; he went with me to Vellore and, as my work and his stopped at the same moment if it was an operating day, he was much the most constant of my companions. Years ago I used to lead him up rocks where he feared to come unaided. Now he leads me up rocks which I can only just manage to climb, and some which I can't.

One of our best climbs is Walker's Gully. That at least is what I call it. It is about ten miles from the hospital, so a car is necessary to get there, and half a mile of walking leads to the foot of the gully. A cave pitch comes first, and leads to a large shelf from which a stiff chimney of only twenty feet debouches on a narrow ledge that brings us back into the gully. Fifty feet of scrambling and we are in another cave; then up the back of this to a shelf with just room for two, in the extreme bed of the gully. There the second man must get firm, for the next twenty feet are almost without holds, though the rock face on the gully's left wall slopes a little. An immense wedged block forces one's back down, and towards this slope, such as it is—about 75 degrees—and it is only this forcing that prevents rubber-soled or bare feet from slipping. One has to traverse twenty feet outwards and slightly up until a tiny ledge for the finger-tips is reached—the first real 'hold.' Six feet above it is another hold and after that it eases off. Many of us descended this with a rope from above, and reascended it, before anyone dared to lead it. At last on our fifth or sixth visit one of the students descended it as the last on a rope, and since then five or six of us have led it. I have climbed it many times, but only once in the lead.

The most spectacular of our rocks, twenty miles away, rises sheer for 500 feet and is rent by a colossal chimney, impossible to enter, but magnificent to behold. There is an easy way to the summit of the rock, steps having been cut (probably hundreds of years ago) on the difficult places. Emerging on the top one is confronted by a large iron basin on a pole, like an inverted umbrella. In this once a year on the sacred 'night of Siva' a fire of camphor is burnt and kept going all night. Several of our climbs lead to these fire-holders, and are easy if the cut holds are followed, but more difficult ways can often be found on a steeper side.

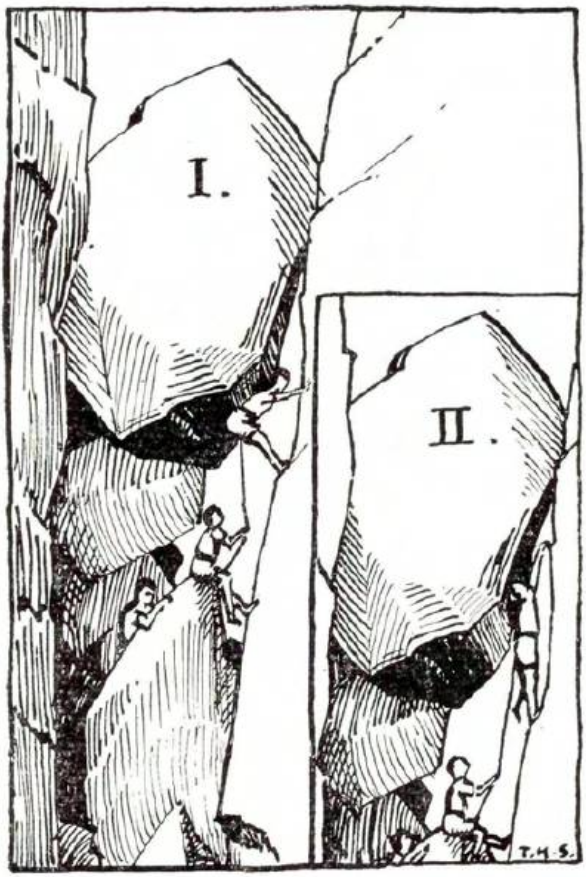
One magnificent block of rock, 1,000 feet high, split into two by a cleft twenty feet wide, could be climbed by modern techniques, but not, I think, without piton and étrier. It involves a thirty-mile motor ride, and even on a half-day like Saturday or Sunday there is not much time for climbing. But it is a fine sight and there is plenty to do on its lower 100 feet.

One of our most delightful climbs is on Vellimalai, a fine pyramid of rock, over 500 feet of it, at the top of a 1,000 foot base of rough boulder-slopes and at the end of twenty-five miles in a car and two miles on foot. We have tried several ways up it, but the one with holds cut is the only way except for a superman or Joe Brown. And even that ordinary way is a good V.D. in several places.

Finally one must mention Moses' Beard, the finest of all our peaks; slopes of the most devilish thorn are crowned by a tall rock in the shape of a bust of Moses, with a long 'beard' of rock, about 300 or 400 feet of it. One climbs up to the neck of Moses without difficulty, and can traverse right round the neck, very exposed in some places, and in others a ledge two to ten feet wide. One can get on to the bridge of Moses' nose, but his forehead has so far defied us. His right ear is a pinnacle of fifty feet which one or two of our student gymnasts have led, and which I have been pulled up, doing a vertical walk. There is room on the top for six people and a gap of ten or twelve feet (and over fifty feet deep) leads to Moses' head. Before my furlough in 1954 this was unscaled, but on my return in 1955 I was amazed to hear that some students had got to the top. I felt I had been a bad instructor in climbing method when I heard the way they had done it. They hauled up two bamboo poles fifteen feet long to the top of the pinnacle, and laid them side by side bridging the gap, then one by one walked across. Roped together, of course. But the poles were not roped together, and if any of them had got the poles a bit separated and done the 'splits' I tremble to think what would have happened. The top of Moses' head is smooth granite and apparently devoid of any belay. I said 'Were the poles tied together?' and the answer was 'No, we never thought of that.'

Nailed boots? Vibrams? Rubbers?—the best of our climbers are those who use bare feet. For the thorny approaches to the rocks, sandals or shoes of some sort are essential, and I have found walking shoes with soles of crepe rubber very good, not

only on Indian granite but supremely so on Dolomite rock. But bare feet are best of all. They cost nothing; they can't come off; if they wear out nature repairs them; and they stick to rock, dry or wet, better than any man-made substance. How often I, as a victim of what we call civilization, envied their users—in India, of course. But in Westmorland, on a frosty day, there's something in 'civilized' footwear, after all.



WALKER'S GULLY, KANNIYAMBADI.
(IT FEELS MUCH HARDER THAN THIS.)

ANTARCTIC HOLIDAY

Donald Atkinson

Travel in the Antarctic need not always be a grim fight or a monotonous routine. There are times in the spring, for instance, when skies are cloudless and blue for days on end and no breath of wind stirs the air; one can ski almost effortlessly along with the sledge on superlative snow surfaces, and it is possible—even preferable—to travel in shirt sleeves, although the thermometer may insist that there are more than twelve degrees of frost. It is on days like these that the sensationally beautiful islands of multi-coloured rock and ice appear at their best when viewed across the intervening miles of frozen sea. The impregnable barrier of ice cliffs that flanks more than nine-tenths of the coast-line of Antarctica, and the icebergs, still locked in the grasp of the sea ice, show off their incredible range of blues and greens. These ethereal colours illuminate the shadows in the depths of caves and fissures, and etch the outlines of towers, pinnacles and battlements of infinite variety and complexity, defying the memory to forget. Surely this carving of ice is the most wonderful of nature's sculpture.

The departure of Malcolm, Cecil and myself on a five-day reconnaissance journey in early July was attended by the great promise that these conditions imply, even though this could scarcely be termed a spring journey. But, though the sun still lay a little below the horizon, we thought of this trip as our holiday from base routine and a welcome contrast to the sterner business of long sledge journeys.

Fortunately we had some brawny assistance from the surveyor when man-handling the sledge up the steep ice slope opposite the base. Even so, it was a stiff pull to the top of the ridge, 500 feet high, which separated the base from Lystad Bay. As we went over the crest, a long howl of farewell drifted up to us from our thirty dogs at the base about a mile away. The mellow music of huskies will always be one of my most poignant memories of the Antarctic. Their concerted chorus of canine howls greets the rising moon or the return of the sun after a blizzard, bids farewell to a departing sledge and—long before it has been seen by humans—sings out a plaintive welcome to its return. This time they were sorrowful, of course, and singing of all the woes of the husky race because they had been left behind when there was sledging to be done. Dog-sledging, however, is not always

the best method of travel in polar regions. Just two or three hours later we were lowering the sledge down a steep ice wall which would have been impossible with dogs. I was thankful then, that on this trip at least, we were to be dependent on the power of our own feet.

This was the one breach in the ice cliff defences flanking the north side of Lystad bay. And difficult enough it was. The steep wall led down through a sort of labyrinth by the side of a rock *nunatak* cutting through the glacier snout. Once down this tortuous passage it was possible to step directly on to the sea ice. By the evening we had crossed the bay to make our first camp about two or three hundred feet up, at the foot of Lystarme Glacier.

Quite a formidable slope led to the icefield. I remember that the hauling up of half-loads the following morning was very strenuous work indeed. It is surprising just how long these manoeuvres take, and it was a shock to find that it was after midday before we had packed and were ready to move on.

The icefield itself was simple enough — just three or four hours of steady hauling up an even gradient of unbroken glacier. There were no crevasses, and only a few patches of *sastrugi* (wind erosion ridges) contrived to make us change our course from time to time. Plod, plod went our feet on hard wind-packed snow, the sledge following reluctantly on its three tight ropes. In the manner of most mountain summits the col was elusive and false crests appeared one after another to lure us on. But even the most strenuous and prolonged haul must eventually yield success; finally there were no more rises to surmount and we were there—on the flat expanse of the col.

This place was to be our base camp and from here we hoped to climb as many of the island summits as possible. As we unlashed the load and pitched camp it certainly looked as though we should not be disappointed. On both sides of the glacier rose chains of peaks—not high to be sure, but of pleasing form, with lots of untouched ice and rock routes such as would gladden the most ardent pioneering spirit. Over the col a steep icefall led the eye in an uninterrupted sweep to the sea ice of Square Bay. The sky was clear, but the bay below had not seen the sun for the past two months and in the subdued light the sea ice lay flat and smooth as a billiard table. Here

and there a table iceberg raised its flat white top above the general flatness. A newly frozen lead connected the eastern-most extremity of Horseshoe with a point on Broken Island—a dark winding ribbon across the intervening miles—reminding me vaguely of an arterial road. Over the leagues of ice rose the wall of the mainland supporting the Grahamland Plateau. Much of the credit for the great beauty of the Marguerite Bay area lies in the agreeable mixture of the two main ingredients of the Antarctic landscape—rock and ice. Though much of the wonderful colour of the rock was not showing at its best, even in the half light of the overall shadow we were still able to marvel at the form of the array of peaks and glaciers rising towards the plateau.

As the light failed and Malcolm cooked the dinner, Cecil and I disported ourselves on ski above the camp. Yes, it is possible to ski for pleasure quite often, and in this age of inter-continental rockets it is not fantastic to envisage such a place as a ski resort not too far distant in the future.

The morning dawned as good, or better, than we could have wished, and ten o'clock saw us well above the camp on our way to the main range. A fairly easy route through a crevassed area above the icefall led very quickly to a gentle col separating a polished ice mound from the main group. From here two or three hundred feet of gently sloping smooth black ice led up to the foot of the final rock ridge. To a large extent the ice was overlaid by tongues of hard névé right up to the final fifty-foot stretch before the rocks. Crampons were not enough on this steely surface, and a half hour's step cutting was required before we could attain the rocks. We stepped on to the shattered ridge into the welcoming rays of the sun. What a grand instant that was. And a few minutes later, when we trod the summit, our happiness was complete.

We were doubly blessed. The base, a few miles away on the other side of the island, still lay in the shadow. It would have to wait another fortnight for the sun, but there seemed no need to worry unduly over that prospect and we lived then only for the moment.

The air was still, and each individual crystal of ice shone and sparkled as if for our benefit alone. We sat and lunched and photographed just as though this were the top of Helvellyn

instead of a newly won and extremely lonely summit of an uninhabited continent. Eventually the photographic opportunities exhausted themselves and the thought occurred that we should perhaps move on. Tomorrow the weather might not be so kind. It would be best therefore to make the most of our heaven-sent chance to explore as much of the group as possible.

The ridge continued, a gently undulating highway, much like the ridge between Dale Head and Hindscarth in form. It was possible to move unroped provided we kept to the long ribbon of scree which led like a gravel path from the first saddle to the bulging ice cap of the next summit. All the way along, the eye could rove at will over glacier, ice sheet and rock ridge, right down to the ice cliff. This last intimidating wall may be an effective obstacle to physical access between land and sea, but the eye can clear it at a bound and cross the miles of sea ice to distant land where no one has set foot. Six or seven miles to the south lay Camp Point, marking the southern extremity of Square Bay. The bold rock ridge of serrated outline was supported by buttresses, 1,500 feet high, which fell so steeply to the sea as to be almost devoid of glaciers and snow. Further south the rocky points of Cape Calmette and Red Rock Ridge jutted out also towards the Bellingshausen Sea. Both were equally bare of snow, and the latter, with its lovely descriptive name, conjured up visions of the huge Adélie penguin rookery which we knew would be starting the season's business in a few weeks' time. Meanwhile, Red Rock Ridge pointed like a finger to the miles of ice which separated it from its summer population of penguins. The ice stretched apparently far beyond the serrated skyline of icebergs and immobilised pack ice, and certainly as far as Alexander Land, just faintly visible a hundred miles to the south.

The next summit after the ice cap had much rock showing through. Here and there small outcrops were evident and numerous boulders lay around embedded in the ice. This profusion of building material was significant because we had promised to build cairns for our surveyor's triangulation scheme. We did not grudge him this cairn for was it not also ours? Our ridge led us finally to a narrow knife edge which, if anything, outclassed all the others as a view point. The last peak of the chain was not to be ours, as it seemed to involve about an hour on a fine rock arête. It was an hour which we could not spare.

for the light was already failing, and reluctantly we began to retrace our steps.

The return to the camp took us down to Lystarme Glacier via a steep icefall flanking the rock ridges of our first peak. The icefall was quite difficult enough in that state of twilight and more than one foot found its way into a crevasse. This would not have been too bad had not two legs of the same person fallen into the same crevasse. The victim was easily extricated, however, and we were soon down on the familiar and safe route up Lystarme Glacier.

We were a happy trio lying in our sleeping bags an hour or two later. Over our dinner—a mug of cocoa, biscuits and pemmican hash—we talked over the events of the day and tried to agree on names for the tops we had climbed. Now the business of naming mountains and other topographical features, like that of naming husky pups, generally led to prolonged argument and discussions of some considerable heat. But be that as it may, we were soon unanimous on the name for the peak with the cairn. It became Penitent Peak and, as far as I know, that is the name it bears now.

I will not dwell on the account of the following day's climb. It was a less ambitious effort and not at all the summit that had been intended for that day. It was climbed as a sort of consolation prize after threats of bad weather had driven us off a more difficult neighbouring climb. Though only 2,000 feet high, it was a good peak, and as a recognition of its classical shape we named it provisionally and unimaginatively — Matterhorn.

We should be expected back at base on the morrow and there seemed no good reason for extending the trip. On the contrary, the weather was now threatening, so, as it was still early in the afternoon, we decided to start down. Conditions were now very different. An overcast sky with a chill breeze ensured that we remained fully dressed and the stop for lunch was necessarily brief. A branch glacier funnelled an icy blast down to the junction place. Little ' drift devils ' which had played to and fro over the upper icefield, teasing us with their erratic wanderings, now gave way to a persistent veil of drift a few inches above the surface.

However, the weather apparently did not want these ominous warnings to be taken seriously, for lower down on the glacier

the drift died away and progress again became a pleasure. The party had now arrived at the highest part of the glacier snout where the ice spills westwards to Lystad Bay and eastwards to Gendarme Bay. For the return journey we chose the eastward descent and the long haul round the north-east cape of the island via the sea ice.

I remembered a breach in the ice cliff which should afford access to the sea ice, but it soon became obvious that we could not reach it. As we travelled seawards, the surface became rougher and rougher until it was one complex maze of troughs and hummocks of black ice, and further progress was impossible. Slowly we retraced our steps to the even surface near the snout.

A short reconnaissance showed that at one point where the snout abutted against the north part of the island there was a break in the ice cliff. Here the glacier ended in a steep slope down to the bed of a gentle trough not far above the sea. It seemed a practicable slope down which the sledge could be lowered, if only the rocks near the bottom could be avoided.

We resolved to try it.

It was almost dark by the time we had brought the sledge over and we were in a hurry to get down. Our haste in trying to get off the glacier before camping almost led to our undoing.

I descended to a ledge on the slope while the others started to lower the sledge towards me on a hundred feet of nylon rope. An ice-axe driven into a snowdrift served as a bollard at the top, and the rope was paid out round it, the principle being of course for the speed of the sledge's descent to be checked by the friction of its rope round the ice-axe. What the pair at the top did not notice in the growing darkness was that the rope loop round the axe was steadily cutting its way down through the snowdrift. Inevitably it cut below the base of the axe, and before any of us suspected anything amiss, the rope had wrenched itself out of Malcolm's hands and the laden sledge charged straight at me. I dodged to one side as it passed me, travelling at great speed, and made a futile dive for the tail rope. It was fortunate that I failed to catch the rope, for the sledge would certainly have taken me with it in its headlong course.

The sledge rushed on silently into the darkness.

Waiting helplessly for the rending crash that we felt sure must come when the outfit collided with the rock outcrops and

boulders in the trough, I thought of the catastrophic results to food boxes, pots and pans, ski and, worst of all, my camera, which I treasured dearly. As the seconds dragged on, still with no sound from below, I dared to hope. Anxiously I cut my way down the ice. I walked carefully across the bed of the scoop and there, within thirty yards of the foot of the ice slope, the sledge stood tidily and on an even keel, its load undisturbed and intact. Miraculously it had passed within a few feet of two outcrops and, avoiding the deep eroded grooves further down the slope, it had run out over smooth hummocks to come to rest gently on the flat floor of the trough.

We had been spared the humiliation of having to explain away the loss of a sledge and equipment to our comrades at base, and I reflected that either a benevolent Deity was watching kindly over us, or that we were being reserved for a more spectacular fate than either starvation or exposure.

That was enough excitement for one day, so we camped forthwith.

The only thing to say about the rest of the journey home via the sea ice of Square Bay and Bourgeois Fiord is that it was a long, strenuous haul over bad surfaces. But what did that matter at the end of such a splendid and enjoyable Antarctic Holiday?

IN DONEGAL

Harold Drasdo

On first entering the Poisoned Glen we had imagined this climb. But there was a lot to be done; probabilities came first; even the least impressive buttresses were quite untouched. So time passed, lines were forced, attempts were stopped more and more often until our attention was turned back to the great cliffs under Bearnagh Mor.

Then a morning came so fine and fresh that an effort was compelled: and laden with all our gear my brother and I walked up the valley and clambered to the foot of the rocks. The rationalization had been made: we didn't expect to get up, unthinkable; but to experience, strength gone and every resource frustrated, the last movements and situation, that would be a quite sufficient satisfaction.

The way went at first up steep grassy grooves and gullies, already understood, until we were in the tremendous right-hand corner, clean-walled towards the top and ceilinged. Here we halted. Neville belayed me and I reached the point where a leftward traverse towards the enormous central scoop was intended. At a glance I saw that the slabs were not to be crossed by normal climbing; there were no horizontal possibilities; the rock appeared in smooth platings separated by slight perpendicular features: shallow gutters and seams or thin grass-filled cracks.

I placed a peg and roped across the slabs, protected from the rappel point, until, laybacking from the rope against a vertical kerb, I could reach a thin fissure, secure piton and stirrup and stand up; then, with two or three pegs, a foothold a little higher. A short rest, pressed against the clean cold stone down which at this point water was trickling: time to feel the damp neuter breath of the granite close to one's face. Movements became complicated. The climbing rope was locking. I descended to the first peg, settled into the stirrups, recovered the rappel rope, belayed Nev. He moved up to the rappel point, unclipped the climbing rope, returned to his stance. Rope-drag relieved a moment, I stripped the crack, placed a second rappel peg, made a second rappel and, laybacking against another narrow vertical facet, established myself in stirrups from a tiny rock spike, strange aberration in the naked slabs. Another rest: a raven fell in one astonishing drift a thousand feet into the valley and wheeled and lifted and was carried over the cliff top

and out of sight. The ledges were ten feet away. I could see good side holds; crossed painfully, using the unwilling drag of the ropes; an apprehensive glance upwards. Dry-throated, I belayed.

Then, time to get the breath back, then the almost unendurable wait whilst Neville moved laboriously towards me.

We were able to look around. The place had atmosphere. Here the enormous scoop, here the perched block and sapling, much bigger than we'd thought; below, the two great grooves, and somewhere to their left, the huge overhang from which the polished, characteristic slabs sprang upwards; above, on the right, a slightly impending wall reaching to the top of the cliff; and (a thin line deciphered from the valley years before) rising from behind the great block, between slabs and impending wall, so improbably, a chimney.

We should have stayed a while to experience that position, should have eaten sitting comfortably on the block, built a small cairn perhaps: but were anxious, impatient to be at the next difficulty. We rearranged clothing and equipment and led in turns, crossing an overhang to come within sight of the upper section. Again a surprise: the final roofs, which seemed from the valley to prohibit escape, might be overcome by a rib springing from the corner directly on to them. It was my lead. I took the right-hand wall, vertical but with good holds; tried to cross on to the facet; clinging there felt some deficiency; said in a weak voice I'd try to get back. The strange inversion we'd known often had come: the way out was for Nev. I managed to descend. Nev went up to the corner; purposeful, almost dedicated movements, I thought; and without a pause fluently up and across and leftwards to a stance on the lip of the overhangs. I followed. There were two lines, five feet apart. I remember a confused time of struggling on rock that was rounded, intractable. Violent moves, a zigzag, and he was exiting on stripping grass; then more calmly to a place within sight of the top. I made a rope-length and was out. No security, a victory piton invited; I placed one, belayed, took in slack; but, for some reason, a final rap. The hammer splintered and sprang to pieces.

We walked to the summit and looked around. That landscape: those bald open hills, Errigal there, two coast-lines uniting

at Bloody Foreland limiting seas stretching to the Arctic and to America in grey unbroken wastes. It was almost sunset; the western sky was violent with an instable passion. There was a quietness inseparable from the immensity that it enclosed. Donegal.

And here were we, neither assessing it nor interpreting it, but feeling somehow the evening itself an expression of our mood, an extension of emotion and thought; a fused identity; with something compounded of satisfaction, agitation, astonishment and shifting nuances beyond analysis or mention. Landscape, sunset, we hardly saw it. We contained it.

And later, rounding down on to the peat-hags, stumbling heavily across the tussocked flats, while, after the last slow flickerings, the sky grew grey: we were tired out.

THE HIGH LEVEL ROUTE—ARGENTIÈRE TO SAAS FEE ON SKI

Dick Cook

The High Level Route is probably the finest ski tour in Europe. It has a few variations, but the one we took stretched eighty-three miles from Argentière to Saas Fee, through some of the most magnificent mountain scenery in the Alps, crossing twelve cols, ascending 32,000 feet (on ski) and descending 34,000 feet. The whole route is of absorbing interest.

Our party consisted of Harry Spilsbury, Eric Arnison, George Kilgour, Frank Grundy, Lewis Smith and myself. We took with us as guide René Marcoz of Champex. It was decided to start during the third week in April and to traverse from west to east as this seemed to give the longest downhill runs. We hoped that all the crevasses would be filled and that Harry's assurance of superb spring skiing on lovely powder snow would be fulfilled.

The standard of skiing required is not necessarily very high, but one has to be fit, because in the ten days normally taken on the route all types of weather are encountered; also a fair amount of food and spare clothing has to be carried. The two volumes of *Guide du Skieur dans les Alpes Valaisannes* with maps of scale 1/50,000 are invaluable.

Harry had a week in the Silvretta to get tuned up, while the rest of us spent a few days around Verbier, which is a delightful spot. We were thrilled to see the fields covered with tiny inch-high crocí to just below the snow line. From Verbier we climbed Mont Fort (3,330 metres) which is a wonderful view point, particularly of the Grand Combin group.

We met Harry at Martigny, bought some provisions, posted the surplus to Orsières and took the train to Argentière. Frank, Lewis and René then went off to Chamonix to replace a ski which Frank had broken near Mont Fort. Eric, Harry and I started off about 3 p.m. for the Hôtel de Lognan (2,032 metres), a trip which was supposed to take two hours. Rain was falling as we plodded up the avalanche slope and it was really hard work; then we saw and climbed to a track high up on our left and the going became much easier. Next it started to snow: we could not see for more than twenty yards and it became darker. It looked as though we should never arrive at the hotel, or that we had passed it, or that we were on the wrong

side of the mountain, but on we plodded. To add to my anxiety, my Trima skins were forced off through the soft snow finding its way in between the skin and the ski. Then we heard a shout from above which was very heartening. Soon Eric and I found a track which had been made by foot, so we took off the ski and just wallowed up the slope with snow up to our thighs, while Harry kept cheerfully zigzagging to the hotel. We arrived soaked to the skin about 6 p.m.

We were very well received with hot *Glühwein* which had a wonderful tonic effect, and were given permission to change in the dining room, which was divided by a curtain from the living room. We stripped, and then Harry found that water had seeped into his rucksack and that his change of clothing was wet through. Perhaps due to Harry's loud praise of French weather, the curtain parted and a female head appeared, but was quickly withdrawn at what she must have thought an appalling sight. We waited for a while for the others, then decided to have our meal, which we did in the company of an Englishwoman who did not speak or even look at us. Perhaps she had seen enough. Lewis, Frank and René arrived just as we were finishing dinner.

The following morning—18th April—the mist was still down and a lot of snow had fallen, but as there was some visibility, we decided to break a trail towards the Col du Chardonnet and to start the following day if possible. It was hard work beating down a track in about three feet of new snow, but now and again we did get views of the Aiguille Verte and the Grandes Montets Ridge which looked fine. We had an interesting trip up the glacier, taking turns to lead in the deep snow: amongst the icefalls it was fun and quite spectacular. I had not skied on a rope before, and when we turned back at about 500 metres from the col, the order was 'keep the rope on'—an experience I am not likely to forget. Lewis, George and I started merrily enough after the others, but unfortunately I was at the end. It was a bit tricky keeping the rope reasonably taut all the time. One usually relies on the sticks when turning and I found it difficult to use them, change the rope from one hand to the other when George changed direction, and take the rope in when George crossed below me, particularly when we were travelling in different directions (that is before I turned to follow George). While I could see him I did

reasonably well, but when we got to the glacier and he disappeared round the corner, that was it. There was a wall of ice on one side and a crevasse on the other, and on rounding the corner I saw that George had stopped. Apparently René had to make a difficult move through the icefall, and Harry and Frank were waiting their turn, when Lewis, George and I whipped round the corner. Panic reigned: sticks, ski, arms, clutching bodies—the lot—just a seething mass of humanity and skiing gear, everybody apologizing to everybody else (we had just begun the holiday). No one was any the worse, however, and it was not long before we were through the icefall and back at the hotel for the usual tonic of *Glühwein*, a good meal and bed.

Next morning at 6 o'clock we were overjoyed to see that the weather had improved, and an hour later we set off for the Trient Hut. The sun was shining through a light haze as we made good time on our tracks of the previous day. Because of the risk of avalanches on the Col du Chardonnet after such a heavy snowfall, we decided to head for the Trient Glacier via the Col du Passon instead. We crossed the Argentière Glacier, struck off to the left, and soon were zigzagging up the Glacier du Passon. It was now a beautiful morning as we took turns at beating out the track. The views of the Verte, Droites, Courtes and the Mummery and Ravanel twin peaks were magnificent, but we could not loiter as it was now midday, the snow was getting soft, and the gully up to the col was at least 300 feet high and very steep. René left his ski for us to carry. They were steel Attenhofer and very heavy, but as he was kicking and, at times, cutting steps, no one minded. Half-way up we stopped and René took to the rock, climbed to the top of the gully and threw down a rope which we used to climb up the steep bed. We had a bite to eat in the sunshine on the col (3,026 metres) and then René set off for a roped descent. He went before I was ready and I did a beautiful nose-dive into about four feet of snow. On the Glacier du Tour we again took turns in leading and as the light was bad it was some time before we reached the Col du Tour (3,282 metres): shortly afterwards we arrived at the Trient Hut (3,170 metres). There was no one at home, but we soon had a fire going and, after good helpings of soup, meat, stewed fruit, swilled down with oodles of tea, we were able to relax

A start was made before 8 a.m. on St. George's Day, 23rd April, and we skied from the hut down to the Glacier de Cheilon: the mist cleared as we were crossing the crevassed part and suddenly we were surprised by Mont Blanc de Cheilon towering above us on our right; it made a fine picture with its cornices glistening in the sun, and the photographers dropped everything to capture this grand sight. A little higher we reached the Col de la Serpentine and crossed a wide snow field where the wind was bitingly cold: then moved across a steep corner to the Col de Breney and up to the col below the Pigne d'Arolla where we left the rucksacks in order to climb the peak (3,796 metres). The weather just at the moment was quite good; we had fine views of the Valais peaks, the Weisshorn, Zinal Rothorn, Matterhorn, Dent Blanche and Dent d'Hérens, but as we were coming down, the mist came down too. We roped, as there were crevasses, and when we came to a track made by an ascending party we took longish sweeps, crossing and recrossing it all the way down on good snow. Lower down we had a difficult traverse and side-slipped the last steep part to the Vignettes Hut (3,157 metres) which we reached at 2 p.m. We had arranged that the Guardian should bring us some fresh meat from Arolla, and later in the afternoon he arrived with his brother who had accompanied him as the mist was so bad.

The party was in great form now: no trouble at all in getting up early and leaving at 6 a.m. for the run down to the Glacier de Vuibé and the ascent of the Glacier du Mont Collon to the Col de l'Évêque (3,392 metres). When we paused here, we could see the line of our descent from the Pigne d'Arolla and could now appreciate the danger from the crevasses on either side of our tracks. Mont Blanc stood out clearly with the Grand Combin in front. We skied down from the Col de l'Évêque (some 1,500 feet), turning la Vièrge, a large rock in the middle of the glacier; then our route lay up to the Col du Mont Brulé (3,213 metres). We took a wide sweep approaching the col, then with the ski off we made a bee line for the top, climbing with one ski in each hand, kicking steps and sliding the ski up the steep snow as we moved; near the top we put on ski again although it was still very steep. We now made height by traversing the slope for a little way, then shuffling backwards without turning, repeating the performance until we reached the col, where we stayed for perhaps

an hour, for there were really magnificent views all the way round, particularly into Italy. On the Haut Glacier de Tsa de Tsan it was very hot and stifling and we were glad when the next few miles up to the Col de Valpelline (3,568 metres) were behind us, but it was worth while. What a view lay in front of us! The Dent d'Hérens, Matterhorn, Dent Blanche, Ober Gabelhorn, Weisshorn, Dom, Täschhorn, all the giants were there to greet us. After taking many photographs we were off again, down the Stockji Gletscher by an intricate route, very enjoyable until we climbed the Stockji and ran, or rather attempted to run, across the avalanche-strewn slopes of the Tiefmatten Gletscher. The route along the top of the moraine was good and the pull up to the Schönbühl Hut (2,710 metres) finished off a truly memorable day.

Swiss troops on a training manoeuvre were staying the night and they moved off quite early the next morning. Those of the party who got up to watch them go were rewarded by some lovely photographs of the rosy glow on the Dent d'Hérens looking really majestic with the sun lighting up its icy bastions. It had been suggested the previous day that we might run down to Zermatt instead of staying at the Schönbühl: now we were glad that we had not done so as we could take our time, enjoying the sun and the fine hard snow to ski right down to the outlying chalets of Zermatt, and to admire a field of croci alongside the path with the Matterhorn beaming down on it.

The Station Restaurant supplied some calories in appetizing form. Lewis got the bag out of pawn, extracted most of the delicacies, and at 4 p.m. we took the chair lift to Sunnegga (2,300 metres) and set off for the Fluhalp Hut (2,612 metres). We had to keep taking off our ski and putting them on again as we alternated between earth and snow, and we were glad to get to the hut at about 7-30 p.m. The key we had brought from Zermatt would not open the door. René broke it in the lock so we had to force the door open, pulling the frame out in the process. Harry repaired the lock and we put the frame back, but the following morning we had to leave the door open and report this when we reached Saas Fee.

René had complained of a bad throat the night before, although George could not see much wrong with it, but he was feeling a little better when we left for the Adler Pass at 6 a.m. Some icefalls were steep and difficult, but we pushed on, at

times following the tracks made by the soldiers we had seen at the Schönbühl, and reached the top of the pass (3,798 metres) at noon, after carrying ski for the last hundred feet or so. We had something to eat and took many photos. René again complained that he was not well, so he went down to the Britannia Hut (3,031 metres) whilst we climbed the Strahlhorn (4,191 metres) quite easily on excellent snow. The run down to the Britannia was good apart from some crust low down.

The next day, 29th April, broke fine again, and for good measure some of the party 'collected' their second *Viertausender* by ascending the Allalinhorn (4,030 metres) on perfect snow. We left our ski at the plateau and kicked steps all the way to the top. The summit ridge was fine and the view of the Rimpfischhorn and Strahlhorn was magnificent. As the last part of the ascent on ski to the plateau had been steepish, I felt that the descent would be difficult, but our guide took great wide sweeps which went really well, and soon we were down through the crevasses to our rucksacks, which we had left lower down. We were soon off again towards Saas Fee, but the snow worsened considerably near the village, where it was really wet and heavy. However it was the end of the tour, and as the last bus was just leaving we decided to shoot off for home, picking up our bag at Stalden and catching the night plane from Geneva.

It had been a jolly good holiday: no snags, no bickerings, everyone thoroughly enjoying themselves, and we had done the Haute Route. True, we had not been over the Chardonnet Col and the Grand Combin, but then there is always tomorrow, and we don't wish to use the mountains all up at one go. We were glad of René's ability to relieve us of the responsibility of route finding in bad weather; and his arrangements for the use of huts, which are rarely guarded at this time of year, were very helpful, too. We owed a great debt to Harry for his organization and to Lewis for his wonderful catering and for seeing to the dispatch of food supplies to points along the route so that we never needed to carry more than three days' food. Eric and Frank kept us all in jovial mood with a constant flow of stories and George ministered to our physical needs when it was necessary to do so. What more could one ask for?

OUTWARD BOUND IN THE LAKE DISTRICT

John Lagoe

For over eight years now there has been an Outward Bound School in Eskdale, and in 1955 a second School was opened on Ullswater. Both Schools have received a great deal of help and advice from individual Club members and from the Club itself during these years; four members are on the Boards of one or both Schools; many others serve on a Mountain Advisory Committee; and a number are, or have been, Instructors.

This article attempts to explain how Outward Bound works in the Lake District and what it is trying to do.

Since the first School was opened at Aberdovey on Cardigan Bay in 1941, the idea has been to make use of natural challenges in training young men, so that every part of them, physical, mental and spiritual, may be awakened and developed. This idea was not original, but its application was. Many lessons were learned from the effects of severe war-time trials on ordinary men, and the short twenty-six day Outward Bound course has often been described as a means of achieving the good of war without the evil. Testing adventures, exacting new experiences, demands and hardships of many kinds are the stuff of the course. At Aberdovey these have always been mainly provided by the sea with a little time spent on Cader Idris, but when the interest became so great that the Outward Bound Trust was formed in 1945 to open more Schools, there was no shortage of mountaineers to press for the full-time use of mountains. So the second School was in Eskdale, and the climbing population of the western fells increased by over 700 boys a year.

Most of these boys, aged between 16½ and 19½ years, are sent by industrial sponsors, but many Local Education Authorities have not been slow to realize the value of this unorthodox kind of further education, and they and parents with thirty guineas to spare sponsor schoolboys. The only qualifications are health and the right age. On the whole the industrial boys are apprentices or trainees of some kind, sent here as part of their training by sponsors who attach considerable importance to our report compiled at the end of the course. Several shipping companies use us in this way to vet their future apprentices, and an increasing number of Chief Constables are including two Outward Bound courses, one sea and one mountain, as part of the training of a police cadet.

A course is a community; up to eighty boys, working in patrols of ten with a Patrol Instructor, share the joys and hardships of a life that is foreign to most of them. Patrols are composed of as wide a variety as possible, so that each boy is purposely faced with the problem of living and working in close contact with nine others of different ages, different backgrounds, different dialects, sometimes different languages. The friendships created here often go deeper than any previously experienced, and the insight into other ways of life and thought is of obvious value to most boys. This was once well expressed by a schoolboy who wrote: 'The thought that soon I had to leave school and join the army and later work for a living has always frightened me before. But meeting and talking with so many boys who are at work and really enjoy it has given me new confidence.'

The words 'boys' and 'School,' used for want of better terms, give a false impression of the Outward Bound atmosphere. The relationship between Instructor and boy is far removed from the usual teacher-schoolboy relationship, mainly because of age and numbers. There are few School rules and little discipline imposed from above. After a day or two's settling in, as much as possible of the daily running of the School is left to the boys themselves, especially to the captain and quartermaster of each patrol. Of course things go wrong; and courses vary. But on the whole there is no problem of discipline; the more responsibility is given to boys, the more responsible they are.

Behind the reception work that any course involves, our prime task is to put the boys at ease, to make them feel at home, to get them to regard their Instructors as friends rather than remote superiors; and it's amazing how the mere use of Christian names breaks down barriers. The Warden's first job is not so much to explain the purpose of the course as to develop in boys' minds the right approach to it. Already inevitable comparisons have been made: some are plainly more intelligent, better educated, bigger, stronger than others. They now learn that natural ability and natural gifts are no advantage here, and the lack of them no handicap. Much is expected from those to whom much is given, little from those to whom little. Everyone can try; and to do well means to make a good, spirited effort, regardless of results. There is no comparison of one with another, and

therefore no cause for either self-congratulation or despair. Excellent results easily obtained don't bring any credit: hard, determined efforts, even though producing the lowest result, do.

Both the Ullswater and Eskdale Schools are country houses converted to provide simple dormitory accommodation, the usual common and dining rooms, and what are probably the biggest and best drying rooms in the District. Washing up and general cleaning is done by the boys. Each day starts with a run and dip in Ullswater or Gatehouse Tarn, and work proper begins after breakfast and morning prayers.

The main theme of the training is mountaineering, once defined by Eric Shipton as 'living and moving in mountains'; and the main aim is to bring boys to as high a level of 'hill-worthiness' as possible, so that they can justifiably be severely tested in a final mountain journey. At present eleven days and eight nights are spent away from the School, on the 'schemes.' The remaining days, except Sundays which are free, are devoted to basic training, which includes a variety of activities apart from those directly connected with mountaineering. Things like canoeing, athletics, ropes course, forestry, serve to widen interests and produce fitness as well as to provide a relief from the intensive instruction in map reading, bivouacking, cooking, first aid, mountain rescue, rock climbing.

After a grounding in these elements of mountaineering, the real training is done through two schemes, on the first of which each patrol is with its own Instructor for the whole time. A typical patrol goes over the Screes to Wasdale Head, builds bivouacs there about lunch-time, then climbs Kirk Fell or Gable without heavy kit; next day they go up to Mickledore, leave rucksacks, visit the Pike, do the Deep Ghyll—Broad Stand round of Scafell, and descend to bivouac in Upper Eskdale; then perhaps home via Hard Knott and Harter on the third day. For most boys this is their first acquaintance with high mountains, scree, nights in a bivouac, cooking their own meals, and being wet through, especially the latter. We always hope for some bad weather on this scheme so that boys may learn from their Instructors how to cope with it, in terms of both technique and morale. It is noticeable how easily morale cracks if boys' first experience of bad mountain weather comes on the final scheme, when they are alone.

About the middle of the course an important 24-hour period is spent on 'Solo,' the one occasion when each boy is entirely on his own. The scheme runs from noon to noon; each boy has his own route to follow and his own little tasks to do, in low-lying ground, before an evening rendezvous with his Instructor, who gives him an area where he must choose a site, build a bivouac for the night, and cook his food on his own fire. Other boys are usually within sight or sound but no co-operation of any kind is allowed. Next morning a different route leads back to the School. This scheme is always a good test of what has been learnt so far, and an interesting challenge to some who have never been alone in the country before. Most boys enjoy 'Solo' enormously: for once they are free of the demands of teamwork.

By this time all have gained a fairly good knowledge of mountain rescue procedure and first aid. Boys react well to genuine demands made upon them, and in all Outward Bound Schools great stress is laid on some appropriate form of 'Samaritan service.' During the last years, Outward Bound boys have made no small contribution to rescue work in the District, and, perhaps more important, the two schools have turned out over 6,000 boys with a wider knowledge of mountain safety than have most visiting walkers.

The approach to the spirit implicit in Samaritan service is explicitly supplemented by a special effort to get boys to think about their religious beliefs and to consider the claims and merits of the Christian faith. This is done in a strictly non-sectarian manner, partly through regular morning readings and prayers (whether in School or camp) and through discussion groups, which are very popular.

At half-time, too, all Instructors meet to discuss each boy's progress — in terms of effort and attitude, of course. Then in private interviews, whatever advice, criticism, encouragement is thought necessary, is passed on to the boys. We leave them in no doubt, though to criticize a boy's performance frankly is often an Instructor's hardest job.

The only rock climbing comes during the next scheme, usually of four days. For this each patrol has a base camp from which, each day, a few boys go off to climb with their Instructor. Despite the B.B.C. television programme last January, boys don't lead unless they're thoroughly capable and want to. The classic

Diffs. and V. Diffs. of the Napes, Pillar, Scafell, Bowfell, Dow are most frequently climbed, though in bad weather we are usually driven down to Shepherd's Crag or Wallowbarrow. While these few climb, the rest go off in groups of three or four for a full day's walk on the hills, their first time without an Instructor. This is the time when many boys can be given the opportunity to lead a group and so gain experience of responsibility.

The training culminates in the 'final scheme,' planned to tax the boys' self-reliance in some obvious and some not-so-obvious ways. For each group of four with its carefully chosen leader, six or eight checkpoints form the framework of the mountain journey they will make. The route between the checkpoints, which are all at a middle height (e.g., Black Sail Pass, Dale Head Tarn, Stickle Tarn), is for them to decide. If the weather is good, they should stay as high as possible and climb as many peaks as they can on the way. If it's bad they do well to get round the checkpoints in the three days. Where they bivouac is their concern. No help of any kind is given by Instructors once the briefing is over and the scheme has started; but in every valley, usually in Club huts, two Instructors are stationed throughout the scheme, ready to be called on in case of emergency; each group leader carries a list of these 'Instructor posts.'

Now obviously boys here use all the techniques they have learned. But the real test is of co-operation and morale. Nothing keeps the group going but itself, and little or nothing is known of its performance except what it tells us afterwards. To keep going hard for three days when there is no one to drive you but yourself and no exact aim to achieve costs a lot. To stick to the rules of the scheme and insist on bivouacking on a wild wet night when a friendly farmer offers you his barn and there's no Instructor there to see—this is a real challenge. Of course not all are so strong; but more than one farmer has told of those who are.

The following route taken last July by three apprentices and a schoolboy gives an idea of what determined and well-trained boys can achieve. First day: from School to Wasdale, Middle Fell, Seatallan, Scoat Fell, Pillar, Black Sail Pass, Scarth Gap, High Crag to Red Pike, down to bivouac in Buttermere. Second day: Robinson to Dale Head, Honister, Grey Knotts to Green Gable and Great Gable, Styhead, Esk Pike, Bowfell, Crinkles,

down to bivouac at Three Shire Stone. Third day: Carrs, Swirl How, ridge to Old Man, Seathwaite Tarn, Harter Fell, School. For most of the second day and all the second night the weather was very bad.

At the end of the course the boy's performance is summed up for him in a badge and a final interview with his patrol Instructor, and for the sponsor in a written report. Boys write their own — very revealing — comments on the course. From these and from a steady stream of letters from sponsors and boys later, sometimes much later, we learn what an Outward Bound course means to those who undergo it. There are many different by-products, ranging from a new interest in mountaineering to a new appreciation of home and 'how much mum does.' But the most striking single thing which appears to affect each boy in one way or another, is the wider realization of his own capabilities, and the consequent increase of confidence. 'I didn't know I had it in me,' 'I've done things here which I thought were impossible'; these and similar remarks come again and again from boys about to leave.

Don't be sorry for any rain-drenched, weary boys of ours you may meet on the hills. Of course they're not enjoying it, not usually. (You need to work in the hills all the year round to realize how much it does rain.) Many of them, like the summer tourists whose holiday is all rain, will not want to see a mountain again once the course is over. But after the struggle to overcome the hardships, difficulties, discomforts that these hills produce so readily, every boy is a step nearer manhood. Surely we, who know the struggle well, can join with the lad who wrote: 'I enjoyed the whole course immensely, *except at the time*. I wouldn't have missed it for worlds.'

NO PICNIC ON MONTE VISO

Wallace Greenhalgh

That, of course, is not strictly accurate: in its way, it was very much of a picnic. It was just that we had not even a label off a corned-beef tin, though I admit we had a look at a picture postcard—of the wrong side of the mountain. Whether we were recapturing the spirit of the pioneering days or were merely innocents abroad, I don't know. Certainly the whole expedition, and not merely our part in it, was somewhat disorganized, and about the only conclusion to be reached is that it's comforting to know where one is going.

I don't know when we decided to climb Monte Viso: in 1954 perhaps, when we saw it from the Gran Paradiso. At any rate, when we were driven in 1956 by bad weather first from Switzerland and then from Courmayeur, we thought things might be better near Monte Viso. But neither in Courmayeur nor in Aosta could we find a guide-book or map, so instead we bought a road map and went to the Mediterranean. The coast looked like Blackpool on Bank Holiday. The search for a camp site was hopeless, and even a peaceful bathe involved waiting until siesta-time and climbing down a little cliff near Pietra Ligure. Monte Viso began to seem very attractive.

The road map appeared to show that Monte Viso was on a subsidiary ridge between two valleys, and that the road in the northern one—the Valle del Po—ran nearer to the mountain. We thought vaguely that if there were any glaciers on the mountain they would be on the northern side. Besides, we had recently read de Beer's *Alps and Elephants* and wondered whether we should have time to go and see if Hannibal could have crossed the Col de Traversette. And so one evening Edward drove us towards Crissolo in the upper reaches of the Po valley. As the figures on the gradient signs beside the road increased steadily to 11.5%, Phil and I were quietly meditating upon the correlation between glaciation and camp sites when the road swept through the square in Crissolo and into a walled yard behind a house. We backed out, asked a policeman, and continued up a steep, rough lane beside the church. After some five kilometres of very slow going, when we stopped for the second time with a vapour lock in the petrol pump, a helpful farmer appeared and found

us a camp site — the first flat piece of ground in the valley — near his house, made us put the car under cover in his yard, and even held the torch while we erected the tents.

The next morning was fine and clear, and we sat in front of the tents trying to sort out the geography. We were just below Pian della Regina, the flat ground at the head of the valley, and above it rose a rock wall like a small Cirque de Gavarnie. There seemed to be a way out round the corner to the right, presumably to the Col de Traversette, and a similar way to the left led up beneath the north face of Monte Viso. We just did not see where a normal route up the mountain might be; the east and west ridges looked able to provide hard climbing for a long time, and as for the face between them, I decided no amount of allowance for foreshortening, parallax, or anything else would get me on it. There was a large lateral moraine at the foot of the face and a track from the valley leading up a grassy shoulder towards it; it almost looked as though there might be a hut up there.

At this point we consulted the farmer's son. There was a hut up there, two and a half hours from Pian della Regina, but the track we could see lost itself; it was better to go first to Pian del Rey, round the corner to the right. It seemed surprising, but he ought to know. As for the normal way up the mountain, one crossed a little col behind a peak on the east ridge — we should see from the hut. By this time, in spite of a strong wind blowing clouds from the west over Monte Viso, heavy clouds were coming up from the fertile plains of Lombardy in the east, and by midday the valley was filled. It seemed unlikely that we should see anything, let alone a little col behind a peak on the east ridge, but we decided that we might as well go and look for the hut—there might even be a map there. And if the weather followed that day's pattern, it might be sunny next morning until about ten or eleven o'clock.

From Pian del Rey, the next stair on the right, so to speak, a track climbed to the left, to traverse all round the head of the valley. The lie of the land was very confusing, and in the mist it was impossible to disentangle it. There seemed to be little subsidiary valleys draining in every possible direction. We passed a lake, crossed a little ridge, went up a valley to a second lake, and across on to the side of the lateral moraine—this was the two and a half hours from Pian della Regina. We climbed

a spur at its far end, where presumably the other track from Pian della Regina would come if it did not lose itself, turned back on to the top of the moraine, and thought we ought to see the hut. We did twenty minutes' boulder-hopping, came out on to the edge of a hollow which ought to have been a glacier but was merely more boulders, and thought the hut should be on the little saddle at its head. But it wasn't. There was another lake beyond, draining away from us, and the hut was on a saddle on its left. By my reckoning it was vertically above our tents. The east ridge of Monte Viso threw down an enormous buttress on the right of the lake, and beyond it we supposed we should find the col we had to cross.

There was a map on the wall in the hut. But it was made up of four sections, with—inevitably—Monte Viso on the join in the middle, and the edges of the sections were so scuffed that we could make nothing of it. Still, not to worry; we talked with a guide who was taking a party of five up next day, and seemed to think it a quite easy, four-hour climb. We got an impression of a face like that of the Grivola, slanting ribs, and snow gullies to be crossed from one rib to the next, and any amount of loose stuff everywhere. There was some to-do in the hut because a party was still out on the mountain, but they came in about half past eight, after fifteen hours on the normal route. We decided that whatever else Monte Viso was, it was certainly the most confusing mountain we had met.

We left the hut about half past four next morning, and were passed by the guide and his caravan while we were feeling for the track among the boulders on the far side of the lake. The guide carried a toy ice-axe walking stick, and there was not a rope in the party—what on earth were these snow gullies, then? The track wound round the mountainside beneath the huge buttress we had seen and turned up to the foot of a steep, loose gully. Here the guide waited for us, and having insisted that we keep close to him as a precaution against loose stones, he set such a pace up the gully that when we reached the little col at its head I was worn out and gasping. Beyond the col was a shallow valley which again ought to have held a glacier but was merely boulders, and above its head was the south face of the mountain. Or was it the south-east face? We had just crossed the south-east ridge, we were told, but what had happened to the east ridge? At all events, we could climb here;

this was a broken, second-hand-looking face, with steep walls at its left and the crest of the 'east-south-east' ridge at its right, and between these one could obviously go up with as much ease or difficulty as one cared to look for in the confusion of broken ribs and gullies.

From the Valley of Stones we went up on to the higher of two huge terraces slanting up to the right, and thence on to the face itself. Again the guide insisted that we keep close to him—obviously we had been adopted, and quite rightly, too, for nine people were likely to rearrange the stones on that face to a considerable extent. 'The climb, though excessively steep, was not very difficult,' wrote Mathews of the first ascent, 'as the rocky juts and corners on which we placed our hands and feet afforded tolerably firm support, and were quite free from ice.' Notions of steepness have changed since 1861, but the constitution of the mountain seems much the same. 'Loose blocks of all shapes and sizes lay along the couloirs, stood poised upon pedestals, or rested insecurely upon sloping faces of rock.' After an hour or so we were allowed to use our ice-axes for a few feet on a tiny patch of hard snow, and we emerged for a moment on the crest of the 'south-east-by-east' ridge to peer down a rickety couloir at the lake, the hut, and the cloud-filled valley. Then more scrambling among the ruins a little to the left of the ridge, the ridge itself for a couple of hundred feet, and then two crosses and the Visitors' Book.

'It is 9-20 a.m.; we are on a flat, rock-strewn ridge; before us is another similar and parallel one, connected with the first by a curving arête of snow.' But Mathews had better luck with the view. We are in sunshine on our rock-strewn ridge, certainly, but the question of whether it is possible to see the Mediterranean remains unanswered for us; we can see a lump of cloud, larger than the rest, which might be the Gran Paradiso, a plain of cloud over Lombardy ('the prospect eastward . . . is not altogether satisfactory'), and ridges of cloud everywhere else. However, 'the percentage of chlorite in different parts of the mountain is very various, and in some places so small that the rock is little else than quartz.'

After the guide's young men had photographed each other repeatedly (borrowing our ice-axes for props.), they began to be anxious about Giulio, who was not there. Giulio was using a ciné-camera, and had apparently stayed behind at the break-

fast-place, where we had climbed up to the crest of the ridge, in order to take photographs. I felt very friendly towards Giulio; I recognized his symptoms from my own experience. But the whole of the face for the next hour echoed with the crashing of rocks and shouts of 'Giulio.' Phil, Edward and I came down at the end of the line—it seemed more comfortable. And if Giulio was wise, he was well away from the foot of the face by that time. Just above the big terrace the guide brought us into a gully rather steeper than the rest, and almost seemed to think we ought to use our rope, but we managed to bring it down unharmed.

We idled our way over the 'east-by-south' ridge and down to the hut, where the cloud came clammily up to meet us. There was cloud all the way to Pian del Rey, and down to our tents, and probably to Turin and all points east as well. But we paddled in the stream at Pian della Regina, and emptied the *fiasco* of Chianti at supper, and wondered what the mountain was like. And where it was, for that matter. On our way up to Crissolo, we had crossed a large bridge labelled 'Fiume Po.' But there was only a dry stretch of boulders beneath it. It seemed quite normal, now.

FIRST 'FIRST'

R. G. Higgins

We'd sat on a little grassy knoll two days earlier on the way up Wind and looked across at it; it was sharp, steep, and the left-hand ridge, seen in profile, looked interesting—very interesting. 'What's its name?' I asked Hans. 'Oh! It's no name,' he answered. 'Has it been climbed?' 'I don't suppose so,' was the reply. I looked at the map; the top, I saw, just cut the nine thousand foot contour; four thousand feet below, the North and South Ribbon Creeks, coming down from either side, met; three miles further down they joined the Kananaskis river, flowing north to the great Bow River valley, where the main highway and C.P.R. track push through the Rockies from Calgary to Banff, and on over the Kicking Horse Pass into British Columbia.

No more was said about it that day, but the next, lunching by a waterfall, after defeat on Mount Kidd, we lay in the sun and again, opposite us, was the little nine-thousand foot peak. This time we were looking at it from the other side, but again that steep rock ridge was in profile, and again we eyed it silently and wondered . . .

It wasn't until after supper that night, as the dusk fell, that someone mentioned it again; it was Hans, I think, for we wouldn't have had the audacity to suggest trying a first ascent on what was still only our third day in the Rockies.

Fred and I were on two weeks' leave from Halifax, and had flown to Calgary and there met Hans Gmoser, the Austrian guide from Banff, whom we had already engaged for a week by letter. A friend of Hans had driven us up from Calgary, and now we were camped on the wooded banks of the Kananaskis river fifty miles south of Banff, with the most magnificent limestone peaks all around us; a spell of settled weather promised some wonderful days to come. Hans, at twenty-five, had been climbing and skiing all over British Columbia and Alberta for the past five years and, before that, had reached a very high standard in Austria; he was definitely a grade-six man. He was tall, about six foot three, very fit and a most cheery and amusing climbing companion; and, without doubt, he was one of the best rock climbers I've ever climbed behind.

So it was that 6-30 a.m. on June the third, 1957, found us heading out of camp up the old lumber trail for Ribbon Creek.

Passing some long deserted miners' huts at the mouth of the creek, we put up an elk nosing amongst the refuse; he disappeared into the thick alder by the stream in a flash, and under the tall pines, cool and shaded from the already blazing sun, all was quiet and still. There was no sign of game; and the only thing that moved was an occasional chipmunk or squirrel.

Where the rivers forked, we crossed to the south branch by a fast-disintegrating log bridge, and half a mile further on turned off the trail into dense pine. We started climbing at once and soon came out on an avalanche track which we had seen from camp; this narrow band of grass, thick with wild strawberry plants, led up for some fifteen hundred feet through the pines to bring us to a snow basin under the south-east face of our peak. The limestone cliffs now rose, tier after tier, for about two thousand feet to the summit, and out to the right and high above us was our ridge. It rose in a series of steps. We saw at once that the first step overhung and, further, that this overhang continued to the left almost a third of the way across the face. Nor did we think that it could be turned on the far side of the ridge. There were only two possible points of weakness: one, a rib running up the centre of the face, and the other, a gully well over to our left, which would involve a very long traverse higher up if our ridge was to be gained.

We roped on two hundred feet of nylon, and Hans started up the rib without hesitation, moving rythmically in beautiful balance; Fred and I followed more clumsily on rock that was perhaps V. Diff. and, for Alberta, very sound. It was a good start to a good climb. Two more pitches found us on a narrow band of steep scree with the first tier of cliffs below us. To the right, a little gully, where we drank gratefully from a trickle of ice-cold water, provided the key to the second tier. Hans, as usual, was moving very fast and no time was being lost; easier rocks followed, and we made height rapidly, always trending to the right towards the ridge. A larger, sloping terrace brought us to the foot of a vertical wall—a band of yellow rock running right across the face. We searched along its base for a chink in its armour and found it in a steep little thirty-foot chimney backed with slimy moss, down which ran a trickle of water. Standing clear of the path of any falling stones, I couldn't see Hans climb it, but when I joined him at the top, the water having run over my head, in at my collar and cuffs and out at

the bottom of my trousers, I saw that he was quite dry—not even his knees or elbows were damp, and my regard for his climbing rose even higher.

I remember two more very good pitches higher up, the second a delightful slab that brought us out on the ridge about three hundred feet below the summit. On the right, the cliffs dropped almost sheer away to North Ribbon Creek; beyond was our friend of two days earlier—Wind (10,200 feet)—and to the left of it the awesome limestone walls of Mount Sparrowhawk and the almost level ridge running two miles to Bogart. In the other direction was Mount Kidd with the hundred-foot vertical step on its unclimbed north-east ridge that had defeated us the day before. An eagle soared across the face. The weather was perfect, the rock warm and dry, the view magnificent—this was climbing at its best. There was no great difficulty, but up here on the ridge care was needed, for some of the holds were not altogether sound.

A couple more pitches, and then we were moving together; suddenly Hans stopped and beckoned us to go ahead. We passed in front of him and then, realizing he had held back to let us be the first to step on the virgin summit, we too stopped to persuade him to go in front, for certainly every bit of the credit for the climb was his. Nothing would induce him to resume the lead, however, and, eventually, and with some difficulty, for the ridge was still none too wide, we stepped three abreast on to the highest point. I didn't notice the view at first; I was looking down at the little mound of gravel that formed the summit: no paper, no orange peel, no rusting tins or empty bottles, not even a cairn. No cairn. A virgin peak, indeed. Our first ' first.'

We lay in the sun, supremely happy, and enjoyed a lazy half hour lunching, gazing across a wilderness of mountains, dozens of them unnamed and unclimbed. One o'clock: we roused ourselves to build a cairn and, leaving our names in a tin at its base, we started off, myself in the lead and Hans bringing up the rear. We had every intention of trying a traverse of the mountain and, with this in mind, we moved cautiously down the south-west ridge, not sure of what lay ahead, but knowing that, if we could reach it, a fine corrie would lead us down to South Ribbon Creek. The ridge proved easy enough, though impressive, and, after twenty minutes, we turned down to the

right and stopped on a small ledge some thirty feet below the crest. Great boiler-plate slabs fell away to the scree below. We untied, fixed the rope, and prepared to rappel off. I went over the edge first and lost five dollars, having bet Hans that the doubled two-hundred foot rope wouldn't reach the tongue of scree running up from below (and it was only due to the stretch in the nylon that he won!).

The difficulties were over; a quick descent of an upper corrie, a traverse out round a shoulder from a waterfall and an easy descent, wending our way through tier after tier of limestone cliffs, led us out below a great cirque of crags into the lower corrie. Soon a steep snow gully gave us a fine axeless glissade and we were back in the pine woods. There only remained the long tramp back down Ribbon Creek, and, almost exactly twelve hours after leaving camp, we were back at the tents, hot and weary, but well satisfied. We gulped down a long cool drink, threw off our clothes and plunged into the icy waters of the Kananaskis, a fitting end to a great day's climbing.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE AND THE LAKE DISTRICT—A NEW APPRAISAL

E. M. Turner

In the *Journal* for 1954 there appeared a delightful and extraordinarily interesting article by A. P. Rossiter, entitled *Notes from a Little-Known Coleridge*. The writer commented that Coleridge's interest in the Lake District had received scant attention 'to such an extent that many must have wondered why he should ever have been described as one of the Lake Poets or "Lakers."' He then proceeded to show how completely fallacious is this view of Coleridge, making his points clear by ample and felicitous quotations from Coleridge's Notebooks; Coleridge's appreciation of Lakeland scenery is discussed, and observations are made on his walks and expeditions there. The present writer would like to carry this reinstatement of Coleridge to his rightful honours yet a stage further.

The past few years have witnessed much intensive study of Coleridge; Miss Kathleen Coburn is editing the Notebooks, Vol. I (Text and Notes, in two parts), having appeared in 1957 (published by Routledge & Kegan Paul), and a sumptuous new edition of the letters is under preparation by E. L. Griggs (two volumes have already, in 1956, been published by the Oxford University Press), in which it is the editor's aim to reproduce every known letter of Coleridge. These letters, particularly the ones written during Coleridge's actual residence in the Lake District between 1800 and 1804, fully bear out the claims made for him as a pioneer in the imaginative appreciation of Lakeland scenery. We propose to turn to some of these letters, where Coleridge's descriptions, in their truth to detail, their richness, and their apt and satisfying imagery, show how complete was his sensitive awareness of the beauty of the natural scene.

We first catch a glimpse of Coleridge as a Lakeland tourist in 1799, when in the latter part of that year he joined Wordsworth in a walking tour through the district. Wordsworth was at this time contemplating settling at the Lakes, and when this became an accomplished fact, Coleridge was not long in following his example. By midsummer of 1800 he was living at Greta Hall, Keswick. He came ostensibly to be near to Wordsworth, thirteen miles away at Grasmere. (How many times must the two poets have trodden the turnpike road where now a car or bus transports us with such effortless ease!).

Nevertheless, Coleridge's letters at once show his vivid perception of the beauty of his own Keswick surroundings. Before he arrived permanently, in a letter to Godwin dated 21st May, 1800, he refers to the house he was to occupy as having a beautiful view, and when he was living there, he was never tired of praising the beauties of the panorama from his study window. Here, for instance, is his excited account, in a letter to S. Purkis on 29th July, 1800. First, he speaks of ' Bassenthwaite Water, with its majestic case of mountains, all of simplest outline,' and then continues:

> My God! what a scene—! Right before me is a great *Camp* of single mountains—each in shape resembles a Giant's Tent!—and to the left, but closer to it far than the Bassenthwaite Water to my right, is the lake of Keswick, with it's [*sic*] Islands & white sails, & glossy Lights of Evening—*crowned* with green meadows, but the three remaining sides are encircled by the most fantastic mountains, that ever Earthquakes made in sport; as fantastic, as if Nature had *laughed* herself into the convulsion, in which they were made.

He then draws a plan of the house, with the Greta flowing round it.

In a letter to Godwin of September, 1800, he again praises the situation of his house, and yet again the view from his study is described in a letter to Josiah Wedgwood of 1st November, 1800.

It is, perhaps, worth noting what others had to say about Greta Hall and the prospects from it, for during his residence there Coleridge had many visitors. One of the liveliest was Charles Lamb, who, with his sister Mary, visited Coleridge in the late summer of 1802. A letter he wrote from London to his friend Manning on 24th September that year is of great interest as coming from one who had previously had no great respect for what he called ' romantic ' scenery. He describes how Coleridge

> dwells upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, in a comfortable house, quite enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains: great bears and monsters they all seemed, couchant and asleep.

They arrived in Keswick on a glorious evening—unfortunately the only one during their stay:

> We thought we had got into fairyland. But that went off (as it never came again—while we stayed we had no more sunsets); and we entered Coleridge's study just in dusk, when the mountains were all dark with clouds upon their backs. Such an impression I never received from objects of sight before, nor do I suppose I can ever again. Glorious creatures, fine old fellows, Skiddaw, etc.

And then he comes very much down to earth to describe in minute detail the contents of the study.

Let us return to Coleridge himself. In a letter written on 21st October of the following year to Southey, whom he ultimately persuaded to come and share his house at Keswick, both poets being allied by marriage, he writes:

> You did not stay long enough with us to *love* these mountains & this wonderful vale. Yesterday the snow fell—and to day—O that you were here—Lodore full—[the] mountains snow-crested . . . misty, howling Weather.

His wonderful powers of perception appear once more in the following extract from a letter to Sara Hutchinson, through whom his love for the Lakes took on a deeper and more personal quality. On 27th July, 1802, after a wet day at Keswick, he writes:

> The whole Vale presented a curious Spectacle / the Clouds were scattered by the wind & rain in all shapes & heights, above the mountains, on their sides, & low down to their Bases—some masses in the middle of the valley—when the wind & rain drop down, & died—and for two hours all the Clouds, white & fleecy all of them, remained without motion, forming an appearance not very unlike the Moon as seen thro' a telescope.

A somewhat parallel passage to this appears in the Notebooks for '21 October, 1803, Friday morning,' where we get this immensely satisfying description of another wet day at Keswick, so true in detail that we cannot forbear quoting it here:

> A drisling Rain [*sic*]. Heavy masses of shapeless Vapour upon the mountains (O the perpetual Forms of Borodale!) yet it is no unbroken Tale of dull Sadness—slanting Pillars travel across the Lake, at long Intervals—the vaporous mass whitens, in large Stains of Light—on the (Lakeward) ridge of that huge arm-chair of Lowdore, fell a gleam of softest Light, that brought out the rich hues of the late Autumn. The woody Castle Crag* between me and Lowdore is a rich Flower-Garden of Colours—the brightest yellows with the deepest Crimsons and the infinite Shades of Brown and Green, the *infinite* diversity of which blends the whole—so that the brighter colours seem to be *colors* upon a ground, not colored Things.
>
> Little wool-packs of white bright vapour rest on different summits & declivities—the vale is narrowed by the mist & cloud—yet thro the wall of mist you can see into a bason of sunny Light in Borrodale—the Birds are singing in the tender Rain,—as if it were the Rain of April, & the decaying Foliage were Flowers & Blossoms. The pillar of Smoke from the Chimney rises, up in the mist, & is just distinguishable from it, & the Mountain Forms in the Gorge of Borrodale consubstantiate with the mist & cloud, even as the pillar'd Smoke / a shade deeper, & a determinate Form.

*—Castle Head obviously intended.

Surely this is poetry-in-prose, in which we behold the strong imaginative faculty of the poet at work.

Elsewhere we can note his acute powers of observation, shown in his description of natural phenomena. See, for instance, this passage about the moon setting behind the mountains:

> Observed the great half moon setting behind the mountain Ridge, & watched the shapes its various segments presented as it slowly sunk —first, the foot of a Boot, all but the Heel—then, a little pyramid △ —then a star of the first magnitude indeed it was not distinguishable from the evening Star at its largest—then rapidly a smaller, a small, a very small star—and as it diminished in size, so it grew paler in tint—and now where is it? Unseen; but a little fleecy cloud hangs above the mountain Ridge, & is rich—with an amber light. (See Notebooks for 15th September, 1801).

Another entry in the Notebooks, for 'Tuesday evening, ½ past 6, 22 October, 1801,' records two moon-rainbows seen in the direction of Newlands:

> All the mountains black and tremendously obscure, except Swinside, which looks like a light green wood growing on the other mountains. At this time I saw one after the other, nearly in the same place, two perfect Moon-Rainbows, the one foot in the field below my garden, the other in the field nearest but two to the Church. It was grey-moonlight-mist-colour. (Friday morning, Mary Hutchinson arrived.)

Similar details to this can be found in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals. She and Coleridge had much in common in their powers of observation; and indeed it is not unlikely that the influence of Coleridge helped her to develop this innate gift.

If we return to the letters, we shall find a particularly interesting account of a visit to Wordsworth at Grasmere, in a letter to Humphrey Davy, the chemist, written on 25th July, 1800:

> We drank tea the night before I left Grasmere on the Island in that lovely lake, our kettle swung over the fire hanging from the branch of a Fir Tree, and I lay & saw the woods, & mountains, & lake all trembling, & as it were *idealized* thro' the subtle smoke which rose up from the clear red embers of the fir-apples which we had collected. Afterwards, we made a glorious Bonfire on the Margin, by some alder bushes, whose twigs heaved & sobbed in the uprushing column of smoke — & the Image of the Bonfire, & of us that danced round it . . . the Image of this in a Lake smooth as that sea, to whose waves the Son of God had said, PEACE!

The poetic cast of thought, the sensitivity in description, are all here once again.

Finally, there are two letters to Sara Hutchinson, describing a walking tour through the Lake District that Coleridge undertook from 1st to 9th August, 1802. The second letter, by way of appendix, also contains accounts of visits to two well-known Lakeland falls that month when they were obviously in spate —and Coleridge seems to have been something of a connoisseur in this particular line. The two letters in their original form are reproduced in the Griggs edition of the Letters referred to above, but later on Sara Hutchinson put them together to form a kind of journal. They are, perhaps, the two finest letters of natural description that he ever wrote, and can be read with interest alongside the detailed accounts of this expedition that also appear in the Notebooks (these are splendidly reproduced in Miss Coburn's edition, with plans drawn by Coleridge on his journey).

This journey, culminating in the solitary ascent of Scafell, was referred to by A. P. Rossiter in the article mentioned above and also in a letter to the Editor (*F.R.C.C.J.* No. 46, 1952) in which he says that Coleridge's account of his 'circumcursion' can be read in a long journal-letter he wrote for the Hutchinsons and Wordsworths. The Griggs edition of the Letters, however, makes it clear that the two letters describing the journey were really intended for Sara Hutchinson herself. Several passages not quoted by Rossiter are of interest. Let us turn to the letters and examine some of these.

See Coleridge, then, setting out on that Sunday morning so long ago, as a walker in many ways resembling his modern counterpart:

> On Sunday Augt. 1st—½ after 12 I had a Shirt, cravat, 2 pair of Stockings, a little paper & half a dozen Pens, a German Book (Voss's Poems) & a little Tea & Sugar, with my Night Cap, packed up in my natty green oil-skin, neatly squared, and put into my *net* Knapsack / and the Knap-sack on my back & the Besom stick in my hand . . . off I sallied.

Coleridge obviously believed in travelling lightly. And how up-to-date does the reference to oil-skins sound!

He travelled by Newlands, which he thought a 'lovely Place,' up Keskadale, noted where the waterfall comes down off Robinson, passed through Buttermere, describing Buttermere Red Pike as a 'dolphin-shaped peak of a deep red,' crossed to Ennerdale by Floutern Tarn, near which he beheld the

> glorious Sea with the high Coast & Mountains of the Isle of Mann [*sic*], perfectly distinct—& three Ships in view. A little further on, the Lake of Ennerdale (the lower part of it) came in view, shaped like a clumsy battle-dore—but it is, in reality, exactly *fiddle-shaped.*

He goes down to the coast at St. Bees (to visit a library which he finds of no value), comes inland again to Calder Abbey, which he describes as an 'elegant but not very interesting Ruin,' and then journeys via Gosforth to Wasdale. Fine descriptions follow of the Screes, of Wasdale Head and its cirque of mountains, and his ascent of Scafell, which, despite the rather unpropitious weather, seems to have exhilarated him greatly. He describes the view from the summit, and rounds off his description thus:

> And here I am *lounded*—so fully lounded—that tho' the wind is strong, & the Clouds are hast'ning hither from the Sea — and the whole air seaward has a lurid Look — and we shall certainly have Thunder—yet here (but that I am hunger'd & provisionless) *here* I could lie warm, and wait methinks for tomorrow's Sun / and on a nice Stone Table am I now at this moment writing to you—between 2 and 3 o'Clock as I guess / surely the first Letter ever written from the Top of Sca' Fell!

His descent from the mountain was nearly attended by disaster, so careless was he of any danger, or unconcerned at following any track. In his description here, he appears as quite a lover of rock scrambling, descending boulders considerably more than his own height, and joyously 'leaping from rock to rock.' How he enjoyed himself, and how very modern his reactions are! So he writes of his descent thus:

> When I find it convenient to descend from a mountain, I am too confident & too indolent to look round about & wind about 'till I find a track or other symptom of safety; but I wander on, & where it is first *possible* to descend, there I go — relying upon fortune for how far down this possibility will continue. So it was yesterday afternoon.

There follows his exciting description of his descent from Broad Crag, as he calls it, though there is every likelihood that this was none other than Broad Stand. Once safely below, he recounts how as a result of the exertion from his adventures his 'limbs were all in a tremble,' and he continues:

> I lay upon my Back to rest myself, & was beginning according to my Custom to laugh at myself for a Madman, when the sight of the Crags above me on each side, & the impetuous Clouds just over them, posting so luridly & so rapidly northward, overawed me / I lay in a state of almost prophetic Trance & Delight — & blessed God aloud, for the powers of Reason & the Will, which remaining no Danger can overpower us!

The storm broke when he reached Eskdale, where he stopped the night, and whence he wrote to Sara Hutchinson. He then proceeded via Devoke Water to Ulpha in the Duddon Valley, and then returning via Torver and Coniston, finally reached Keswick on 9th August, a second letter completing the account of his tour. There is a further reference to his trip in a letter to Southey written immediately on his return and dated 'Monday night, August 9, 1802.'

Such an expedition as this shows how fully Coleridge foreshadows the present-day attitude to hills. The delight we ourselves take in the Lake District, and under all sorts of weather conditions, is similar to his.

Coleridge is of importance because he was undoubtedly one of those pioneers who helped to mould public opinion into a more sympathetic understanding and appreciation of the natural scene: and the further evidence adduced above is surely sufficient to substantiate the claim that he should be regarded as a true 'Laker.' His reaction to natural beauty was every bit as sensitive as that of Wordsworth, who has generally been accorded all the honours. It may be true that little fresh original poetry emanated from Coleridge during his stay in the Lakes, and that the only important poems then composed were *Dejection, an Ode,* and Part II of *Christabel;* and it may be that domestic difficulties, ill-health, and his succumbing to the temptations of opium (the famous 'Kendal black drop,' of which we hear so much) all came to mar his happiness at Keswick. Nevertheless, no writer deserted by the imaginative faculty—the 'shaping spirit of the Imagination,' as Coleridge called it — could have written of the Lakeland scene in the way he did. There is enough material to be garnered from his letters and journals and notebooks to show just how vivid were his reactions to nature. They are vivid because they are so intensely personal. Coleridge really knew nature at first-hand, and not through the media of books, like so many of his 18th century predecessors. He reveals a love of mountains for their own sake, and not as a mere backcloth to complete the 'correctness' of landscape, as in William Gilpin, nor as just a pleasurable emotional disturbance to oneself, as in the fantastic inanities of Mrs. Anne Radcliffe. In his natural descriptions we detect keen power of observation, and truth to the minutest detail, allied with a sense of unbounded delight in the outdoor scene. The 'cleanness' of his descriptions has been noted by others. There is in them a sense of freshness

and spontaneity, and they move along with all the freedom and vitality of a mountain wind. It is for these reasons that Coleridge deserves more recognition than has been accorded him, as one who helped to set the pattern for our own appreciation of nature and of natural scenery. This should surely be sufficient *apologia* for this tribute to him in a mountaineering journal.

Coleridge has been described in many ways. To Lamb he appeared as the ' inspired Charity Boy ' of Christ's Hospital; to Wordsworth he was the ' rapt one of the god-like forehead '; while a modern scholar has described him as ' one of the great seminal minds of the 19th century ' (House, in the Clark Lectures for 1951 at Cambridge). Above everything else, in all that he did or said we can behold that ' shaping spirit of the Imagination ' at work. For that reason amongst others, his influence has been profound, and is not to be measured merely by the apparent slightness of his literary and poetic output.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

Harry Ironfield

The Club year began with a well-attended maintenance meet at the Salving House, where a large variety of necessary chores was cheerfully performed.

New Year's Eve falling on Monday, the organized arrangements for the meet extended over three days. Contrary to expectations, petrol restrictions seemed to have little effect on numbers, and the usual throng assembled at Raw Head and the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel on Saturday. After dinner, Harry Spilsbury entertained us with a most interesting and superbly illustrated account of the High Level Route on ski. Sunday was a day of thick mist with soft snow under foot. The meet walked to the summit of Stake Pass and continued over the Pikes before descending upon the O.D.G. for tea. During the evening, George Spenceley gave an absorbing account of his experiences in South Georgia. Some of his pictures of seal-hunting and whaling were rather trying for the squeamish. These were offset by his delightful description of the courting habits of penguins. Most amusement was caused by the story of the amorous penguin, who, searching for a mate, dropped the courting pebble at our narrator's feet, an honour he declined to accept.

The weather continued poor on New Year's Eve; those who went out eventually reached Pavey Ark via Raw Fell. Heavy rain hastened their return and the Hut was soon crowded for tea, a meal of astonishing proportions, *the pièce de résistance* being the remains of the Jubilee cake. As the President was unavoidably detained at business, W. G. Stevens presided in his place at dinner and the entertainment which followed. Dinner was crowded and festive as usual. When the room had been cleared, Harry Griffin conducted a Lake District 'quiz' which provided much interest and laughter. Music and song, interspersed with other features, including 'good resolutions for 1957' attributed to various members, occupied the remainder of the evening. Just before midnight the venerable figure of Father Time, carrying the traditional hour-glass and scythe, passed down the crowded room. On the stroke of twelve he welcomed a hairy specimen of neolithic man clad in skins and carrying a formidable stone axe. An amusing interrogation by W. E. Kendrick revealed that the newcomer had been asleep for centuries, and had been discovered that morning in the area commonly known as the Plint flint factory. He had consented to

let in the New Year. Hot rum punch and cake were served by our hosts and we all joined the President in toasting the New Year.

Skiing enthusiasts were disappointed by an insufficiency of snow the first week-end in February, which was scheduled for a joint meet with the Lake District Ski Club, under the leadership of Dick Cook. Undaunted in their search for snow, two parties visited Great End on Saturday and were rewarded by a good climb of two long snow pitches in Central Gully. They returned to the Salving House by way of Scafell Pike, Sty Head and Taylor Gill. On Sunday a party of nine made a 'Cook's tour' of Honister, Drum House, Warnscale Bottom, Newlands and Maiden Moor. An unusually strong wind helped their passage down Newlands by, it is claimed, a good 2 m.p.h., hastening their return to the Hut and tea.

More than a dozen members spent an early March week-end, warm and sunny, spring cleaning Brackenclose. At the end of the month, some thirty-two members and guests enjoyed a week-end of good weather at the Burnmoor Inn, Eskdale. The leaders, John Lagoe and Vince Veevers, arranged parties according to aptitude and inclination. The energetic walked the horseshoe of Upper Eskdale; others chose Bowfell and the Crinkles. The climbers, following the now well established custom of not climbing in the valley in which they are resident, climbed a variety of routes on Wallowbarrow Crag in the Duddon Valley. The more leisurely inclined ascended Harter Fell from the south side and returned via Hardknott Castle, where the restoration work proved most interesting.

The custom of holding meets at each of the Huts during Easter week-end was followed again this year. Heavy rain fell on the Sunday, but otherwise good weather prevailed. Some 100 members and guests attended the four meets, and the leaders report a great deal of energetic walking and a general high standard of climbing by all who took part.

At Raw Head in May, the maintenance party concentrated on the Cottage, where much plastering and painting was undertaken. Others gave the Barn a thorough cleaning. More fortunate members had, in the meantime, been to Ullapool; a full report of this visit will be found elsewhere in the *Journal*.

The Borrowdale Meet at Whitsun, led by Donald and Nancy Murray, was the next home fixture. Well in excess of fifty people found accommodation at the Salving House and elsewhere in the valley. The remainder overflowed to Birkness.

Saturday was a very wet day, and at least one party sought shelter in Dove's Nest Caves. Sunday was beautiful and large parties climbed in Birkness Combe. A well attended tea party at the Salving House disposed of the final remains of the Jubilee cake, which, if anything, had improved with keeping. Monday was another glorious day, and the majority went to Gillercombe where twenty-five people climbed the Buttress. Meanwhile a party of young (and some not-so-young) climbers spent a delightful and memorable afternoon in Combe Gill with Bentley Beetham who, after introducing them to the Glaciated Slab and giving them the benefit of his expert knowledge, laid on a ' volcanic ' tea bar for their refreshment.

The Coniston Meet at the Sun Hotel now appears to be a popular item in the Club calendar. Led by Jim Cameron, four parties climbed on Dow Crag on Saturday under warm, dry conditions: Sunday was most inclement, and, following a short walk in the morning, most members attended the service held at Little Langdale Church in memory of Crosby Fox.

The August Bank Holiday week-end in North Wales was spent this year at the Oread Club Hut, Bryn y Wern, situated in the Pennant Valley. A heat wave during the weekend, combined with the pleasant surroundings of the Hut, was not conducive to the doing of mighty deeds. Several full-scale expeditions were made to the coast. Many, deterred by the rigours of the journey, swam in the nearby Afan Dwyfor or indulged in ' strenuous laybacks ' on the lawn of the Hut. There was some rock climbing on two nearby crags, and the only serious attempt on the Cwm Pennant horseshoe was abandoned owing to a severe thunderstorm. On the final day of the meet, a party of two traversed fourteen 3000-footers.

Some forty people arrived at Wasdale Head in mid-September for a very pleasurable meet. On Saturday, a large party ascended Scafell via Deep Ghyll; a strong wind and wet rock made a return passage by Broad Stand almost a hazardous undertaking. Sunday was fairer and permitted most of the meet to traverse Dore Head, Red Pike, Scoatfell and Overbeck. Later in the month, a small group accomplished much useful maintenance work at Birkness. Finally, a walking meet at Mungrisdale covered relatively new ground and enjoyed the homely hospitality of the Mill Inn.

The Club is fortunate in its meet leaders and is indebted to the President for his example in attending most of the meets—surely a happy augury for the start of our second half century.

ESKDALE

ESK BUTTRESS

GIRDLE TRAVERSE VARIATIONS 500 feet. Very severe. First ascent 17th June, 1956. W. F. Dowlen, J. Smith.

Climb the first two pitches of Frustration and follow the Girdle to the end of its eighth pitch (280 feet).

EITHER traverse right to the Abseil Spike and descend to join Great Central Route at the top of pitch 4, then climb piches 5 and 6 of Great Central Route.

OR traverse right to the Abseil Spike and climb the wall above for 20 feet and move right to a ledge. Go along the ledge to the right and descend to the stance above pitch 6 of Great Central Route.

Great Central Route, pitch 7.

Ascend the groove to a narrow ledge; descend with difficulty on the right wall to a ledge just below a small overhang. Go straight up to the ledge at the top of pitch 9, Great Central Route.

Great Central Route, pitch 10.

From the Waiting Room, take Kirkus's Variation for 15 feet, then traverse right and slightly down, round a corner, pass below a groove, and reach the foot of a second groove. Climb this to a mantelshelf, then traverse right to easy ground.

LANGDALE

GIMMER CRAG

GRONDLE GROOVES 160 feet. Severe. First ascent 3rd March, 1957. C. R. Allen, N. J. Soper (alternate leads). Starts 30 feet to the left of Main Wall where a large block or flake stands out from the wall.

(1) 35 feet. Climb the crack formed by the right-hand side of the block. Spike belay.

(2) 55 feet. Climb the wall behind the block, to the right of the thick moss, moving left into a light-coloured groove which is climbed to a grass ledge. Flake belay.

(3) 45 feet. Step left up grass for a few feet, then right, and climb a mossy wall. Step left round the corner across a groove; then move up and left to a small stance and good belay.

(4) 25 feet. Ascend the wall on the right.

SAMARITAN CORNER DIRECT First ascent 1st September, 1957. G. E. Moore, P. McDonough.

Pitch 3. Climb the bulge direct.

PAVEY ARK CASCADE 240 feet. Very severe. First ascent 26th May, 1957. R. B. Evans, J. A. Austin (alternate leads).

Starts at the same point as Hobson's Choice.

(1) 80 feet. Climb the slabs to a small corner. Step left and ascend to a ledge below the groove. Piton belay.

(2) 70 feet. Follow the steepening slab on the right until it is possible to step to the right just below a grass ledge (piton runner used as handhold). Descend to the right to belay in the chimney.

(3) 90 feet. Return along the traverse until the wall can be climbed. A chimney leads to the top.

RAVEN CRAG

THE TRILOGY 130 feet. Piton route. First ascent Easter, 1957. G. West, I. Hadfield, R. Hughes. Starts between Oak-tree Wall and Bilberry Buttress, at the top of the first pitch of Oak-tree Wall.

(1) 70 feet. Start 6 feet right of the overhanging corner. When the first small roof is reached a strenuous move is made into the corner, then up for 55 feet via the overhanging wall to a shallow recess. Belay in étriers with a wedge. About 12 pitons.

(2) 60 feet. Take the rib on the right to the first of two roofs which is climbed. Then bear right to the weakness in the second. After this, easier ground is climbed free. About 8 pitons.

STEWPOT. VARIATION TO FIRST PITCH 30 feet. Severe. First ascent 5th October, 1957. R. Marshall, C. W. Burman. Starts at the left-hand side of the large detached flake.

Climb the chimney between the block and wall to the narrow ledge at the top of the block, then the crack trending right to the top of the first pitch.

RAVEN CRAG EAST

ROWAN TREE GROOVE 120 feet. Very severe. First ascent 19th May, 1957. J. A. Austin, J. M. Ruffe, R. Jackson. Starts a few feet left of Casket and takes a direct line to the right-hand end of the ledge on Jungle Wall.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the wall on good side holds to a blunt pinnacle. Step round the corner on the left and traverse upwards and leftwards to a small stance and belay about 5 feet below and to the right of the crack on Jungle Wall.

(2) 60 feet. Traverse right for about 12 feet to the foot of an undercut groove which is climbed to the overhang. Traverse right, to the rib, and climb to the top.

WHITE GHYLL

SHORT CUT 25 feet. Very severe. First ascent 4th April, 1957. J. D. Johnston. Starts from the top of pitch 3 of Perhaps Not.

Continue traversing as far as the junction with the Gordian Knot.

SCOUT CRAG

RAMSBOTTOM VARIATION — 40 feet. Severe. First ascent Easter, 1957. R. A. Brayshaw, N. K. T. Froggatt.

(1) First two pitches of Route 1.

(2) 40 feet. Climb the wall to the left (Route 1.5) and move right, under the overhang. Climb the gap in the overhang and the bulge ahead to the belay at the top of the arête on Route 1.

SIDE PIKE

MARRAWHACK — 95 feet. Severe. First ascent 9th November, 1957. F. Holmes, M. Cheevers. Starts 10 feet left of the prominent pinnacle just below a holly tree.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the wall to a ledge, then up the face on the right of the holly tree and traverse the wall above the overhangs. Continue round the corner to a crack below an oak tree. Climb the crack. Belay by oak tree.

(2) 35 feet. Climb to the top.

BORROWDALE

WALLA CRAG

WHITE BUTTRESS — 210 feet. Very severe. First ascent 25th May, 1957. P. Ross, D. Sewell. Starts directly below the centre of the crag behind a large beech tree.

(1) 75 feet. Climb straight up for about 35 feet, then traverse left and up a sloping slab to a small stance below some spiky blocks. Piton belay.

(2) 70 feet. Ascend to the left, then back right on to the blocks below a steep groove. Move round the corner, and, after pulling out of a small niche, make for an oak tree on the face. Belay.

(3) 65 feet. Climb the steep broken groove behind the oak for a few feet, then move on to the left wall and ascend this. Move left and climb direct to the top.

SOUTHERN RIB — 125 feet. Very severe. First ascent 28th May, 1957. P. Ross, D. Sewell. Starts about 60 feet up Walla Crag Gully and about 100 feet right of White Buttress. Scramble up the gully to a bushy yew tree.

(1) 35 feet. Move left from the yew tree on to the rib and climb up for 20 feet, then move left on to the edge. After a strenuous move, a small rock ledge is reached. Piton belay.

(2) 90 feet. Move left for a few feet, then make straight for the obvious groove above. Climb the groove for a few feet, then move left on to the knife edge, which is climbed. 25 feet of scrambling leads to a tree belay.

FALCON CRAG (LOWER)

DEDICATION 160 feet. Very severe. First ascent May, 1957. P. Ross, E. Medcalf. Starts about 20 feet down from the start of Funeral Way.

(1) 30 feet. A small overhang is ascended, and the steep rock is climbed to the right, to a small ledge and piton belay.

(2) 30 feet. Mantelshelf over a spike on the right, then traverse right, to a ledge of shattered blocks.

(3) 100 feet. An open bracken groove is entered after a pull over a short overhang. Ascend the groove for a few feet; step right on to the edge, then left and up to a groove which is climbed until a traverse can be made left. Finish up the groove above on the left.

SPINUP 145 feet. Very severe. First ascent 22nd May, 1957. P. Ross, D. Sewell. Starts below a corner on the left-hand end of the crag, behind a large ash tree.

(1) 65 feet. A small slab which leads round the corner to the left is followed to a ledge. Climb straight up from the left-hand end of the ledge until a gangway leads up left for 20 feet to a small stance just to the left of a black steep groove. Piton belay.

(2) 80 feet. Climb the black groove for about 10 feet, then step right and descend to a traversing line above the overhangs. When the traverse ends, climb straight up. The climb finishes at the same point as Hedera Grooves.

GOAT CRAG

FLAKE CLIMB 140 feet. Difficult. First ascent 17th November, 1957. E. S. Graves, S. M. Redmond. Starts on steep slabs at the right-hand end of a small outcrop of brown rock below, and to the left of, the start of the Knitting Needle.

(1) 35 feet. Climb the steep slab and belay on the small grass ledge in the corner.

(2) 60 feet. Make an ascending traverse left until a small face is reached, then an awkward traverse left to a large ledge. Climb straight up a short wall to a birch tree. Belay on tree.

(3) 45 feet. Behind the tree twin cracks will be seen. Climb the flake to the right of the right-hand crack. Belay on tree at the back of the ledge.

SERGEANT CRAG

ACAB 250 feet. Severe. First ascent 31st March, 1957. K. Jones, E. S. Graves (alternate leads). Starts at the top of the greasy slabs to the left of Sergeant Crag Gully. Cairn.

(1) 80 feet. Climb the buttress until a large sloping terrace is reached. Belay on the wall just below the overhang.

(2) 70 feet. The crux of the climb. Strong arms are essential. The overhang is climbed direct with difficulty, but may be avoided by climbing a fine crack on the left wall. Continue round the corner on the gully side and belay beside a broken wall.

(3) 50 feet. An easy traverse round the corner on to the gully bed. Belay beside a short steep wall.

(4) 50 feet. Climb the short crack on the left, and finish high up on the heather terrace.

A further pitch of 60 feet may be added on a wall of rough, steep rock; then continue, on easy rocks, to the crag top.

GRAINS GHYLL

From where Grains Ghyll divides at the 1,000 ft. contour, follow the south branch until it divides again into two deep ghylls which enclose a crag (the name of which it has not been possible to ascertain) on the edge of National Trust property. Two climbs were made on wet rock in vibrams. The crag offers possibilities of some short hard routes.

WHIT'S RIDGE 140 feet. Difficult. First ascent 25th May, 1958. C.R.W., T. P. Loftus. Commences from a cairn on the grass ledge under the nose of the ridge. Belay on right.

(1) 55 feet. Ascending traverse right, then left, to ridge. Continue to corner and large block belay.

(2) 70 feet. Follow the ridge to a large grass terrace with block belay.

(3) 15 feet. Ascend wall above belay.

WHIT'S END 145 feet. Very difficult. First ascent 25th May, 1958. C.R.W., T. P. Loftus. Starts from a cairn on a ledge on the west wall of the crag, about 50 feet horizontally from the start of the ridge.

(1) 30 feet. Ascend the wall to a ledge. Traverse left, then ascend right to a stance. Piton belay used and removed.

(2) 50 feet. A short traverse right, then ascend direct to a large ledge. Piton belay used in back corner and removed.

(3) 50 feet. Traverse left to the ridge which is climbed to the large grass terrace at the end of pitch 2 on the Ridge route. Belay.

(4) 15 feet. Ascend the wall.

BUTTERMERE

STRIDDLE CRAG

TRAVERSE AND SLAB CLIMB 200 feet. Severe. First ascent 23rd April, 1957. D. N. Greenop, G. Benn (alternate leads). Starts below a prominent holly tree some yards to the right of Pedagogue's Chimney. Just to the right is the foot of pitch 3 of Striddle Crag Buttress.

(1) 25 feet. A broken crack behind a block leads to a holly tree.

(2) 40 feet. Climb the groove on the right to a steep finish on a small ledge. Belays high on the right.

(3) 70 feet. Traverse easily left for 30 feet, then continue delicately to a small quartz-topped block on the edge of the slab overlooking Pedagogue's Chimney. Surmount the slab and climb straight up its right-hand edge on small holds to a ledge and belay.

(4) 30 feet. Climb the difficult wall to the left of the easy wide crack on Eureka Grooves.

(5) 35 feet. Cross the bilberry ledge to the foot of a thin vertical crack which widens higher up. This can be ascended throughout, or left 20 feet up in favour of a pleasing traverse to the right. Finish on rock glacis.

MARR'S ROUTE 225 feet. Very severe. First ascent 25th April, 1957. D. N. Greenop, G. Benn (alternate leads). Starts to the left of Pedagogue's Chimney at a steep smooth slab crowned by an overhang.

(1) 20 feet. The slab to a small stance and belay beneath the overhang.

(2) 10 feet. A long step to a heathery corner; then up to a wide ledge.

(3) 10 feet. A small layback crack on the left to a wobbly tree stump.

(4) 70 feet. Climb past the tree to the left for five feet, then ascend the fine wall ahead, moving first right, then left, on small holds. Block belay on bilberry ledge.

(5) 20 feet. Mount the block and gain the sloping shelf above with a strenuous finger pull, followed by a balancing movement. Then easier climbing to a small heather shelf and belay.

(6) 15 feet. A thin and difficult crack directly ahead leads to the rock glacis.

(7) 80 feet. The last two pitches of Striddle Crag Buttress.

DING DONG 210 feet. Very difficult. First ascent 25th February, 1957. D. N. Grenop, G. Benn (alternate leads). Starts by scrambling 100 feet up the steep rock and heather to the left of Pedagogue's Chimney. Follow the bilberry ledge until a short chimney with an ash tree growing in it can be seen on the right. The climb starts 3 feet to the left of the chimney.

(1) 60 feet. Climb a fine steep wall which eases after 30 feet. Small stance and belay at the foot of an impending rib.

(2) 50 feet. Step round to the right and climb a heather groove which steepens into a vertical crack.

(3) 40 feet. Move down and left, gaining a slab below a crevasse. Follow this to the upper of two flakes on a ledge.

(4) 35 feet. Turn right and ascend the slab above the flakes to the lip of the crag.

(5) 25 feet. Boulder problems to the top.

THE FRETSAW CLIMB — 255 feet. Very difficult with one short severe pitch. First ascent 25th February, 1957. D. N. Greenop, G. Benn (alternate leads). Starts 6 feet to the left of Ding Dong.

(1) 100 feet. Climb the steep rough wall for 60 feet, then traverse left along a sloping rock ledge to a spike belay on the small buttress which terminates the traverse. 30 feet above is a holly tree.

(2) 30 feet. Step to the edge of the buttress and move round for 6 feet, then, with a long stride, climb the short but severe crack on the left. Belay on blocks.

(3) 25 feet. A difficult slab to a flake belay directly above the holly tree.

(4) 50 feet. Move slightly right, then ascend steep rock, working left and up.

(5) 50 feet. A similar line to an open finish.

YEW CRAG KNOTTS

MILLIGRAM ROUTE — 270 feet. Severe. First ascent 22nd July, 1956. E. S. Graves, B. Ramsbottom, J. D. Millington. Starts beside a hawthorn bush 30 yards to the left of Garden Wall.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the short wall and cross a slab to a small grass ledge.

(2) 50 feet. Cross the remaining slabs to an obvious pinnacle on the main crag face. Belay.

(3) 55 feet. Beside the pinnacle, a fine curving crack of about 25 feet will be seen. The first part of this may be climbed by the lay-back method, but, owing to a flaw in the crack, the climber is forced on to the face, which is climbed on fine holds until the crack behind the pinnacle is reached and climbed without much difficulty. Block belay.

(4) 60 feet. From the pinnacle an easy but awkward traverse left is made until a small gully is reached. Climb the broken rib on the right of the gully to a large heather ledge. Belay at the back of the ledge.

(5) 45 feet. To the left of the ledge a large rock face will be seen. An obvious but airy traverse left is made on good holds for about 25 feet to an overhanging bulge, which is climbed on very small holds up the right of a divided scoop. Finish on ledge. Block belay.

CONISTON

DOW CRAG

UNFINISHED SYMPHONY — 155 feet. Very severe. First ascent 25th May, 1957. A. C. Cain, P. Shotton. Starts at a corner crack about 15 feet left of Eliminate A.

(1) 25 feet. Climb the crack, then slightly right to a stance and belay on Eliminate A.

(2) 90 feet. Ascend left over a short slab, then continue diagonally upwards to the left, over a bulge, to Hyacinth Traverse which is followed to the right to a stance and belay behind a large flake.

(3) 40 feet. Up behind the flake, then a short traverse leads to the Crow's Nest. Finish up Eliminate A.

ENNERDALE

PILLAR ROCK

SPIRAL GIRDLE 1,600 feet. Very severe. First ascent 24th April, 1957. C. J. Crowther, T. W. Gallon (alternate leads).

Grooved Wall, pitches 1—5.
North-east Climb, pitch 7.
Grassy ledges lead to Savage Gully. Climb the crack used in the descent from the Nose.
North Climb, westerly variation. Descend pitches 9—3.
Traverse right across the slab and descend the Nor'-nor'-west Climb to its junction with the North-west Climb.
North-west Climb, pitches 5—8.
North-west Climb (alternative finish) to the top of the Appian Way.
Appian Way, descend pitches 5—3.
An ascending traverse joins the Nook and Wall near the First Nook.
Nook and Wall, pitches 4—5.
Traverse left to pitch 7, West Wall Climb.
Ledge and Groove, pitches 5—7.
The Old West Route.
Route 2, pitches 1—4; traverse right to pitch 6, Route 1.
Route 1 is followed to the New West.
New West, descend pitches 7—6.
Rib and Slab, pitch 6.
Original Girdle Traverse, reverse pitch 2.
South-west Climb, pitches 4—6.

NOR'-NOR'-WEST CLIMB
DIRECT FINISH
First ascent 18th March, 1954. W. F. Dowlen, R. Greenwood. From the stance at the top of pitch 9, climb the very steep chimney above, which is strenuous for 20 feet, then more easily in a direct line to Low Man.

THIRLMERE

SHOULTHWAITE CRAG (the crag on the east side of the road opposite Shoulthwaite).

CASTLERIGG BASTION 150 feet. Severe. First ascent 2nd November, 1957. J. A. Austin, J. Ramsden, D. G. Gray. Starts about 10 yards to the right of the prominent tree-filled gully and takes the easiest line up the buttress.

(1) 30 feet. Climb up to a short overhanging groove, swing on to the left-hand wall and climb up doubtful holds to a ledge with tree belay.

(2) 90 feet. Climb the corner behind the tree and gain the gangway slanting leftwards. Move up the gangway and ascend the pinnacle overlooking the gully. Climb the wall above and move left into the groove to a stance and high tree belay.

(3) 30 feet. Move right on to the arête which is ascended. 15 feet of easy ledges lead to a spike belay.

WASDALE

SCAFELL EAST BUTTRESS

TIO PEPE 140 feet. Very severe. First ascent 2nd May, 1957. G. J. Sutton, E. G. D. Roberts. Starts 10 feet right of Tia Maria.

Climb the crack parallel to Tia Maria to a chockstone belay in a corner on the right.

PHOENIX 240 feet. Very severe. First ascent 1st August, 1957. R. Moseley, D. M. Adcock. Starts to the left of Great Eastern and Yellow Slab.

(1) 60 feet. An easy gangway leads left to a stance below an overhanging prow.

(2) 90 feet. Pull up round the overhang to the right into a groove. With the aid of a peg, swing back round the rib into the groove on the left, and with great difficulty climb the overhanging crack to a poor resting place on the left at the top. Protected by another peg, continue up the groove above and make another very difficult pull out at the top, when the corner on the left can be gained and climbed to a grass stance on the gangway above.

(3) 40 feet. Continue up the gangway to a good stance and pedestal belay.

(4) 50 feet. Straight up the corner above to the top.

KEY TO INITIALS

C. R. Wilson

CORRECTION (*Journal* No. 51, 1957, pages 78-80).

It will be noticed that Throstle Buttress has been given two fifth pitches (page 80). The second one (40 feet) is the fifth pitch of Babylon (page 79). The length of Throstle Buttress is therefore 160 feet, not 200 as printed on page 79, and the length of Babylon is 200 not 160 feet.

IN MEMORIAM.

ROBERT HENRY HEWSON, 1912-1958

Robert Henry Hewson died in his eighty-fifth year at his home at Worthing on the 13th of March, 1958. He joined the Club in 1912 and, with his first wife, Madge, was very active in the Lakes and in the London Section from its formation in 1920. Madge Hewson was disabled for several years before her death and during that time his activities were severely limited. Her In Memoriam notice by H. S. Gross is in *Journal* No. 35 (1941).

He had walked in the Alps in the 1900's and in July, 1923, with the writer, had his first climbing season in the Alps at Arolla, where we had a splendid time with Joseph Georges, le Skieur, and were joined by C. G. Markbreiter.

After many years' separation, owing to the writer's Indian Service, it was pleasant to have him as one of my first visitors in Patterdale for the Annual Dinner of 1948, at which date and age, 74—75, he was active and able to carry a heavy sack. His last visit to the Lakes was for the Dinner of 1954. By that time he had failed to a great extent and, like the writer, had to be content with a walk from the bus to Stockley Bridge and back. He said that that would be his last visit to the fells. He was extremely quiet and unassuming, but had an unobtrusive sense of humour and, when he did speak, was always to the point. He remarried in the 1940's and leaves a widow and two stepsons in addition to his son by his first marriage.

So another of the few remaining pre-1914 members has left us and there remains a memory of a very trusty friend, who will be greatly missed by many of the older members. Time has not permitted the obtaining of any notes from his family.

W. ALLSUP.

C. H. EVANS, 1926-1957

Cecil Evans was born 28th April, 1898, the eldest son of the Rev. E. F. Evans, Rector of an Essex parish. He went to Tonbridge School, Kent, where his ability in the classroom and on the playing field was at once apparent, and when he left Tonbridge he had achieved almost every distinction obtainable there, as well as a classical scholarship to B.N.C., Oxford. Claimed by the War, 1917-18, and wounded, Cecil came to post-war Oxford with a reputation that he fully maintained, finding time both to take a good degree and to gain his Blue at Rugby football. Few who witnessed it will forget one remarkable match with Cambridge, in which he took a forward part.

So to the north and Sedbergh School, to teach classics and to take charge of football there. Inevitably he soon was appointed a Housemaster at Sedbergh and, later, sad to leave, was elected to be Headmaster of Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh. Here, not long before the date fixed for retirement, in August last year, he died.

How many, translated from the comparative flats of south-east England, have found in the north-west hills a challenge and a new joy. This was certainly so with Cecil Evans. He came to love the Pennines and the Howgill Fells with a deep love born of knowledge of tramping them in all weathers. And when G. F. Woodhouse turned his eyes to the Lake District hills and to rock climbing, Cecil of course welcomed the invitation, and in spite of some bulk, was soon at home on rock. The obituary notice of G. F. Woodhouse in the 1957 *Journal*, pages 89-90, should here be consulted, as well as the article *Thirty Years On*, pages 23-25, which describe his abrupt termination to rock climbing. Cecil was a married man—ideally partnered many of us who knew and worked with them both at Sedbergh felt—and both his wife's claim on him and an ever-increasing demand by the School on his time, determined him to give up climbing. The Latin verses he wrote later about the event, as given in the pages referred to, illustrate his sense of proportion, his humour and the classical skill maintained fresh throughout many years of teaching.

The truth is Cecil was the ideal companion: very talented himself, he kept his head and was not, as he might so easily have been, unsympathetic with those less endowed than he was. There was indeed an integrity about Cecil Evans that made it good to know and to work and to play and to climb with him: and to his life companion, now returned to Sedbergh, there must be good memories and hope.

G. W. Ellison.

FRANK HEAP, 1926-1956

Frank Heap loved the mountains and was very happy amongst those associated with them. Those who had the pleasure of his company will no doubt agree with me when I say he was a very good companion. He was one of the regular members of the Bryan-Pirie Parkgate days. It was there in the early thirties that the Kendal party, of which I was a member, first met and enjoyed his company. As years passed, our friend-

ship grew, and I came to know him as a wise, knowledgeable man, always happy to help and advise. His circle of climbing friends was wide, and his wise outlook on life had a steadying effect on any discussion that seemed to be getting out of hand. He will be remembered by many in the early Brackenclose days for the work he put in with the numerous working parties preparing the Hut for the Opening Day.

His climbing, though not of the highest class, was wide and varied and, apart from the Lake District, embraced Scotland and Switzerland. His keenness was such that at certain times of the year, when business kept him in Blackpool over Saturday night, he would leave his home very early on the Sunday morning and motor to Wasdale, Coniston or Langdale and be with us in time for breakfast. A perfect November day provided him with what he often mentioned as his finest day on the hills. He had always had an ambition to climb the Pinnacle Face of Scafell, and although some snow and ice lay on the fells the sun shone, the sky was cloudless and the rock bone dry. The conditions were perfect. Ruth Hargreaves, A. T. Hargreaves and Frank had come round from Coniston for a very early morning start, in the car. I met them at the crag. The ascent of Hopkinson's Gully, Herford's Slab and then the Bad Corner was a delight, and a very elated party made the journey back to Parkgate that night.

S. H. Cross.

C. ALSTON HUGHES, 1928-1957

C. Alston Hughes, who died in 1957 after a long illness, spent the last years of his life in sight of his beloved fells.

In his early years of membership he frequently visited the Lake District but later, when in practice in Liverpool as an eye specialist, he tended to find relaxation more amongst the Welsh hills and footpaths of Wirral. I do not think that he ever rock climbed, but he was a great walker and many a long walk have I enjoyed in his company. He keenly appreciated the beauty of mountain scenery and his contributions to the *Wayfarers' Journal* showed that besides a lively imagination he also had a strong sense of humour.

By nature he was a kindly and tolerant man but could be roused when the occasion demanded it and I well remember his criticism of what he considered a professional injustice—the time passed very quickly during that walk!

R. G. Plint.

MRS. W. A. WOODS, 1941-1957

Probably not many members of the Club knew Mrs. Woods personally, for she was of a retiring disposition and made no claim to be an active mountaineer. She was, however, the daughter of W. B. Brunskill, one of the pioneers of Lakeland climbing, as whose guest she frequently attended the Club Dinners at the Windermere Hydro, while her mother (as Miss Mary Westmorland) was among the very earliest of her sex to climb the Pillar Rock, in the middle seventies.

This parentage was deemed by the Committee to outweigh any deficiency in climbing qualification when, after her father's death, Mrs. Woods applied for membership, the granting of which she very much appreciated, to some extent as amounting to a tribute to his memory.

F. LAWSON COOK.

P. G. KNAPPETT, 1930-1957

P. G. Knappett died on 5th December 1957, at his home at Outgate to which he had retired in 1955. He was sixty-nine. He remained until his very sudden and unexpected death an enthusiastic and tireless fell walker. Several holidays during later years were spent exploring the less accessible parts of Skye. He was never an ardent rock climber but enjoyed seconding his son in the years prior to the outbreak of the war. It was a happy combination always remembered with pleasure by them both.

D.K.

J. A. Wray writes:

' In my climbing days I knew P. G. Knappett quite well. He and his family camped in Wasdale during the August holidays for several years from 1930-1939. He often climbed with Basterfield and my party and was quite a nice climber '.

The Club suffered a very great and unexpected loss in the death of Leslie Somervell on the 11th May at a London hospital. Memorial services were held at Kendal and in London, and a considerable number of members attended one or the other. A full memoir will appear in next year's *Journal* as it was impossible to write it for this number at such short notice.

It is greatly regretted that Sir Arthur Cutforth's memoir, which should have been included in this number, could not be completed in time, owing to illness. It also will appear next year.

EDITOR'S NOTES

At the last Annual General Meeting there was a suggestion that an interval of some months between the publication of the *Journal* and the Annual Dinner would be an advantage. Actually, thanks to the co-operation of the contributors and the printers, a start in this direction had already been made by issuing the 1957 number early in September. It would be an impossible task to advance the date by several months in one year, but it is hoped to do this gradually, so that eventually the *Journal* may appear in the early summer. To ensure this, however, contributions would have to be received in the autumn. May I, therefore, appeal to members to follow up their expeditions of the summer by immediately committing them to paper for the benefit of the *Journal*? After all this is, or should be, the best time to do it.

Some people may not feel inclined, or have time, to write a full-scale article, and it is hoped that they will send short notes on their climbs and expeditions abroad. It would, of course, be out of the question to include particulars of the holiday of every member who goes to the Alps, but details of alpine ascents of special interest would be as welcome as those of expeditions to more distant places. A page or so is devoted to these notes in this number, but time did not allow the idea to be made generally known and it is hoped that more information will be available next year. Please send details as soon as you get home. Particulars of forthcoming expeditions are also welcome.

As so many members of the Club have been in the Antarctic, it is a special pleasure to include in this number Donald Atkinson's impressions of a holiday in that region. In contrast to much that has been written on life in Polar lands, he makes it all sound delightful and gives very little hint of the inevitable hardships.

K. I. Meldrum's account of the successful expedition to the Peruvian Andes, led jointly by Simon Clark (another of our members) and John Longland is of great interest. The average age of the expedition members was 22; they all reached the summit of Pumasillo and they deserve our congratulations on a fine achievement. There are many unclimbed peaks in this area and an offer of help in making arrangements for climbing parties has been received from Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Fabian who have recently gone to live at La Oroya, Peru. Further particulars may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary.

In looking through the post-war *Journals*, one cannot fail to

notice the rarity of articles on rock climbing in our own district. It is eight years since the appearance of W. Peascod's *The Cinderella of Climbing Valleys* in which he describes the routes on the Buttermere crags with the exploration of which he had been so largely concerned, and ten years since Bentley Beetham's *Shepherd's Crag Declares a Dividend* (if anything deserves the term 'epoch-making' surely this does) in which he followed up his *Interim Report on Borrowdale* of two years before. Ten years ago also Arthur Dolphin's *Recent Developments in Lakeland* appeared—and much has happened since then. To bring up to date the history of rock climbing in the Lake District since 1934, the date to which it was taken by H. M. Kelly and J. H. Doughty in Vol. XI (the Lakeland number) of the *Journal*, would be a formidable task; but it cannot but be regretted that the climbing of the last decade has remained practically unrecorded (except in *Climbs Old and New*). For the benefit of the wider climbing public, which knows little of the present position in the Lake District, as well as for Club members, there is great need of an author who is familiar with recent advances and also inspired to write about them.

Two publications of considerable local interest have just been received. Langdale Church this year celebrates its centenary and our member, the Vicar, has presented to the Club an interesting short history, entitled *Church and Chapel in the Langdales*, by his son, H. G. Ellison. *The Report and News Letter* (June, 1958) of the Friends of the Lake District announces a satisfactory arrangement for preserving the Rusland beeches, makes thoughtful observations on the implications of Windscale and Calder Hall for the Lake District, on public transport (including the closing of branch railway lines, and the effect of this and of increasing industrial traffic on the road system), on the problems of litter, caravan sites, rural electricity and many other matters of local interest. The Post Office, the B.B.C., the Atomic Energy Authority and Manchester Corporation are congratulated on their co-operation with the societies whose object is the preservation of the natural beauty of the District. In contrast are the methods of the Electricity Board.

The coming of electricity to the Lakeland communities cannot but be welcomed, and the Club is benefiting from it at Raw Head and the Salving House, but the constant vigilance that must be exercised in protecting the valleys from its introduction in an unsightly manner is illustrated by the corres-

pondence on pages 212-213. As the President says in his introductory sentence, the letters are self-explanatory, but it should be noted that nothing could be done about the ugly poles and that it was only through the promptitude and determination of the President that the underground supply to the Barn and Cottage was ensured.

For a number of years the Scottish meet has been an important event in the Club calendar, and it has been the regret of many that the date (normally in May) made it impossible for them to attend. Mountaineering (pleasantly combined with social activities) has been the keynote of these meets rather than rock climbing and, in order to redress the balance, the President has this year had the happy idea of introducing an extra Scottish meet with rock climbing as its main purpose. John Wilkinson is leading it and it is to be held at Glen Brittle in September. A notice giving particulars will be found on page 211.

Incidentally, the 1957 Scottish meet narrowly missed its customary report. Just as the *Journal* was going to press the arrangements for the report fell through, and I am greatly indebted to two members for supplying it at extremely short notice. Much help with putting the article into its final form was received from Geoffrey Stevens. Probably few people, other than those who attend these meets, are aware that for twelve years he has kept a very full log. These day-to-day accounts have been of great value to the authors of the reports of past meets, but have probably never been more fully appreciated than this year.

The Club is also indebted to Geoffrey Stevens for the immense amount of work he has done in connection with the revision of the Handbook. Every entry in the list of members was checked and many alterations made. He typed the whole list for the printers — and this was but one of the many labours involved.

In the 1957 number, the Fell and Rock, in its 51st year, had the pleasure of congratulating the Alpine Club on its centenary. Since then a number of our members have had the good fortune to take part in the celebrations: at Pen y Gwryd in May; at Zermatt in July (the Swiss excelled themselves in hospitality as will be testified to by those who attended the raclette at the Gornergrat and the cocktail party at the Monte Rosa); in November at the centenary dinner, when representatives of Alpine Clubs from many parts of the world assembled at the

Dorchester; finally in December at the centenary reception in the Great Hall at Lincoln's Inn which was honoured by the presence of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh; guests of both sexes were eligible for this function which was a great occasion for women climbers as well as men. Between the dinner and the reception an alpine exhibition of great interest was held at the Alpine Club, and in November came the centenary number of the *Alpine Journal* which makes fascinating reading. In his thought-provoking introduction, Sir John Hunt says of the seven articles (by J. Monroe Thorington, D. F. O. Dangar and T. S. Blakeney, H. E. L. Porter, Geoffrey Winthrop Young, R. L. G. Irving, Jack Longland and A. K. Rawlinson) which form the chronological survey to which the greater part of this number is devoted ' the series is not a history of the Club, but a series of monographs on the seven ages of mountaineering.' Some special aspects of alpine history are dealt with in papers by Tom Longstaff, Sir Gavin de Beer and Sir Arnold Lunn. Douglas Milner, who chose all the illustrations for the number, contributes an article on *A Century of Mountain Photography*.

We welcome also the Jubilee issue (1956) of the *Wayfarers' Journal*. It is full of good things and fittingly commemorates the foundation of their club, which followed so closely on our own.

My predecessor in office has mentioned with appreciation the work of Molly FitzGibbon in obtaining books for review and distributing them to reviewers. She felt unable to continue to help in this way after the 1957 number, but I should like to place on record that she did so for many years; the Club owes her much thanks.

Once again I must express my gratitude to all the regular contributors who give up so much time to the *Journal:* Peter Moffat, Harry Ironfield, Harry Griffin, W. E. Kendrick, R. Tyssen-Gee and E. W. Hamilton. Special mention must be made of Lyna Pickering, who has most generously, in addition to all her arduous work as Honorary Secretary, again supervised the distribution of the *Journal* to members; and of W. G. Stevens who has never stinted his help and advice and has again most kindly read the final proofs.

July, 1958. MURIEL FILES.

We have just heard with great regret of the death in Switzerland, in tragic circumstances, of the wife of our member, Canon G. A. K. Hervey. The sympathy of the Club goes to him and his family in their loss.

CLUB NOTES

Fell and Rock members are taking part in several expeditions this summer and autumn. Sir John Hunt left this country for the Soviet Union at the end of June with the first non-Soviet climbing party to visit the Caucasus since before the war. J. P. O'F. Lynam is deputy leader of the Sherborne Kulu-Spiti Expedition, which will be in the field from the 24th July to the 4th September; their aims include finding a route into the head of the Bara Shigri Glacier from the Spiti valley and climbing some of the peaks, the highest of which is 22,500 feet, round this extensive basin. Alf Gregory is the leader of a party of six, including Dick Cook, which has received permission from the Nepalese Government to visit the Everest region in the autumn and carry out explorations and climbs in the area of Ama Dablam, Kantega and Taweche.

John Thompson and Ron Miller are on their way home after two years in the Antarctic with the Falkland Islands Dependencies' Survey. The latest news is that they jumped ship at Montevideo (along with ten other returning FIDS) in April and are making their own way home through South America. The connection of the Club with Polar regions is now of some years standing, but it may not be generally known, and will certainly be of interest, that Mount Battle in Baffin Island is named after our late member, W. R. B. Battle, who lost his life while with the 1953 Baffin Island Expedition of the Arctic Institute of North America.

David Ferguson, who was in the States last year, sends news of our original member, Charles Grayson, who gave him a great welcome when he visited him at his home at Troy. Aged 78, he is still very spry and remains chief engineer of one of Troy's largest factories. He possesses a number of interesting photographs and relics of the period before his emigration in 1913 and, in particular, the final proof copy of the first *Journal*. He gets a great deal of fun out of life and puts a great deal into the lives of other people. Needless to say his heart is still in the Lakes. Members visiting America can be sure of a hearty reception at 2602 Lavin Court which, as the Club scrapbook shows, is not an enormous block of flats, but a very pleasant small house standing in its own garden. Another of our original members, J. B. Wilton, came to Keswick for the Dinner, but, unfortunately, became ill just before it. We are glad to hear that he is now well and hope that he will not be deterred from coming again.

On the Monday after the Wasdale meet last September, it was discovered from the delivery of a large envelope to the President and his wife by their daughter, Alison, that it was their wedding anniversary. Some hurried work behind the scenes produced a bottle of sherry and a collection of old cups and glasses which enabled a small company at Brackenclose to drink the health of the happy pair amid some mirth. A bouquet of bracken in golden autumn colours, tied with a bandage from the first-aid box in default of white ribbon, supplied verisimilitude to the occasion.

New oak trees have been planted at Brackenclose; some came from the Eskdale Outward Bound School, and some were given by J. M. L.

Beaumont, who had grown them from acorns gathered in Birkness woods. The planting of these trees illustrates the detailed work and planning that goes on from day to day to ensure the existence and continuity of the Club on which the activities of its members, recounted in these notes and elsewhere in the *Journal*, are based.

At the New Year meet there was another illustration of this 'backroom' work. To ensure performers on New Year's Eve and apparatus for the film show, Harry Ironfield took (or rather attempted to take) Frank Alcock home from Langdale over Shap (as he had passengers for Kendal, too), was turned back by snow and eventually reached Calthwaite via Dunmail Raise in the early hours of New Year's Day. Graham Ackerley drove to Keswick to collect, and later to return, the projector and operator.

It is a pleasure to congratulate the following: John Jackson on his his appointment as deputy warden of the Central Council for Physical Recreation's mountain training centre at Capel Curig, and Alf Gregory on the two awards he won with his Disteghil Sar film (which we enjoyed at the New Year meet and which necessitated the projector and operator referred to above) at the international festival for films of mountaineering and exploration at Trento last autumn. Two of our members, Joan Williams (now Mrs. W. S. Morgan) and R. G. Higgins, have married during the year and the Club wishes them much happiness.

CLIMBS AND EXPEDITIONS

This list is no doubt incomplete, as there has not been an opportunity of issuing a general invitation to members to send particulars of climbs and expeditions abroad; it is hoped that in future they will make a point of doing this. Notes on expeditions of special interest in the Alps are as welcome as those on more distant places.

HIMALAYA. Disteghil Sar, 1957. Leader, Alfred Gregory.

The only member of this Club in the party of six was the leader.

From Gilgit the Expedition travelled by jeep to Minapin, then by horse to Nagar where they arrived at the end of May. From here, with 80 coolies, they went up the north side of the Hispar Glacier, then up the Kunyang Glacier to establish base camp at the foot of Disteghil at 15,000 feet. Reconnaissance showed that the approach to the mountain from the east was too exposed to avalanche danger and it was decided to attempt it by the west col. The approach to this col is very steep, in fact a face climb; the whole of the south face of Disteghil is continually swept by avalanche but it would seem that the route taken by the expedition is sound provided good weather is experienced. The weather in 1957 was very bad; in two months there were only eight good days, which came at a maximum of three days together. The placing of Camp I at the foot of the face is a serious problem owing to avalanche danger. The 1957 site was very carefully chosen with regard to this threat, but towards the end of the expedition it was destroyed by an avalanche which fell 10,000 feet from near the summit of the mountain. Fortunately no one was in the camp at

the time. Four camps were established above base, and the party was finally forced to turn back at something over 21,000 feet, a little below the west col.

ANDES.

A full account of the ascent of Pumasillo by the Cambridge Andean Expedition, in which S. G. McH. Clark (joint leader with John Longland) and K. I. Meldrum took part, appears in this number (pages 125-133).

ALPS.

Graham MacPhee spent five weeks in the Alps in 1957, the high spot being the Alpine Club dinner and celebrations at Zermatt. He has sent the following formidable list of what he accomplished in a notoriously bad season.

Alpine search party in darkness, mist and snow (21st-22nd July), Théodule Pass to Breuil (23rd July), Breithorn and Klein Matterhorn in very soft snow (24th July), Pollux in soft snow (25th July), Theodulhorn (26th July), Monte Rosa—Dufourspitze, Zumsteinspitze, Signalkuppe (28th July), Lyskamm (29th July), Dent Blanche (1st August). Mont Dolent (4th August), Aiguille de Rochefort, Dôme de Rochefort in storm (5th August), Grandes Jorasses—Pointe Walker, Pointe Whymper in storm (6th August), Aiguille de Triolet in bad storm (11th August), Dent d'Hérens in bad storm (18th August), Monte Rosa—Nordend (21st August).

John Wilkinson writes: 'The weather was so disgusting that the only climbs worth recording were the Campanile Basso (Brenta Dolomites) by the Pooli-Trenti route and the Pointe Gamba of the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey by the south ridge. These were climbed with I. G. McNaught Davis (Climbers' Club), Neil Mather (Rucksack) and Albert Ashworth (Rucksack and F.R.C.C.).'

FINLAND.

Tom Price was in Finnish Lapland with the British Schools Exploring Society from 29th July to 19th September, 1957. The purpose of the expedition, which comprised 60 boys and 10 adults, was to introduce the boys to the principles and practice of scientific field work, which was carried out in surveying, natural history, geology and geomorphology. Base camp was ten miles from the village of Peltovouma (near Kalmakantia, a post on the Norwegian frontier). A series of walks was taken in northerly and easterly directions, the longest one, which lasted fifteen days, reaching Lake Inari, an all-round distance of about 250 miles. The country is not mountainous, but has fine expanses of barren uplands, forests of birch and pine, swamps and lakes. Mosquitoes, midges and clegs abound in the summer, but disappear in early September when the woods assume magnificent autumn colouring. It is perfect camping country; one can dispense with tent-poles, primus stoves and change of clothing owing to the abundance of wood. Wellington boots are the recommended footwear. Good large-scale maps are obtainable, and rivers form the only serious obstacle to the cross-country traveller.

THE SCOTTISH MEET, 1957

The reason for the unusual means of transport adopted by the Fell & Rock for the Ullapool Meet was the petrol rationing, now almost forgotten, of the winter of 1957, and so the meet actually started from Southport when 'The Bus' was driven away by John Sycamore on 16th May. It was not until thirty people had been collected in various numbers in Preston, where Dick (the 'Manager') and Eileen Wilson embarked, Kendal, Penrith, Carlisle and Inverness that the party was complete, and even then Leslie Somervell, on his Lambretta, caused Geoffrey, the counter of heads, many anxious moments by his will-o'-the wisp procedure. In spite of the driver's inexperience of Highland roads we arrived at Ullapool five minutes ahead of schedule.

Stac Polly and Cul Beag were the main objectives on the first day; views were limited or entirely obscured by rain and mist, and tea was most welcome to many wet and bedraggled folk on their descent to Linneraineach. The chief victim of the rain was the President's wife, whose new blue corduroy slacks appeared to have been dyed in non-fast colour, so that on the homeward journey allusions to 'woad' were heard from the back seats.

On Sunday a strong party braved very cold weather on Ben Wyvis, all reaching the main summit and some also the northern top. Others had more leisurely walks near Ullapool. Next day the general plan was to go by coach to Inchnadamph, dropping off anglers in various places, the main contingent of climbers for Cul Mor, Dick Cook and George for Ben More Assynt, and the rest according to choice. It was a very wet morning and a late start was made. Cul Mor could hardly be seen and no one seemed to want to climb it. After a journey not without incident, Inchnadamph was reached and the hotel invaded for coffee and other beverages. The weather still discouraged much activity, and most of the party pottered round, some discovering the swallet holes and flowers of the Traligill glen, and others going on in the coach to Ardvreck Castle. Ben More Assynt remained unclimbed, but the fishermen, Molly especially, had a successful day. On the return journey the bridge over the Ledmore River, although most cautiously approached, sustained some damage to its planking, and everyone had to get out in pouring rain while Raymond and his men improvised repairs and warnings to other road users.

21st May was An Teallach day, when the weather cleared and for the rest of the meet could hardly have been better. On the way to Dundonnell Leslie on his scooter did useful work in clearing cows from the road, and in the evening acted as despatch rider, tracing the stragglers and transmitting telephone messages to Ullapool. A 'base camp' was established near Dundonnell House, where the stalkers' path to Kinlochewe starts, the coach being sent on to the hotel with instructions to return at 6-15. A large party went up the path but soon became subdivided according to likes and abilities. Some were content to reach the col, others the first 'Munro' top, Sail Liath, and thence down one of the gullies to Toll an Lochain. But more than a dozen traversed some or all of the pinnacles and main summits, descending to the road by various routes. Dick Cook seems to have run down

most of the ridge to Dundonnell Hotel in order to hold the bus for his adherents and ensure the bar being open.

Meanwhile a continuous service of tea was being provided at 'base,' and let it be said here how much every one was indebted to the tea-makers, especially Eve, Gladys Cook, Paddy and Bentley, for their lavish provision throughout the meet. Before 7 o'clock all had returned except the President, Howard Vaughan and George Webb, and it was not until nearly an hour later that they were seen coming down the stalkers' path, which they had reached by rather a circuitous route from Bidein a'Ghlas Thuill, the highest top, in the hope of overtaking other parties. By way of reparation for this failure to comply with time-table, drinks for all were at the President's expense when we did at last reach the Royal for dinner at 9 p.m.

On Wednesday morning after breakfast the meet photographs were taken with the usual distracting comings and goings, especially when the Somervell brothers were operating with delayed action shutters. The day promised calmness and colour for the sea trip to the Summer Isles, and a photograph taken after lunch shows a triumphant crowd on the summit (406 feet) of Tanera Mor. But a rising wind and rough sea prevented the landing for tea on the islet Carn nan Sgeir, and engine trouble in *Rose Marie* caused a hazardous exchange of skippers on the high seas between her and *Rose Isle*. However, we got safely back to port, fairly wet and salt-caked, but having thoroughly enjoyed the day.

Missing from this adventure were Margaret Hicks, who had conquered Stac Polly with Dick Cook's support, and Howard and Peg, visiting Tom Longstaff at Achiltibuie. These two returned by a very early bus the next morning only to find that our coach was going that way to enable a party to have a good day on Cul Mor. A dozen or so made the ascent from the road by the east ridge, and, after gathering on the summit, came down by one or other of the steep gullies on the western side. Several had intended to continue with Dick Cook over Cul Beag, but thought better of it and went for a swim, so Dick made the traverse alone and even so was not last down at Linneraineach. Here there was again a large gathering for tea.

24th May brought a Dartmouth training squadron (a destroyer and two frigates) into Loch Broom, and for the next few days Ullapool was much enlivened by the comings and goings of their crews. At night the three ships with their bright lights were an attractive sight from the hotel terrace. On this day some members went for a sail round the 'fleet,' others made a sortie across the ferry and walked over to Dundonnell and back, or climbed a hill, Beinn nam Ban, which they reported delightful. The rest of the Fell & Rock preferred its accustomed habitat and mode of transport and set off in the bus with a large party for Ben More Coigach, some determined fishermen, and a few equally determined to have a lazy day by the sea. Ben More Coigach, which was new ground for many, proved a most rewarding expedition. As usual the whole party gathered on the summit, the more energetic then following the ridge to its seaward end, and afterwards making for the top of Sgurr an Fhidhleir to look down its imposing crags and gullies.

In the evenings we were wont to immure ourselves in an upstairs lounge where the cohesion of the party, brought about originally perhaps by the fact that all travelled together by coach, was made even closer! There we were entertained at different times by colour slides from Dick Wilson, John Appleyard and Howard Somervell, and very topical and amusing recitations by Paddy Hirst and Laurie Marsland. One evening was specially notable, for the President presented to Dick Wilson a compass, sleeping bag and cheque as a token of affection and regard from past and present members of the Scottish meets. The President referred to Dick's long association with these meets, and his constant concern for the welfare and enjoyment of those taking part in them. His work in making arrangements for transport to Ullapool had been untiring. Dick, evidently taken entirely by surprise, expressed his thanks in a modest little speech.

On Saturday many of the party went off in the bus with the 'Manager' and other V.I.Ps. to inspect Kinlochewe as a possible place for the 1958 meet. A hired car was therefore required to take the President and his party (Dick Cook, Howard Vaughan and Edwin Ransome) to Little Assynt which they left at 11 a.m. for Glen Canisp and Suilven. They went up to the middle col and then to the summit, thence back to the east top and down to the old hunting lodge at the head of Cam Loch, and along the loch to the bridge at Ledmore where the car awaited them. This they reached in pairs at 7 p.m. and 7-30 p.m. after a very strenuous but enjoyable day.

The President's wife had further adventures when returning from a day of hot sunshine across the ferry and up Beinn nam Ban with a more leisurely party. They came down to tea at the 'inn' at Aultnaharrie, where a newly painted green chair had a fatal attraction for the now famous blue corduroys.

On Sunday the bus was not used and many went to church — so did 'the navy.' The ships were reported to be open to visitors in the afternoon and a number of us joined the people at the harbour awaiting transport. When at last a boat came over it was in the best tradition of 'women and children first' that the local people were able to make the trip, and our members gradually gave up hope and returned to land pursuits. Our last two evenings were marked by wonderful sunsets especially as seen from the Point — May nights of perfection in these northern latitudes.

Less romantically breakfast was at 7-15 next morning, and after farewell to the hotel staff, who had served us well, we left at 8 o'clock on the homeward journey. As we went south the passenger list gradually became smaller, our first loss being George at Dalwhinnie, and two more at Bridge of Allan where we spent the night. Next day Bentley was dropped at Penrith, still carrying some firewood on his rucksack, and several more at Ambleside and Windermere. The remainder enjoyed a delightful tea at Plumgarths on Leslie's invitation, and so to Preston and Southport, where the three survivors said goodbye to the 'bus' and its driver, whose cheerful personality and fine driving had contributed not a little to the success of the meet. Both for those who have attended previous Scottish meets, and for the newcomers it had undoubtedly been a very memorable one.

ANNUAL DINNER, 1957

A. H. Griffin

To one observer, at least, the 1957 Annual Dinner of the Club—with fifty glorious years nicely behind it — was chiefly remarkable for two things. One was the fervent hope, expressed by more than one speaker, that the Club might shortly put an expedition into the Himalaya, and the other was the skill with which the principal speaker (I. G. McNaught-Davis, of Mustagh Tower fame) managed to keep off both the Himalaya and climbing in his extremely amusing speech. With all the official looking back over half a century over and done with, this year's Annual Dinner seemed a pleasant, light-hearted affair, although the President was very properly quite serious on one or two occasions.

But before the dinner we had the Annual General Meeting in the Albion Hall, Keswick, which, perhaps because of shortness of time, failed to produce a single firework. Dick Plint, who, it was said, had attended every meet of the Club during the year and probably worked harder than anybody else was re-elected President, after some good-humoured cracks about his predilection for fishing in Scotland and stone-axe hunting in Langdale. He, in turn, welcomed R. W. Eldridge as junior Vice-President (with Geoffrey Stevens as senior) and thanked the retiring Vice-President (Bill Kendrick) who, he said, had been at his right hand throughout the year. Muriel Files was also congratulated on the excellence and timeliness of the first *Journal* she had edited.

The President referred to the Club's tussle with the North Western Electricity Board over the laying of cables to serve Raw Head. It was satisfactory to note that—due largely to the stand taken by the President —there is now an underground supply to both the Cottage and the Barn, although the Club have had to pay something over £25.

There were only two other matters of note after the re-election of the officers and the election of the new committee (which again had to go to the vote, there being more nominations than seats). One was the announcement of Harry Ironfield (Hut and Meets Secretary) that the forthcoming Wasdale meet would celebrate Brackenclose's twenty-one years. The other was a criticism of the practice followed for a number of years in the In Memoriam section of the *Journal*, certain deaths being noticed simply by printing the name of the deceased member. The obvious difficulties were appreciated, but the President asked members to co-operate in future by getting into touch with the *Journal* Editor if they could give any help in compiling the notice of any member who had recently died.

An hour or two later we were seated in the Royal Oak, with an excellent meal of roast Cumberland chicken inside us, enjoying McNaught-Davis's attacks on the Club. (According to the toast list he was proposing our health.) Although we were informed by a later speaker (Donald Murray) that McNaught-Davis was the only man ever to climb the Brenva route wearing a double-breasted suit, our distinguished guest was careful to make no mention of the Alps. And the only reference to the Himalaya from one of the conquerors of the Mustagh Tower was: 'Oh, the Himalaya! Deeply boring, really, although you might trundle a few rocks now and then. One gets up, not by climbing, but by accident.'

McNaught-Davis apparently spends his time at dinners running down most of the British climbing clubs—apart from the Climbers' Club—but the operation is not a painful one. All he knew about the Fell and Rock, he told us, was that we had a hut for every member, spent the whole year writing Journals, and had male and female members. The Club's best excuse for not climbing—very few climbing clubs do any climbing, according to McNaught-Davis — was that we were supposed to walk instead of going about in cars, and also that we had so many huts to look after. Other clubs were also attacked for failing to climb—the Wayfarers were merely wayfarers and the Rucksack were busy training members to carry other members' rucksacks on long, boring walks. The speaker even had the temerity to launch an attack on our President who he described as a professional beggar — a reference, no doubt, to overdrawn accounts and letters from Plint beginning 'I beg to draw your attention . . .'

Just before he sat down, after a most successful speech which it was said he had composed immediately before dinner, McNaught-Davis said one or two kind words about the few 'climbing members,' including Jack Carswell, John Wilkinson and Alf Gregory, and even went so far as to congratulate the last named on his attempt on Disteghil Sar.

The President was by no means nonplussed by the broadsides of the principal guest, firing back several of his own, one of them being that the reason our hut wardens had become 'hut bound' was because our huts were so frequently used by the Climbers' Club.

Dick referred to the ban on camping in Langdale (later lifted) and said this showed how slender were the threads upon which hung our freedom of the hills. The price of freedom, he said, was eternal vigilance. He appeared reasonably satisfied with the 'compromise' Langdale electricity scheme, but had been appalled by the way the village of Chapel Stile had been changed by 'its network of wires and forest of poles.'

'If that is the way a village in the heart of Lakeland is treated,' said the President, 'then I tremble for the other villages still without electricity.'

About the Himalaya the President said: 'We have a wealth of experience in the Club of climbing in the Himalaya, and it would be a pity if this were lost. I hope that in the future we can have an expedition of Fell and Rock members to the highest mountains in the world.' (A later speaker, H. K. Hartley, of the Rucksack Club, who spoke of the Manchester expedition to Masherbrum, suggested that the Fell and Rock should also attempt a Himalayan peak, and he concluded his speech with the words: 'I hope that the Fell and Rock will soon be able to organize their own expedition to the Himalaya and that perhaps they will reach the summit of Masherbrum').

The President went on to deal with the success of the meets during the year, the influx of young members, the increased climbing on the Lakeland crags and the encouraging way the *Guides* were selling. The huts, too, were being increasingly used, and he paid high tribute to the wardens and appealed for the support of members at maintenance meets.

Looking ahead to 'the next fifty years' the President referred to the standards and traditions of the Club and concluded: 'So long as we

keep these standards as guide posts for the future then this Club will go on from strength to strength. So long as men and women are willing to accept the challenge of the mountains, and, in particular, of this huddle of hills which we call Cumbria, we need have no fear for the future.'

Taking a leaf out of McNaught-Davis's book, Donald Murray proposing 'The Guests and Kindred Clubs,' proceeded to slate them all in good-hearted fashion, and delighted us all with his racy delivery. During one of his rare moments of seriousness he congratulated the Alpine Club on their centenary, and then came out with the revolutionary suggestion that to celebrate their double centenary they might consider admitting female members. In fact, come to think of it, much of Donald's wit seemed to hang around the fact that we are a mixed club, although it would perhaps be an exaggeration to suggest that he seemed obsessed by the fact.

The sober response came from Herbert Hartley, a past President of the Rucksack Club, who spoke of the good old days with Fell and Rock members now departed, including George Bower, Albert Hargreaves and Bert Gross. Much of Hartley's speech dealt interestingly with the problems surrounding the mounting of the Manchester expedition to Masherbrum—'a party of more or less ordinary climbers without any great financial backing.' And, as reported above, he put in a strong plea for the Fell and Rock seriously to consider tackling a similar project.

The speeches finished with the customary thanks by the President to Mr. Beck and his staff for again looking after our comforts so well, but the happy fellowship in the crowded smoking rooms continued until long after midnight.

On Sunday morning we were greeted with a steady downpour of rain, but, nothing deterred, parties were made up and a stream of cars departed for various places amongst the fells. Whether by coincidence or design most people seemed to find their way to the Salving House (where the occupants were still having breakfast) and the place soon became uncomfortably full while we waited for a break in the weather which, unfortunately, was not forthcoming. About 10-30 there was a general exodus, some going to Combe Gill and Gillercombe for climbing, others walking to Watendlath, Langstrath and Dale Head, and again others moving off to Buttermere where they foregathered at Birkness for lunch. The weather improved slightly, but the thought of tea at the Royal Oak and the necessity for getting back in time for McNaught-Davis's talk on 'The Ascent of the Mustagh Tower' was uppermost in most members' minds, and soon we were on our way back to Keswick. McNaught-Davis enthralled us with the account of this hair-raising ascent and we marvelled at the wonderful sequence of slides in colour which showed the climb almost step by step. A truly memorable talk.

BLUE-PRINT OF A PRESIDENT

THE SORCERER'S SONG

My name it is Richard G. Plint,
I'm an expert on axes of flint.
Other axes I grind — of a different kind;
Of their nature you havn't a hint.

I possess an adorable spouse,
And we share an adorable house.
We have daughters, a pair, both brunettes, but both fair,
So the one thing we lack is a grouse!

At the sport of rod and line
I've very great capacity,
But it's failed to undermine
My faith in strict veracity.

I've controlled the Committee's finances
For a matter of nearly ten years.
My annual B.S. demonstrates my success,
And is always received with loud cheers.

At my job in the bank, I hold very high rank;
I could get much higher but I mean to retire;
My job's been well done; now I mean to have fun;
With so much more time to go walking and climb,
And pursue all the hobbies I like.

My name it is Richard G. Plint,
They can keep all the gold in the mint!
While I have more leisure to spend on my pleasure,
And that's what I'll do without stint.

So now you've a sort of blue-print
Of Kathleen and Richard G. Plint,
While we're both of us very addicted to sherry,
I never refuse half a pint!

J.H.

Sung by John Hirst at the Annual Dinner on the 26th October, 1957

LONDON SECTION, 1957

Apart from the Annual Meeting and Dinner held as usual in December, and two informal dinners at the Chinese Restaurant in Park Road, the walks have again been the chief activity of the London Section on their home ground. Ten walks were held during the year and attendances have increased; indeed, it seems to be agreed that besides offering opportunities for stretching the legs, these rambles are a very pleasant way of meeting fellow members and at the same time of exploring the unspoilt countryside within easy reach of London. For, although it may surprise those who do not know the 'home counties,' it is a fact that once the roads are left for the field tracks, there is a great deal of beautiful open country only a few miles away from London's ever spreading suburbia. If we cannot have the fells at our doorstep, we can at least seek the uplands and wide views from the Surrey Hills or the Chilterns.

Our first walk of the year on 27th January was led by M. N. Clarke from a new starting point at Langley, through Buckinghamshire parklands to Gerrards Cross. The party numbered fifteen, and we were very pleased to have with us once again Glen Preston on leave from New Zealand. On 24th February Stella Joy (with 'Spot,' of course) took us from Egham through Windsor Great Park to Virginia Water. The walk included a visit to the R.A.F. Memorial, so splendidly situated on Coopers Hill above Runnymede where Magna Carta was signed. Our leader again kindly provided tea for the party, and it should certainly be recorded that owing to some misunderstanding about a key, one of our smaller lady members performed quite a feat in climbing through a very small window to let us in.

A month later, the Walks Secretary led a circular round from Dorking up to Coldharbour and Leith Hill (1,000 feet with the tower). Spring was in the air and primroses were in bloom in the woods. We returned by Holmbury St. Mary and through the pine woods to Wotton Hatch. Our next walk on 5th May was the annual one held jointly with the London Section of the Rucksack Club. Boyland (Rucksack), starting from Milford, took us to Hascombe and Hambledon, those two secluded villages under Hascombe Hill. It was a glorious spring day with the cuckoo calling and bluebells already carpeting the woods. We skirted along Hascombe Hill and were allowed a welcome rest to admire the superb view. Our route back to Milford included Winkworth Arboretum (National Trust) where we found the azaleas, rhododendrons, and other flowering shrubs at their best.

16th June was a scorching hot day. Dr. and Mrs. Garrod had invited us to tea at their new home at Radlett, and J. E. L. Clements chose an excellent route there, starting from Boreham Wood and circling round our destination by Aldenham Reservoir (where the sailing boats tempted us to go no further), and along the River Colne to Bricket Wood. No bathing was allowed, but after lunch our leader permitted a welcome rest. Along the field path by the river we were rather amused by a farmer rushing up and down in a jeep admonishing people who strayed from the path into his fields; evidently he knew what to expect on a fine Sunday afternoon by the river. Radlett was

reached in good time, and we were all glad to relax in the cool of the Garrod's charming garden and do full justice to the sumptuous tea.

Next month on 7th July we did try a combined swimming and walking round, led by R. P. Mears, and announced as the 'three lakes walk.' Unfortunately, however, after the hot spell, the weather had cooled off and the thought of a dip was not quite so alluring. We started from Witley and made straight for the lake in Winkworth Arboretum. The water was quite warm and several members enjoyed a swim in spite of the lack of sunshine. After a picnic lunch by the lake we continued on by Busbridge Hall and lake down to Godalming and the Lake Hotel. The swimming pool here was out of action but as it turned out nobody was anxious for a second swim. All, however, had enjoyed a delightful cross country walk.

As usual there was no walk in August, but the month brought the news of the marriage of Ruth Pickersgill to Mr. A. O. Gelber to whom we offer our congratulations and best wishes.

Ian Clayton opened the autumn season with another of his 'natural and unnatural obstacle walks' on the Sussex Downs. The obstacles were mostly slippery chalk and barbed wire, but all survived the ascent from Hassocks to the ridge of the Downs and Devil's Dyke. This is a splendid view point, with the Weald of Sussex spread like a map below. We had climbed up the steepest side, of course, over the slippery downland grass, but there is a good road up from Brighton, and the refreshment house on top, with its juke-box music blaring out, forcefully reminded us that we were not really in the wilds. From the Dyke we returned to Hassocks across country, just beating the rain which had threatened all day. Our leader was soon busy frying sausages for our tea, whilst the party introduced themselves to his young family. It had been an energetic day, and we were very grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Clayton for their hospitality.

On 13th October M. N. Clarke again led us through the Chiltern woods from Great Missenden to Wendover. The autumn tints were magnificent and the soft sunlight streaming through the great beeches made it a memorable day. The route included Chequers, the ancient church at Ellesborough, and Coombe Hill. There were twenty-seven people on this walk, a record for the London Section, at least since the war. In November, on rather a bleak day, Stella Joy again led us through Windsor Great Park, which is attractive at any time of the year. To vary the route we returned through the park by Queen Anne's Ride, a splendid avenue of trees.

Our Annual Meeting and Dinner was held on 14th December as usual at the Connaught Rooms and fifty-five were present, exactly the same number as the previous year, which might have been exceeded if there had not been some cancellations owing to illness. It was a most enjoyable evening and our Chairman was in great form, disposing of the 'business' to everyone's satisfaction with more than usual alacrity. Mabel Burton was elected to the committee unanimously. The Club guests were Una Cameron, President of the Ladies' Alpine Club, F. H. Keenlyside, Alpine Club (editor of the *Alpine Journal*) and Alan Deane, Rucksack Club (Hon. Sec. of their London Section). We were also very pleased to welcome our own

President, R. G. Plint, and much appreciated his coming to be with us. The toast of the guests and kindred clubs was proposed by Mrs. Marjorie Garrod, for many years Hon. Sec. of the London Section. Her speech was full of graceful turns of phrase and happy reminiscences. F. H. Keenlyside responded for the guests in a thoughtful speech to delight all who love mountains, alpine or in the homeland. At nine o'clock Dr. Hadfield proposed the time-honoured toast of 'Absent Friends,' then a toast was proposed by R. A. Tyssen-Gee to Dr. Hadfield, whom we all hope to have as our Chairman for many years, although he is always threatening to retire.

Next day our new committee member, Mabel Burton, led the walk on which nineteen people turned out, and we were delighted to have the President among them. It was a high level route from Guildford to St. Martha's on the Pilgrims Way, Albury, and the Silent Pool at Shere, returning by Newlands Corner. And the weather could hardly have been better. So ended a happy year for the London Section.

R. A. Tyssen-Gee.
E. W. Hamilton.

CLIMBING MEET, SKYE.

Glen Brittle, 30th August to 6th September, 1958. Leader, John Wilkinson.

An additional Scottish meet of the Club is being arranged with the primary object of encouraging rock climbing among the younger members. The meet will be informal and those wishing to attend should arrange their own accommodation or camping. Interested members should contact the leader for further information and indicate whether they require transport or have vacant places to offer.

PROPOSED IRISH MEET.

There has been a suggestion that an Irish Meet, organized on the lines of the traditional Scottish meet, should be held. W. G. Stevens has obtained information and advice from the secretary and individual members of the Irish Mountaineering Club and from N. E. Odell as to location, hotels, etc., and anyone interested should get in touch with him. Connemara is the possible first choice, Kerry the second.

As Ireland is rapidly being 'discovered' by rock climbers and there are reports of large unclimbed faces with the promise of long routes of high standard (in this connection, Harold Drasdo's article in this number, *In Donegal,* is of great interest), the possibility of a rock climbing meet is also under consideration. In this case anyone interested should apply to the Hut and Meets Secretary.

ENGLISH FOLKLORE SURVEY.

This is being organized by the English Department of University College, London; the object is to study the traditional elements in the life and customs of England, including folk tales, anecdotes, beliefs and superstitions, traditional plays, games, etc. The directors of the survey ask for help in collecting material directly from living people. If anyone interested in the subject is willing to assist, please apply for further information to the Editor.

ELECTRICITY COMES TO RAW HEAD

It might well have been thought that, when the final agreement was reached over the method of carrying a supply of electricity up Great Langdale, there would have been little difficulty in connecting up Raw Head, but such was not the case. The following letters are self-explanatory.

To Members of the Committee.

In connection with the electrification of Great Langdale the North Western Electricity Board offered to supply Raw Head subject to a guaranteed payment of £15 p.a. for a period of five years. Wayleave was also sought to carry an underground cable from the supply pole (in the Achille Ratti field) down through our property to the road for the purpose of supplying the Wayfarers' Club.

Further details were requested as it seemed desirable that the Cottage and the Barn should each have separate meters. It was then found that our supply was not to be brought via the underground cable but by overhead wires from the supply pole and the supply would be to the Barn alone. A second meter could not be installed as the Cottage and Barn were considered to be one property.

A letter was sent to the Board stating that an overhead supply was considered undesirable and in a reply, dated 5/3/57, we were informed that we could have an underground supply at a cost of £9 but the terminal position of the cable would be immediately above the main entrance. No reply was received to the objection to this proposal and our request for a separate supply to both Barn and Cottage and a deadlock appeared to have been reached.

In the meantime, seeing that negotiations were not proceeding satisfactorily, the Wayleave Agreement was withheld.

A few days ago the Board enquired by telephone about this agreement and the position was fully explained to them. They asked if I would be willing to take one of their engineers to Raw Head and show him what was required and we went there on the evening of 8th instant.

The following arrangements were made, subject to Committee approval:—

(a) The Barn and Cottage were each to receive a separate underground supply, the former by way of the window sill to the right of the back door to a meter fixed on the landing wall; the latter to come into the Cottage at the S.E. corner to a meter fixed in the cupboard on the right-hand side of the fireplace in the living room.

(b) The total cost to be £15 per annum for five years or the actual cost of the energy supplied, whichever is the greater, plus £9 for the difference between the cost of the proposed original overhead supply and a new underground supply, plus a further £16 10s. 0d. to cover the cost of the extra separate supply.

(c) The Wayleave Agreement to be completed.

Will you please let me have your approval or otherwise to these proposals as soon as possible.

1 Town View, Kendal.
15th April, 1957.

R. G. PLINT, President.

The Committee agreed to these proposals.

Dear Mr. Dobell,

The Committee of this Club, at a meeting held on 8th June last, considered the effect of the overhead electric supply lines on the property of the Club and its neighbours at Raw Head, Great Langdale. The Committee deplored the loss of the amenities of the locality, and directed me to acquaint you of their views. It is appreciated that some of the factors in this complaint were outside your control; others we believe were in it. It falls under two counts:—

(1) The H.T. line passes along the fell side about 80 yards above the buildings at Raw Head. In addition to the pole on this line which carries the transformer, there are three poles for the L.T. lines serving the three consumers in the locality. From the rear of our property all these poles are very conspicuous, and two of them (the H.T. pole and the L.T. pole close to it) are an eyesore as seen from the road through the gap which acts as a focal point between our buildings.

(2) The North Western Electricity Board, although it took an underground line through our land (under wayleave) to serve the Wayfarers' Club building on the other side of the road, originally proposed to carry the supply into our two buildings by means of overhead cables, which would have involved a further disfigurement of the site. After negotiation, the Board finally consented to place these lines underground, if the Club would pay the extra cost. This was agreed to in order to preserve the amenities of the locality, though it was felt that in the circumstances such a charge was unjustifiable.

In general my Committee felt that whereas the route and type of high tension lines are controlled by agreement between the parties concerned, or by the result of a public enquiry, no such control seems to be exercised on the low tension systems serving individual buildings, and that considerable disfigurement may thereby result.

We observed in the first paragraph of this letter that we believe you have not the power to keep full control over these matters. To carry out your statutory duty 'to preserve and enhance' the beauty of the Lake District you need this control, and we have, therefore, made this complaint in detail, so that it may perhaps add to the weight of public opinion, which in due course may lead to the changes in legislation necessary to this end. In so far as this letter is critical we hope you will be assured that our criticism springs from a devotion to the Lake District by a Club, one of whose objects is 'to protect the amenities of the District,' and whose members, collectively or as individuals have, during the last fifty years, given both personal effort and resources to do so.

K. Dobell, Esq.,
The Chairman, Lake District Planning Board,
Noran Bank,
Patterdale.

Yours faithfully,
R. G. PLINT,
President.
8th August, 1957.

No reply was received to this letter.