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THE BONDED WARE'OUSE

By C. F. HOLLAND

"I will now out of the bonded ware'ouse of my knowledge—." Thus was the ever-famqus John Jorrocks wont to preface many of his amazing dissertations on the noble sport of fox hunting. With apologies to Surtees, and grateful acknowledgment of many happy hours passed under the spell of that very great writer, his celebrated character's words are quoted in the hope that they may act as an inspiration in "A Sporting Lector," though on a subject of a totally different nature.

An apology is also needed to those who expect a climbing article to be filled with accounts of new achievements and the conquest of hitherto uncharted cliffs; but this is not for the super-expert but rather for those, such as the author, who, rapidly approaching the sere and yellow, their hair coming out in handfuls, and to whom every so often a resounding crash announces that yet another tooth has gone to its last long home, have to live in the past and do their climbing by the fireside on distant crags lit up by the afterglow of memory.

But there is no bitterness in the thought that those days are gone for ever and that their romance is a thing of the past. Values never die; their aroma, like that of good wine, improves with age, and the bones that we thought were dead are found to be alive, full of a new vitality and the power to make us see visions undreamt of in the days of our youth. Regret for the roseate hues of early adventure passes as the long day wears on, and as the evening shadows steal out we begin to realise their significance and value in the scheme of things—that they were not evanescent but became part of our being and are with us still.

Values never die, but it takes time to show us this and unfold the scroll fully. Life is not just a large chest of drawers in one of which the climbing part is locked up separate from all the other parts, but a one piece tapestry with the golden thread of climbing woven continuously through it and beautifying its most sombre stretches. Though we may have to live far from the mountains, yet are they still very part of us; our hands may be unable to grasp the crags, nevertheless spiritually we are still on them and are still in union with them; distance adds new

and enchanting colours to scenes the beauty of which we had not grasped to the full. And so let me wander in spirit once more up among the hills, and browse contentedly for a while among ancient memories, in search of that easing of the heart and cumulance of comfort which is the everlasting gift of high places.

It is one of my amusements, when the mood comes, to revisit the crags in fancy and do the old climbs over again, recalling my companions to bear me company, picturing their appearance and sensing their personality, hearing their voices, laughing again with them at the funny incidents, and gasping at breathless moments when danger was too close to be pleasant.

Some of the most dangerous moments in my own experience came very early in my climbing career one cold January morning when I was ordered to lead Kern Knotts Chimney by a much older climber, long since dead, who had me very much under his thumb but expected me to do all the leading. The day was raw and windy and snow was on the rocks. The chimney part went easily enough, but the slab, cold and wind-swept, with snow on every hold, was a very different matter; in addition, it was my first day out that holiday and I was out of training and did not know the climb. My feelings of dismay after the first tentative efforts had failed are still fresh in my memory. On informing my companion of my expectation of coming off I was not encouraged; he told me that if I did so he could not possibly help me and that I should be killed for a certainty. He then said that he should consider me a coward if I did not go on. After this there was nothing for it except to try again and, of course, after a few seconds of desperate uncertainty, I found that the difficulty, like most other difficulties when boldly tackled, had been conquered. However that may be, I shall always consider this experience as one of the most dangerous, if not the most dangerous, I have ever had. From Kern Knotts to the Napes is an easy flight of the imagination. How many happy memories the thought of the Napes evokes. I have had a perfect day's climbing on them in the depth of winter, only the next day to be driven off the Arrowhead by rain which froze as it fell on the cold rocks and masked every hold on the arête with ice. Had the leader been half-way up the slab when the shower came on, I really believe he would have been forced to slide down, with such speed did the ice form.

This holiday seems to have been marked by unusual incidents, for three of us were climbing the Ling Chimney and the first two were high up, the leader at the most difficult section, when a voice came up from below: "I am not feeling well, in fact, I am in a half-fainting condition." The rapid scurrying for a safe position and a belay on the part of the leader may be easily imagined. The invalid was soon lowered to safety, and found to be suffering from an acute attack of indigestion which kept him off the rocks for the rest of the day.

The Napes also once gave me a lesson as to the advisability of taking enough rope. We were descending the Eagle's Nest direct and found that our rope would not reach the big belay at the foot. The problem was solved on this occasion by my tying the rope round my braces, but the device is not one to be recommended.

The great increase of tourist traffic on the Napes is distressing and, disturbed by the alarms and excursions of happy bands of pilgrims, we will take the wings of a dove and flee away to the secluded recesses of Bowfell and the famous buttress. Although most parties doing this climb must reach the top without anything out of way occurring, yet nearly every ascent I have made has left a memory of something unusual. The first time I had barely started when my companion begged me to come back. He said he was Scotch, that he had the gift of second sight and that he knew there was going to be a fatal accident. At intervals all the way up this information was repeated. I attribute the success of our climb to the fact of my Irish demon being too strong for his Scotch one.

A few years later I was asked to take a man up, and we arranged to meet in the valley at four o'clock. That day I had to attend a funeral the other side of Keswick and, starting from Windermere, must have cycled some fifty miles before we met, with the natural consequence that I was extremely tired by the time we reached the foot of the buttress. In any case I found each pitch harder than the one before it and in particular made very heavy weather of the little overhanging crack. When we reached the top the other fellow's only comment was: "I climbed that in very much better style than you did; I used my feet very much better."

I have spent the rest of my life regretting that I could not

think of even one of the many excellent retorts that have since suggested themselves.

Quite recently I made another ascent, this time as second in a party of two, and as usual the buttress gave us all the excitement we wanted. The day was cold, mist and slight rain making the rocks greasy and most unpleasant to handle. The crack had this time much the better of me in a hand-to-hand struggle and, in fact, only the rope enabled me to conquer it. Above that, the climb seemed continuously very difficult, certainly a good standard harder than normal under the conditions, cold fingers slipping on slimy rock conveying the impression that no handhold could be relied on in the event of a slip. After a while my leader was held up and could make no further progress. My confidence was not increased, but my inferiority complex was deepened by the great difficulty I had in reaching him. Here I could find no adequate belay and had to sit on one bulge, holding the rope round another and wondering if I could possibly hold him if he came off. Though he had a desperate struggle this doubtful point was, luckily, not put to the test.

Strangely enough, the traverse, generally considered the hardest pitch on the climb, went quite easily, but I do not think that either of us is likely to forget our feelings of uncertainty at the pitch below it. And all this trouble on an ordinary difficult. It would be interesting to know how many accidents have been caused by parties not at their best taking on climbs, reputedly more or less moderate, when the conditions made them just that degree harder that makes all the difference. It does not require any great effort of the imagination to point out quite a number of such a character.

As the Crags of Bowfell dissolve in the mist a new scene gradually emerges and a prodigious leap has been taken to the great cliffs of Skye. For me the romance of that rainswept island was shattered by a fortnight spent among its cloud-filled corries. I grant that for scenery and mountain form there is nothing in England to challenge the Coolins, and only Lliwedd and Clogwyn d'ur Arddu approach in size their sweeping cliffs, but the charm of the English and Welsh climbing grounds does not exist there for me. The reasons for this are not easy to discover; perhaps it is due to the feeling of remoteness they

inspire, perhaps to the appalling inertia of the valleys and the leaden-footed crawl day by day over the interminable heather. For one memory, however, I shall always be grateful, that of the view from the ridge one day when a keen north-westerly breeze swept the mists away and laid what looked like all Scotland bare to our astonished gaze. As for the outlook seawards, no words of mine could convey adequately the immensity of its spaciousness or the brilliance of the colour effects on and under the water. Infinitely far away beyond the Hebrides a dim mountainous mass can only have been St. Kilda. In the words of the immortal Dick Swiveller, the view can well be described as " an unmitigated staggerer."

In addition to giving me this imperishable memory, the island, possibly in resentment for a lack of appreciation of its crags, administered to me two disagreeable pills in the shape of falls. The first was on the top pitch of the Cioch gully, down which a stream of cold water was pouring; just as I was congratulating myself on reaching the final pull-out all strength left my arms and the effort could not be made. Retreat and advance were equally impossible and the only thing to do was to fall. I am sure that those who saw this happen will agree that the performance was distinguished by ease and considerable grace, for I managed to turn round and do a sitting glissade down the big slab, while the delighted laughter of the rest of the party was ample compensation for my loss of dignity, if any. The other was a novel way of coming down the first pitch of that gloomy fissure that penetrates into the vitals of the Bhasteir Tooth.

After an abrupt descent through space I found myself hanging head downwards against the wall below, thus adding several feet to the climb. Although, theoretically, this unorthodox movement should have resulted in bodily damage, the contrary happened, for in bouncing on a ledge the last remaining adhesion left from a wound in the right arm was knocked out and the arm was afterwards considerably better from the shock. This falling movement, however, like crossing the feet on difficult slabs, is best left to the expert. The only occasion on which I hurt myself, was when I fell two inches in the Black Chimney on Doe Crags, which seems to show that the secret of a successful fall is to make it a good long one. Chilled by the driving rain and hail of Skye, the memory is only too glad to return to the

amenities of crags nearer home, to hover for a few moments over Kern Knotts West Buttress.

I can remember asking Herford how it was that on standard severes one never met any problem approaching those set on the average boulder? His answer was that no one would care to tackle pitches of the calibre of a boulder problem in exposed situations. I have always held that the time would come when climbers would take real severity and ignore exposure. Nowadays this has evidently happened and the standard of climbing has become higher in consequence.

Herford and Sansom were in reality the pioneers of this advance in technique. I am not thinking in this connection of their performances on Scawfell, for the only boulder problem they found there was the top ten feet of the Flake Crack as originally climbed by Herford; but on Kern Knotts West Buttress this standard was reached and it was up to that date the hardest climb ever done in the Lakes; Wales cannot be included as, undoubtedly, Gibson's direct route on the Fach satisfied all the requirements needed to put it in the boulder problem class. Those who know their journals will remember that the discoverers of the buttress took the trouble to do the Eagle's Nest and Botterill's Slab on the same day and found it considerably harder than either of them. Perhaps it will be argued that the first pitch of Collier's climb is an earlier example of what might be called "advanced climbing," but this is a disintegrating part of Scawfell, and it seems certain that the place has become more severe, and in any case the exposure of the difficult spot is not great; it is a fact that Herford fell off it without injury.

I did not see this happen, but I did see Sansom fall on one occasion, and it was in the sitting room at Burnthwaite when he was practising abseiling from a beam and turning completely upside down hit the floor hard with his head. Later on, when I had to abseil on the Engelhörner, the recollection of this event was with me so vividly as to cause intense nervousness, and I never reached the end of one safely without feeling great relief.

From Scawfell it is natural that one's thoughts should stray to the Pillar, the only Lakeland Crag, except Doe Crags, to rival it in size and in variety and complexity of route, sharing with it an atmosphere of mystery and of possessing secret recesses that is, by me at any rate, not to be found on Doe Crags.

On no other crag is one so utterly aloof, no other crag is so unworldly and detached, on no other crag have so many queer things happened. It must also hold easily the record for benighted parties and the cases of necessity for rescue.

It is easy to understand that Walker's Gully has often got parties into trouble; it is not so easy to understand the terrific reputation the North-West held at one time, nor why so many parties had to call for a rope from above near the top. My first ascent of this course was third on a rope with Herford leading and George Abraham second. The latter acknowledged at the top that the reputation for danger was undeserved. I can still remember my great happiness at having done this famous climb, and also my admiration of the second climber's foot-work and beautiful balance, an object lesson for a young climber.

An instance of Herford's great energy was shown on this day for, on reaching the top of Pillar, another climber appeared who said he had never done the North-West; on this Herford immediately went down with him and did it again.

Subsequently, while having tea at Burnthwaite, he suddenly remarked that I had never done Kern Knotts Crack and, as it was his last evening, he insisted on racing off and taking me up it; and it was a race too, against the rapidly advancing night. The only other climber in my experience to show equal energy was Crawford, who simply never had had enough.

One summer evening, after a very long day on Scawfell, the rest of the party were putting on their boots about half-past nine, when he came up and demanded with indignation what we thought we were doing. We pointed to the falling shades of night and said that we also thought a spot of dinner was indicated.

"But," said he, "You have never done Colliers'. You must do Collier's! Heaps of time, Heaps of light! You may never do it if you don't do it now!"

I have often been sorry that we did not listen to the voice of the charmer, and that he did not seem to us to charm wisely, for I never have done Collier's, and I have not the slightest doubt that on this occasion he would have led us up it no matter how dark it got.

To return to Pillar, one of the climbs to which I look back specially is a descent of Walker's Gully, with Kelly and Crawford; for once in a way quite dry, it was much easier than an ascent.

This dryness must have made all the difference, for Odell will bear me out in the fact that the rather similar West Jordan Gully under wet conditions was by no means easy to descend.

Kelly's exploration for the Pillar Guide is an epic that could do with a fuller description than it has yet received. I like to think of him leading his devoted party up the North-West in pouring rain, measuring all the pitches without any of that hurry usually associated with cold and wet. How many people realise the hard work, mental and physical, the exacting climbing, the tiring business of incessant measuring, the fortitude in facing adverse weather, that were needed for so careful a survey of this great crag?

The photograph, *l'envoi*, at the end of the Guide, is the most apposite and the most touching climbing picture I for one have ever seen, and the thought of it brings this article to a fitting conclusion. So, as the evening shadows lengthen and the afterglow spreads its magic veil over the sky, let us wander down to the purple mists of the valley and the lights of home.

For all of us at last it ringeth to evensong, but though all the lights have faded out of the sky we can in spirit again reach the heights and relive the times we have spent on them in the past. Their value has not perished but is with us yet, though I do not think that in this life we shall ever realise to the full the benediction that the hills have shed upon us with their message of spiritual triumph over material difficulty.

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF SKYE

By Kathleen Boothroyd

"It is easy to sit at home and conceive rocks and heath and waterfalls," stated Doctor Johnson long ago; but that he was no advocate of such slothful ease is proved by his famous—and for those days, how adventurous!—journey to the Western Islands of Scotland. A hundred and fifty years have passed since the worthy doctor set out, in his "large bushy greyish wig, black worsted stockings and silver buckles," provided with a pair of pistols, gunpowder, and a quantity of bullets to ensure his safe return. Rope and rucksack have taken the place of his more warlike weapons, and clinkers instead of silver buckles adorn our feet; but still the pilgrimage to the Western Isles goes on, and still it is an adventure and a rich, enduring joy.

It was mid-September and a peerless morning, when five of us left the mainland at Mallaig, bound for Skye. The first stages of the journey had been long, but not wearisome; for the utter darkness and desolation of the little station on which we had spent half the night, followed by the magical train-journey by countless blue lochs and through glens vivid with turning birch trees, were our prelude to adventure. "Their weather," says our authority on the inhabitants of Skye, "is not pleasing." But had he been with us on that September day as, leaving the rattling bus at Sligachan, we tramped the last eight miles to our destination, Glen Brittle, Doctor Johnson would have had to alter his opinion. It was perfect. Shadows were deepening in the corries, and moor and ridge, touched here and there with cloud, were lit with gold. "Take a good look at the ridge," said the wisest member of the party, "for you may never see the tops again." But this grim prophecy, so often justified in the "misty isle," was unfulfilled this time; for morning followed morning of weather that the mountaineer dreams of; light summer clouds resting their shadows along the ridge, dry rocks, warm and friendly in the sun, and views lovely beyond words. We were out on the ridge (not alas, at dawn, for the pleasure of nine o'clock porridge and bacon and eggs at the Post Office was too great to be foregone) every day; breaking no records and performing no extraordinary feats of cragsmanship, but living every moment to the full.

Perhaps there is no spot in the whole of Britain which offers, within so small a boundary, so much variety of scene, such endless changing of light and colour, as Glen Brittle at the foot of the Coolin ridge. There you are on the edge of the sea, now roaring against the cliffs, now still as an inland lake. From the coast, the moor sweeps upward, scarred and trenched here and there with clear rivers. Of the ridge itself, it is difficult to speak, so magnificent a wall of rock it is, seemingly so impregnable, holding in its buttresses and chimneys, its pinnacles and precipices, such unequalled opportunities for human strength and achievement, and such revelations of wonder and of beauty. It is never twice the same. On the sunniest day the clouds will appear from nowhere and wreath themselves round the peaks, or (but this is rarer !) on a morning when the mist droops to the very moor, a rift will come, and the summits of Sgumain and Alasdair and Dearg will stand out for a moment, clear and bold. Every change of weather comes as a new and exciting experience. There was the morning when we toiled up the southern ridge of Gars Bheinn, surely the steepest and most unrelenting uphill trudge in the Coolins ! The sun was beating fiercely on our backs, the whole mountain seemed to be composed of scree of the most malevolent type, and the summit, instead of becoming nearer, appeared to recede further and further from us. But at last the ridge was breasted, and all the toil and struggle was past; even lunch was forgotten; for, below us, were the dark waters of Loch Coruisk, and Scavaig, opening out to the sea, while northwards stretched the whole Coolin ridge, black and broken and magnificent. And all round, as far as the eye could reach, lay a bank of cloud, above which the high hills of the mainland, the peaks of Rhum and distant Mull rose like blue islands in a sea of mist. Even St. Kilda was visible beyond the Outer Hebrides. It was a moment of enchantment, prolonged throughout a day of rare loveliness.

Evening after evening we left the ridge after sunset, lingering until the last possible moment, then careering at break-neck speed down the rough stone shoots into Coire Lagan or Coir'a Ghrunnda, trying to regain the moor before dark. Sometimes even this precaution was unnecessary, for the moon was at the full, and the day then had no limits.

And " I am not sure," Percy Withers says, " if the best part

of those days on the fells was not the return at nightfall." The last mile's tramping, with tired legs and the spirit exalted, towards the tiny light across the valley, that signified hot soup and a peat fire, brought a contentment and a sense of peace that is surely hard to equal. There are mountain-lovers all over the world to whom Skye means Glen Brittle, and Glen Brittle Mrs. Chisholm's. To those who have met only the hard-headed landladies of towns and cities, she would appear a miracle; to all who know her, she is a friend to whom it is impossible to pay sufficient tribute. The light across the valley means more than mere creature comforts after a hard day, it is a symbol of the kindness and interest and a "hospitality like that of the golden age," which meet the traveller in this unspoiled, uncommercialised corner of the world.

And, in passing, I would say that time and again the legend of Scottish meanness was refuted. Everywhere we went in Skye we were met with unprecedented kindness. To give only one example: we were camping for four nights near the shores of Loch Slapin, at the foot of Blaven. There was no house for some miles, only a tiny croft a few hundred yards away. The first evening we were cooking our supper and lamenting the absence of fresh milk, when we heard footsteps approaching, and a small boy appeared, carrying a can of milk almost as large as himself. He offered this to us rather shyly, but refused absolutely to take any payment for it. And every night and morning after this, without fail, came two quarts of fresh milk, a gift from folk whose poverty was as evident as their generosity was great.

But, though the kindness of the people was unfailing, that of the weather was not so. There were days of bitter cold and clinging mist when, though the rain did not fall, great drops of moisture fell from the wet slabs on to our heads; when the rocks seemed made of ice, and numbed fingers slipped out of tiny handholds. We were constantly reminded of the words of Job: "They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter." When one is waiting in a damp gully, with the wind investigating every portion of one's anatomy, the pleasures of mountaineering seem sadly over-rated.

The traverse of Clach Glas and Blaven was made on such a day. The cold was intense, the black clouds became more and more

threatening, and there was no escape from the wind, even for a moment. It was the more cruel in that we had heard such glowing accounts of the panoramic view of the Coolin which we should obtain. And nothing did we see but a fleeting glimpse of the most northerly spur of the ridge, Sgurr nan Gillean, and a faint Red Hill or two. Yet, strangely enough, Blaven does not stand out as a disappointing day. It fits into the pattern; for, however one may enjoy a perfect and a cloudless climb, the aching cold and misery, the mist, even the vile condition of the rock, have an important and valued place in one's mountain record. I remember the day when we climbed King's Chimney from the Mhic Choinnich Gap. There was not the vestige of a view, the mist was chilly, and we had come to the end of our sandwiches. The rock, that never to be sufficiently praised gabbro, was wet and cold, and as beastly as rock can be. One of the party arrived at last at the top of the climb, with a face streaked with mud, wildly searching after a grip on the rock, and saying, amid laughter but with full conviction, "I've never been so miserable in all my life!" To give one more example: the Sligachan burn. The words may recall to patrons of Campbell's Hotel the picture of a pleasant river flowing between the Red Coolins and the Black. But to five weary walkers, who had missed the track, one moonless, unforgettable Sunday evening, it meant something very different, and that something might be simply expressed in one syllable, Bog. Surely Cardinal Newman, when he wrote "O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent till the night is gone," was thinking of the Sligachan burn, and those barren wastes—so treacherous, so unending, so cruel after a tiring day on the ridge—that lie between the "tourist route" from Sgurr nan Gillean and the shores of Loch Sligachan! Yet it is strange how subtly the discomforts of mountaineering change in retrospect and add a fine flavour to the enjoyment. For how often since then have we not looked back on that day—even those very moments of struggle and physical wretchedness—with laughter and with joy! It is such confessions that make the Philistine lift his eyebrows and say derisively, "It's funny how some people enjoy themselves!" But to him and his race I would reply that never, in all his ease-loving days, has he tasted anything to equal a certain brew of tomato soup that was cooked that Sunday night. Nor can be have experienced, for

instance, the sudden joy on attaining the summit of Mhic Choinnich after the rigours of King's Chimney, of seeing the first Brocken spectres, clear and distinct on the clouds below. Those are moments of sharp delight, when one cries "Look! look!" to one's companions; and to those who climb in Skye they come as a repeated miracle.

For the mist is the almost inseparable companion of the Coolin ridge, and its crowning beauty. It can transform the visible world into something unearthly, and cover the commonplace with mystery and wonder. It gives an added grace to the curves and contours of a mountain ridge, and brings a momentary independent life to innumerable crags and pinnacles of rock which appear to be one with the solid mountain. To see the clouds play on the broken face of Sron na Ciche, whose unimposing skyline belies the fierce precipices of its western side, is to be swept into another and an awe-inspiring world, where rocks indeed "tower in horrid nakedness," a region "dismissed by Nature from her care and disinherited from her favours, left in its original elemental state."

But although the Coolin ridge has a wild grandeur that is unsurpassed, and a changing beauty that no intimacy could dull to indifference, its mountains are not the only source of the often vaunted charm of Skye. One has only to wander along the rough cliff-tracks, with the sea breaking below with a Cornish strength and beauty, to realise this. One may spend hours watching the countless varieties of sea-birds that haunt the loch; cormorants, gulls by the hundred, and gannets with their black-tipped wings sailing along the wind or diving from incredible heights sheer into the waves. The inevitable "lazy days" need not be spent only in recounting old triumphs and planning new (though these are pleasures no mountaineer will forego). There are the burns, hurrying down from their green lochs, to explore, the moors to wander over, and last but not least, if one is camping, the inevitable washing up and cooking of meals. Food plays a prominent part in the life of those who climb mountains. And let him who wishes to deny this unromantic fact, deny himself also the slab of chocolate at the top of the weary scree shoot, or the last coveted sandwich (soaked and squashed, it might be, but still a sandwich) as the day draws on to the hour when respectable folk are having their afternoon tea. Best of all, per-

haps, is the evening meal, after which it is unnecessary—and inadvisable—to move, except to go to bed. For the sake of my companions at those evening meals I will say no more, lest they should rise up indignantly and deny that on one occasion—but enough! for "there is a time to speak, and a time to keep silence."

Every holiday that is worthy the name, must of necessity be full of its own peculiar jokes, jokes as innumerable and absurd as they are incommunicable. There will be also many isolated moments of beauty, that will, perhaps, remain in the memory when the general impressions of mountain days have merged and lost their individual sharpness. There is a little red aspen tree overhanging a pool in the lovely Allt na Dunaiche whose autumn brilliance, against the stormy background of Blaven in cloud, will not be forgotten by those who saw it. Skye is full of tiny miracles such as this, and each season, each hour of the day will yield a fresh store.

One incident during those three weeks, of a rather sorrowful interest, must be mentioned. We were present at the closing of a chapter in the history of Glen Brittle. The fell rights of Rhudunan, the oldest sheep-farm in Skye, have been sold to the Forestry Commission, and McLeod's sheep, some 3,000 of a fine mountain breed, were driven away for sale and eventual slaughter at Dingwall. It was a splendid and yet a pitiful sight to witness the long white cavalcade, well shepherded by five men and their alert dogs, moving slowly up the valley and over the Bealach a' Mhaim to the coast. The end of a chapter—and the end of a holiday. It was with the reluctance of Doctor Johnson who at Dunvegan said, "I was in danger of forgetting that I was ever to depart," that we shouldered our rucksacks and said goodbye to Glen Brittle. The valley was full of stormy sunlight as we looked back, trying to catch the last glimpse of Mrs. Chisholm's white apron waving at the door of the Post Office. We were silent for a little while, then as one man, we began eagerly to plan out our next visit to the misty Isle.

CLIMBS IN THE LONG SLEDDALE VALLEY

By L. H.

When all trods lead to the major crags, and little tents spring up like mushrooms at Wasdale, Seathwaite and Mickleden; when the Dress Circle overflows, and the Needle get its annual polish with unaccustomed portions of the human anatomy, there is much to be said for the peaceful solitude of the more isolated crags. The Long Sleddale Valley will, at such times, well repay a visit. The rubber enthusiast can find keen satisfaction, a use for every finger and toe, and exposure enough; while there are boot climbs ranging from "moderate" to "very difficult," and boulder problems in profusion.

Ironically enough, the disclosure of the valley's attractions was due indirectly to the destructive advance of the Manchester Waterworks scheme (now discontinued since the additional tax on beer). For if A.W. had not succumbed to a disreputable interest in pneumatic drills and such like devilish contrivances for disembowelling Mother Earth, Buckbarrow Crag might have remained no more than a name on the map, and the explorations carried out by J. D. Best in 1929 have languished still in modest obscurity. Admittedly, it was rather a blow to high-flown ambitions when M.E.W.N. sprang this on us and, by some mysterious agency, produced a written description of some half-a-dozen climbs. Still, the face of the crag had not yet yielded to assault; there was that consolation. Other climbs might be worked out, and the old ones surveyed; Goat Scar, across the valley, and Raven Crag, high up on Harter Fell, looked worth a visit. Incidentally, the latter is not.

That programme has not been completed. Old climbs remain unvisited, new ones unconquered or incompleted. The description of climbs which follows is therefore compiled, of necessity, partly from J. D. Best's account and partly from the work of A.W's. party.

Buckbarrow Crag faces west and south-west from the head of the valley. It is conveniently approached from Kendal via Garnet Bridge by a road—Heaven forgive the flattery!—which

passes below the crag. At the stile, a mile or so beyond Sad Ghyll, a car may be parked with sufficient space for turning. From this point the three main features of Buckbarrow stand out clearly to right and left of the dark rift, Cleft Ghyll. To the right, the Dandle rises something over 300 feet from a broad base narrowing to a tooth-like pinnacle; from the steep slopes of broken rock and turf on the left of the Ghyll, and from its head, High Crag emerges; below these slopes lies the intricate region, Low Crag. Half-way up the Dandle face note the Oak Tree and the final few feet of the hidden Oak Tree Chimney. It marks the half-way house on the Direct Route and, incidentally, affords the only stance offering anything approaching comfort.

Close proximity to the Dandle may prove disappointing at first. Bands of vegetation appear to break up its face into commodious ledges and gullies. This is a snare and a delusion. In point of fact, the angle of ascent is fairly uniform throughout and, thanks to gardening operations which twice demolished and buried the cairn at the foot of the climb, turf clutching is encountered only at one point, the last few feet of the third pitch.

The first assault on the new route was made in August 1931 and the ascent as far as the Oak Tree completed. Thereafter, A. W. and L. H. stole away at every opportunity to work from above on the upper portion, hurling down loose blocks and, so far as possible, clearing the course of those dangerously loose flakes which seem to abound on the Dandle. The rock is by no means rotten, but it behoves one to go warily and trust nothing that has not first been well tested. A moment's carelessness is apt to prove startling, to say the least of it, as A. W. discovered when he took a flight of 15 feet down Cleft Ghyll, affectionately embracing a large armful of rock. Other minor diversions attended these enjoyable half-day expeditions; there was the attempt on Express Crack in a strong wind when the rope signals failed to function, and nothing was left to do but swing and spin till the man at the top grew tired of inactivity and decided to slack off the rope; there was the descent of Dandle Buttress route in rubbers while a thunderstorm spat down vicious hailstones. But the real show-piece was withheld until the day of the first ascent of the new climb. A sheep, or lamb to be precise, with marked suicidal tendencies was bleating out "crag-bound" from the upper reaches of Cleft Ghyll. Though it refused to be

rescued we were able to put it in the way of safety. But its mind was apparently fixed on descent and presently down it came a full hundred feet in three beautiful curves, two bumps and a thud. When we found it—*mirabile dictu*—it was standing on all four legs, looking very sheepish indeed, and, as the shepherd later informed us, suffering from no greater injury than a cut nose and a broken tooth. Does, or does not, the question arise, "Should climbers wear braces, belts or feather-beds?" The controversialists will perhaps decide.

THE DANDLE.

DANDLE FACE DIRECT (rubbers—100 feet of rope):

1. A small cairn at the lowest point just to the right of Cleft Ghyll marks the start. A short arête is followed by a scramble, and in 50 feet arrive at a belay at the foot of a tufted slab.

2. Mount the belay and, avoiding the turf on the right, move upward on small holds into an indefinite scoop, where holds are plentiful, but awkwardly placed, and in 40 feet step right to a grass stance with satisfactory belay.

3. The steep slab above is climbed into the overhanging corner which runs obliquely up from left to right, when an awkward step up and to the left lands the leader on the face again. Continue upward and finish an exhilarating pitch of 35 feet over steep turf to a sharp-pointed belay at the base of a short crack.

4. Stand on the spike and, on holds widely spaced, make an upward traverse to the right into the Oak Tree.

5. Oak Tree Chimney offers no real difficulty if climbed facing left, but it is somewhat narrow, and grunts have been heard. The leader emerges on a small stance with belay at 25 feet immediately below Pigeon Slab, but a better stance and belay is discovered at the foot of a grassy shute on the left.

6. The passage of Pigeon Slab constitutes the crux of the climb; it is the longest pitch, the most exposed, and its lower portion is decidedly severe. A slip at this point would probably have unpleasant results. It may be tackled in perfect confidence, however, if the second ties on to a small knob twenty feet up the shute, from which point he could, if necessary, play a luckless leader into the turfy recess. The route lies directly up a small corner above the chimney exit. A finger crack in the corner

is useful till it peters out. The next movement to an adequate finger-hold rather high up is tentative. Once the foot is on this hold the worst is over. (M.E.W.N., who made a second ascent with H. Vaughan in October, reports the unearthing of a hold formerly occupied by a sprig of heather, and the alternative of stepping to the right out of the corner onto the face). The angle now steepens, but holds are comforting. Continue directly up a short arête, and at 60 feet find a stance with small flake belay. To the left is a recess with larger belay to which the second may be brought.

7. Cross the grassy gully on the right and climb the slab, passing close to the left corner of a small but conspicuous overhang. At 30 feet traverse left to a grass stance with large belay.

8. The final pitch of 35 feet offers no great difficulty but it remains interesting to the last foot. Step back onto the slab and continue up, bearing to the right of necessity; enter an amiable scoop and, a few feet higher, when the left hand encounters a broad ledge, step left round a bulge and stride up the last few feet to an airy finish and the comfort of a well-sprung bilberry couch.

(First ascent. September 27th, 1931. A.W., L.H., M.E.W.N. and J.B.)

DANDLE BUTTRESS (any footwear):

This interesting route gives 120 feet of climbing. It begins up the right wall of Cleft Ghyll just below the Cave. The first pitch provides a difficult problem for a short climber. Emerge from a steep corner onto a broad stance. From this point it is possible to make a downward traverse to the top of the grassy shute on the Dandle Face route, a procedure which has proved useful on more than one occasion. From the broad stand the climb advances in a series of short pitches giving excellent climbing on sound rock. Keep always to the left and enjoy a pleasant measure of exposure in perfect safety.

(First ascent: J.D.B's. party, 1929.)

DANDLE SLABS:

A route of about 340 feet from base to summit which follows the line of least resistance. Turf-clutching appears to figure in unpleasant proportions, and at least one section is dangerously loose. The climb starts 20 feet to the left of Camera Gully up broken rock and heather to a steep rib which is climbed for

20 feet when progress continues up a heather slope bearing left. A traverse right discloses a chimney described as "horribly loose" which is climbed. A doubtful anchorage is attained 15 feet up the slab on the left from which a "disturbing traverse" brings the climber to a large spike. The slope eases and progress is made bearing right to the final pitch, a 20 foot chimney.

(First ascent: J.D.B's. party; classed as "very difficult.")

CAMERA GULLY:

The gully runs to the summit of the crag, but little of interest offers until a 40 foot chimney is encountered. This may be climbed throughout, or an exit at 30 feet may be made left. The chimney is of the wide variety and back and foot work is just possible. In the upper reaches the gully divides. Its left fork has been climbed on the rope only.

CLEFT GHYLL:

The Ghyll is chiefly notable for its very superior cave and as a means of quick descent from the Dandle. It has no genuine climbing to offer but it is steep and unpleasantly loose.

GREEN GHYLL:

A gully on the extreme right which merges into the fell. Near the top where it branches two pitches of 15 feet and 30 feet on good rock lead out to the summit of the crag. M.E.W.N., who has investigated the region between Green Ghyll and Easy Gully, describes it as affording capital climbing of the "moderate" variety. Five buttresses, rising one above the other, and a finish by the chimney exit of Green Ghyll provide a "moderate" course of some 300 feet. The rock is sound.

HIGH CRAG (maximum height about 300 feet):

Two routes are described by J.D.B., the Eagle's Nest and the Cocktail Route. A traverse runs around the base of High Crag from the top of Cleft Ghyll and the nest in question is encountered on the way. The climb starts at the lowest point up a wide chimney. High up on the right and jutting out from the face is a ledge which forms the next objective. The process of surmounting it is described as "severe." A scramble follows till it is possible to climb the slab on the right and emerge at the summit.

(First ascent: J.D.B.'s party).

THE COCKTAIL ROUTE:

A crack to the right of a very steep slab which, so far as is

known, has not yet been climbed, ends on a broad ledge. The next pitch of 50 feet lies immediately ahead. A broad grass rake is then crossed, known as Mutton Rake (possibly for olfactory reasons). A steep wall with comforting holds brings the climber to the final pitch.

(First ascent: J.D.B's. party).

LOW CRAG (maximum height about 100 feet):

Moving left from the bottom of Cleft Ghyll, Low Crag Chimney is first encountered. Scratches were discovered, so no doubt it was first climbed in 1929. It provides 60 feet of quite difficult climbing. Half-way up and again at the chock-stone the left-hand route is taken.

THE HOG'S BACK (80 feet):

From the recesses of the chimney traverse left on to the arête. Holds are small, but the angle is not too steep. The difficulties increase with upward progress, and the climb remains as yet incompleted. The rock, as everywhere on Low Crag, is excellent.

EXPRESS CRACK (80 feet):

A magnificent corner with an overhanging crack which so far has defied direct assault and seems likely to do so till a new generation of fly-footed climbers makes its appearance. Plans for its circumvention, however, are afoot. Leaving this out of the reckoning, Low Crag may yet yield at least one super-severe course.

GOAT SCAR:

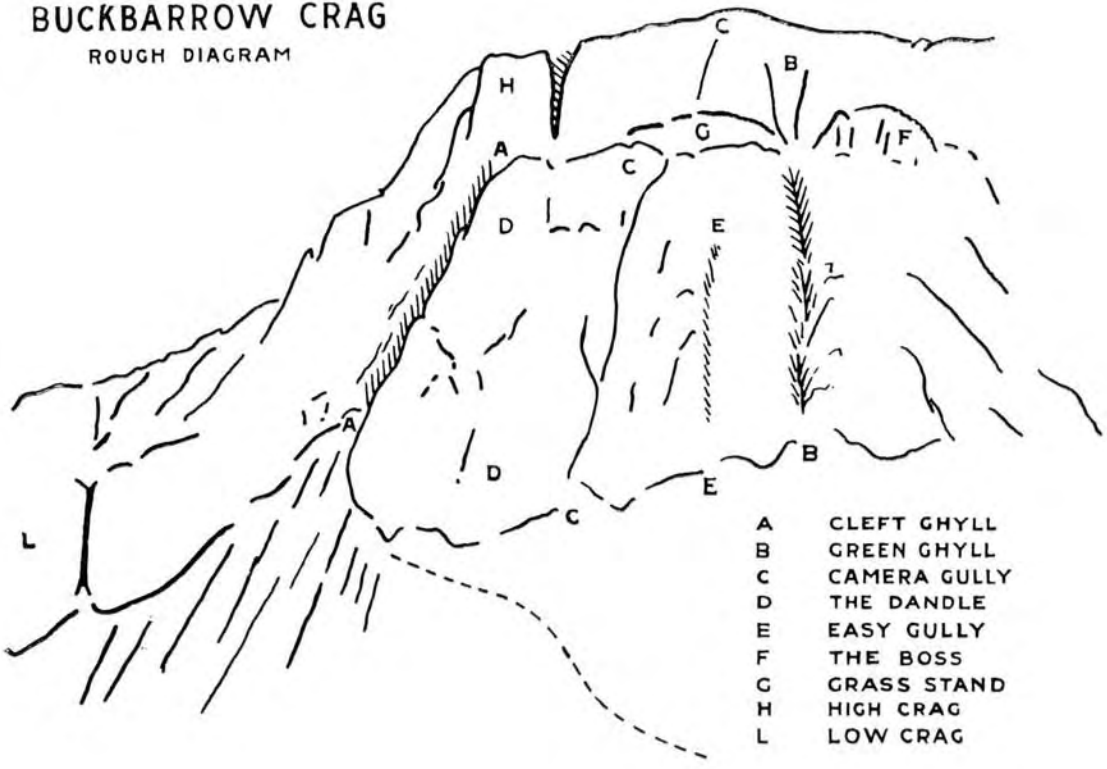
A flying visit by M.E.W.N. and J.B. has yielded one gully climb of about 160 feet. At the lowest central point of the crag two buttresses tapering down to the screes are cleft by a narrow gully, Black Cleft, which rises in four pitches to the summit. A narrow chimney giving 45 feet in three sections is followed by a strenuous 25 feet up crack and slab. The third pitch of 50 feet is straightforward with good holds on both walls. In the absence of other belay it is necessary to mount 10 feet up the final chimney where an excellent belay is discovered. The climb finishes on loose scree, but on emerging from the chimney a knob belay should be sought away to the left.

CASTLE ROCK:

This small crag is plainly visible on the left about half-a-mile after leaving Garnet Bridge. With the exception of one crack running up the buttress at its highest part, the climbing is of the

BUCKBARROW CRAG

ROUGH DIAGRAM



boulder problem variety. So far as can be ascertained, the only ascent of the crack was made by J.D.B. on the rope, and it has not yet been led. Holds are small and uncomfortably sharp, and the going is strenuous throughout.

Should any incurable optimist misread these cursory notes as a panegyric and expect to find in the Long Sleddale Valley a second Doe or Napes, his unjustifiable expectations will get their deserts. Buckbarrow is not a first-class crag. Its vegetation may delight the botanist but, from the average climber's point of view, it is a disadvantage. Nevertheless, though I began by classing the crag as a suitable objective for a Bank Holiday, I am not at all sure that this classification does full justice to its attractions. Let less partial and more experienced critics decide.

Key to initials used :—

A.W. = A. Walmsley, F. & R.C.C.

L.H. = L. Hamilton

M.E.W.N. = M. E. W. North, F. & R.C.C.

J.B. = J. Brady, F. & R.C.C.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

By Wilson Hey

"What shall our children's children do on the high places?"—
Kings II.23.38.

The mountaineer is surely the most casual thinker among men. He is endowed with higher mental powers than his average fellow and is blessed with an unusually rare gift. One either loves the mountains and desires to traverse them, or one does not. This desire is a congenital trait and can no more be acquired than the finest of the fine arts. So, you see, the true mountaineer is the elect of God, and, let us be honest, we, we snobs, know it.

Our Clubs assert that they make mountaineers. But do they? It is probable that they are top-heavy with that pseudo-mountain man who has been lured from his low-handicap golf, or his common game, and has been taught only too perfectly our technicalities. Almost too thorough in all his doings, movement amongst mountains now absorbs his life. No detail is too minute for his meticulous investigation and no committee too large to listen to his over-thought plans to improve his movements and our mountains. Our easy-going, loose-thinking hillman follows this perfect mountaineer, this super-climber of the Impassable Crack, this organising attacker of the Peak-next-door-to-Heaven and this transcendental writer of the stupendous glories of high places and even of the simpler delights of the pleasant flat lands. The one has a childlike faith in the other's capacity to determine the ultimate destinies of our game. Mountaineering thought thus has gone nearly all one way and maybe we are heading for disaster in the next generation. The discontented pessimist speaks, you say; but really the essential characteristic of the mountaineer is contented optimism. It is merely, but very humbly, here premised that there must be two sides to every question.

Now, gentle walking does help thinking, as does also the creation of the appropriate atmosphere. The French naturalist, Buffon, donned his uniform and his sword and even marched, before he began to write, just as to-night I put on my old climbing coat and heavy boots in this suburban study before I sat

down to tell you what I think about you. If some of you would do this, there would be no necessity for your editors to write cajoling, beseeching, nay, demanding copy. Are we for ever to put up with the produce of such uninspired labour? Is our editor never to have the chance of turning down, as not good enough, three-fourths of the material sent to her? Really, as I sit here, I do sympathise with you in your dinner-jackets.* We read from cover to cover perhaps a dozen journals annually, simply because having paid for our peak we feel that we must do it. Yet not one-twentieth of all this do we read twice, unless perhaps years afterwards when we wish to do something that we once read; and then we shall not know in which Journal, or in what year, we may find it. If we are to continue in this journalistic muddle and multiplicity, our energetic mountaineer must bring out a Mountain Index, so that we may know whether our proposed Variation C of Route B on the Moss Ghyll Grooves has or has not been done, before we risk upon it our bodies racked by nights of literary investigation. Our journals are full of journeyman stuff, and who cares for what we *have done?* What we want, is to be in at the *doing* of it. Although I read my Moore as I read my Bible, his feelings on the Brenva knife-edge do not excite me. I feel the same thing on every *mauvais pas* or any day on walking across Piccadilly Circus. To describe once again, or at any time, the splendours of an Alpine dawn or a sunset from Pillar Mountain, is surely a repetition of sacrilege. To endure these disjointed meanderings of mine is wearisome to the flesh. To be informed of the domestic intimacies of a fellow member is too delicate an intrusion to be worthy of my mountain's notice.

But carping criticism cannot go on for ever. In my Utopian mountains there will be many Clubs, because I like to meet and move with my friends, but only one Journal, which will record all great deeds, new moves, fine thoughts and fresh techniques. My local hillman will then read the writings of the distant ranges, and the world-explorer, often so deficient in technique, will learn of the improved methods worked out in the laboratories of our home crags. I thank God that every football club does not produce its own Journal.

I cannot think clearly; walking, seeing and climbing clog

* The author appears to be confusing the F. & R. C. Club with the Alpine Club.

my brain, and make me too content and too subservient to the organising mind of my over-thinking friend, who is steadily driving me away from my Fell and Rock country. I want no paths well laid, nor indeed any track at all; no cairns, so that I may never need my compass or lose my way; no bridges, so that I may neither jump nor have the delights of a dubious crossing; no huts, so that I may not once in a way be compelled to nestle intimately with my own hard earth; no signposts—oh! must I go on? Have I to cross the seas to understand or experience that adventure which is the heartstring of every mountaineer?

Must I endure the passing of an Access to Mountains Bill, when every open mountain shows indecent, jarring evidence that the public is still insufficiently educated to possess it? Do we need to fight at law every landlord who attempts to close an ancient mountain path? He is helping Nature by closing it, and who are we to oppose God? Still further, why should we be deprived of the pleasures of undamaging trespass? To trespass is a primeval instinct. Make the moors of Britain free and one of the primitive pleasures of wandering has gone. Our early ancestor had the excitements of walking delicately on the outlook for his human enemy, and why should not we? It is a far, far better thing to be hunted than to hunt. My only objection to our Cumberland hills is their freedom. We go to Pillar Rock because it hunts us, which Pillar Mountain does not. The modern Hazlitt would write, "Give me steep crags in front of me, a bridgeless, wide river behind, and a couple of gamekeepers on the starboard bow, and I run, I leap, I laugh, I sing for joy!"

Does man suppose that he can improve on nature? In the distant past he has robbed our mountains of their trees and disfigured them with his walls, which you think beautiful, because you have been associated with them from your childhood days. He cannot with the delightful, disorderly inconsequence of Nature put up those trees again. But I trust that whenever you pass this cairn, or cross that wall, you will pick up at least one or two stones and scatter them as the volcanoes did before you.

Our members argue that it is degrading to measure one's strength with the hills, to top the four thousand metres or to capture the Munros; surely you do not thereby spoil them, you merely lower them. But to rope and ladder them, to chisel and even scratch them, to hut, tent and hotel them, to drive

living things off them, to pave, cairn and bridge them—these are only one degree worse than motoring over them. Our hearts go out in daily praise and thanksgiving to those generous ones and our rulers who provide our national recreation grounds. But shall our high lands be turned into parks for nursery maids? Should we not strive to encircle our fell country, and after returning it to God, keep our hands off it, and let it run to seed, or to Nature, whichever you prefer to call it?

Some parts of this essay have been treated with that happy levity which comes naturally to us northerners when dealing with the essential matters of life and beliefs. Now, with all seriousness and with every reverence, I think of those simple, human souls, so intensely natural, that they preferred again to embody themselves in Nature rather than that their country's mountains should pass into unnatural hands. And as I think of our Immortal Dead, I doubt if they would approve of our action on the top of their glorious Gable. In the actual acquirement of their Fell memorial they will rejoice with us, but in our permanent demonstration of that acquirement, will our passed mountaineers quite agree? May we not be a little mistaken in so showing our open everlasting reverence for them? It is not for me to decide. Those men were so open and so generous that you will not be called to the bar by *them* to answer for these things. As for other memorials which advertise our feelings and our sentiments, the hills themselves and the granite in our Cumberland churchyards are a sufficient reminder. By this time, I trust we are all ashamed of our summit cairns, those boastful monuments of man's triumph by some easy, back-stairs way over Nature, reminding us of "Damned Casca," who "like a cur behind struck Caesar in the neck."

To leave in the midst of this industrialism a small patch of country untouched by the hand of recent man would be a legacy of invaluable worth to the generations yet unborn. Out of this self-seeking, wrangling, materialistic age would then emerge a glorious gift. To the higher civilised future, this example of the lower civilised present in restraining our desires and needs, our arts and sciences, in their urge to further development, would always be remembered, when our world's failures and disasters have been forgotten.

If we go on as we are going, I visualise in this century at a new

Wasdale Head, a new industry—a Fremden-Industrie—with its concomitant services. Tall, loud Ritson hotels, with bazaars alongside, an aerodrome, a mule service over Esk Hause for the romantic, and a mountain railway, with its Styhead junction of course carefully camouflaged, with its branches to Lord's Rake and Green Ledge, with halts at the foot of Needle Gully and Doctor's Chimney and doubtless a lift to the Scawfell subterranean refuge. Simple Cumberland shepherds in plus-fours and with badges, centred by a very large Needle, will spend their time either sitting on that dear old wall waiting for custom or wandering into the Tyson cinemas. There will be climbers with luxurious rucksacks and bags full of tools to be used on every conceivable occasion according to the Wasdale Rules. Tiers of grandstands with comfortable plush-covered armchaired seats will surround the "Dress Circle," whilst the "mournful silence of the fells" will be drowned by the droning of the day-trip aeroplanes encircling our summits, from Blackpool and the Isle of Man. But more folk will enjoy it, you say. I wish I could believe you. The hypothesis that the more there are on a mountain the greater the sum of enjoyment, is untrue. A mountain cannot give at one moment more than a certain amount of happiness. Your hill perhaps will give most to the two or three gathered together to worship in its name. Mountains do not love masses.

I dream of our distant children departing from a simpler Inn and when they reach the barbed-wire entanglement, or its equivalent, which only those of the elect will know how to penetrate, they will pass through, ever careful not to disturb unnecessarily the smallest bracken leaf. Entering Mosedale they will wend their contouring, map-less way to Pillar Rock. On reaching the west wall of Pillar, having been careful to avoid disfiguring the stones en route by their boots, they will remove them, as with rubbers they force their way up that wall, helped perhaps by some ancient instructions which have reached them by word of mouth and almost Masonic secrecy but never by the printed word. They will murmur with bated breath the names of Haskett Smith, Oppenheimer, Abraham and Kelly, and discuss the routes they took. They will descend across The Slab, careful not to disturb the herbage now growing in its cracks. Then there will have been indeed a great adventure, which they likewise will not spoil after descending by disclosing it to anyone in the world.

You are smiling and shrugging your shoulders, and perhaps I have been enjoying my little hyperbolean joke—a little crude and somewhat audacious. Perhaps I do not believe it now, nor may I to-morrow when I go out with my Club. I may bless the track that gets me to my climb, the cairn that leads me through the mist, and the bridge after dark that helps me to my bed. But when I go alone on the hills I think of these things and on the hills and when alone we are saner and less selfish and take the longer view.

The valleys must develop and "improve" because men live in them, but is it not this Club's object to permit the hills to *de-develop* and to degenerate? To our grandfathers, the awfulness of our fells was sufficient. That became tame and passed, and our fathers and we fled to the heritage of the rocks, which we plunder and destroy with the help of our climbing books and boot-nails, just as our ancestors devastated our forests and our modern gunmen still exterminate our animal races. Rubber must be better here than leather if, like Agag the Amalekite, we are to walk delicately. We are, indeed, the vandals of the crags. Our children must have the chance of finding their own way up the rocks and the fells. Is our sport and our craft to be but a passing phase in history? Is this century to have all the fun?

THROUGH THE BULGARIAN MOUNTAINS

By W. T. Elmslie

If you look at a map of the Balkan Peninsula, you will find a high range of mountains running east and west some miles south of Sofia. They are the Rhodope of Classical times. The highest point is Musalla (9,631 ft.*), next to Olympus the highest summit in the Peninsula. To the south-west the Struma valley leads down to the Aegean Sea, flanked by and passing through other ranges of somewhat lower altitude.

Even so long ago as 1926, motor bus services were beginning to extend to the remotest parts of Europe; but our surmise that there might be such a service from Sofia to Samakov, a small town near the northern foot of the range, was admittedly hazardous. Enquiries, however, from the entire population of the city, who followed us about wherever we went amused at our shorts and at our ignorance of their language, elicited the information at length that buses ran every three hours some distance beyond Samakov in the direction of the mountains.

Sofia at that time was not an imposing place. Several churches seemed to have been subjected to bombardment, and citizens sleeping in the streets might easily have been mistaken for corpses. The only trade that seemed to be in a really flourishing condition was that of the shoe-cleaners, who abounded everywhere.

Our bus was due to leave at 6 p.m. Unhappily, one of the seats was occupied by a gentleman who had not provided himself with a ticket. Efforts were made to eject him, without avail, though the whole square was filled with shouting and gesticulating people, to whose assistance there came eventually two policemen armed to the teeth, who joined their voices to the general pandemonium. Our friend was eventually disposed of by the simple expedient of removing his luggage, consisting of two bottles, from the bus; and, at 6.45, we set off!

We observed no speed limit, and we avoided no holes in the road, though in the attempt to do so we swerved wildly from side to side. Occasionally we jumped crevasses or railway lines, or splashed through rivers. I padded my head, as it was

* The height, as given by various authorities, varies somewhat in both directions.

impossible to avoid coming violently into collision with the roof from time to time, and hung on for dear life. Three hours later we had passed through Samakov, and had drawn up at a little village in the mountains called Camkoriya (pronounced "Chamkooria") where a small hotel provided us with shelter for the night.

Next morning soon after sunrise we set off through the pine-woods for Musalla. In the village we had been able to replenish our stores of bread and cheese, as we should be some time before we reached civilisation again. We passed the Royal Summer Palace, and climbed up and up through the woods. The heat grew more and more intense, especially after the pines were left behind and we were on the open hillside.

After some five hours, we reached a small hut beside a mountain lake. It was a hunting lodge, erected by the late king for his own use, but now available to tourists, shepherds and others. We found the restricted accommodation much over-occupied. There was a large family of not over-clean shepherds. There were two or three parties of Bulgarian tourists. There were dogs, hens, and numerous other creatures, small as well as large. The atmosphere was not exactly fresh. We decided to push on, even though it should mean a night in the open.

We were now in really beautiful scenery. The summit of Musalla was close above us, its gullies filled with snow (it was the end of August); and its rocks reminded me of the Ross-shire Highlands. We passed several delightful little tarns. A steep ridge brought us up to the summit (marked 2,984 metres), some two hours from the hut. As, however, we had not hurried and had enjoyed several prolonged rests, the hour was getting late. We rested again on the broad grassy top, in order to quench our fierce thirst with tea, and to take stock of our position.

The summit ridge of Musalla runs north and south, and is smooth and grass-covered. Down below, to the west, was a deep valley in which our map (based on the Austrian military map) showed a black dot marked Kar. Beyond this was a tangled group of rather fine mountains, which we should have to cross in order to reach the Rila valley, in which lay a monastery which was our next inhabited place. Optimism told us that Kar meant a house, or hut, or perhaps even a hotel. We decided to make a push for it.

We left the summit at 6 p.m. and hastened southwards along the ridge for some distance, till we reckoned that we were close above Kar. Then we turned west, and descended in the gathering darkness at a furious pace. For a long distance all went well. Then suddenly we were held up by a thick belt of Krummholz, or dwarf pine, "that hateful little shrub" as Bryce called it. If a modern Dante requires a suitable penance for naughty climbers, let him insert a belt of Krummholz in his next Inferno! It grows to the height of tall gorse or juniper, though it has neither thorns nor prickles. But let no one presume upon its apparent innocency. Its supple sinuous arms twine about in all directions. You press some down; a score of others rise to take their place. To get through the stuff is an impossibility, and we soon found that the attempt must be abandoned. The belt stretched along the hillside without intermission as far as we could see. Apparently we should have to make up again for the ridge, as the side of the hill was cleft by gullies with precipitous sides. This would undoubtedly mean a night out high up on the mountain side—a prospect that we by no means relished. Was there no alternative?

One of the gullies descended in a suspiciously easy manner close beside us. It allowed the only way through the Krummholz, which could find no hold upon its narrow rocky bed. We decided to follow this route, with some fears as to what might happen lower down.

It was almost dark as we began to descend that gully. It was necessary to walk in the bed of the stream, which provided the only way through the thick growth, and which lower down offered the only track through a ravine whose sides grew steeper and steeper. We had now left the Krummholz behind, but escape on either side of the gully had become impossible owing to crags. Our feet were soaked through by the water. And now we heard a sound that caused our hearts to sink. It was the sound of a waterfall below us. We came to the very edge of the fall, we peered over into the blackness without seeing the foot of it, we felt in vain for a way round it. Advance was impossible; retreat almost equally so, owing to the extreme blackness of the night.

Just above us, on one side of the ravine, we found a patch of grass, set at a very steep angle. It was held up at its foot by a

low ridge of rock, which appeared to overhang the abyss. On this patch we had perforce to spend the night. There was room for one to lie down; the other three had to sit all night on the steep slope, holding on to the grass! We managed to light a fire of fir branches on which we cooked some soup which was flavoured sadly with pine-needles; a log which we were able to kindle burned at one end, while the other hung over the fall. A light drizzle began, which fortunately did not turn into rain. And so we waited for the dawn.

Before we left England we had laughed at the fears of our friends, who had warned us of many perils. But now every sound alarmed us, and every distant hill seemed alive with brigands, when the moon rose later in the night. Yet the longest night comes to an end; and when day broke we found a somewhat hazardous route down by the side of the waterfall, and at long length reached Kar.

We have not yet discovered what Kar is meant to be. Certainly we saw no signs of any habitation. But we were in a broad valley, the sides of the hills clothed with pines, and, higher up, with Krummholz. A small path led up the valley and this we followed, thankfully accepting its guidance when it led us through thickets of our hated shrub!

We were distinctly tired, and we made but slow progress. It was thus 2 o'clock when we reached the Ribnojez pass at its head.

Below us on the far side, at the head of a lovely valley which must lead down to Rila, was the most delicious-looking of tarns. After a scramble down a rough slope, we were soon refreshing weary limbs in its waters. Leaving our clothes on the bank, we swam away some distance, when we suddenly saw a couple of armed men watching us. Our first thought was for our clothes, which we safely recovered! The men meanwhile disappeared, but some came into sight again on a little hillock, reinforced by several others. A wild-looking party they were, and we made haste to depart as unconcernedly as possible in the circumstances. The men stood where they were, watching us till we disappeared from view. We have since come to the conclusion that our fears were unjustified. The men were simply local inhabitants who had never before seen human beings washing . . . .

There was a path down our valley in places, but occasionally

we lost it, and stumbled on amidst rocks and undergrowth, up and down, hour after hour. Just before nightfall heavy rain began to fall, accompanied by a terrific thunderstorm. The peals of thunder echoed amongst the crags on either side of the valley; the lightning illuminated brightly the stems of the pines under which we were now making our way. We reached a wooden bridge over the river, and for a while thought of spending the night on the boulders of the river beneath it, where we should be comparatively protected against the storm. But the river was rapidly rising, and our plan had to be abandoned. Soaked to the skin we staggered on through the darkness. The path was now somewhat more continuous, but no monastery appeared where we expected it. At one moment we left the path, led astray by brilliant lights which we took to be those of the monastery, but which turned out to be emitted by fireflies! Utterly exhausted we sat down from time to time, and could hardly summon up energy to set forward again upon our way. Finally, our progress became automatic, a dull, hateful, endless stumbling onward through the wet night.

At last real lights appeared. We made for them, and found ourselves in front of a wooden hut, in which was a crowd of rough folk sitting round a stove, on which was a dish of steaming soup. We were helped in at the door, with the rain pouring off our sodden garments. A babel of voices surrounded us, quite unintelligible. But, presently, amongst them I caught some words of Italian; one of the woodcutters, whose name we learned later was Sam, knew that language; and in a moment my exhausted energies were roused to appeal for shelter in the most fluent Italian that I have ever spoken!

Shelter, it appeared, we could not have in the hut, which was already filled almost to overflowing with both men and women; but Sam assured us that the monastery was close at hand; that there were thousands of people staying there on holiday; and that there was a restaurant on the premises. Totally ignoring our incredulity, he seized a flaming torch of wood from the stove, and we set off behind him through the night.

The monastery of Rila has been frequently described by travellers, who have all been impressed by it. Yet no description with which I am familiar gives even a faint idea of that extraordinary place. It lies in a deep and well-wooded valley,

some distance above the river. It is roughly rectangular in shape, with a gateway at either end, and a large courtyard enclosed in the middle. In this courtyard rises the church. The outside of the building is somewhat forbidding, like a mediaeval castle; the inside is most remarkable. The other members of our party might not agree with me when I describe it as exceptionally beautiful in general appearance; but in detail the decoration is crude and ugly.

All round the courtyard run three galleries one above the other, supported by rows of pillars with rounded arches. The church is built in a corresponding style, surmounted by several cross-crowned domes. In one corner of the courtyard is a large square tower or "keep." The whole of the building is coloured, and it is this feature which gives such a unique appearance to it, the colours used being red, black and white.

The colouring of the church surpassed one's wildest dreams. Every inch of the walls is covered with paintings of sacred subjects red, blue, and gold being predominant. The paintings illustrate Biblical scenes, lives of saints, and allegorical subjects. All that we examined were extremely crude.

During the latter half of August there is a great festival observed at the monastery; and vast numbers of people from all over Bulgaria congregate there. Tourists were clearly combining the occasion with a holiday in the hills; merchants were making the most of the opportunity to sell candles, trinkets, souvenirs, confectionery, and photographs; peasants were enjoying the bustle and activity, and gazing open-mouthed at the pictures, the shops, the crowds. The galleries were all being used as dormitories by the visitors, over whom there seemed to be no monastic supervision at all; but we were taken to a room which was used as a police office, and here our passports were taken from us for the night. The officer relieved us of the attentions of a half-drunken Russian, who had picked up some English in Egypt, and led us out to a refreshment hut, where we obtained soup and Turkish coffee in spite of the lateness of the hour.

In our wet condition we did not wish to sleep in the open air in the galleries; and it was with difficulty that we persuaded mine host to allow us the use of two dirty tables in his restaurant on which we made ourselves as secure as possible, and forthwith slept the sleep of the just.

Of the gorgeous interior of the church I cannot now write, nor of the service which we attended there. It was a Sunday, and the only truck which went down the railway line went before we had secured our passports. No other vehicle could be found and we set off to walk . . .

We had still about six miles to do before we reached the village of Rila, when we saw a motor car at the side of what passes in those parts for a road. We at once made attempts to secure it, and were fortunate enough to find that it was returning to Sofia via Rila empty. The driver agreed to take the four of us to the village for half-a-crown.

Probably the next half-hour was one of the most risky periods that any of us had ever passed through. We were thrown here and there as we bounced through trenches and over boulders. Streams were crossed, frightful corners were taken skidding or jumping, the railway lines had occasionally to be leaped over. The usual pictures of Chevrolet cars crossing the prairie are as nothing to the actuality of this one passing along a Bulgarian road. But safely we arrived in Rila, and there we left the car, not a little thankfully.

Rila is a large village which seems to be the centre of a considerable tobacco industry. The wooden houses were all decorated with thousands of tobacco leaves strung in festoons along the walls to dry; the prevailing green being occasionally relieved by a house front decorated in similar fashion with brilliant red paprikas. Most of the inhabitants wore gorgeous costumes, in which the red colour predominated; and one maiden whom we saw was wearing a golden tiara.

In the middle of the main street a horse was being shod. It was laid on its back, and securely fastened fore and aft, whilst a small boy sat on its head to prevent the least motion even of that portion of its anatomy. Further along, some cows ran amok amongst the population, causing considerable excitement. The only train of the day had just left the station, and the crowds which had been to see it off were returning to the centre of the town.

On the whole Rila seemed to us to be the dirtiest place we had ever seen, and picturesque to match. We secured two small beds near the station, and discovered that by placing them together, and sleeping across them, we could avoid the danger of

falling out of them. Outside the window could be heard the continual fall of water, for every street had a river in it, which seemed to serve for all purposes, and not merely as a drain.

We left next morning by light railway. The tender of the engine was a kind of large coal scuttle carried on the side of the boiler; and our speed for the next ten or twelve hours rose to nearly ten miles an hour. Our fellow passengers were of some interest. One was wearing shorts, a frock coat, and a top hat; when last we saw him, at Struma Junction, he was throwing stones into the river to watch the splash, and his hat was somewhat battered. Another appeared to be new to trains, and tried to step off, when we moved away. He fell, grabbed a projection on the carriage, and was being dragged along at some peril of getting entangled in the wheels, when an attendant came along, disengaged his hands and rolled him off down the embankment. A third brought into the carriage a freshly cut piece of raw meat, and placed it on the hat rack immediately above an immaculately dressed officer. The latter succeeded in having it removed, but it came very much too near to us for our pleasure.

It was here that we made the only really serious mistake in our programme, and for this bad staff work I must take the blame. From a careless examination of the map I had concluded that a light railway ran all the way down the Struma valley, till it joined the main line from Constantinople to Salonika beyond the Greek frontier. Actually, as we discovered, it did not run beyond the frontier; and we were unable to make out just how near to the frontier it really did approach. We did not in the least relish the prospect of a long tramp with full rucksacks in the heat of the Macedonian sun; yet our only alternative was to return to Sofia, and make an enormous detour through Nish. This would involve at least two days, and would not introduce us to any new country. We, therefore, resolved to proceed down the Struma.

In spite of many enquiries, we were unable to discover just where the train did run, what time it would reach its terminus, what accommodation there might be there, or what hope of wheeled transport. At length we took tickets to Djumaia, where we were informed the headman of the place *might* possess a motor car, and *might* lend it to us; but whether there was a road

for it to travel on was uncertain. At Djumaia we decided to remain in the train, as the village was some miles from the station, and if we did not get the car, we should have to wait till next day for another train. Accordingly we proceeded down the Struma valley with the high range of Pirin on our left. This range was absolutely barren of all vegetation; the highest summit, Yel Tepe, was a rounded hump on the ridge; and we thought that Alexander Smith's phrase "a range of clumsy hills, dull offspring of primæval mud," applied far better to it than to the Red Coolin.

Krupnik is a station and a tiny eating house at the northern end of a fine gorge. We found that our train went no further, and that there would be no other till late in the evening; so we sat down under the shade of a tree, and consumed some "soup" which was the only refreshment procurable. For the next hour we argued with the entire population of the place, seven souls all told, with the assistance of a porter who knew a few words of German. Whether it was our insistence, or simply a piece of good luck, it is probably impossible to say; but at 3 o'clock there appeared from nowhere in particular a goods train, which we had been solemnly assured was impossible. Along with two or three other persons we got into a dark and hot cattle truck, with a wooden apology for a seat running along its two sides; and we thus continued the journey for five hours. It would be hard to exaggerate our sufferings in that truck; and they were not relieved by any appearance of beauty through the narrow high windows, for the valley and the hills were uniformly barren and dreary. Only at sunset the ugly hills were touched with a new and wonderful light, as an unedifying character is lit up by some sudden and unexpected act of sacrifice.

We had now tickets to a place called General Todoroff, or, as one of the less sedate members of our party dubbed it, "General Toddle Off." This station appeared to have been erected at the point nearest to the frontier, in place of the old station of Marinopolye, destroyed in the war; and we were told by several people that we should find a first class hotel there, and many good cars. On arrival we found a splendid station building, and nothing else at all. It was nearly dark, and there was no shelter, if we decided to sleep out; nothing but the dusty brown earth. And we wondered whether it would be advisable to pass

a night in that way so close to a frontier where "incidents" are not unknown. Accordingly we followed the advice of a fellow-passenger, and went on to the terminus, the "grand and important city of Petrich."

Petrich lies a long way from its station, like almost every other place in the Balkan peninsula. It is mostly in ruins, presumably as a result of bombardment; but we were guided to a hotel where we found tolerable accommodation. We enquired at once for a motor vehicle, for we understood that we were now some thirty or forty miles from the nearest point on the Greek railway; and, after some time, it appeared that in the town there happened to be one car that night. The chauffeur duly turned up, we arranged to start next morning at 7, and we retired to rest.

The car was a Sunbeam. That is, it once was. When we saw it, it was little more than a heap of old iron. When we were all in it, the driver gave the signal to an assistant, who gave it a good push, so that it ran down the track which we had to follow. Then the assistant came on board, and we free-wheeled to the foot of the town. It was now necessary to ascend somewhat, and efforts had to be made to start the engine; but this was at last accomplished, and we were off in earnest. Our Scottish hearts were delighted at the saving of petrol which was made on every descent; but whether it was a method which was quite consistent with safety is another matter.

A veil may well be drawn over the rest of the events of that day. The squalid settlements that we passed, the shirt-sleeved official who signed our passports though he could not read a word of them, the crossing of the frontier into Greece on a plank high above a deep river-gorge, where the bridge was being repaired, the springless cart which took us down the Rupel gorge, with its bones and other war remains, the four mile walk over dusty brown roads under a blazing sun to Siderokastron (Demirhisar); these things are good to *have done*; the doing of them is sheer misery! A long train journey in the evening brought us past Lake Doiran, with its fine War Memorial, to Salonika, where we were at length in comparative luxury.

The other members of the party were Messrs. C. M. Sleeman, L. A. Ellwood, and A. E. Storr.

THE GHOST HARE

By George Basterfield

The little cream-washed cot trembled about us at the terrific impact of the roaring tempest that surged up in shrieking crescendo from the western sea.

The cottage is set in the narrow neck of the upper reaches of the valley and the gale, that night, funnelling up from the west, flung itself in mad constricted force on this, the only obstacle that dared to challenge its right of way at this convergence.

We sat closely grouped about a vainglorious fire in the clean-flagged, cosy kitchen, cosier and snugger because of the sharp contrast of inner comfort set against the raging beast without.

In the silence of the lull that followed the storm ram, 'Owd Jim,' the woodcutter, entered from the outer world and, bidding us, "Good evening, gentlemen. Rough neet," he doffed his outer garments, drew up his chair into our half-circle, sat down and commenced to charge his old clay pipe.

"Aye, it's a gay ruffen out," he ventured, "Not afe; it wer jist sic anudder neet as this wen me an mi brudder Tom, 'im as is out i' Britisclumba, shut gost hare. Aye, it's mony yars agine sin na. I mind it well."

"A gost hare?" questioned 'Curley.' "Na Jim, tha nars there's na sic a thing i' existance, thou confounded owd leer, soor tha was sober at time?" This was Curley's method, used to get 'Owd Jim' going.

Jim sat with his pipe and unstruck match held in suspension, seemingly deaf to the jibe of the irreligious doubter. He *had* heard, however, although at the time he was intent, alert to the uncanny lull, the intense quiet that obtained, for the moments, outside; then sitting expectantly upright he whispered prophetically, "Na, weer fer it chaps, its cummin; By gock! am as well in afore it git 'ere;" and almost immediately the western brute flung its constricted body against the antique building that sheltered us, shaking it to its old foundations. But we were not "for it," the ancient structure stood the terrible blow undamaged, with its three-foot walls of rubble and heavily slated roof, although giant trees were torn up and laid low in the vale that night.

And then, seemingly spent with passion, the storm abated suddenly, just as it rose, and quiet reigned without, as within. "Aye, chaps, thars a power aboon! yer can tek it fra me," 'Owd Jim' resumed; this in a hoarse whisper, with eyes upturned to the low ceiling; then bending forward he struck his long-suspended match on the fire-bars, lit his "old clay" and settled down to his story of the "shutting" of the "gost" hare.

"Aye, chaps, at first ga off, it were a lound neet! Starlit! an' moonlit! woods, stark nakt, nivver a le-aff! thick snar' ligged frish an saft on't fells.

"Well, me an mi brudder Tom ('im as is out i' Britisclumba) an mind, if yer waint bleeve tale am tellen yer, ga an ax im fers yersels. Well—as I telt yer—me an im gars oot wi mi fadder's gun ta git a hare. Aw wer as lound as de-ath as wi struck up lonnin, on't snar, an thin away oop bi t'pine wood balar t'igh fells. Well, I carrit gun an Tom e sne-aks round on't howe ta see ef 'e cud sit oat oop. Well, I ligged thar dowkin, fer a wile, an nowt doin, I begins ta feel a bit creepy like, wen aw ov a suddin I spotted a gert red hare! a terble size it wer an aw, chassing across brant makkin fer t'woods. Jist thin, mi brudder Tom ('im as is i' Britisclumba) yells fra behint a sevin bush, 'Git im Jim, git 'im!' Nar need ta warn ma, gun wer oop riddy an takkin aim I pult trigger. Well, bullet git yam areet, but nar suner was trigger pult wen leek a shut o' leetnin a gert storm arose!!! an't hare set up a screamin' fit ta mak yer blud run cawd. Pullin o't trigger ad' louzed storm on us, aye chaps soor enuff, thars a power aboon! Jist afore trigger was pult aw was lound as de-ath, an yaw cud see owt, an nar, yan cud see nowt, aw was as black as ma Sundy 'at, moon, stars, woods, aw gone missin'. Wind? By gock! it git a odd o' me, an banged ma in't dyke, an t'gun, it wer wrostled fra mi grasp nivver to be seen agin. Nobbut afe a jiffy passed, me tryin' ta git mi feet, wen mi brudder ('im as is Britisclumba) pitched inta ma, an down wi wint tagidder, reet int' bottom o't dyke. Well, wi ligged theer a time, listenin' storm an oddin' oor wisht, an aboon all t'bother we cud 'ear t'hare screamin' far in't wood. Gert trees wer blarn doon, an wi feart fer oor leeves wen yan gert yak fell across dyke, we thote thin oor time 'ad cum, but nar, it wis nut ta be, yer see oor time 'adn't cum, an foak nivver gat till ther time comes. Well, we liggs close a wee wile and thin, pullin' oarsen tagidder,

we scraffled oot fra under t'tree, an thin, chassin' an dowkin down dyke side, wi made lounin, and manished ta git yam wi a struggle.

" Nar suner wi gits in yam wen fadder axes. ' Wer you lads bin ocherin ? Wers t'gun ? ' an' ' ast gitt'n oat ? '

" ' Nay fadder, Tom set yan oop a'reet, an I muh a struck, but storm blinded ma and wrostled t'gun fra ma grasp.' Fadder, 'e begins ta rate baith on us, but soor enuff afore we cud git back on 'im, gert storm fell agin, suddin like, an aw three on us gars ta lait gun an't hare.

" Aw was lound yance agin, aw was starlit, an' moonlit as if nowt ivver 'ad 'app'n'd. Well, me, mi brudder ('im as is i' Britisclumba) an mi fadder, we sarched an' sarched, we laited yon gun, but it wer nar go, an' it wer nivver fun fra that day ta this. Sa thin we gars oop ta t'place wer t'hare wer chassin' wen I pult trigger. Aye, soor enuff, a'd lamm'd 'im a'reet, a'd fun mi mark, nivver narn ta miss—ax oor Tom aboot that—aye, a'd gitten 'im reet enuff, blud wer spattered aw aboot. Three on us tak's oop trail and wi follers futmarks and blud-drips thru t'snar, reet across t'fell an reet along int'll middle o' t'wood. Wi trassed hare reet int'll a gert hoile, futmarks an t'blud follered true, over an' down int'll sink, but listen 'ere you chaps, this is wot git us gessen, an gits aw on yer gessen." Jim hesitates for effect.

' Curley ' intensely, " Carry on Jim !"

" Well, thar wer a gert clot o' blud in't bottom o' that 'ere sink, an snar were aw scraffled amang it, but as true as am tellin' on't, an yer ken axe oor Tom (as ganged oot ta Britisclumba) mi fadder bein' de-ad this long sin ; as soor as thers a power aboon ! thar wer nivver a hare in that sink ! nivver a futmark ner blud-stain leading oot on't ider ! may God strike ma de-ad if I lee !

" Aye, it wer soor a gost hare ! provin' as I sed afore, thars a power aboon ! Aye, an' w'at's moor, tha do say as 'ow on neets sic as ta-neet, foak ken 'ear't gost hare screamin' as if 'ell 'ad odd on't, reet aboon storms ; an ivery time screamin' sets oop in't saam spot, an dees away' far int'll woods. Na, doot foak i' them parts wad git a gert freet ta-neet. Aye, chaps, thars a power aboon ! sure enuff, thars a power aboon ! "

Photo by *M. R. FitzGibbon*

THE AIGUILLE DE BLAITIERE.

FOUR CHAMONIX AIGUILLES

By M. R. Fitzgibbon

A first visit to Chamonix began with three weeks spent in various parts of the valley tantalized all the time by the Aiguilles—then came the amazing good luck to find Joseph Georges Le Skieur free for five days, three of which turned out to be the only consecutive fine ones in the disastrous August of 1931.

Leaving Chamonix by the 8 a.m. Téléférique on the doubtful looking morning of Sunday the 2nd, we shot up to the Gare des Glaciers, en route for the Aiguille du Peigne. After a damp breakfast in a cave, we changed into rubbers and started up the couloir, when it began to drizzle. The leader hopefully suggested going on to find an " abri " for shelter until the sun shone again and dried the rocks. Halfway up the couloir rain came down in earnest, Joseph started to sing, and I realised that we were bound for the top whatever the weather. " On risque rien " was his encouraging remark as we arrived at the beginning of the difficult climbing to the summit arête.

It was my first day with J. G. " à deux," and the ascent of a peak with the reputation of the Peigne in rain and rubbers appeared rather alarming. However, he seems to specialise in this kind of climbing and, as he was already well up the first crack, there was nothing to do but to follow on. There were holds at first, but recollections of the final chimney—up which the leader sailed without a pause although encumbered by a heavy sac—are of absolutely nothing for wet rubbers; a tight rope and a struggle solved the problem for the second, and we emerged on to the very airy and varied arête. The west summit was reached in just over three hours from the foot of the couloir; the guide-book says it takes four and a half, but some time was saved by branching off to the left over slabs to the final cracks and chimneys, avoiding the Col du Peigne. Luckily the descent from a Chamonix Aiguille is usually easier than the ascent. Starting down some short chimneys on the south-west arête, an exhilarating " rappel " down a perpendicular slab on the Chamonix face landed us at a long groove, from the overhanging foot of which a flake leads back to the south face. Water was now pouring down the rocks, and we continued our descent

down the couloir, the leader letting me down the impossible places, then coming down on my shoulders.

In spite of hankerings after luggage at Montenvers, we decided to stay the night at the Plan de L'Aiguille hut, J.G. saying that it was famed for its "bon feu," and that they would lend us dry clothes. We arrived there soaked to the skin, with one spare dry shirt between us—mine own. The hut "gardien" produced a pair of enormous breeches for me—evidently his very best—and as the only alternative was . . blankets, I was grateful. Joseph presently appeared attired in a rakish jumper, the second best breeches of Monsieur, and a large and ornate pair of braces. Monday morning dawned fine and clear, but the rain of yesterday had turned to snow on the high tops, the Grépon—which we had hoped for—was impossible, even the much lower Peigne being white half-way down. So the leader's suggestion that we should go round to the Requin hut, and hope for the Dent du Requin on the morrow, was carried unanimously.

Our clothes being more or less dry about mid-day, we said goodbye to Plan de L'Aiguille and "les culottes de Monsieur," and set off for the Requin hut. It was a glorious walk along the pine sheltered path to Montenvers; after a welcome dive into a suitcase and some tea there, we strolled on up the Mer de Glace. Clouds were down over the Col du Géant, a faint drizzle met us round the corner, and the weather did not look at all promising.

Over a wonderful "omelette au jambon" we discussed the Requin, finally deciding to make the ascent by a route known as "La Voie des Plaques."* which goes straight up the east face from the Glacier du Requin. Hoping the weather would "s'arrange" we retired in luxury, for being looked after in huts by J.G. means at least one more blanket than anyone else and usually a hot water-bottle.

At 3 a.m. a window was opened . . . grunts and mutters of "mauvais temps," so everyone settled down again—or tried to. When we eventually got off at 7 a.m. it was a brilliant morning, the sun benificently drying the rocks. I found we were to have company; a C.A.F. member with a Chamonix guide were also doing the Requin "par les Plaques" and had been invited to join us "à cause des chutes de pierres." Roping up on two

* Reference. *Annuaire du G.H.M.* 1927.

ropes, Joseph led, cutting up the steep little Glacier du Requin at a furious pace—one scarcely paused on each step before moving upwards. The rimaye was small but deep; cutting up the crest of its lip which curled towards the rock, we jumped across on to a ledge and I was requested to change into rubbers. "Mlle a l'habitude en le pays du lac" explained Joseph. Though I afterwards learned the real reason was that he thought we would get on more quickly; while discussing the climb the Chamonix guide had said "of course we shall have to wait for you—on attend toujours les dames." J.G. being quite determined no one should have to wait for any "dame" on his rope, we led all the way, and at what seemed a frantic rate. Memories of the next two hours are mostly of slabs and ledges; of a descent into a couloir followed by a delightful Gimmerlike wall with good holds . . . shouts of "Ça va? Mlle," more slabs, then a traverse to the left to the Epaule, where the difficult part of the ordinary route is joined. Here there is a wide ledge where one dumps superfluous sacs, etc., and, according to the guide-book, surveys "la sauvage pyramide finale." Our time from the hut to the summit was four hours, which the guides seemed to think fast, neither of them having done this route before. Descending by the Cheminée Fontaine is very exciting; to try to rope down its sheer and slippery walls was an experience worth having. This chimney cleaves the top of the Requin in two and is about 120 ft. high. One "rappels" down in two spasms, first landing on a snow-covered jammed block where there is room for two to stand precariously—then going off a doubtful-looking piton. The rope was short here and it meant disentangling it from one's leg and sliding down on to the snow ledge at the foot of the chimney. Successfully fielded by the Chamonix guide, I was just enjoying a little hand-traverse, when his large hand descended on to my back and whisked me into safety—J.G. does *not* do these things. . . . Back to the Epaule, boots, and a tin of luscious peaches which the C.A.F. member produced to celebrate our "ascension difficile."

Avaricious glances were cast at the Plan, which looked very near, but the leader dismissed it as being "pas interessante par la route ordinaire," intimating that we were in search of good rock-climbing and were not on a peak bagging expedition. The

ordinary route lay down over snow-covered rock to the Glacier D'Envers du Plan. The rimaye looked enormous to unaccustomed eyes. The Chamonix guide (who was leading down) suggested making a détour to the right where it appeared to tail off, but Joseph—ever omniscient in all matters relating to snow and ice—differed, pointing to the rimaye. "Non, par là!" Some doubt was expressed, but on J.G.'s decisive "C'est bien sûr," the C.G. started to cut steps down its almost vertical wall . . . down into bluey green depths, the hollow tinkle of melting water warning us what lay in store below. At the end of the steps one found one was expected to jump across on to a frail looking snow bridge which jutted out from the farther side . . . "Sautez Mlle!" from above put an end to misgivings and once up the other side and into the sunshine again, life seemed a new gift, rimayes being forgotten in attempts at glissading, then a steep wall down which steps were cut, and back down the crinkly ice of the Mer de Glace to Montenvers in time for tea.

That evening Joseph had his "bonne idée"—to traverse the Charmoz and Grépon in one day, and to have "un jour de repos" on the Thursday. This would only be possible with two on the rope so, having tactfully dissuaded the C.A.F. member—who was longing to do the Grépon with us—we turned in for a few hours of that fitful half waking dream that passes for sleep when one is being called at 2 a.m. The moon was high over the Mer de Glace as we left Montenvers at 3 a.m., taking the historic Grépon track, round the corner into the black velvet shadow of the Crête des Charmoz—a contrast to the brilliance of the Chamonix lights spread over the valley below. Judging by starting form neither of us thought that we should ever get as far as the Grépon that day. At the Rognon rocks we put on the rope as I found them annoyingly difficult—Heavens! what will the Grépon be like! It must have been nearly 6-30 a.m. when we finally reached the Salle à Manger. Breakfast was somewhat marred for me by a sudden shock.... a raw egg which was described by J.G. as "bien âgé"; but having dumped the axes on the glacier, once up the couloir and on to the rocks of the Charmoz, fatigue was forgotten.

On reaching the slabs where the serious climbing commences we changed into rubbers. The main difficulty about a traverse

of this kind, if one is wearing "slippers" is—boots; however, the leader cheerfully stowed them away in the sac, and the second carrying the corde de rappel we started up the chimneys. They went very well until we reached the famous ice chimney, which is very smooth, lined with an abundance of ice, with no visible holds . . . the sac came off here, to be hauled up afterwards; later I came to realise that any place where the leader described the sac as "gênant" meant a severe pitch. The exit from the Cheminée Burgener through an ice-floored tunnel, leads over easy rock to the brèche (3.421 m.) and the sunshine. The ridge to the summit took about 2½ hours of exciting climbing, especially when rounding the gendarme Le Bâton Wicks—a very exposed step down across a gap, which meant just letting go and hoping that one's foot would land on the distant foothold.

It was on the summit of the Charmoz that a tragedy happened. My camera (containing the film taken on the Requin) slipped down a crack . . . However, Joseph—like the Mariner who found himself inside the Whale—is "a man of infinite resource and sagacity," and immediately began fishing for it. Just then three stolid German students, whom we had passed on the ridge, arrived; J.G. seized their "piolet" and started to dig. Nothing would induce him to stop . . . "had he not l'habitude des pierres and had he not built himself a chalet pendant l'hiver." There is not very much room on the top of the Charmoz; eventually I was untied and parked near the extreme edge as safely as possible, while J.G. and the Germans got busy. Roping up an enormous block which had been loosened, they shifted it by inches to cries of "Un . . deux . . trois . . How w . . w . . " from J. G. I had to stick my face out over the Mer de Glace to laugh, so as not to hurt their feelings, they were so terribly serious.

After some hard work they manœuvred a large hole, down which Joseph disappeared as far as his waist, while we sat round waiting and holding on to bits of him in case he vanished altogether. During the brief intervals in which he came up for air, the following conversation ensued:—"Joseph, leave it alone; it is not possible!" "Mais oui Mlle, C'est possible....mais très délicat!" And he would dive down again to grope anew. At last the camera appeared, balanced on the blade of the ice-axe, heralded by a triumphant yell—so it is entirely due to the

tenacity of Joseph Georges Le Skieur that there are any photographs to reproduce in this Journal. If there is a Society for the Preservation of Alps, their hearts will be broken when they re-visit the Haute Pointe of the Grands Charmoz—for we left it quite unrecognisable.

After an hour spent over this episode it was "temps pour manger," and the wonderful spire-like Grépon seemed further away than ever. But the leader was quite determined, so a "rappel" down the last of the Charmoz, and we were soon at the fearsome Mummery Crack. A welcome sight was a large spike belay, to which I tied on while the leader vanished. Halfway up he stuck his head out of the Crack—his face wreathed in smiles. On inquiring of the cause for mirth, he replied: "Je trouve la Fissure Mummery très amusante." However, he did not take long over it, up went the sac and down came the rope for me. I remember a thin traverse into the Crack, then nothing specially difficult until the jammed stones, where there is just room for one leg and arm inside. "Amusante" is a very inadequate adjective with which to describe this portion of the Mummery Crack. I believe the correct procedure here is to come out on to the left wall and to progress upwards by means of invisible excrescences thereon, but by this time both my toes were through and not having natural crepe extremities, the only thing to do was to stay in and wriggle . . . after 20 ft a flake can be grasped and the rest is easy. Then the Râteau de Chèvre, a smooth flake set at an angle of 70°, and so to the Grand Gendarme. From here a "rappel" of 50 ft. is necessary; the rope is wound in some wonderful way round the arête, down which a start is made "à cheval," subsequently comes an uneven overhang, where (if one is a novice at the joys of abseil) it matters not if one swings to the east or to the west. I swung to the east, and it was a good lesson in abseil traverse to get back again . . . The Grépon is a wonderful climb but—strenuous. I should like to return to the attack some fine day in a pair of nice new rubbers or—lest an ancient and apparently buried bone be unearthed . . . boots.

Not being out for any more records we sunbasked on the summit, lulled by the shrill musical cries of the "choucas," until a chilling wind found us out. Climbing in French is fun; it is so expressive to be told to go "plus dans la vide." In abseiling

off the top of the Grépon by the last pitch of the Mer de Glace route, that fly-on-the-wall feeling is intensified as, save for the rope and one's feet against the rock, there is nothing but " vide " for miles on three sides. Then comes a " surplomb," successfully negotiated this time,—I have wondered since if it was the actual one where Knubel performed acrobatic feats with an ice-axe—a landing on the flake of a large rock crevasse and the Brèche Balfour is easily gained; the descent afterwards being over continuously interesting rock. As we neared the Col des Nantillons, a thunderstorm which had been brooding in the chain of the Aiguilles Rouges burst over the valley, and its end swept over the Grépon. We saw some magnificent cloud effects while sliding quickly down the glacier, past the region of toppling seracs, to the axes and the Rognon rocks . . . And so back to Montenvers after 17 wonderful hours, gloriously tired, happy, and all the other things one feels after a good day on the mountains. J.G. summed up everything in four well-chosen words . . . " J'ai un sommeil délicieux ! "

INTERVIEWS WITH CLUB CELEBRITIES

By H. E. Scott.

(5)—Mr. J. H. DOUGHTY

Sitting at the breakfast table at Stanmore the talk fell upon the subject of knight-errantry and the penchant of the mediæval knight for destroying dragons and delivering distressed damsels. When the writer ventured to suggest that in these humdrum days men constantly perform deeds demanding equal heroism and equal sacrifice, though not so picturesque, the hostess said "If you feel so brave about dragons, go and interview Doughty and write me the result." And I went.

My first inquiry was, naturally, directed towards the great mountaineering feat described in detail in the 1923 Journal, I mean, of course, the first ascent of Lingmell. This, the only first ascent of a real mountain, as distinguished from a mere rock-climb, that has been carried out in the Lake District since the war, was no hastily-conceived and sloppily-organised affair, but was only attempted after years of consideration, and careful study of routes both on the spot and on six-inch and forty-foot maps in the British Museum, in the same manner as Finch treated the Dent d'Hérens and Smythe Kamet. The mountain was climbed guideless, ascent and descent direct from the base without bivouac or hut, without the loss of a single member of the expedition. "I led from start to finish" said Mr. Doughty, modestly averting his eyes, "and I carried all my own tackle." Since this event Mr. Doughty has participated in many treks but none with the same romantic glamour as this first ascent of Lingmell, "the mountain," as he remarked at the time, "that Thomas left out."

I found Mr. Doughty less willing to talk about his achievements on the literary side, but on reminding him that I had left the Manchester Grammar School just 25 years before he did, and that I had collaborated with him on one occasion in a review of the *Bergsteigungsencyclopædie*, he relaxed, and I found, as I expected, that his activities had covered a wide field. I was able to elicit the fact that he had recently published a

brochure on *The Relationship between the Informatory Double and the Differential on the Back Axle.* Also, he stated, " my notes (since translated into German) on the perceptivity (Empfindungsfähigkeit) of mountaineers have been greatly admired." In his *Observations upon some of the More Important Lacunæ in the Allgaier Gambit, with an Excursus into the Higher Mathematics,* he has shown his mastery of the intricacies of the game of chess. Besides this, he admitted that he had as an essay in biography published in our Journal some notes on the life of a quondam climber (now, alas, somewhat passé) who flourished under the name of Scott.

The first public evidence of his now well-known Bolshevik proclivities appeared quite early in his career. In fact he had been a member of the club only four years when he attacked no less august a personage than the (then) Editor, in his own Journal, on the question of rubbers, and later, in a rival Journal, he made a still more daring attack upon established authority in an article entitled *The Conventions of Mountaineering.* This article caused a great flutter in the dove-cotes of the A.C. and if it had been written a few hundred years earlier would have resulted in his being burned at the stake. Although so definitely revolutionary, however, it is a curious fact that I was unable to discover whether he wears a red shirt or a black one.

Careful calculations based upon Mr. Doughty's article *Failures* in the 1927 Journal, the M.G.S. *Old Boys' List* and the table in the Church Prayer Book lead me to the conclusion that he began to climb at the age of about 24. An extension of these calculations shows me, with regret, that whilst I only arrived at the dignity of Editorship of the *Rucksack Journal* 31 years after leaving school this precocious youngster took the same Editorial chair, which he still so ably—and completely—fills, in the short time of 19 years after leaving the same school.

Mr. Doughty's aptitude for Committee work is well-known, especially to the Rucksack Club. If no urgent matter is on the Agenda (or even if one is) he is prepared to revive the question which was voted upon and settled last month, or last year, to shed fresh light upon it, to view it through differently coloured spectacles, and generally speaking to relieve the monotony of the proceedings. Fastening unerringly upon each debating point, he develops his argument with remorseless logic and devastating

lucidity—at the same time gazing benevolently at the Chairman through his spectacles until that unfortunate individual is reduced to the condition of the rabbit in front of the boa-constrictor. Any Committee on which Mr. Doughty sits, and when he sits on a Committee he *does* sit upon it, need have no fear that its meetings will suffer from lack of accurate and logical statement of the opposition point of view.

As Editor he rules with a rod of iron, as a photographer he has an eye for a picture, his knowledge of music is both profound and practical, whilst as an after-dinner speaker he is unquestionably the finest discovery that the climbing fraternity has made during recent years.

As I left his house there rose in my mind a pleasant vision of Mr. Doughty, years ago, standing inside the doorway of Middle Row, Wasdale, his massive bulk and square shoulders just fitting into and filling the space, whilst he recited *Hans Breitmann's Party* for the delectation of the Pinnacle Club.

Photo by *J. F. Burton*

THE GUGLIA DI BRENTA.

THE GUGLIA DI BRENTA

By J. F. Burton

Last year a party of nine visited the Tosa Hut, hoping to climb this pinnacle which the guide book describes as the most "astonishing and formidable in the eastern Alps." Owing to a spell of atrocious weather, our acquaintance with the Guglia was confined to the examination of a bronze model of the peak possessed by the hut. This shows a mass resembling Cleopatra's Needle, but with less taper towards the summit. On the north side, near the base, there is a sort of wart forming a roomy platform. Near the top, on the south face, is a slight abrasion, furnishing a tiny ledge and known as "Sun Hotel." These are the only irregularities of any note.

At the end of June 1931, my wife and I arrived at the Tosa Hut, with Johann Demetz of Santa Christina, at the end of a ten days' tour in the Dolomites. This time the weather was perfect and we were able to appreciate the marvellous situation of this well-equipped hut. The next day was Sunday, and Demetz suggested that we should leave the Guglia until the following day, because: "Things are inclined to happen on Sundays." We therefore decided to tackle the Campanile Alto, a taller and much more tractable neighbour.

I woke at 3.30 on the Sunday, to see a blood-red sunrise over a complete cloud-sea billowing a few hundred feet below the hut. All day the valleys sweltered in a steamy mist, and we enjoyed an atmosphere of unusual brilliance. Crossing the Bocca di Brenta, we soon reached the small snow col between the Cima Brenta Alto and the Guglia. We then heard voices coming from the first pitches of the Guglia, whose east face towered above us. There were five climbers, evidently Italian. Demetz immediately suggested that it would be a good idea to follow and my wife firmly elected to await our return after the three to four hours Demetz considered necessary for the climb.

The climbing runs to about 1,000 ft. and there are only two major difficulties, both walls, with 90 ft. run-outs and near the limit of possibility. The other sections are delightful chimneys and traverses, on perfect rock with wonderful exposure. The route starts on the east, spirals via north and west

to south and back to the west side. The severe sections occur, one near the start, and the other just under the summit pitch. Demetz led over the first difficulty, and in about half-an-hour we overtook the Italian party, composed of three guides, a porter and a hotel proprietor. We had no food or drink and no spare rope. The Italians were moving very slowly, all on one string, and the yelling was extraordinary. They had two hundred feet of abseiling rope and Demetz overheard a reference to six litres of old chianti left with their sacks. These two facts made him unwilling to pass them, and we twice had waits of fully an hour in very cramped positions, exposed to the most merciless sun I ever remember. After about five hours we reached the very commodious top, but an overhang prevented me seeing if my wife was still on the col. After an hour the Italians commenced the descent and allowed us to use their spare rope. Their howls presently reached the solitary watcher below and with sinister suggestion after eight hours of waiting. When we did come within sight of the col my wife had just lost hope and was descending the steep snow slope.

Ten hours of waiting was rather a tall order for her and my parched throat prevented much explanation. There was no liquid available except the old chianti, with which the Italians were very liberal. When we all descended the snow gully I found some difficulty in balancing, but the remainder of the climbers were in an extremely lusty condition and quite oblivious to any danger in the descent.

To anyone who likes sound rock, perpendicular to overhanging, in a marvellous setting, and on a very generous scale, easily reached from a comfortable hut—I recommend the Guglia, with a good guide who knows the intricate route.

THOUGHTS ON "COME-BACKS"

By W. Eden-Smith

We frequently read—by "we" I mean those of us who do not confine ourselves to the cream of the Daily Press, but rather take a keen delight in wallowing in the depths of the more sensational news columns—as I say, we frequently read of the return of various idols of sport to the field of their former activities and triumphs. These renewed outbursts of energy are colloquially known as "come-backs" and may either be eminently satisfactory or equally disastrous from the point of view of the person concerned. But where in so many sports the result of the "come-back" affects not only the individual, but possibly thousands of eager spectators also (albeit only temporarily), a "come-back" in climbing is a source of satisfaction or disappointment to that one person alone, regardless of the effect, if any, it may have upon the mass. Your climber may return after, say, a year's absence, with a fixed determination to lead one particular climb, and should he (or she) accomplish it successfully, why, surely the delight in achievement is no whit diminished in the climber's mind, simply because a seething mob of excited humanity is not also acclaiming the feat? Which all boils down to the oft-reiterated statement that of all sports, climbing is the least competitive and the least dependent upon the favour or caprice of the public. Which again is quite as it should be, for God forbid that we should ever live to see the day when the conquest of "that super severe, entailing a succession of overhangs whose few small holds are seldom, if ever, quite dry" would automatically result in the transfer of the leader to another club "at a fee which staggered the climbing world." Perhaps it is because climbing makes its appeal so strongly to the individual and not to the public as a whole, that a return to the rocks and hills brings home so poignantly a realisation of all one has missed during those months or years of absence. I am afraid that here I am quoting from personal experience, but it is largely because I have been so long away from the fells that these thoughts have come into my head, and I have taken the (I sense it) unwise step of committing them to paper.

There is, perhaps, much to be said in favour of many of the divers forms of "come-backs." Your footballer, for instance, who, after a protracted absence, returns for the key match of the season and runs through the entire opposition in a series of scintillating side-steps and swerves, finally shooting unerringly into the corner of the net, well, one might say, without fear of contradiction, that he has benefited humanity, or a portion of it at any rate. He may have anything from twenty to seventy thousand people leaping from their seats and possibly waving their neighbours' hats in the air. (This, of course, is assuming that the supporters of the opposition, on the principle of the ranks of Tuscany before the gates of Rome, are also on their feet). Such is the tonic of a favourite's successful return in competitive sport. It is even rather pleasant to reflect that a goodly proportion of those seventy thousand people may return home after the match and murmur no word of complaint simply because their tea is too weak, or because the newly-made rock cakes feel as if they consisted of gabbro. This footballer, therefore, has sweetened—for the time being, of course—thousands of lives, and if the woman in the home has her fair share of tact, she will listen patiently to the eulogies which are being poured out, and even if the detailed description of the winning goal bores her to distraction, she will not remark in an acid tone that for the life of her she cannot see the fascination in standing or sitting for ninety minutes, merely to see a few men kick a silly ball about. Mind you, this is assuming that the "come-back" has been an unqualified success. Reverse it, and you naturally reverse the condition of the onlooker's mind, which may lead to anything from the cat being kicked to a gloomy silence, which in the interests of diplomacy, it is better not to break. I have purposely touched on football first, because it is a game at which the onlooker can release more pent-up energy in a short space of time than at any other, that is, in this country, for I cannot write of baseball matches or bull-fights, although from all accounts, the crowd at the former can, when occasion demands, work itself into a frenzy reminiscent of the Maenads at one of their more hysterical orgies. Not so with cricket, which has a quieter and more dignified appeal, although it is a curious fact that the same man—and he may be the most harmless-looking of mortals in pince-nez and spats—who, from the Members'

Enclosure, can applaud a boundary with an appreciative " Well hit, Sir," can, on a football ground become a positive menace to his surrounding fellow-creatures in moments of acute excitement.

In view of an opinion, for which I have the greatest respect, expressed in a Journal of a few years ago, that an active member of a climbing club should be " a despiser of golf," and a somewhat scornful reference to this much-maligned game in a more recent Journal by someone whose word I have always been brought up to regard as LAW, perhaps it would be as well to shelve this matter of golf, merely remarking, before passing lightly on, that in golf the personal element (I am not speaking now of competitive golf only) plays such an important part that a bad or indifferent round has been known to play havoc with sensitive and highly-strung natures to an almost incredible extent. How many of those golf-widow tales which one hears spring originally from an unsuccessful " come-back " on the part of the husband ? Why, to quote—however, I promised I wouldn't.

Thus we see that in the majority of sports which come before the public eye, anyone who stages a " come-back," whether it be a roaring success or a hopeless failure, must of necessity affect other people's minds at any rate for a short space of time. Contrast this with climbing. The climber can stage his own private " come-back " without having to consult anyone and without having his decision dragged into the limelight of the Daily Press. It is a matter of complete indifference to him, even if his decision evokes such comments as, " That ghastly fellow X has taken up climbing again ; it isn't as if he knew the elementary principles of the sport." It leaves him unmoved. He merely smiles, fills his pipe with Three Nuns, and re-greases his boots. He is out to enjoy himself. Then again he can return when and where he pleases, for the rocks and hills are not dependent upon climatic conditions to such an extent as are other sports. This means that should he at any time feel a fierce desire within him to climb, say, Kern Knotts Crack, he can go almost immediately and with very little fuss and either do it, or fail to do it. In the former instance, the glow of satisfaction which must warm him, is imparted to perhaps two or three others—no more ; in the latter, his chagrin can be mollified somewhat by his companions who will no doubt encourage him to make a further

attempt at the earliest opportunity. But a cricketer might suddenly feel a longing to lash that over-pitched ball past mid-off and then find that the calendar showed January 10th, and what good would that be? None! He could hardly board a tram with his cricket bag in his hand, journey to the county ground (or even walk from "The Gables" to the village green behind the church), solemnly go in to "the middle" and there make his off-drive. Any possible onlookers would think it—well, odd, to say the least of it. There might even be pursed lips, questioning looks and grave shakes of the head!

Again, in the event of failure, the climber is to be envied. His failure, whether packed with thrills or not, can be a very pleasant experience, as J. H. Doughty pointed out in an article some years ago. At any rate, the climber scores heavily in that his failure has at least the virtue of privacy. But would the footballer who missed an open goal get away with a few sympathetic murmurs of condolence? He would not. He might easily have fifty thousand people snarling with mingled rage and disappointment, and calling him dreadful names, and the chances are that he would not be allowed to forget his lapse for the remainder of the game. The cricketer who misses "a sitter" exposes himself to the barbed tongue of the barracker and his life can at times be made most unpleasant. It really would be rather disturbing if, when the climber's foot slipped from a sloping hold, or when he came down to rest, there was a chorus of derisive "boos" from a mob assembled below. As it is, he can delude himself into believing that the raven's croak is merely a noise in its throat indicative of sympathy.

The climber will possibly find everything the same when he returns, for nothing ever really changes in the mountains, or on the crags. That pitch which some years back one termed "a brute" and said, with a touch of wistfulness, "I don't suppose I shall ever lead that"; well, the pitch is still there when one returns (this does not include the screes, gullies and other like places which emulate so ably the "amœba" which, I understand, is the lowest form of life and is constantly changing its shape), almost asking one to try one's hand and foot at it again.

I fear there is no real meaning in these disjointed thoughts, but it has been interesting from the personal point of view to compare this matter of a climbing "come-back" with those of

other sports. I could write of the joys of a week in Skye, in particular of Mallory's climb on Sron na Ciche, when the only thing which kept the leader with the rest of the party was a tin of cherries which was periodically sent up about 100 feet of line to soothe him and check his impatience; of the pleasure, mixed with a slice of trepidation, of being last man on the end of 150 feet of line on Mickledore Grooves, with everyone else except (in this case) the patient leader, romping in a carefree manner down Broad Stand, laughing gaily and recking little of the glassy stare in the victim's eye as he gazed upward at a notch in the skyline, where the line disappeared in the faint drizzle which had obligingly begun to fall. Then there was the Club Dinner, which seemed all the more delightful because of a gap of two years. Everything seemed to be enveloped in a slight haze—a haze of happiness, let us say, for this sounds rather more romantic than to give the true description. Just incidents these, but they all add to the personal delight and satisfaction which one experiences after a climbing " come-back." Oh! and while I think of it.... but I wonder why the Editor is pulling the waste-paper basket nearer to her in that meaning way?

THE KANGCHENJUNGA DIARY

OF

GEORGE WOOD-JOHNSON

April 25th.—Rhonak—Base Camp. After a moderate day's march we are now at the mountain. The men worked very well to-day, and early to-morrow morning most loads should be in. We started to-day, surrounded by 20,000 footers which are unnamed, with the Wedge Peak ahead and across the moraine. As one marched one was continually searching for the right-hand bend up which runs the glacier to our mountain. Late in the afternoon, the upper ice falls of the mountain came into view, and almost at the same time, camp was reached. Had spent a very interesting day in the upper crags endeavouring to get a shot at a mountain sheep or goat. Saw lots of tracks, but met with no success.

A filthy night; the wind whistles over the knoll behind which our camp is sheltered. Heavy snow is falling and I am afraid that many of our men will not get in, but will have to spend a wretched night on the track. Warming up in the bag this evening was a long job. It is a comfortable thought that we are at the base and shall soon be on the mountain. Am still as fit as ever. It appears to be almost weird how well I stick it. Eat tremendous meals and sleep well.

April 27th.—Establishing Base Camp. The weather is again filthy this afternoon, and one wonders when it will take up. I feel that these conditions cannot go on for many more days. Everybody studied possible routes on the north-west face this morning. There are three snow terraces, supported by ice walls of formidable dimensions, between the preliminary ice falls and the summit of the north ridge. Marcel Kurz' route to the right and turning each terrace to the summit is much too dangerous, being exposed over a great portion of the way to snow and ice avalanches. Another route, and more practical, is to work up through the ice falls to the left of the first terrace, traverse this and by easy rocks to the second terrace. Between the second and final terrace, rocks have again to be surmounted. The plan is to reach the north-west ridge between the two

peaks and along it to the summit. This route is not too safe, and the Prof. is working for a route up the north ridge.

April 28th.—Base Camp. Again very fine views of the whole Kangchenjunga range this morning. The Prof. has decided to try the north ridge from the first terrace. The most dangerous point is that between the ice falls and the ridge. If this portion can be climbed safely all will be well. The Wedge Peak, just across the glacier from our camp, is the most interesting Peak which I have ever seen. Both ridges for the last 1,500 feet are sheathed in steep and fantastic ice. Like huge irregular saw edges. The peak is unclimbable from this side.

Kurz, Frank and I are usually the first people along for grub in the mornings. The cooking is steadily going downhill, and our wails of pathos are most impressive. All we eat these days is smoke. There is talk of us all having a day to do what we like in to-morrow. Frank and I propose to climb a 20,000 footer north of our camp. The Doctor wants to let 200 cubic centimetres of blood out of each climber. Prof. and Duvanel have been done to-day. Personally, I am not at all keen. First night here, 37 degrees below, but much warmer last night.

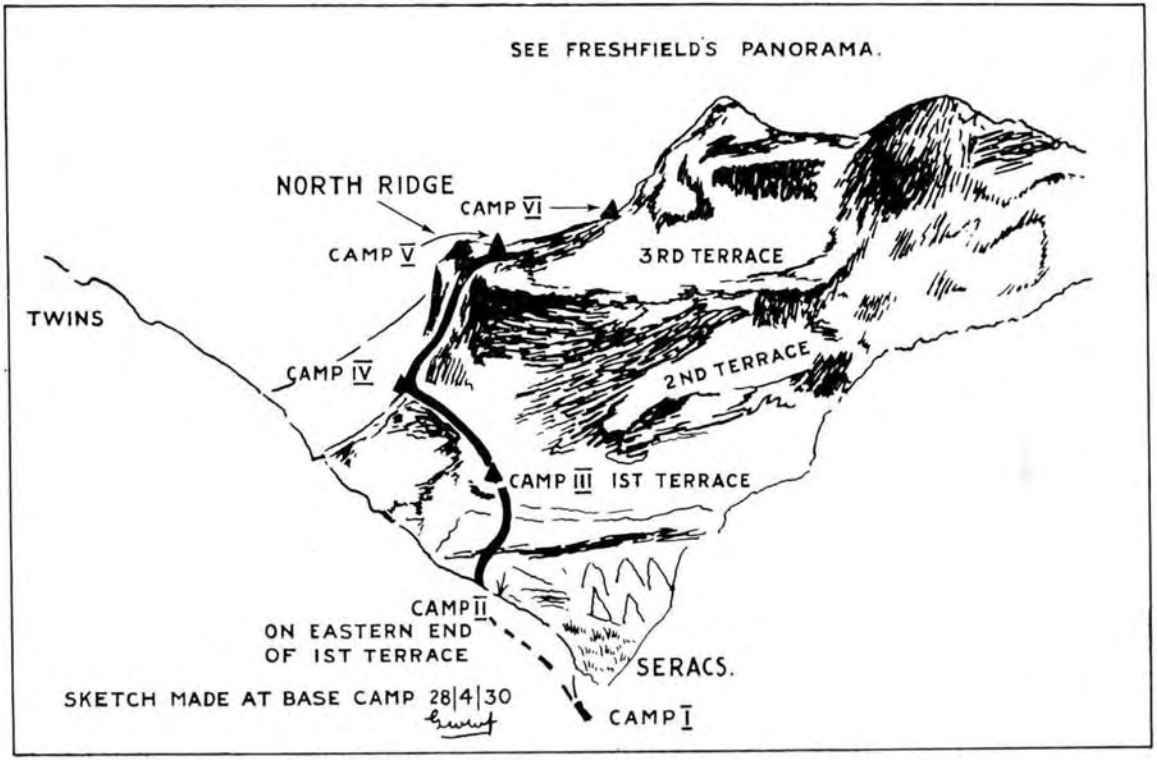
April 29th.—Base Camp. First climbing day. Up with the sun, which is at 6.45 a.m. at this camp. Didn't trouble to wash, and hailed Frank whose tent is about three yards away. We decided that the climb was on, so rushed round getting clothing, etc. for Nimoo and Ondi, whom we were taking with us, and despatching a useful brekker. We were off by 8.30 a.m. in a scorching sunshine, but clouds coming up the valley warned one that bad weather was not far away. A ramble up a scree slope brought us in full view of a magnificent glacier which is totally hidden from here. It is strange that no stream leaves its foot. Another example of the tremendous amount of evaporation which takes place. We stood for a while and watched the effects of sun and dry wind, and were astounded. The glacier is fed by the snow field on the left and our peak, which we have named the Cone Peak. Crossing the foot of the glacier, we climbed up right on to the ridge. Here, a bitterly cold and merciless wind met us. There was no escape, so we staggered on, ears and sunburnt faces stinging and frozen. Snow was whipped up in clouds all around us. The difficult task of putting on extra clothes was somehow accomplished and we staggered up and

on. At the start of the ice slope we left the porters and commenced the trying task of cutting across hard ice in a high and devastating wind. It was impossible to traverse to the lee side as this was a hanging glacier. At last the final cone of steep ice came into view; it was immediately realised that it would take too long and the risk would be too great to go on. Retreat was necessary only 150 feet from the summit. It was essential to use all the judgment and balance I possessed to return down the ice slope in a blizzard, with all the footholds concealed by new snow. As we stepped off the ice to comparative shelter, our companions and safety, we resembled two weird snow-men. Frank's lead across that ice under such circumstances, and cutting steps at a height of 20,000 feet, at which height we were compelled to return, is one of the finest pieces of mountaineering I have ever witnessed. We both observed that general fitness improved after passing the 18,000 foot line.

A hectic rush brought us back to camp for tea. As we approached we were delighted to see Hannah coming out to meet us. This evening has been the first good one for days. After tea, I took advantage of this piece of good fortune, by stripping to the waist and having the first wash and change for days. The climb seems to have done us both heaps of good and now I feel wonderfully fit. Prof. has issued orders that to-morrow preparations to move forward to Camp 1 must be completed.

April 30th.—Base Camp. Busy scenes. Memsahib and Wieland running through gear required for Camp 1. Hannah and I choosing the 80 best men to stay on with us, after which I made a speech and attempted to instil a little *esprit de Corps* into the troops. Prof. also made a speech which I translated. The next work was equipping our 40 best to push off with us to-morrow. Schneider and Hoerlin are ill, and the Doctor says not fit to join the first party, which will consist of Prof., Kurz, Frank, Wieland, Duvanel and self. The above two do not acclimatise well, and are suffering from stomach trouble. The Doctor has examined us all minutely and taken blood samples. He passes me as being particularly fit, heart, lungs, pulse, acrobatics, all in order. Kurz's heart is none too good, I understand. Frank passed flying.

A route across the moraine on to the glacier ice has been examined for to-morrow. One's thoughts are mixed in


SEE FRESHFIELD'S PANORAMA.
NORTH RIDGE
CAMP VI
CAMP V
3RD TERRACE
TWINS
CAMP IV
2ND TERRACE
CAMP III IST TERRACE
CAMP II
ON EASTERN END
OF IST TERRACE
SERACS.
SKETCH MADE AT BASE CAMP 28|4|30
CAMP I

anticipation of moving on to the mountain to-morrow. Anyhow, one hopes, and keeps steady. Porters are acclimatised and have had a long rest, so should work well. Don't anticipate any trouble from them. Again a wonderful evening. Everyone outside his tent, enjoying the evening sunshine and benefiting by the indescribable view of Kangchen and her satellites. These things cannot be described in words, but one endeavours to retain a faithful impression in the mind. It is good to have Lobsang with us again, and I think it would be best to take him on to the mountain. He has proved to be even more useful than I ever imagined that he would be. Transport has been far from easy, and it is only by using harsh methods that it has been possible for the Expedition to reach this point so early. It has been perfectly loathsome to carry on on such a principle, and I should never do so for any other object than this. Avalanches, both snow and ice, have not been as numerous as would naturally be expected when surrounded by such precipitous faces and glaciers. Most of the ice falls occur during the night and come down with a roar like artillery in action. Not so snow avalanches; they are mostly day occurrences and do not sound the same, but make a duller and more continuous roar.

May 1st.—Camp 1. A very fine day. Everything went well. Up and to work earlier than usual with a glad heart. After much delay, due to last-moment brainwaves, etc., we were off at 9 a.m. The cairned route across the moraine was quite good and naturally followed. Soon we were amongst rolling hills of ice, all but their summits covered in new snow. These gleamed blue and green in the brilliant sunlight. Frank and myself went ahead tracking in soft snow, later to be relieved by Wieland. Before reaching the brown buttress of rock reaching out from the Twins into the glacier, we stopped to await the advice of the Prof. on a safe camping site, as to go much farther meant being threatened by the walls of the first terrace and also to be under fire from a hanging glacier from the Twins. Whilst prospecting for the actual site, the Prof. went through into a crevasse. Frank grabbed him and hauled him out. On investigation, we discovered that our present position is in the midst of many crevasses. All porters have been warned. There is quite a formidable fellow crossing our site about six yards behind my tent. Moonlight excursions will be decidedly a sporting venture. We

have discovered a most wonderful looking peak between the Wedge and Kangchen. Not so high as the former but a fine ice summit supported by wonderful rock buttresses. We are very comfy here. The cook produced a wonderful dinner, after which we walked about our confined site admiring the cloud effects and a very fine sunset. It is decidedly colder than at the base, but not inconveniently so. We wonder what awaits us up the icefall. An occasional avalanche awakens an otherwise deathly silence, which can only exist in a world of frost. The bare and the snow-covered ice all along our route this morning fascinated me immensely. Fortunately, all crevasses were avoided until camp was reached. The unfortunate part about most of these serious menaces is that they are completely concealed. The most experienced of us fail to recognise them. Porters must use ropes tomorrow. Should hate to have an accident.

May 2nd.—Camp 2. The sun visited us in Camp 1 delightfully early this morning. Result was a fairly early start. One awakes to a cold world and a bag mouth fronded with frost and an occasional icicle. The weather is perfect and the Prof. is taking advantage of this. It was impossible to establish this camp with the porters in hand, so had to snatch Duvanel's* men from him, thereby making a total of 18 carriers. Quite a number of loads were left, so I stayed behind to await porters from the base and to persuade as many as necessary to push through to here with me. Duvanel is still in Camp 1; we spent the morning together in terrific heat and glare. My lips are now in complete ruin, and a constant application of cream is necessary. This incidentally, now covers most of the garments which come into contact with the face and neck.

An interesting and almost tragic incident occurred this evening. As I was pushing up the slope to Camp 2, late in the afternoon, I saw the heads of Frank and Wieland about 100 yards above. The former had heard mysterious and muffled yells for about an hour and a half, and was unable to place 'em. As we had crossed several narrow crevasses, I asked Chrita, who had brought our rope down, if anyone was missing from camp. He informed me that Ondi had started down before him to meet me. Frank was informed with lusty yells, and a few hasty words to my men and we were moving upwards at a useful pace. On

*Duvanel was in charge of the cinema apparatus.

arriving within 30 yards of the camp I found a crowd gathered round a small hole in the snow through which I was told Ondi had disappeared. Frank in his usual practical manner, had dashed off to crampon-up and prepare for a cold descent. In the meantime we discovered that Ondi could back up between the walls of his prison. Although the fall had been 25 feet we had him out in about 5 minutes. He was a pathetic sight, almost frozen to death, but still game enough to stand up and salaam us for hauling him from a ghastly end. Got him into a bag and treated his hands for frostbite. He fortunately has only sustained several small cuts on back and hands. Frank quietened his pathetic and animal-like cries with a dose of belladonna. Shock is the most serious business.

Our route to-day carried us to the right of the first ice fall, and underneath and at a safe distance from the ice-clad slopes of the Twins. Our position is on a snowfield below the second ice fall, through which a route has to be made to-morrow. Coming up the glacier in the heat of the day was most trying. At times, we struck pockets of foul air, and as one man stood and gasped for breath. On the whole pace slower, but attribute that to the trying conditions. We are sleeping two in a tent, i.e. Kurz-Wieland, Frank-Self and Prof. is on his own. It was amusing lecturing a collection of very awed men on the dangers of rambling for even short distances around camp. Kurz is not fit. Prof's throat giving trouble.

May 3rd.—Camp 2. Up at 7.15 a.m. and a conference was called on how safely to ascend the icefall ahead. It is not big, but heavily crevassed. All discussion was stopped by a declaration from Kurz that he was ill, had not slept all night, and proposed to return to the base. He looked very ill and must have suffered unawares to the other members of the party since the base. Prof's. throat was too bad for him to accompany us so, after seeing Kurz off, and with Frank in the lead, we started for the icefalls. The Prof. was working out the only possible route from below. Two steep ice pitches had been passed when we arrived at the snow bridge on which our hopes were centred. It was rotten! Our leader then took us along the lower lip of the huge gaping crevasse, across which was safety and an easy route. The situation was none too bright when a triumphant yell from Frank told of the discovery of a route round the

right of the icefall up a long snow slope, absolutely safe from avalanches of snow or ice from the first terrace and its walls. We returned joyously to Wieland, who was making colossal steps up the second ice pitch so that it would be practicable for porters. We descended and struck out to the right and round the icefall. Looking from this camp, one would never imagine that the distance was so great between the ice falls and the wall of the first terrace. Frank's discovery was a very acceptable one. There were two ropes, (1) Frank, self and Nimoo, (2) Wieland and Kipa. Taking it in turns, the three sahibs stamped a route round right, and up left, until above the icefall. We went on across what was termed the great plateau, which is a tremendous snowfield, rising towards the left-hand of the ice wall of the first terrace. Below the wall is an icefall about 500 feet high, which we think will prove to be the crux of the whole route. We decided to turn back after I had gone into a useful crevasse whilst leading, and been very efficiently jerked out by Frank. It was impossible to see that the thing existed, and one only realises the gravity of the situation when the feet fail to find bottom. Just after turning, the wind took Frank's terai down the slope and on to the flat. There it lay 500 yards away, in the midst of a great expanse of white. We thought its loneliness so intense that we hurried down to assure it that there were still people on the earth.

The Prof. was very pleased with our performance and discovery of the easy route. Wieland was not fit on starting out, but finished up strong like the rest of us. Duvanel has arrived in camp his usual cheery self, with his camera and numerous gadgets. It seems very extravagant for one man to have seven porters. Have told him that for such a great sacrifice of transport, a very wonderful film is expected. Had a very scrappy dinner in the cook's tent this evening. Cold grub at about 21,000 feet. ! ! He now realises his grave error.

May 4th.—Camp 2. Awoke this morning to low temperature and a perfect sky. Had quite a good night and was feeling fit. The Prof. was suffering from a very bad throat and it was obvious that he could not possibly go on. After a long discussion it was decided to have Camp 1. brought to the foot of this slope and Camp 2. established above the icefall on the grand plateau. Prof. then left for the base with the intention of discussing the position of new Camp 1. with Hannah on his way through.

We turned to our task and soon had the first loads off. As usual I awaited the return of the porters to take up the final loads. The heat was terrific and glare almost unbearable. To avoid the latter I rigged the Prof.'s tent and got inside, but then the heat became so unbearable that the idea had to be abandoned. Finally, I mounted and perched on the summit of a small heap of debris, under which must exist a crevasse, as at intervals there would be a shuffling noise beneath me followed by the sound of stones hitting ice far below. At noon, ice avalanches of all sizes were continually falling from the steep western slopes of our mountain, on the left, whilst the Twins, to justify their existence, sent down stones. One effort was truly great. A block about as big as Napes Needle detached itself high above and hurtled several hundreds of feet through space before making contact with the mountain side. What made the incident so impressive was the fact that it happened immediately above me. I felt perfectly safe in the knowledge that the icefall would swallow up the numerous pieces of the fallen pinnacle, which scattered and boomed with great force in all directions.

After some three hours' absence, the men returned, and we had quite a strenuous argument, until the whole crew realised that I was determined to see everything of importance to new Camp 2, which meant that they had to carry biggish loads. At last, all was amicably settled, and we left the old site looking very much deserted with two loads of the Prof's., one pair of skis and two tins of oil remaining. These must be brought up to-morrow. Duvanel met us just down the slope from camp and took a motion picture of our caravan from a hole as we advanced towards and over his camera. Greatly amused our men. Frank and Wieland were up on the slope above prospecting a route up the snowfield to the foot of the icefalls abutting the ice wall of the first terrace. Had just finished a colossal late lunch of eggs, sausages and fruit when they got back, not having reached the icefall because of very deep, new snow. It has been decided to start early to-morrow to enjoy the benefit of a hard crust, but I have heard this type of resolution passed before at great heights. This is not exactly a very warm place. As soon as the sun retired behind the Wedge Peak, we realised that the temperature had dropped below zero quite a considerable

number of degrees. Have Sahibs' food for six days and porters' rations for one. Their food is to be sent up daily until the base becomes a land of milk and honey so far as they are concerned.

May 5th.—Camp 2. Last night Frank and I decided that we would not sleep until late. But must have dropped off about 8.30 p.m., as with one accord we awoke at midnight not feeling the least like sleep. An hour's talk and we were off again. Certainly the most disturbed night I have had since Darjeeling. Awoke to a very cold morning with frost and icicles round the mouth of my bag. Wieland, according to programme, was already dressing and feeding. Awoke Frank and we started brekker. I got out just before the sun came over the N. Ridge. Wieland was ahead with Lewa and Kipa. I gathered together Nimoo and an unknown man and tied them up with a frozen rope. Most inspiring work. Frank had by this time wrenched himself from the interior of a warm bag, and we were off, carrying spare ropes and pitons. Clouds were filling in the valley below, and as we ascended crept on to and over us. After one and a half hour's going we came up with Wieland and companions at a great crevasse fortunately bridged. How long the snow will last is impossible to estimate. We, as a sign of trust, left a fixed rope, and all trudged on to the foot of the icefall. Under the lowest wall of ice refreshment was handed out, then Wieland and Co. pushed up right along a snow shelf which leads to our first ice, a pitch of about 40 feet rising diagonally to a small landing on the right. Having carved out elephantine steps, they, noble fellows, retired: we ascended. On reaching the platform, which incidentally we had to make, we looked up to realise that overhead towered a large and very weakly foundationed serac. We were not overjoyed, but from bare necessity, cut up to a boss of ice at its foot; that was a second pitch of 40 feet. The next pitch was increasingly difficult, a horizontal traverse to the left, from under the serac on a very steep slope, which started well, but did not end well. Wieland's party started this about the time that snow commenced to fall in earnest. They had not cut more than a dozen steps when we had to relieve them. We were working partly on ice and partly on hard snow, on a slope 20 feet long, joined to the base of the serac above us and ending in a vertical ice wall below. We were working left to a minute, flattish ridge, which would enable us to turn right and round the back of the

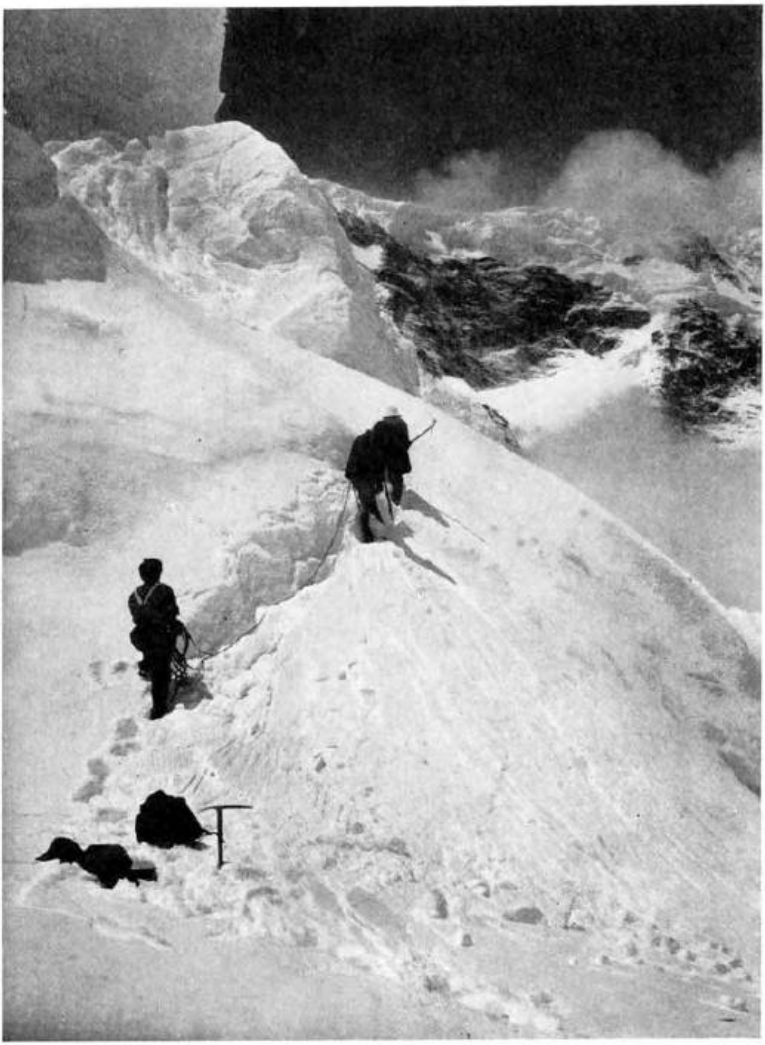


Photo by *F. S. Smythe*

ON THE GREAT ICE WALL ABOVE CAMP 2.—KANGCHENJUNGA.

serac to what appears to be the most difficult piece of the whole ice fall. The effort of cutting was beginning to tell and we had to return before reaching the small ridge. Wieland again went up, but had to retire almost immediately as snow and wind had almost made conditions impossible. This would be about 2 p.m. Duvanel, who had come up to cinematograph the business, was terribly disappointed. Leaving him and his vast retinue in the rear, we scooted for camp in driving snow.

On arriving I was handed a bulky paper containing many letters, mostly from Tobin, who explains that his transport arrangements have completely broken down. I read that Hannah left Camp 1. to-day and that the Prof. wishes me to return at once. It is a bitter disappointment, that one should have to turn one's back on companions and the mountain at this stage to grapple with almost impossible transport difficulties. Tobin says stores are scattered between Kang La, Tseram and Khumsa. I suppose something has to be done quickly to permit climbing to continue on the mountain, and every day now, i.e. from a weather standpoint, is valuable. Too late to go down this evening; must start early to-morrow. Am using the Prof's. tent and rubber mat, which I find to be a great insulator from cold. Last night the sunset was magnificent; and through the slightly opened tent door I can now see a rock ridge standing out stark against a cold blue sky. Warming the interior of a sleeping bag is not a quick task.

May 6th.—Camp 2.—Rhonak. This morning did not turn out with the usual gusto knowing that the road led downwards. After a brekker in almost shivering conditions, went to Frank's tent and left my flag with him. Did not feel like saying cheerio to W. and D.; much too glum. My three men had gone on ahead, but I soon caught them on a pair of our combination ski and snow-rackets. The going was good, due to the early hour and dull, cloudy conditions. Took several photos on the way to Camp 1. During the last few days of fine weather, the route has become more difficult. Crevasses have opened and stone shutes relieved of their binding snow. Could hardly recognise the last lap to 1. At this camp had a rest and tea. Talked over the situation with Lobsang and decided to take him down with me. After leaving 1, weather thickened up and we were soon trudging over the icehills and down through driving snow. Between 2. and 1. met

Schneider going up. He is now fit for work and may be on the icefall to-morrow. The sooner he and Hoerlin are on the active list the better, as between 2. and the ridge comes most of our difficult ice work. The route was just visible, and at last we left the ice, traversed across the moraine, and into Base Camp. Met Kurz just going to mess tent for lunch, so joined him. Over lunch discussed the whole transport problem with Prof. and wife. They both naturally feel the position very much. At the Base again one feels awfully fit and braced with life. After numerous helpings of everything going for lunch, and a wash, I sallied forth with men and kit for Rhonak. If going well, Hannah should reach Khunsa to-night, and between us we should soon have matters straight. In fact, we have simply got to, in order to arrive back in time to do some decent climbing.

Am writing this in a dismantled yak hut, sitting close to our cooking fire. There is a blanket on my right, which shades the candle from vagrant gusts of wind. Overhead is a half-moon, by whose light can be seen the ice ridges of the Wedge Peak on the right and her dark supporting buttresses of rock below. Our position is under the shelter of a shattered crag, of which every wall, slab and block stands out blackly across what was a snow-covered pasture a few days ago. A collection of unoccupied yak huts looking like squat chapels give the whole place a cathedral-like atmosphere. The night is wonderful and, after Camp 2, almost balmy. Have written my home letters to return for the mail bag at the base. Must turn in, although reluctantly, as to-morrow's is a long march.

May 7th.—Rhonak—Khunsa. Awoke this morning feeling very fit and, with Lobsang, superintended the pushing off of four men, who had come down with us, back to the base. They were carrying one spar and planks stolen from the yak huts to be utilised for making a bridge to span the crevasse below the ice-wall between Camps 2. and 3. I spoke with the Prof. about this matter yesterday and he thought it advisable to prepare for the collapse of the present snow bridge, which cannot last indefinitely.

Going down the valley from Rhonak, one realises that one is leaving the atmosphere of great mountains behind. The contrast caused by looking down the valley with its fir-clad slopes and patches of green pastures, compared with days of

endless snow and ice was amazing. Lower down I strode across patches of wonderful springy turf, strewn with primulas and bordered with flowering rhododendrons, with a fine feeling of well-being. Saw three types of birds to-day. Have taken up my quarters in the Altar room of the Kaje's house. My bed is alongside the Altar and by turning my head in any direction I can see numerous prayer flags and mats. A unique bedroom.

May 8th.—Khunsa. The result of to-day's work is to have got away about 70 loads to Base Camp and to have returned 20 men to Tobin and Hannah.

Word came through from Tobin at Khunsa to-day that Puri, Naspati sirdar's assistant, has died on the Kang La. A regrettable incident. Have cross-questioned all the men and gather that the unfortunate man broached our cases of alcohol on the summit of the La and, with certain porters, consumed much Asti. As there is no water, I presume he took the liquor neat. He is not a strong man constitutionally and, naturally, with a drugged system at 17,000 feet, he just lay down and slept, which, of course, under those circumstances, proved fatal. There are further rumours that two coolies have also died. I sincerely hope not. The weather has thickened up again this afternoon and a cold wind blows up the valley. Wonder how the people on the mountain are faring and what kind of weather they are experiencing. Have run short of food and am living chiefly on eggs and milk and native bread. My men have dished up such filthy uncooked dishes that this evening my stomach revolted, and I had to make a hurried exit from my tent to be really ill. This afternoon, I sat in the smoke begrimed room of the Kaje, surrounded by his and my people.

May 9th.—Khunsa. A day of wait and no loads, relieved by the arrival of another Dak runner with home letters, news from Hannah and another epistle from Tobin. It is obvious that Tobin is unfit and should return to Darjeeling, leaving the rest of the work to us. His task has been a prodigious one and full of setbacks. Bad weather conditions and a company of men who could not face difficulties. Wonder of wonders, the F. & R.C.C. Journal arrived and I have spent the afternoon under cover reading it. Mentioned in the Base Camp letter that I should like to return as soon as the Prof. will give permission. Cannot stay too long as time is advancing and one does not acclimatise for

great heights in places at this altitude. It is not pleasant to think of what is happening above, or where I might have been had not the transport so completely broken down.

May 10th.—Khunsa. Nine Bhotias have arrived with eggs, etc. Am sending 400 up to Base Camp to-morrow.

May 11th.—Khunsa. Late last night had word from Tobin of four more loads—not yet arrived. After a useful self-cooked brekker a letter arrived from the Memsahib. Things are not going too well up above. An avalanche, occurring between Camps 2. and 3, killed Chetan and almost got Schneider. There has been a general evacuation to Camp 1. Prof., Kurz and Richter have gone up for conference. There is a talk of W. Ridge, but this is much too long to attempt so late in the season. Am rather anxious to know what will be decided. Memsahib appears to be not fit and rather depressed.

Had a row with Khunsa men this morning. The hopeless people refuse to work unless given same terms as Darjeeling men. Am damned if I'll give in to them. Have given 'em an hour in which to turn up and go to Tseram. All non-arrivals will be sent down to the nearest military authorities with a letter explaining everything. Sent off two sepoys last evening to collect 30 strong men for carrying loads. Later. As these Khunsa people were in need of a rest I agreed to give them to-day off, and they start work to-morrow on the old footing. Am terribly short of food and living on what I can get from the village.

May 12th.—Khunsa. After lunch was just off for a stroll, when I noticed many men coming down from Tseram direction. Their speed drew one conclusion; they were our picked Base Camp men who had been sent over—27 loads will go up to base to-morrow. Conditions are improving but mighty slow. Tobin must have left most of his loads at the other side of the Kang La. Received letters from him and Hannah this evening. Gyalchen, whom I sent on the 10th to Tseram, has not yet arrived. Decided to send Lobsang this evening as the Nyk has turned up from below with 23 loads of rations. If Lobsang can get through to Jongri quickly, and he has not too many loads to bring along, there is no reason why Hannah and I should not return to the mountain. Am sending over rations, etc., with L. so that he is independent of Khunsa. He also has detailed instructions of

what to do, and has been told that it is vitally important that this work should be done swiftly and completely. I can depend upon him in this matter.

The new subadar, a much smarter man than the first one, goes down into Nepal to-morrow to collect rations. This morning, with Khunsa men and our own people, I sent back 40 to help Hannah. No trouble in getting them off.

May 13th.—Khunsa. Lobsang left early this morning with a full sense of his responsibility. The mail for Darjeeling arrived from above this evening; with it came a long letter from Frank, giving a detailed account of the accident and avalanche of No 3 icefall. He also says that it has been decided to attempt the summit by the West Ridge. Also had a letter from the Memsahib; her spirits seem to have improved since last writing, and having a certain number of loads up has brightened her considerably. Schneider was in camp at time of writing and is quite optimistic about the new route, I understand. Received a small tin of *Paté de Foie gras* from the Mem. It will be despatched promptly. Another pleasant surprise was the Himalayan Club Journal. It had somehow escaped my notice in the upgoing mail and had to be returned. I spend much time with my Browning, but find it an acceptable change of reading. Weather is still very monsoonish. Hope it does not extend as far as the mountain.

May 14th.—Khunsa. This is my 7th day here and still many loads behind.

May 15th.—Khunsa. Awoke to enjoy a beautiful morning with spring in the air. Something had to be done so, ordering a quick brekker, a searching of the village for rope, and the packing of lunch, I then thought of what our crew might accomplish. It was decided, after deep meditation, to explore a route to the magnificent snow, ice and rock peak, on the same side of the river as, and above, Khunsa....

Loads have come in, and letters from Hannah. He hopes to join me on the 17th. Not many loads left. That being the case, about 50 loads must have been stolen. Afraid much looting has occurred; boxes in to-day, much battered, and the majority broached. Hannah had a stiff time trying to cross Kang La to dump. Snow soft, sank to waist, below knees water. Must have been walking up hidden stream bed!

May 16th.—Khunsa. Better news from above to-day. Everyone but Kurz appears to be pleased with the West Ridge route. Camp 3. was formed yesterday and Hoerlin up there. Prof. wants me on the mountain as soon as possible. He can absolutely depend on my complying with his wishes.

May 17th.—Khunsa. Was writing the last letters for home, about the middle of the morning, when Hannah arrived. It appears that there are very few loads behind, something under 10 in number. Lobsang will deal with these, and so we move forward to-morrow. As we are both very fit, and our men carrying under full loads, we should march to the Base in 2 days. The Ghurka will be quite capable of dealing with the simple work of sending through rations.

May 18th.—Khunsa-Rhamtang. I was awakened this morning by the appearance of Hannah at my tent door. He had roused our men and I emerged into a world of white frost. Brekker was over by 6.15 a.m. but a start was not made until 7.30 a.m. My people, who have been lazing for so many days, wanted to employ two more men to carry one load. Insisted on only one man coming along. Moved off with a truculent labour force. We have had magnificent views of Jannu, the Chapel Peak, and the many other nameless giants surrounding us. At Kangbachen, we gave the men a few minutes rest and here their obstinacy came to a head. It had been obvious that they had completely made up their minds to stay the night, hence the slow marching pace. We had decided otherwise. It was necessary to enter the house where they were leisurely drinking tea and have 'em out of it, on the march again.

Just before reaching this place about ten to fifteen wild sheep rushed round a buttress from above and crossed our path not fifty yards ahead. I now imagine that they were being pursued, as a wolf called quite close to the camp just after dark. This place I call Lower Rhamtang, as there is only one hut here, the other being about a mile and a half higher up the valley. Saw Red-billed Chough to-day. A pair. They were very shy and kept to the crags.

We had a large dinner and sat with the men in the yakherd's hut. The cloud effects, seen through our roof which was mainly holes (large), were magnificent, and the last rays of sunlight on the ice and snow of the peak rising from the other

side of the moraine absolutely beyond description. It is a little colder here than at Khunsa. One is very happy in the thought that the Base will be reached to-morrow. Interrupted by the arrival of a letter from the Memsahib. The W. Ridge has been abandoned and all the climbers return to-morrow. An attempt is to be made on the Jonsong Peak, following a passage of the Jonsong La to Lachen. This final repulse must be a terrible disappointment to the Prof. Much more so than to the rest of us. Conditions must be very severe for a general retreat to have been decided on.

May 19th.—Rhamtang Base. We arrived at Base with the vanguard of people from the mountain. Duvanel was the first Sahib in. His throat is in a very serious condition and his general state one of exhaustion. Hoerlin has been in camp for several days, and from his eyes and general haggard look it is easy to gather what great physical strain has been put on him. Wieland was next in. He told me that yesterday he collapsed and was absolutely incapable of any kind of exertion. Frank and Schneider were making an attempt on the Rhamtang Peak. I went out to meet them and was delighted to find that they were the fittest men in the whole party. They had reached the summit of the Rhamtang Peak 23,000 feet. and had reached 21,000 feet on ski. I now know how difficult the W. Ridge has been and how necessary it was to abandon so dangerous an undertaking. One is greatly impressed by the appearance of the climbers. All haggard and weather beaten. The high winds and blizzards have shown no mercy. The Prof. is still at Camp 2, and Richter at Camp 1. The whole story has been told, and genuine enthusiasm shown for the gallant way in which the porters have conducted themselves under all conditions. Only one man has failed, the second cook. One night at Camp 2. (W. Ridge), in a terrible blizzard, he completely lost control and rushed round to the Sahibs' tent weeping. Several showed no sympathy but he was taken in by Wieland and Schneider. The man has not been at all satisfactory in many ways and returns with Hannah to Darjeeling.

May 20th.—Base Camp. Frank and I slept in the Polar tent last evening. We kept the camp awake until 2 a.m. going through the happenings on the mountain. Considering that he has been away from here for the whole 19 days he is very fit and only

requires a rest. Duvanel is very bad to-day, and requires medical attention. Later, Richter and then Prof. arrived, both fairly weak. The latter's throat does not seem to improve.

It has definitely been decided to attempt the Jonsong Peak and also send a party to explore the Nepal Gap, but we are a camp of tired and sick men, and several days will be required in which to recuperate. Have started to get out figures of transport. The chief difficulty is that we have 160 loads at least and only 80 men to carry them. Relay work will be resorted to. Am not in favour of this method, but as nothing is to be dumped here there is no alternative.

May 21st. Last evening, the Prof. decided that the Jonsong Peak should be explored from this side, before deciding which route to try. Kurz went out to-day, and returned with the news that the Peak is not practicable on its Southern and Eastern Ridges. After some discussion, Prof. decided that we should move over the La. The climbing party to go in advance and attempt the peak by the West Ridge as in Kellas' case. Am very happy as I am to be given every chance this time, with no fear of having to return to straighten out transport difficulties.

Wieland and Hannah had a shot at the Cone Peak, and reached the summit after cutting steps the whole way up the final Cone. Both arrived in tired about 5 p.m., having made a start at 6 a.m. They did not experience the wind and blizzard which defeated our attempt.

May 22nd.—Base Camp. Yesterday 50 loads were prepared and to-day Hoerlin and I took 50 men up towards the Jonsong La to find a site for Camp 1. I did not sleep last night, had a go of sciatica in the shoulder, and as a result started badly. The day was gloriously fine and the route to the left of the moraine, just up the slope, easy. Three hours' going found us at the junction of the glaciers with no sign of a track over the chaos of moraine. It was decided to form a camp at this point. On the return journey I descried figures moving up the glacier towards the Nepal Gap. They were Schneider, Wieland and 8 porters, who are to explore the Gap, and endeavour to find a route crossing same. It cannot be crossed direct, but must be made by first climbing the Peak on the left and then descending to the shoulder. Found remains of three wild sheep which must have perished in the deep winter snow. We took some very fine photos of Wedge

and Kangchenjunga. A long discussion this evening on transport. Prof. is fully confident that we can work our loads over the Jonsong La, at least 150, in relays. He is taking grave risks, both with his men and the approaching monsoon. I am not keen on his plan and said so. Anyhow, there is nothing left but to try it.

May 23rd.—Base Camp. Narsang left early this morning for the dump at Camp 1. with 45 loads and we leave to-morrow. Now that Kanchen has been given up every one makes an effort to get the work of crossing the Jonsong La forward. The weather is very unsettled and one sees daily definite signs of the approach of the monsoon, which is absolutely certain to be on us early this year. This Camp is in a beautiful situation and one will leave with regrets.

The Bhotia element of our porters attempted a scene to-day. Shouting, and generally making nuisances of themselves, they came along in a body. A most disgusting scene. They complained that most clothing had been given to the Sherpas. On enquiry I discovered that the reason was that, apart from personal servants, only Sherpas had been taken high. The Prof., to pacify these, promised extra money in lieu of clothing when paying off in Darjeeling. I shall see they get no baksheesh. After doing all we possibly could for their comfort, the only reward appears to be that they would leave us in the lurch at a critical time.

May 24th.—Base to Camp 1. on Jonsong La route. This morning all was hurry and bustle, and now Prof., wife, Kurz, Frank, Hoerlin and I, are in possession here. Hannah also left the Base for Darjeeling this morning. Richter is still at the Base with Duvanel, who is far from well. Frank and I started late after lunch and lazed along. During one of our long halts, while admiring the Nepal Gap and its surroundings, I discerned a small dot descending the snow slopes of the Peak on the left of the Gap. As the sun changed position later, we could plainly see the tracks made in the soft snow. My companion commented on an unusual smell of yaks. So I have decided to search for some clean clothing this evening. The weather is unsettled, but as we travel higher up the valley the monsoon clouds are left behind. Possibly the other side the La may be very free from cloud. Coolies went well to-day. Hope they can keep it up.

It is strange that we should have unrest amongst even our best people. I think I know the chief reason for it all.

Sat round and watched Tenchedar making soup in our high altitude cooking pot. It possesses a screw-down top, furnished with a safety-valve and whistle which blows off like the sound of a standing express engine with steam up, heard from a distance. Spent some time allowing the imagination to play tricks and during this time was back on the various platforms I know at home.

May 25th.—Camp 1. A day of many funny happenings. Awoke after a particularly good night, full of the one object to push on Camp 2. towards the La. We packed up and Kurz pushed off ahead to make observations and notes. The rest of us patiently awaited the arrival of our porters whom Richter should have pushed off from the Base, where they had returned yesterday, at 6 a.m. Our latest time of starting was fixed at 11 a.m. At this hour only four men had arrived. The situation was annoying and alarming. The main party arrived in at 1.30 p.m. and, therefore, we have been unable to start. Most of the men arrived without their bedding. The people have been sent back for their gear and we make an early start to-morrow. Also Kurz, who is a day ahead up the Pass, has been informed and supplied with food.

This Camp is just beyond the Tent Peak and opposite a smaller mountain of great beauty. Across the moraine from us, clinging to its flank, and fed by the summit snows, is the steepest glacier I have ever seen. We are surrounded by great peaks, with Kangchen. blocking the whole of the valley below. A magnificent situation, and what gives one much joy is the prospect of having even grander views as we journey towards the La. To-day have been busy with Memsahib, getting boxes and other things more ship-shape, also working out what we shall require as a minimum to go ahead. Have limited each Sahib to three men, including servant. Had a little trouble with Prof. over this, but had the satisfaction of winning. Schneider and Wieland returned from Nepal Gap and joined us this evening. It could be crossed by climbing the small peak to the north, which they did. It would be quite an expedition, but not dangerous for porters under the right conditions. Former climbed alone peak of over 23,000 above Gap. A world's record.

We drank champagne. The Peak was not difficult. Done in crampons. The latter is not fit and is taking a few days' rest.

May 26th.—Camp 2. Very early this morning the last of the porters arrived in from the base with their bedding, and with Kurz's people now number 47. Last night, stones fell down on the camp from a most innocent looking slope above. One arrived in a snow drift near our tent, which effectively prevented it from sweeping Frank and his tent away. I heard about it this morning, having slept through the whole racket. We were off by 8 a.m. led by the Dud Wallah whose route finding is remarkably good. The going was exceedingly rough over moraine and made infinitely more difficult by the joining of the main glacier with that coming in on the left from the main peak of the Jonsong Massif. The country travelled through has been superb, the whole time surrounded by majestic and beautiful peaks with Kangchen. filling the valley below us. As this mountain becomes more distant, its outlines, walls, towers and buttresses assume finer proportions and shapes. Such a huge mountain cannot be fully appreciated from so close a point as the Base or Camp 1. The men went well and at 3 p.m. a point about two miles above the glacier junction was reached on the true left of the main moraine and under a series of huge seracs. The setting sun, as it shines down on them, produces shades of green, blue and dazzling silver. Altogether this is a very pleasant place. The evening is perfect for photography and views of Kangchen. superb. Kurz has gone on and is in Camp 3, miles higher up. He will wait for us to-morrow. It will not be possible to cross the La in one day's march, but we should camp directly under it 24 hours hence.

May 27th.—Camp 3. Jonsong La. Frank and I went ahead with the Dud Wallah, this morning, and soon spotted a Swiss flag on the moraine; below was Kurz's camp. He was very pleased to see us and not in the least annoyed at being left with very little food. He offered us a meal of sorts and we fed. From this place the glacier fills the whole valley ahead apart from where it joins the slope on our right. The ice is a maze of seracs and not in the least a desirable place to lose oneself in. Our admirable milkman took off to the right and led across the slope on which we saw signs of recent and extensive stone falls. Many cairns had to be erected. At about 18,500 feet, Frank put on his skis and

went ahead leaving us two to follow. Very little higher the route turns left, at which point one passes through debris of ice avalanches which have fallen from a big ice wall immediately above the track. On warm days, people will have to exercise caution. We now found ourselves above the seracs and out on the smooth slopes of the glacier. Shouts from below told of foolish wanderers who had not kept to the cairns, but got on to the glacier too low down. It was two hours later before the unfortunate ones put in an appearance, having found our route. In the hollows the snow is very soft and waist deep. Crevasses are few and small. Our Camp is out towards the middle of the glacier and free from ice avalanches.

This evening Frank and I went up to the La on skis. The surface was hard and going easy. The last 500 feet had to be done on foot. Looking down into Sikkim was a complete surprise. The valley below us was wide and flat and the mountains on its far side low and almost snowless. Colouring is totally different. The rock being a dark reddish brown. The northern side of the La is steep, and for porters a fixed rope will be required. Lingering was impossible, night was almost upon us, and it was necessary to return. A glissade down and we had our skis. I was not too happy for the first half-mile, as the surface was hard frozen and consequently fast. However, I very quickly learned a control of sorts, and after that the descent was the most delightful of my experience. The absolutely effortless motion, apart from turning, is enchanting. All silent except for the whispering of the skis and the rushing of the wind past the ears. This has been my first ski run and leaves me with a terrible thirst to learn more of this fascinating sport.

May 28th—Jonsong Peak Base Camp. It was arranged last evening that Frank and Schneider should go ahead this morning to fix ropes on the Sikkim side of the La. My work was to get over our 47 porters. The day promised to be hot, and as early a start as possible was very necessary. With every man on the rope I was off just before the sun reached the camp. The condition of the snow was quite good and we made quick time to the foot of the last steep 500 feet. Clouds had appeared and brought in their train the usual wind. Prof. was on ahead of us toiling along carrying his skis. After a short rest we pushed on to the summit. A strong cold wind was encountered. Our route

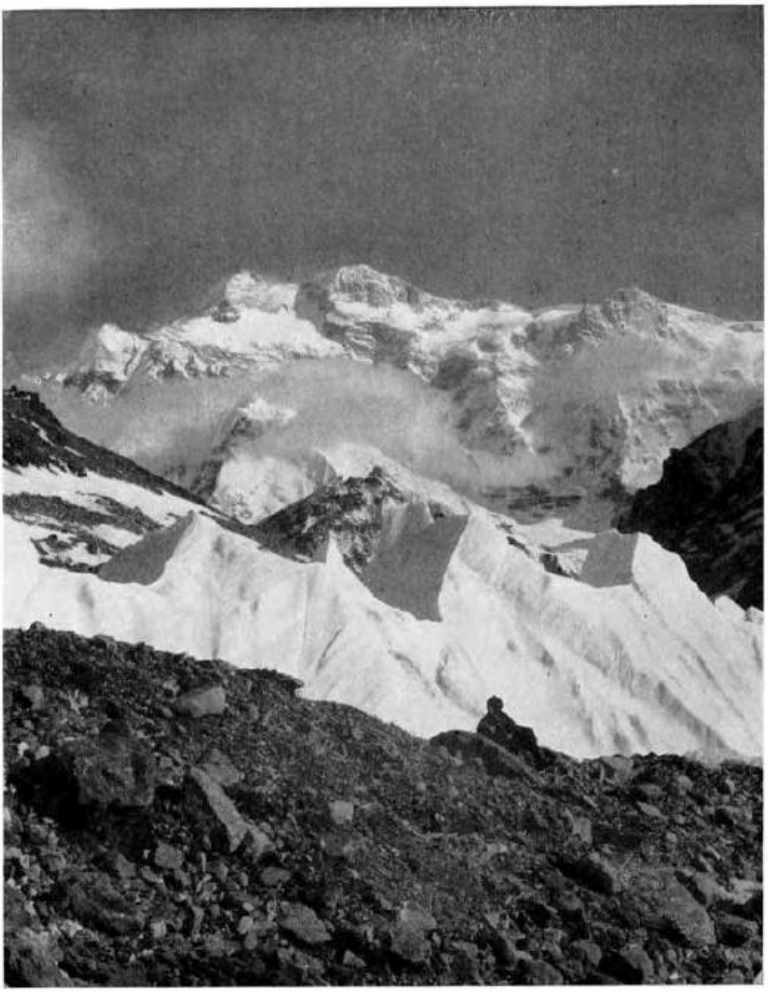


Photo by *G. Wood-Johnson*

KANGCHENJUNGA FROM CAMP 2, JONSONG LA.

descended from the right for about 30 feet to a rock outcrop on which we collected all our men. The slope fell steeply away for 500 feet to the glacier. Frank had been down and reported that it was snow the whole way, but the angle demanded the use of a rope. Schneider and I fixed this and got our men down. The other sahibs were by this time rapidly disappearing down the glacier on skis. Schneider shot down the preliminary slope of the La at a tremendous pace. His ski-ing is very good. I was left alone with the porters and, unroped, we tramped across the snow-covered glacier, keeping left, under the rocks of the eastern flank of the Jonsong Peak, and finally climbed across moraine to the lowest snow-covered portion of the glacier. The men were tiring and I hurried on and caught the Prof., telling him to make camp as soon as possible. We are now established on the gravelly shore of a glacier lake. The western end possesses a 100 foot wall of ice, decorated with numerous weird designs and long icicles. Right and left, rise steep banks of moraine, whilst by climbing over the latter, one comes on a similar but smaller lake. The east leads down the moraines and through this opening a chilly wind blows without ceasing. That, the proximity of ice and cold water and lack of sunshine, combine to make this a cold spot.

May 29th—Jonsong Peak Base Camp. Hoerlin complains this morning that the porters have used up half our meta fuel between camp and here. The cook cannot be relied upon to care for this and now all portable fuel is in the hands of a sahib, and must not be used for anything but an attempt on the Jonsong Peak.

To-day is a day of rest for our men, but it was imperative to call for volunteers to push down the valley and bring up firewood. It was gratifying to see that every available man volunteered and pushed off early led by the indefatigable Dud Wallah. Wrote to the Maharajah of Sikkim to-day, asking for help with transport, also the Pipan of Lachen, requesting him to send up 50 men, chickens and kerosene oil as soon as possible. The weather has been unsettled for the last two days and, as I write, snow is falling. Sincerely hope that the monsoon is not upon us, but as we are now on the northern edge of the range there is every reason to expect the monsoon later. I think that the present

conditions must be only a local disturbance and will clear in one or two days in the extreme. Looking south and south-east, one continually sees rolling masses of storm clouds and great columns of thunder cloud, but the north wind, ever blowing down through Tibet, holds the whole in check some seven to ten miles away.

Spent this afternoon on the summit of a rocky point above camp, doing a reconnaisance of possible routes on Jonsong, Lionak and Dodang Peaks. Prof. has promised to let us start to-morrow. As I write by candle light, I am thinking of the immense competition between Tenchedar and the climbing party to bag the lion's share of our scanty supply of foodstuff. He did his best to keep back most of the good stuff for Base wallahs, but we won and can last out. Yesterday, was spent planning a dash for the Jonsong Peak. Prof., Frank and I, spent several hours on the rock ridge above here examining Jonsong Peak, Lhonak Peak and Dodang Peak, through glasses. If the icefall on the north face of the former can be safely climbed, there is no obvious reason why the summit should not be reached. The whole of the fall cannot be seen, but the portion visible does not offer much hope, however, the north-west ridge blots out almost half; and so it has been decided that Frank, Schneider, Hoerlin and self shall explore the fall and, failing to discover a route, return. To-day, we have been bagging all the food we can, and have enough for a maximum of 4 days, and porters' food for 3 days. Fuel is very short. We shall have to do the best possible. Prof. refuses to lend us Tenchedar, so Hoerlin and self will do cooking. An absolute minimum of men are coming with us both for reasons of short rations and in order to send back as many as possible to help the Memsahib to get the loads over the La. Packing of food has been rather an amusing business. All boxes were lined up and open. The lack of grub was not altogether a cheerful sight, but naturally Hoerlin and I were out to get as much as possible; on the other hand, Prof. and Tenchedar were equally determined to hold back as much as possible. Whilst all four were engaged in going over the contents of a box, Schneider would sneak out from his tent at the other end, purloin a tin or two and hurry back; by this method we won 4 days' food instead of 3. We are to sleep two in a tent after the first camp, and the porters are to use their diminutive high climbing tents, christened, "The dog kennels."

We are quite braced with immediate prospects of a climb, and the weather, although not settled, is not bad. Regardless of this, one cannot but feel anxious for the rest of the party on the other side of the La. With Duvanel a sick man, Wieland not fit and a host of loads to be transported to this side. If the sirdars carry out my instructions, and if porters work for the Memsahib, all may yet be well. Richter will be busy with Duvanel—and after all these " ifs " should not exist in work of this sort. A little warmer to-day, but as I write after dinner, temperature is fairly low and a cold wind blowing. I have observed that it is only in the day time, when temperatures are up, that the north wind from Tibet can hold in check the monsoon clouds from the south. As soon as the sun sinks below the horizon, and the thermometer drops rapidly, the cold southern clouds become masters, and surround us.

May 30th.—Camp 1. Jonsong Peak. We were off by 8 a.m. this morning, admittedly a late start; but knowing that our task was not a long one, and in addition acutely aware of the fact that our men are not in a fit mental or physical condition to do long days, I think the wisest course was taken. Frank and I led off up the rock slope and, crossing two small ridges, commenced the diagonal left-hand traverse to bring us as high up the glacier as possible before actually having to travel on its surface. Onghal Sherpa was determined to keep up and travelled at a remarkable pace with his 50 lb. load. Before reaching the foot of our objective, the icefall, it was necessary to pass under a steep rock face, absolutely rotten in composition, and continually sending down showers of stones. Hoerlin and Schneider had an interesting time passing this unpleasant spot with the porters jostling in order to avoid falling stones. Joining forces we proceeded to a point where the route up the fall could be thoroughly examined. A unanimous decision was speedily arrived at that the route was dangerous, otherwise easy. It was mutually agreed to disobey Prof's. orders and push on to Kellas Col, and examine his route. Up the glacier we went until reaching its narrowest point, where a now rounded ridge of Jonsong Peak swings out and cuts it in two. Also all the worst crevasses and all seracs had been passed. The glacier is remarkably dry here. No snow, and very few shallow surface streams. Schneider led off and soon had us through a maze of icewaves and over a few small crevasses to

the dividing rock ridge, which we ascended by the means of a steep scree slope. The ice has shrunk away from the vertical rock wall, and the intervening space is occupied by dirty glacier water in which float dirty and diminutive bergs. At the top of the scree slope the glacier just fails to overflow the ridge, thereby leaving a very narrow strip of scree, which must actually be the ridge's summit. On this we are camped. The evening is glorious and we lie about on the rocks enjoying the warmth of the late afternoon sun, gazing in wonder at our perfect surroundings and, to come down to earth, gorging ourselves with a top layer of a spacious box of sugared fruits. It is altogether the best camping site of the whole expedition. Everyone in good spirits. Lewa in charge of porters, so I am giving out rations myself. Hoerlin guards the meta carefully, and I do not fear wastage of that. We feel like truants from school, having ignored orders and cut ourselves off from the Base with insufficient supplies to obtain our objective. One occasionally hears chuckles as the other three discuss what the Prof. will say, or what has happened if he happened to climb up to the viewpoint. With his glasses it would be possible to see our diminutive camp perched high up on the glacier. The most amusing affair to me is our porters' dog kennels. Have never seen such small tents for this work before. The boys keep walking around them, then crawling inside and trying the interiors, emerging with broad grins on their faces, or making grimaces at their fellows through the small windows. Schneider tells me that he used one on Mount Kaufmann and says they are capital for two men. We have three porters in each. The sun has gone and I must now devour my share of the last full meal we are to have until obtaining fresh supplies.

May 31st.—Camp 2. Jonsong Peak. A glorious dawn this morning and a fairly early start. Going for the first part delightfully easy, across almost level, firm snow. Ahead was a ridge from which we thought it might be possible to reach Kellas Col without descending. Frank went on ahead to prospect as the idea was his. After being led from the straight, broad and delightful path of ease to the craggy fastnesses of the Ridge, wasting in all about an hour, we were compelled to return and dropped to the glacier. F. was cursed hotly and unreservedly. My one thought is to conserve our porters' energy. Other people

can't see that they are cracking up so early in the game. Proceeding up the Lhonak Glacier, we arrived at a snow trough, through which we painfully broke a trail for our men. We were mostly in up to the waist, but at one point Schneider shot in to the shoulders. Murderous work. We struck in the middle of it and decided to lunch before seeing the last of this nightmare. At last we climbed out of the hell-hole, up a steepish, but firm, snow slope, climbing, climbing, and bearing left through rolling hillocks of ice. Eager as we were to reach Kellas Col, it was obvious at 4 p.m. that our men could not go on. I put it to the others, and here we are in a hollow, just deep enough to give shelter from the blasting and shrivelling wind. This is a wonderful position, ice and snow all round and beneath; above it one can see summits of Kellas, Lhonak and part of Dodang Peak. Reminds me of what Scott's camps must have been like on the Beardmore Glacier. Food is alarmingly scarce. Hoerlin and self do cooking, tent doors facing each other and about a foot apart with our cookhouse between. We both lie on our bellies in the bags with heads out of tents chatting like two kitchen servants over their culinary efforts. Frank plays the mouth-organ and Schneider, between snatches of song, endeavours, with much success and delight to me his tutor, to perfect his vocabulary of good bodyish English curses. The men have received their rations and are happily chatting and telling good 'uns in their dog kennels. Altogether things are very satisfactory.

June 1st.—Camp 2. Jonsong Peak. I woke this morning to snow and a very unpromising world outside. We fed and prepared to move off, but here we are at 4 p.m. still weather bound. It has been decided to stick to our position to the last. Our chief difficulty and almost a danger is the lack of food. The porters are nearly out for rations and we are on half-feed. Blast the snow. Spent the day bucking, reading classical editions, labels on our few remaining tins and smoking a lot. One thing is, we are all tremendously fit; apart from porters tiring quickly, and that obviously is due to overwork. There is no sickness. Got through a long list of songs this afternoon and this is the interval before cooking a meagre dinner. We are down to bedrock with things now and out to get Jonsong Peak at all costs. Hoerlin has put his head into the kitchen, so I must roll over and do likewise, to assist him in the most desirable task

of all, i.e. preparing grub. Later. Just finished a sumptuous repast—a cold tinned herring, my share of a tin, three ginger biscuits, two preserved fruits, much damaged, and half a slab of chocolate. I think we are doing ourselves proud, under the circs. Anyhow, so proud that there are moments of revelry in song. Still snowing. One can't curse the weather part of a climber's life enough. Just interrupted by Schneider to have a bout. He has improved wonderfully to-day and can hurl 'em back, curse for curse, good and hot. He has taught me a few useful ones in German. Personally, I am not impressed. They are weak and lack determination, so losing in effect. Not so warm in the bag to-night; think it is due to lack of exercise and good warm food. Frank is fussing round prior to turning in, says I've got half the tent and stolen his humbugs. Made it so easy to gain these advantages whilst he was engrossed with the inside of one of his cameras that I couldn't resist temptation. Peace is restored and he lies with his back to me sucking one with great determination and gusto. Brings back homely memories of Gielle and coolie women suckling their appreciative young. Told him so. Not snowing quite so hard. Have a feeling we shall be able to move to-morrow and in the right direction.

June 2nd.—Camp 3. A wonderful day. Started with snow and most people depressed. After enjoying a sumptuous repast ?? a discussion started, but was cut short by the appearance of the sun. I have convinced the others that the monsoon will hold off and they believe me. The snow this morning was deep and powdery, but not really bad going. Slope wasn't great enough to cause avalanche anxiety, but we had to watch out for crevasses. Kellas Col was further away than anticipated and just before reaching it, we came up against a formidable icewall. Fortunately, Schneider, who had been leading, found a way out to the right and so up to the Col. At this point the porters were making exceedingly hard work of it and some of the weaker ones were feeling the height. Had taken a lot of determination and persuasion to get 'em so far, and now they vowed not to climb another step. This is a time when bribery or reward meets with no response, and the only way was to give myself out to 'em and brace 'em up by sheer personality. It worked, and so here we are, hundreds of feet above the Col., camping just below an ice

Photo by *F. S. Smythe*

HOERLIN, WOOD-JOHNSON AND SCHNEIDER,
CAMP 3.—JONSONG PEAK.

summit on the north west ridge of Jonsong Peak. A glorious evening with wonderful views of Everest and Makalu and on the right to the brown plains of Tibet. Beyond Everest, ranges of unknown Peaks in Nepal. Looking east across Tibet, one sees another mighty range of peaks many miles away. Wonder if they are those mentioned by Pereira. What scope for a man with a decent supply of money. To reach our objective to-morrow, it will be necessary to descend a steep ice slope to the glacier, then up same to the ridge. Our route appears to be just short of the ridge and out on the face to the right. Doesn't appear to be any great difficulty. We are all four very fit and only ask for decent weather. It is good to be so near success and I have a strong feeling that the Peak is ours. It is perfectly wonderful to keep fit on such an inadequate, and in some cases, unsuitable type of food. There is some difference of opinions on where the camp should be pitched. We are on the crest of the ridge, a little rounded, here. There is every sign of strong wind from the south as the snow is wind-blown. Personally, I wanted it a little below on the north side. Perfectly calm evening and temp. damned low. Something spiritual in the air; and to sit up in the bag to gaze at Everest through the tent ventilator gives one strange stirrings of the soul. During the time we have had her under observation (and we can see the whole of the route from the north Col. up), conditions have been ideal. It is so easy to think that given these conditions we could very reasonably hope for success on those slopes. In fact, our present party would stand a good chance. Must turn in; have a long, stiff day to-morrow.

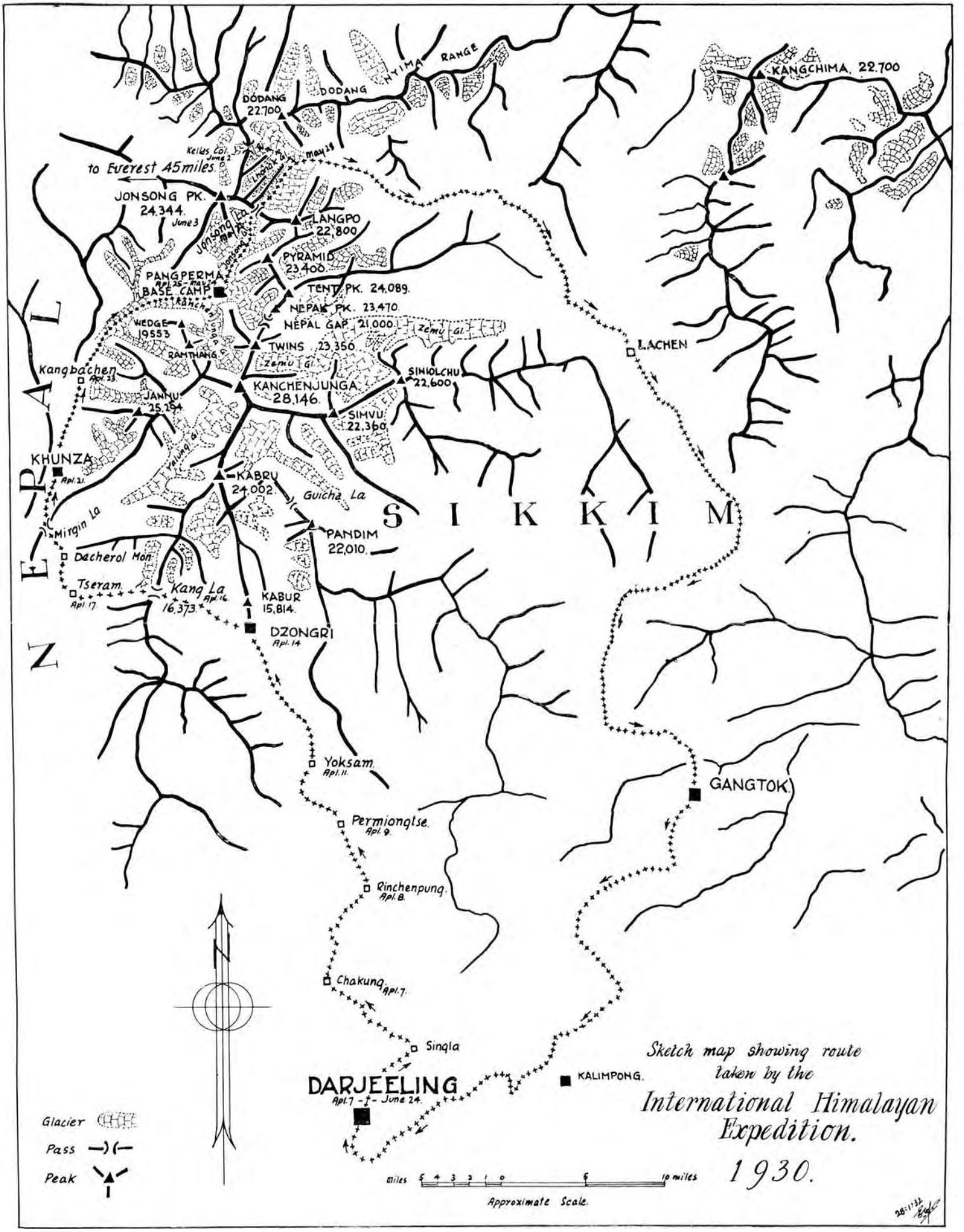
Jonsong Peak Base Camp. I don't know the date, but think I have been lying in my bag here for two days. Nothing really matters much as the Peak has been climbed by Hoerlin and Schneider. Everything went wrong with me on the morning of the attempt. First of all, there was a hellish wind blowing across our ridge which absolutely prevented us from turning out of the tents until 8 a.m. I awoke, feeling very fit and had slept well. For breakfast I had half a cup of lukewarm water, called tea, but, on downing my share of the solids which consisted of a tin of decomposed German eels, I immediately got terrific pain and felt as weak as a rat. Hoerlin and Schneider had got away

and, hoping that my condition would improve, I staggered out into a still strong wind and somehow got on my crampons. Thought it not right to mention anything to Frank, until absolutely necessary so, leading on the rope, I started down the slope, hoping to catch the others, who were cutting steps on the bergschrund below. Before we reached this obstacle, I realised I was done, but carried on across and led up the glacier until my feet absolutely refused to be lifted and carried forward. I felt ridiculously weak and at last my confession was out. Insisted on Frank trying to catch the others, feeling how hopelessly I had messed up his chances. I tried to follow after a rest. No good. Then slowly somehow got down the glacier to the foot of what looked to me in a done up state, the most awful ice slope in the world. I watched the other people for a few moments and then, like a fool, fainted. I came round in time to see Hoerlin and Schneider take the last slope to the summit and for Frank's return.

A KERN KNOTTS PORTFOLIO

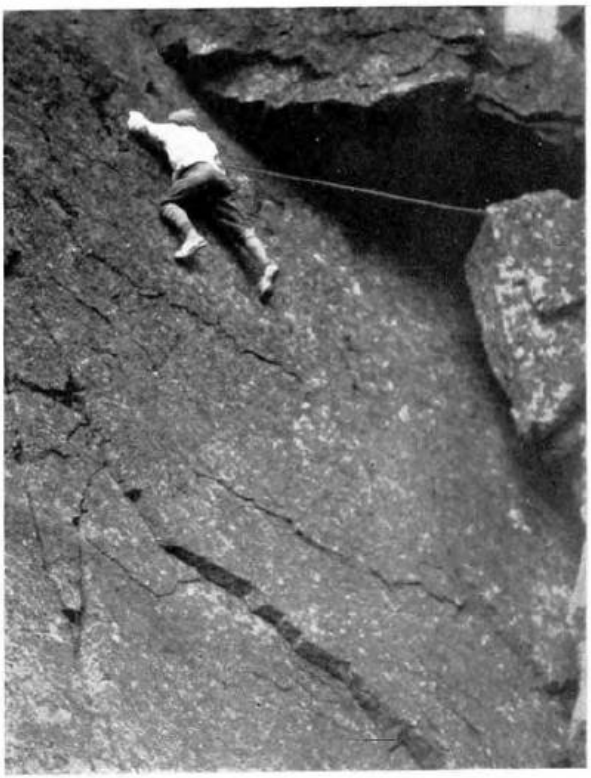
by

W. COWEN


NYIMA RANGE
DODANG
DODANG 22,700
KANGCHIMA. 22,700
Kellas Col. June 2
to Everest 45 miles.
JONSONG PK. 24,344.
June 3
LANGPO 22,800
PYRAMID 23,400.
PANGPERMA
BASE CAMP
TENT PK. 24,089.
NEPAL PK. 23,470.
NEPAL GAP 21,000.
Zemu Gl.
WEDGE 19553
RAMTHANG
TWINS 23,350.
LACHEN
Kangbachen
SINIOLCHU 22,600
KANCHENJUNGA 28,146.
JANNU 25,294
SIMVU 22,360.
KHUNZA
KABRU 24,002.
Guicha La
SIKKIM
Mirgin La
PANDIM 22,010.
Dacherol Mon
Tseram
Kang La 16,373.
KABUR 15,814.
DZONGRI
Yoksam
GANGTOK
Permiongtse.
Rinchenpung.
Chakung.
Singla
DARJEELING
KALIMPONG.
Glacier
Pass
Peak
miles 5 4 3 2 1 0 5 10 miles
Approximate Scale.
Sketch map showing route taken by the
International Himalayan Expedition.
1930.

No. 1. Kern Knotts Buttress.
(Going over the Nose.)

No. 2. Kern Knotts West Chimney.



No. 6. THE SEPULCHRE CLIMB.
(The Hand Traverse).

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

BY DARWIN LEIGHTON

November, 1930

We are always eager for Langdale, even though many were there on " The Hydro " hardy-annual week-end, a month before. What is it that makes Langdale so popular? With some of us it was our " first love," and the climbs are so handy; Gimmer, for grit and courage; Pavey Ark, for pleasant ways. Then there are headquarters that give service with smiles—a table well-spread and a comfy bed—quite a number had to avail themselves of the kind hospitality at the Wayfarers' hut-de-luxe.

December.

Christmas comes but once a year. Then Wasdale wakes to festive stir. George the first, with his Furness princes sat on the great white thrones of Scawfell, Pillar or Gable, many princesses made sacrifices with gallant knights, slaying dragons and giants that dwell round the precincts of Mickleden, singing songs of victory on the downward, homeward way, along slopes of amber bracken, amid purple mists of evening changing to twilight, cold and grey. Someone may have forestalled the bath, but your Christmas dinner is ready and it never gets into the other fellow's rucksack as your lunch has done at times. Mrs. Whiting beams, Edie and the maids rush round, John lights his pipe. There are no bills like the Wasdale bills, when the Club goes down the dale—reasonable!

January 1st, 1931

You wonder if you can get to Buttermere, so and so are going and so are you if all goes so and so, and so you do; honestly, it's always worth it—the one resolution that you are proud to keep. 'Tis where Solly seeks his secret strength, for did not he and Joseland put to shame many younger ones of the party when he led over High Crag, High Stile and Red Pike. Chorley is developing into what old Jackson proudly called himself, a " Patriarch of the Pillarites," his 100th ascent being one nearer; he may " annually sigh for a vision of the Valais with the coming of July," but his prayers for the New Year are whispered on Pillar. Mr. and Mrs. Winthrop Young, staying with Pigou, came up for dinner, thirty of us sat round the temptations of turkey and plum pudding, the walnuts and the wine.

Happy members. Everyone blessed the name of Edmondson. It was a merry meet, continued in the cosy room above. Winthrop warmed us with "The Wild Man of Borneo." Solly told a boy scout story. Joseland sang and so did Pape. Lapage told us how "Billy did" and we all sang "The Rope."

February

Thirty-seven members and friends dined at Moss Grove and hurried off to the Dialect Play—Grasmere's famous annual. Sunday was very wet, but did not deter the enthusiasts from walking the fells and feeling the glow after bath and change. Climbing was decidedly off. Some of us walked to Easdale Tarn; we too got wet and so did the sandwiches. What matter, we had our day and enjoyed it. Report has it that the Gimmer specialists never put their hand on a rock, tapped the weather glass and other glasses in the hotel; wise men of the west.

March.

Coniston, fair Coniston, not always fair; weather again being disappointing; shelter and lunch in the cave for some, rain and cloud on Doe, wet rocks, wet rope. Others walking up to the col above Goats' Water, Old Man, Carrs, Wetherlam, sought the comforts of the hotel early. We are lucky to have headquarters where real comfort exists.

April.

Easter at Wasdale, time-honoured gathering of veterans and timid tyros. Rucksack members at Strands. Very good meet and good weather. Scawfell was still snowed up and Deep Ghyll on Good Friday was in fine hard condition. Men of Manchester managed Moss Ghyll; what a great and joyous climb. Pillar had a crowd of climbing ants all over it. Fell and Rock members were on North-West, Savage Gully, Grooved Wall, Walkers' Gully and other popular climbs. "Is it not fine to walk in Spring, when leaves are born, and hear birds sing...."

May.

Whitsuntide was very wet in Borrowdale. On Saturday evening a full committee passed a resolution that the Annual Meeting should be held at Windermere, end of September instead of early October. Sunday was a day of cold rain and cold winds; no crowd gathered round the Needle. Some of us tramped up Sty Head on to Great Gable and back by Honister. There was a good gathering for the evening sing-song. Monday was showery; one party walked through the woods to Grange and back along the banks of the crystal-clear Derwent. No

better walk exists for beauty of Lakeland ferns and wild flowers. Thornythwaite still holds us with fragrant happy memories.
June.

Langdale and scents of wild rose and honeysuckle along the lanes. Time was when we walked or cycled and got more joy of the journey. Sunday, more walking than climbing; Bowfell and Hell Gill claimed many pilgrims. Three friends joined on a rope to the crescent of Gwynne's Chimney. No report of Gimmer.
July.

Coniston. Committee Saturday night, not many there and few stayed at The Sun. It is the headquarters; members should patronise it for warm and cosy welcome. There is an atmosphere of happy days, and memories linger round The Sun. Walks and climbs on Doe were done, but no record available.
August.

Bank Holiday. Wasdale. Summer just arrived, glorious week-end, hot sun, blue sky. Plunge in the pool. Days to be long remembered.

Strong parties on the Napes, Pillar gave away its North West, South West ascents. How sweet the waters of Mickledore to the thirsty ones "where we sat down" and lunched.
September

Sweet September in Eskdale. A well-packed Woolpack, Wha' House Farm, and other hostels, to say nothing of the tents on the greensward sheltering Boothroyds and Alferoffs. Where all wandered and climbed we know not. Dr. Bentall led a jolly crowd of mountain men and maidens up Mickleden on to Scawfell. Voices were heard from the depths of Deep Ghyll. Pipes of Pan played on the Pinnacle. Burnett left us and walked to his car at Seathwaite for home. Who were the men and maidens on Mickledore Grooves? Bower and Macphee beat Esk Buttress.
September.

Sweet September, not in Eskdale but at our great Annual Pow-Wow at Windermere. Miss Briggs and her Hydro staff capably handled the excellent dinner and ministered to the comforts of members and friends. F. S. Smythe, our chief guest, fresh from the kicks of Kangchenjunga and Kamet, interested us greatly. Sunday all the climbs in Langdale had nails or rubbers on them. "Rucksackers" and "Rockers" joined forces to climb Saddleback, descending gingerly down Sharp Edge. Twas a great meet. We bid goodday to Basterfield and put Hadfield in his stead. So carry on; carry on. The game's a good 'un.

NATIONAL PARKS; A NOTE

By The Editor

The National Parks Committee have published their Report. There is not, of course, the slightest chance of any action being taken at the moment which involves the expenditure of public money. It is clear from the Report, however, that when action of any kind is taken, the Lake District will stand a good chance of getting scheduled and to a greater or less extent controlled as a National Reserve.

This idea of a National Reserve still seems to upset a good many people whose practical knowledge and love of the fells entitles their opinion to the greatest respect; and I think it ought to be voiced in this Journal. I am, therefore, going to quote at length from a communication I have received on this subject:

> "The romance of the lives of early cragsmen is mainly responsible for the Club's abnormal growth. Undoubtedly, the fundamental lure of mountains is their capacity for serenity, silence and solitude, and the solace to be gained therefrom was originally the attraction to our founders. They came, they beheld, and they worshipped. To-day, outside the limits of Climbing Clubs, and apart from any appreciable desire to worship, the pressure of civilisation is driving irresponsible crowds into the hitherto peaceful hills; these crowds panic from petrol to peace, their very advent turns peace to pandemonium and quiet is no more.
>
> "Roads encroach and buses provide a convenient access to the fells and it is made easy to enjoy high places. These aggregations blunder about the sacred slopes decked out in blazers, flannels, celanese and crocodile skins. They tear up the tiny trods of the shepherd and climber into a wide and dishevelled track; in their erratic struggles to find rest, they pad into a quagmire those green mossy banks and shelves that once provided a haven of rest for the active cragsman; the peaceful nooks and corners just off the popular trail, and the mountain tops, they make to shriek with a grinding indigestion, caused by a glut of their unwholesome litter and garbage.

"Any holiday crowd is a contamination on a mountain, a condition of sacrilege. The mountain abhors this blundering monster, filled with elemental passions of destruction and pollution. It is not only a danger to itself; it is repellent to nature unadorned and her spontaneous pilgrims.

"Having regard to these happenings during the past year, had we not better call a halt in our endeavour to reduce our hills to the status of a National Park? Must we turn our cathedrals of silence into jazz halls, convert our fells into fairgrounds and our crags into a circus? Rather tear out their great hearts in sacrifice to industry than that the hills should suffer this degradation of ribald carnival with all its filthy aftermath.

"The purpose of a label is advertisement; let us withdraw the suggested label of National Park and leave the hills unlabelled as heretofore. It may be that the crowd will eventually dissemble on approach and its members enter more or less alone and, beholding for the first time, stay to worship, and at the close of a mountain day, substitute vespers for vandalism. What's in a name, you ask? Well, it seems to count for something.

"The monster of the cinema is told of a Dress Circle. In torture it writhes and wriggles up Needle Gully, scattering in every direction the slow-trickling, natural debris of the ages. Crawling desperately into position, it is fed and entertained. It then descends to the abyss whence it emerged amid a deafening riot of rolling stones. The green and pleasant place of observation and rest, where the monster settled for a brief space, is no more. All we see is the mark of the beast, a ploughed up quagmire and a festering midden. Does this thing worship? Yes, in a way. Its hymn of adoration commences:

"'We plough the fields and scatter....'"

There is certainly no need for me to name the author of the foregoing. His indignation, and the rich baroque style in which it is conveyed, give him away. And I can't refrain from just teasing him, *en passant*, to the extent of saying how amusing it is, the paradoxical way one finds that one's friends with advanced political views—the champions of the Proletariat—are almost always the world's aristocrats at heart. And quite right too.

Much the same point of view about the Lake District runs through Wilson Hey's article published in this number. So far as I personally am concerned, it is a point of view with which, in theory, I agree most heartily. We have, perhaps, arranged things by our multiplication of rambling clubs, climbing clubs, climbing literature and organisation, so that to us is forever denied that glamour of pioneer adventure, of lonely and friendly wrestling with nature, which made our fathers' treasure of enjoyment when they went up to the hills by twos and threes and tramped the fells and worked out the classic routes on the crags, returning in the evening to the quiet valley farms and the talk of the dales-folk. No doubt, the modern rubber expert, with his marvellous technique and his standard of "real" severity un-influenced by "exposure," gets a thrill—a sort of craftsman's thrill of mastery over his medium—which our fathers did not understand, but I submit that he misses the more important thing; I submit that he misses the value to his soul of the great silences. He has never really gone up into a mountain apart.

The number of minor maiden crags that have been discovered in the last few years after much patient searching is a proof that a few people, at anyrate, do feel the need to pioneer, but are finding it extremely difficult to get the chance. If every climb on the great crags had not been written up foot by foot, the moderns, climbing on Scafell or Pillar, might still recapture something of the spirit of the early explorers. Guide-books are interesting, historically, and they stand for the fine cragsmanship of their makers; but they do help to propagate curses. They are not one of the least reasons, incidentally, for crowded crags and noisy parties.

And, if a mountaineering Savonarola would arise and induce us by his eloquence to bring our Guide-books to the top of Scafell Pike and cast them into a fire which he would light, I would welcome the occasion and stagger up under my load of red books.

Nevertheless, they are, I feel sure, natural and inevitable developments. They belong to our scientific age which will strip life of mystery and wonder in the attempt to strip it of fear. Have it all measured up, reasoned out, predictable like some far off eclipse or the motions of the tides. You may not like this trend of the years, but you can seldom succeed in going back on it. What you have got to do is to turn the particular currents

of the age into the most fertile channels—not try and dam them out altogether.

The Anti-National Park people are surely being unrealistic, and I think my correspondent is also confusing the issue a little. He inveighs, for instance, against the crowds because of their ill-manners and lack of respect. But at the same time he is a disciple of *laissez faire* and refuses to allow anything to be done to control them—or the evils that go with them, motor roads, unlicensed building, restaurants and hotels. He would no doubt like to see the crowds barred out of the District altogether; and so would I. Indeed, I can see no practical alternative to a National Park for dealing with them, unless it be a sort of Alice Through the Looking Glass Syndicat d'Initiative, a propaganda Society with offices in all the big towns and at every entrance to the Lake District, whose job would be to inform the world what a quite foul place for holiday-making the country really was. We all know the power of advertising nowadays. I would have posters at all the big railway stations, at all the bus offices, on every hoarding; pictures of Esk Hause in a thick mist—a dirty grey blank would achieve this—of a driving hailstorm on Honister, of a string of stretchers being borne down the slopes of Brown Tongue. And under each, I would have the legend printed; "Abandon hope, all ye that enter here."

As for those audacious spirits who after all this dared still run counter to the blast of herd propaganda and actually penetrate into our dear Hell, well we should welcome them with open arms for the stout good fellows they needs must be.

But, alas, this is not really a practical solution. There are too many vested interests at stake. It might also be objected to as being selfish and undemocratic. But I should not mind that. You don't give children precious things to play with unless you are assured that they can handle them without damaging them. And I don't see why people should play with the Lake District who cannot handle it without spoiling its quality—on ethical grounds. Unfortunately there the vandals are, increasing summer by summer, and there they will remain and you cannot snatch the precious thing away from their clumsy and destructive grasp however permissible and desirable it might be ethically to do so. My correspondent thinks that if you left out the label "National Park" the vandals might perhaps in time be awed

into manners by the hills themselves. Well, perhaps, some of them might, in time. But they would just about have ruined the hills for the rest of us, I think, before their conversion was effected.

We National Park protagonists feel, therefore, that our solution is a case of half a loaf being a great deal better than no bread. The label is more than a label. It is a warning. It implies sanctions which can be enforced. Take for instance the present case of Keswick and its pylons. The Keswick people are still protesting about their line of pylons and the *Times* newspaper has taken up their cause, but whether successfully or not remains to be seen. If the Lake District were properly scheduled as a National Reserve, this sort of thing would probably just not happen. The Electricity Commissioners would find they were up against an organisation as strong and important as themselves.

Then there is the question of litter. When W. C. Slingsby and his party made the first ascent of the Pinnacle Face some forty-five years ago, I feel sure that they took a snack before starting, as their descendants do, sitting under the Rake's Progress. I feel equally sure that they did not find the whole place mucked up with cigarette cartons and chocolate paper as their unhappy descendants do. They did not find every flat stone suitable for sitting on degraded into the tombstone of an orange.

We English dislike control and rightly—but for our own and our children's sakes, a good many of us feel that we must submit to a certain amount of it, lest we lose our heritage of hills entirely.

IN MEMORIAM

H. L. CRUDGINGTON, who joined the Club in 1922.

ADAM FOX, who joined the Club in 1909.

MISS H. L. TATE, who joined the Club in 1926.

We also have heard with much regret of the death of MR. HOWARD PRIESTMAN, who was our guest at the 1931 Windermere Dinner. Mr. Priestman was not a member of our Club but his name was well-known to many of us. He belonged to what we younger ones may call "The Great Slingsby Era"; and there are so few figures left now belonging to that time that it is particularly sad to have to record the passing of any one of them.

EDITOR'S NOTES

In the list of notable fell walks reprinted last year from a *Manchester Guardian* of 1905, the name of Leonard Pilkington appears in 1883. This should read Lawrence Pilkington—the present holder of the Patriarchate of the Pillar. The error was in the *Guardian* cutting, but I much regret that it should have been transferred without my realising it to the Journal.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that Mr. C. Dodgson, the Grasmere lad, who completed the 2,000 ft. summits in the District last year, has now, apparently, broken any long distance and endurance feats recorded to date. At the beginning of July last, he walked about 100 miles in just over 33 hours. He reckoned his climbing at just over 29,000 feet.

Starting off from Keswick at 8-30 on Sunday night he went by Braithwaite, Grisedale Pike, Hobcarton Pike, Sand Hill, across the top of Caudle Pass, and reached the top of Grassmoor at 10-58; then he went by Wandhope, Eel Crag, Sail, Ard Crags, and Knot Rigg, arriving at the top of Buttermere Hause, at 12-15 a.m. Next came Robinson, Hindscarth, and Dale Head, Honister Hause, Grey Knotts and Brandreth, the top of Green Gable being reached at four o'clock. The climber then ascended Great Gable and walked down by Beck Head to the top of Kirk Fell, over Black Sail Pass, Looking Stead and Pillar Fell, across Windy Gap to the tops of Black Crag, Steeple, Scout Fell, Red Pike, *Stirrup* Crag, Yew Barrow, and down to Wasdale Head, which was reached by 8-55 a.m. An hour was spent over a rest and breakfast. From Wasdale, Scafell and Scafell Pike were scaled followed by Great End, Esk Pike and Bow Fell. Mr. Dodgson then went to Dungeon Ghyll and over Yew Crag to Grasmere, which was reached at 3-38 p.m. Starting off again at five minutes past five Mr. Dodgson went by Stone Arthur, Great Rigg, and Fairfield to the top of Helvellyn, along the Helvellyn range by Helvellyn Low Man, White Dodd, Raise, Stybarrow Dodd, Watson's Dodd, Great Dodd, Calf How Pike, reaching Clough Head at 10-5 p.m. The descent was then made to Threlkeld where an hour was spent. From there the journey was by Hall Fell Top to Saddleback, which was reached at 1 a.m. A walk was then made to Great Calva, Skiddaw, and back to Keswick by 5-45 a.m. on Tuesday morning.

I quote from the *Westmorland Gazette.*

I understand that there is a feeling among the innkeepers of two or three of the Club Head Quarters that a good many members are apt to come for meets and put up elsewhere, while making use of the official Head Quarters in the evening for Committee Meetings or talk with the people who are staying there.

The point of view of members who object to paying the relatively high prices at these particular Head Quarters is obviously a sound one. Yet one feels that the innkeepers have a certain amount of legitimate grouse, too. Doubtless, all would be well if callers who stroll in during the evenings would remember the time honoured custom of ordering a glass of beer for the "good of the house." And, after all, there is such a beverage as "lemonade" for the tee-totallers!

Wray Castle—belonging to the National Trust—has been opened as a hostel for "hikers" under the auspices of the Youth Hostels Association.

Inter-club marriage: Marjorie Cain and Basil Alferoff. Good luck to them both.

It is almost impossible for me to attend more than one or two meets during the year and I am, therefore, liable to get out of touch. The task of producing a good Journal—one which reflects the points of view and activities of the "live" section of the Club—becomes therefore a difficult one, since I never know whether some item of special interest may not have escaped my notice. Hence, I shall be specially grateful if members will send me from time to time notes of any particular matters which they think might be of interest in the Journal, whether personal or pertaining to the Lake District generally.

CLIMBS, OLD AND NEW

By A. T. Hargreaves

Although new routes on the major crags are few, the exploration of hitherto unknown rocks swells the flooding tide of new climbs and causes consternation in the ranks of the " tickers-off."

CONISTON
Doe Crag,
Tiger Traverse. First ascent. 20/9/31. G.H.M., B.T., A. H. Griffin, (non-member).

Starts 40 feet to the left of the start of Murray's Route " B " Buttress, at a detached flake, and consists of an upward traverse to the right over a smooth outward shelving slab. The start is very delicate, but conditions gradually improve and good holds at the finish lead to the top of the second pitch of Murray's Route. Rubbers advised.

Blasphemy Crack. First ascent, 27/9/31. B.T., G.H.M.

This is the obvious crack in a knott of rock at the bottom left-hand side of Easy Gully (looking up). It faces the wall on which the Trident Route lies, but is at a higher level than the first pitch of that climb.

(1) 15 feet. A smooth quartz marked slab.
(2) 15 feet. A slab with a rough crack down its left-hand side.
(3) 15 feet. A slab with a deep crack in its centre, good holds on each side. A horizontal projection forms a poor belay.
(4) 30 feet. A crack with a difficult start. It seems best to face left and use some small flakes in the cracks. The finish is strenuous.

LANGDALE
Gimmer Crag
Hiatus. Variation of the last pitch. A. W. Bridge (R.C.), A.B.H. The vertical crack with somewhat loose holds immediately above the small stance was climbed, instead of the usual scoop on the left.

Joas. Second ascent. 26/9/31. A.T.H., W.C., G.G.M.

The Crack. First descent. 18/10/31. M. Linnell (R.C.) last man, A.T.H., G. Barker, (non-member).

Wall and Groove Climb. First ascent. W.H.C., W.E.-S., U.H.C. Start at the ledge of red rock between the small embedded rock and the large flake at the foot of the right wall of S. E. Gully (true left). Step up into a shallow scoop and bear slightly right to a grass tuft, belay, then go straight up a groove to a second tuft, belay. Keeping on the right edge of the wall climb to the foot of an obvious groove, belay, climb the groove and finishing on the left wall over an easier pitch reach a cairn. About 220 feet. Rubbers advised.

Bowfell Buttress. Two new climbs were done in September by H.M.K. and party. One, called the Plaque Route, starts about 25 yards to the left of the start of the ordinary route up the buttress, and is marked every few feet by a series of Maltese crosses, and is probably a good difficult. The other route starts up the first pitch of the ordinary way and continues up the overhanging chimney straight ahead, after which it goes up slabs to the left of the ordinary route and eventually finishes up a steep wall. This route is probably severe.

PILLAR ROCK, Girdle Traverse. First traverse. A. W. Bridge (R.C.), A.B.H., M. Linnell (R.C.). Traverses the High Man and Low Man from the foot of West Jordan Gully to the top of Walker's.

High Man.

(1) Ascend first three pitches of South West to good cairned ledge on edge of Gully. Belay.

(2) Traverse to the left round the corner, across an overhung "V" groove filled with loose blocks, and on to a stance at the top of the sixth pitch of the Rib and Slab Climb. Small belay.

(3) Descend Rib and Slab Climb to its junction with the New West near the traverse into the chimney on that climb. Good ledge and belay.

(4) (A).

(i) Descend rib to left of New West Groove pitch to good ledge and belay.

(ii) Traverse to the left and upwards to grassy ledges beneath Route (1) rib. Good belay on rib; poor stance: good belay lower down on the right; better stance.

(iii) Ascend sixth pitch of Route (1) to " the fine spike of rock " to which bring second to give " moral support," and belay. Poor stance.

(B)

(i) Traverse into New West Chimney and belay on chockstone.

(ii) Traverse slightly downwards to the left and round on to Route (1), meeting it at the " fine spike of rock."

(5) Ascend the mantelshelf of Route (1) and stop at small grass ledge with small, but good, flake belay at the back.

(6) Descend into niche on the left and work across the steep and exposed wall to a pedestal on the edge of the rib bounding the Route (2) " V " chimney. Stance and belay.

(7) Stride across with some difficulty into the chimney, thus connecting with Route (2) at the top of its fourth pitch. Stance and belay.

(8) Descend Route (2) to grass ledge with block belays. (4th pitch).

(9) Follow Route (2) traverse (3rd. pitch) and descend easily on to the Old West.
Walk across to the top of the West Wall Climb.

Low Man.

(10) Descend about 60 feet of West Wall climb to ledge with huge belay-block.

(11) Traverse left, at one of three levels, round a vertical right-angled rib into the corner at the end of the traverse on Nook and Wall Climb; follow this traverse to Bad Corner on that Climb.

(12) Descend Nook and Wall Climb for 50-60 feet to the First Nook. Good grass ledge fitted with " saddle " stance.

(13) Descend left across easy rocks to the ledge at the top of the second pitch of Appian Way.

(14) Ascend direct up a fine wall, well supplied with holds, to the pinnacle seen on the skyline (on the Appian Way). Belay above, pinnacle loose.

(15) Follow fourth pitch of Appian Way to thread belay. One is now adjacent to the alternative finish of North West Climb (traverse from foot of Oppenheimer's Chimney).

North Face.

(16) Traverse easily round to foot of Oppenheimer's Chimney, and beyond, to stance and belay at top of Lamb's Chimney.

(17) Follow traverse across Taylor's Chimney and descend slightly to stance and fine belay near protruding corner.

(18) Work down and round the corner (belay just round and above, may be used if desired); and then across on open wet gully to large grass ledge with large block belays.

(19) Traverse easily left across grassy ledges to terrace with belays at the back; one loose, the other fitted with a loop of line.

(20) Descend direct to a smaller grass ledge, then down a very steep mossy chimney to a niche; a narrow ledge a few feet below forms a very difficult mantelshelf about 12 feet above grassy terraces on the North Climb. The wall below the mantelshelf is also very difficult. The section, which is very steep and dirty, is almost unclimbable when wet, but has been led up under such conditions.

(21) Traverse across Split Blocks and The " Strid " to the Nose.

(22) Descend crack into Savage Gully and follow usual track to North East Climb.

(23) Descend part of North East Climb to corner below final pitch of Grooved Wall Climb. Belay.

(24) Ascend final groove of the Grooved Wall.

Grassy scrambling then leads to the upper scree of Walker's Gully.

Notes. Original party of three took nearly 7 hours, but this included a certain amount of exploration on High Man.

On Section (4) alternative (A) was taken, but (B) would be more direct and more difficult.

Section (20) was roped down by the last man because of being very wet—hence the loop left behind.

The chief features of the expedition are its uniformly great exposure and great length. The main technical difficulties are those of known climbs, parts of which are used; some of the crossings are very difficult also, and section (20) is at present a very tough problem, and will remain so until drastically gardened.

SCAWFELL. Waiting-room from first pitch in Steep Gill. Second ascent. 8/6/30. J.A.M., N.R., J.B., M.M.B.

GREAT GABLE, Kern Knotts. 22/6/30. "Sepulchre" Route. The Crack which rises a few yards to the right of the "Innominate Crack" was climbed as far as a large platform with an overhanging roof, since "dubbed" the "Sepulchre." From here the leader proceeded up to the overhang and after some very severe movements climbed upwards from under it on the left finally reaching the large niche in the Innominate Crack about ten feet from the top.

First ascent. J.A.M., N.R., E. S. Wilson, M.B., J.B., A.G.B.

LONG SLEDDALE, Buckbarrow Crag, Dandle Face Direct. *First ascent. 27/9/31. A.W., L. Hamilton (non-member), M.E.W.N., J.B. From a cairn to the right of Cleft Ghyll easy climbing leads in 50 feet to the base of a slab which is climbed for 40 feet to a stance on the right. Negotiate the overhanging corner above and finish a 35 foot pitch over steep turf. A short upwards traverse is now made to the Oak Tree and the chimney behind it is climbed to a stance at the foot of Pigeon Slab. The route lies directly up for 60 feet to a small flake belay. The slab on the right is climbed for 30 feet when it is necessary to traverse left to a belay. Continue up the slab into a groove, and in 35 feet emerge at the summit. Rubbers advised.

Dandle Buttress. First ascent. J. D. Best (non-member) and party. 1929. A start is made up the right wall of Cleft Ghyll just below the cave, after which the climb follows the arête in a series of short interesting pitches.

Eagles' Nest, (High Crag). First ascent. J. D. Best (non-member) and party. From the slopes on the left of Cleft Ghyll a start is made up a wide chimney. The next objective is a conspicuous ledge high up on the right, and its attainment provides a pleasing problem. The final slab pitch lies above and to the right.

The Cocktail Route. (High Crag). First ascent. 1929. J. D. Best and party. To the right of a steep slab a crag is climbed to a broad ledge. 50 feet directly upward leads to a grass rake which is crossed to a wall pitch with good holds. One more pitch completes the climb.

* For further details see P. 19.

Black Cleft, (Goat Scar). First ascent. 6/9/31. M.E.W.N. and J.B. A 45 foot chimney in three sections is followed by a 25 feet pitch up a crack and slab. 50 feet with good holds on both walls then lead out to the final 35 foot chimney.

FAIRFIELD. Hart Crag, First ascent 20/9/31. W.E-S., W.H.C. The climb, although it contains several grassy ledges, consists of short pitches on sound rock. It might be described as a series of somewhat severe problems deliberately linked together. Rubbers advised.

(1) 20 feet. The climb starts up a short wall to a triangular ledge at the foot of a steep groove. The groove is then climbed to a platform on the right. Belay on the wall above.

(2) 45 feet. A delicate step across to the left is followed by a thin crack which leads to a slab on the skyline. Then a traverse is made to the right across the top of a slab to a vertical corner which is climbed to a large grassy rake.

(3) 10 feet. Walk along rake to the right.

(4) 20 feet. The overhang immediately above is surmounted and a succession of shallow grooves climbed to a long grassy incline. Belay down to the left.

(5) 15 feet. Climb the slab to the right and up a corner, finishing the pitch by traversing across to the left to the top of an overhang. Belay.

(6) 20 feet. A crack leading up obliquely to the right to a notch in the sky-line. Belay and grass ledge.

(7) 30 feet. Cross the wall to the right on rather sloping holds and climb up the right-hand edge to a platform. Continue straight up the steep crack ahead.

(8) 20 feet. The wall ahead is climbed on the right of a thin crack which can be used as a hold for the left foot. The climb finishes at the top of this wall where a small cairn was left.

A variation start was made some yards to the right of the ordinary route. It consists of a steep wall followed by a mossy slab to the left which eventually leads to the large grassy rake. Although this pitch is taken in one run out of about 45 feet it is somewhat disappointing as one is forced too far to the left in order to avoid an "impossible" overhang.

ESKDALE. In September 1930 G.G.M. and A.T.H. discovered a small crag of excellent rock called Yew Bank Crag on the 1 inch O.S. maps, which is the northerly spur of Border End. It can be easily identified from the picture and the pool of water at its foot. At least seven routes were done, all sufficiently obvious. Its maximum height is about 60 feet.

Key to Initials used:

A. B. Hargreaves	W. Eden-Smith
Bryan Tyson	Miss U. Heaton Cooper
G. H. Mackereth	H. M. Kelly
W. Heaton Cooper	A. Walmsley
J. Brady	W. Clegg
G. Graham Macphee	A. T. Hargreaves
M. E. W. North	J. A. Musgrave
Miss N. Ridyard	Miss M. M. Barker
M. Beaty	A. G. Bush

LONDON SECTION

LIST OF OFFICERS:
President: Dr. Chas F. Hadfield
Committee:

J. W. Brown.	G. C. M. L. Pirkis.
R. S. T. Chorley.	Miss D. E. Thompson.
W. P. Haskett-Smith.	J. B. Wilton.
R. H. Hewson.	George Anderson.

G. R. Speaker, Hon. Sec. & Treasurer, Abbotsmead, Twickenham.

All members are eligible for membership in the London Section on payment of a subscription of 2/6, due yearly in advance on the 1st January.

The total membership is 100.

The following is a summary of the activities of the Section during 1931:—

Sunday, January 18th—Walk of about 12 miles from Hayes to Oxted via Highams Hill and Bealestone, led by G. C. M. L. Pirkis. Cloudy but otherwise fine day. Ten attended. Finished up with tea at the Hoskyns Arms.

Sunday, February 8th—Circular walk of about 14 miles, led by A. F. Godwin. Route: Tring, Northcott Hill, Grimms Ditch, Cholesbury Camp, Hastoe, Wigginton, Tring. Tea at Station Hotel. Fifteen attended.

Sunday, March 1st—Circular walk from Dorking via Coldharbour, Leith Hill, Holmbury Hill, Coneyhurst Hill, Peaslake, and Abinger Hammer. Leader, H. N. Fairfield. About 12 miles. In fine weather. Eighteen attended.

Sunday, March 22nd—Walk from Leatherhead to Shere via Fetcham, Polesden Lacy, Ranmore, Hackhurst Downs, and Newlands Corner, led by H. C. Amos. About 14 miles. Tea with Miss Bray at the Manor House. Eighteen attended.

Sunday, April 19th—Walk from Hatfield to Welwyn, led by Gervase E. Smith. About 12 miles, through Marford and then north and east to Welwyn. Tea at "The Wellington."

Sunday, May 3rd—Walk from Berkhamsted to Harpenden via Ashridge and Waterend, led by Miss Mary D. Glynne. About 16 miles. Incessant rain from 10-45. Very grateful and comforting tea with Dr. and Mrs. Garrod at Bankcroft—including dry footgear for everybody! Several of the party were shown over the laboratories of the Experimental Station at Rothamsted, by the leader. Twenty-two attended.

Sunday, May 31st—Walk from West Wycombe to Henley, led by Miss D. E. Thompson, via Wheeler End, Pheasants Hill, Hambledon. Tea at "Stag & Huntsman." About 12 miles. Excellent weather. A few of the party of 16 went on the river after tea.

Tuesday, June 16th—A small party of members turned up at 7-45 p.m. at Stanmore Hill and were led by R. S. T. Chorley and Mrs. Chorley for a very pleasant evening walk over the surrounding country about 7 miles, returning to The Rookery at 10 o'clock where they were refreshed and entertained by Mrs. Chorley until time to catch the last bus back to London, concluding a very happy evening.

Sunday, June 21st—Miss Hadfield led a short walk—about 8 miles—from Hatfield Broad Oak to Dunmow, via Broomshawbury New Hall, and Great Canfield, in fine weather. The party of 18 foregathered at the Dove House in response to Mrs. Hadfield's generous invitation to tea, leaving for London by bus.

Saturday, June 27th-Sunday June 28th—This was a very successful repetition of the midnight walk last year. Leader, Miss Sylva Norman. Sixteen members turned up at Lewes at 11-30 p.m. in bright, clear moonlight, and walked over the Downs to Firle Beacon, where a short halt was made at about 2 o'clock in the morning; continuing the walk to Alfriston remarkable numbers of glow worms were seen. Miss Norman had very thoughtfully arranged for hot tea and coffee to be available about 5 in the morning, at a country cottage near Alfriston. Birling Gap was reached at 7-30 where breakfast was served at 8. After a rest on the beach and a bathe a number of the party walked along the shore to Eastbourne, returning to London by the 4-30 train.

Sunday, July 19th—Cross country circular walk from Bishop's Stortford led by Miss Gladys M. Kitchener. About 12 miles. Route: Through Great Hallingbury and Hallingbury Park to Wood-side Green, thence to Little Hallingbury, Wallbury Camp, Thorley Wood, Thorley Village Church, Bury Green, and Stortford Park, returning to Bishop's Stortford by a circuitous field route. Tea at the "Boar's Head."

Sunday, September 20th—Circular walk led by Miss L. E. Bray. About 11 miles. Route: Gomshall, Friday Street, Holmbury Hill, Peaslake, Hartwood, Shere, Gomshall. The party took tea with Miss Bray at the Manor House. Weather and visibility perfect. Twenty-two attended.

Saturday, September 26th—About 30 London Section members attended the Club Annual Meeting and Dinner at Windermere.

Sunday, October 11th—Walk from Westerham to Sevenoaks, led by Dr. Hadfield. Route: Squerrys Court, Crockham Hill, French Street, Toys Hill, Ide Hill, River Hill, Knole Park, Tea at the "Royal Oak." A good day, although not sunny. Sixteen attended.

Sunday, November 1st—Walk from Chalfont to Rickmansworth, led by R. H. Hewson. About 15 miles. Tea at "Victoria Hotel." Twenty-five members and their friends attended. A cold but very fine day.

Sunday, November 22nd—Circular walk led by J. W. Brown. Route: Amersham, Penn, Pyler's Wood, Shardloes Park, Amersham. About 12 miles. Weather thick and misty all day, making route finding rather difficult. Twenty-two attended.

Saturday, December 12th—12th Annual Dinner of the London Section held at the Connaught Rooms, with General Bruce in the Chair. The Club had intended to invite all the members of the Kamet Expedition but could secure only Wing Commander Beauman, who was the only one not engaged on the 12th on lectures, etc. The toast of the guests and kindred clubs was proposed by Dorothy Pilley (Mrs. Armstrong Richards), which was responded to for the guests, by J. H. Poole, and for the kindred Clubs by Sir William Ellis for the Alpine Club. Among the other guests invited by the Club were N. E. Odell, and H. M. Kelly (Rucksack Club). H. M. Roberts proposed the health of the Chairman. The number present was 114 (55 members)

Sunday, December 13th Dinner walk from Coulsdon South to Reigate Hill, led by G. R. Speaker. About 10 miles. Route: Farthing Downs, Tollers Farm, Chaldon Church, Tollsworth Farm (Lunch on Quarry Downs), Merstham, Gatton Park, Pilgrims' Way, The Rock, where the usual sumptuous tea had been prepared by Mr. and Mrs. Holland. The day was misty and rather raw. Thirty-six members and friends turned up at the start, six at Quarry Downs, and a further eight at The Rock.