



**THE FELL AND ROCK
JOURNAL**

NO 88

THE FELL AND ROCK JOURNAL

2022

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**The Fell and Rock
Climbing Club**





Wendy Stirrup - President - on Kalymnos

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Edited by Jim Sutcliffe and Tony Walker



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Editing

Jim Sutcliffe, Tony Walker

Design and artwork

Creative Consortium, Tony Walker

Proofreading

Janet Ashworth, Alison Cresswell, Tim Cresswell,
Lis Cook, Val Hawksworth.

Obituaries

Clare Kenny

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Editorial

It is a hundred years since the Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District published the first climbing guidebook to Doe Crag and this year's journal pays homage to that event.

The 2022 Journal is a journal of two halves with the first half being the 'usual articles' (if such a word can be used in that context!) and the balance of the content being focused on the 100 years of guidebooks; new routes and the climbers involved. At this point I must give a big thank you to Ron (Kenyon) and his team of helpers who have done a great job in assembling the articles for the centenary section. It must have taken a fair amount of cajoling and persuasion! Lots of really interesting historical information and articles in there. A couple of my personal favourites are the great photo of a band from Paul Ross's Lamplighter folk club abseiling down Little Chamonix and the email debate I had with Jim and Ron about whether the best climbing plimsolls came from Woolies or M&S.

The range and diversity of articles in the 'usual' section is equally impressive and interesting - reflecting a healthy and active club which is really pleasing. We received the same number of articles as in the 2020 Journal, so the centenary section is all 'extra' and the 2022 journal is a bumper edition and almost double in size.

Inevitably, there are times when reading another article becomes hard work (usually time to close the laptop!) but all the articles have been interesting this year. Inevitably, some articles don't get included and that's no reflection of the quality but, as the journal takes shape, certain themes come through and article selection follows naturally to achieve a balance and flow to the content. Take it from me – it's easier to include an article or a photo than to try and explain why you've excluded one! Be gentle on we journal editors.

Although we are now post-pandemic, it has still been affecting everyone (including the huts and committee meetings) until quite recently. Hopefully, it is now well and truly behind us, and we can all look forward to enjoying the hills and crags more freely (after you've read the journal of course!).

I hope you enjoy this year's journal.

Have a good one and stay safe.

Cheers

Tony and Jim

President's Report

Wendy Stirrup

The Club activities over the last two years are particularly impressive against the constant presence of Covid. Lockdown was announced within hours of the 2020 AGM, so it is worth taking a bit of time to remind ourselves of the impact. It lasted for a month then we managed 1 day meet, for those not in tier 3, before moving to a 'stay local' instruction. Day travel was finally allowed in April. Then in May, overnight stays were allowed, initially only for single households and with 72 hours between stays for two household occupancy. Whilst Government restrictions were lifted in July, we tried to reduce the risk to members by limiting hut occupancy to 50% until December

Huts

Huts were closed for approximately 6 months. No-one had anticipated it would be so long but plans for regular visits to run water did mean there was no requirement to sanitise water systems this time before re-opening.

The prolonged closure combined with the extreme cold resulted in a significant flood at Karn House. (see Graeme's report) Fortunately a leaking pipe at Waters was quickly spotted and damage limited. The ancient heaters were also upgraded.

The prolonged closures followed by very restricted use resulted in several issues including damp. Thankfully, at Birkness, the second winter of lockdown did not result in the horrendous covering of mould experienced early in 2020, as the heating was back on; however, there are still several damp related problems. Dry weather caused a water shortage and hut closures at Rawhead and Birkness,

This has been a difficult time for the hut teams with hut closures followed by restrictions on occupancy. Further work was caused by restricting to warden only bookings and then converting huts back from a two-household set up. The changes to Government Covid guidelines meant regular updates to our risk assessments. Thanks to all involved.

Meets

This must be one of the hardest year's to be a Meets secretary. A programme of climbing and walking day meets allowed members to meet up in a variety of different areas including Yorkshire Dales, Pennines, Peak District as well as the Lakes. Single pitch climbing venues proved popular as well. After high temperatures in April at Hutton Roof we suffered sleet showers in Langdale climbing on the newly developed routes at Thrang Crag as all indoor options were closed.

Camping provided us with the first opportunity for an overnight meet. 30 gathered in Eskdale (the maximum allowable at the time) for the guidebook meet. The weather was not on our side and whilst one team ventured onto Slight Side to check routes most people stayed on the low-level crags.

Not long afterwards the Scottish hotel meet enjoyed many new attendees and the Cobbler received lots of ascents

The June Welcome Meet in Borrowdale saw 2 households (the 2 meet leaders) stay in Salving House whilst others camped nearby or travelled up for the day. Fortunately, the weather stayed fine allowing an evening meal in the car park.

The Classic rock meets provided a focus for climbers with some great Scottish conditions allowing classics including The Chasm, Savage Slit, Clachaig Gully and Ardverikie Wall to be climbed. Meanwhile in the Lakes colder weather resulted in a mass ascent of Needle Ridge.

We had an enforced break from tradition for the VP meet moving to the Coniston Sports & Social Club field. An amazing 50 tents / campervans housed members at the venue with others staying elsewhere. Over the weekend climbing teams enjoyed routes in the Duddon, Dow and Coppermines whilst a large walking group explored the Coniston Fells.

The weather was less good in August but that didn't deter many people from gathering in Ennerdale for the official 'Unveiling of the Plaque', which coincided with VJ day. The plaque commemorates those members of the Club who were killed in action during WW2. Many of our senior members were able to attend, courtesy of Cockermouth Mountain Rescue and we heard about the opening ceremony and funding the bridge. By working with Lake District National Park (LDNP) we were able to arrange for the bridge handrails to be replaced just before the opening event.

Camping again allowed many to join the Eden Valley meet. We were surprised to stay dry whilst walking on Saturday, but a heavy downpour mid BBQ called for a hasty evacuation to the barns. A fire pit was designed to keep people warm, whilst listening to the musical entertainment, but nearly smoked everyone out.

By September we were brave enough to hold our first face to face Committee meeting of the year and started to plan for the Annual dinner. It was the first

time we had gathered at The Castle Green Hotel. The Friday evening slideshow covered rebuilding Brackenclose plus highlights from various meets. Due to restricted numbers, we decided not to invite Kindred Clubs. Hatty kindly agreed to give a talk about the immediate aftermath of the Brackenclose fire and the fundraising effort. I was pleased to have the opportunity to recognise the numerous members who give their time to help run the Club and in particular the achievements by Meets Secretary Hazel during such a difficult period.

It was good to get back onto Great Gable for the Act of Remembrance although it was a quiet affair at Birkness given the accommodation restrictions, until the fireworks which echoed around Birkness Combe.

In December we lifted restrictions on huts although the rapid rise in Omicron a couple of weeks later caused caution and reduction in bookings. This didn't stop those who attended the New Year from having an enjoyable time and confidence had increased by Burns weekend with the event nearly at full capacity.

February committee plans were almost scuppered by Storm Eunice with many Committee members being unable to travel but fortunately 20 made it to Raw Head allowing the meeting to continue.

Indoor wall meets

Another new venture for the Club was the winter wall programme. The first meet at Preston wall provided ample opportunity to socialise whilst by comparison Kendal wall was so busy, we weren't even sure how many people attended the meet. Despite Omicron scuppering the planned pre-Christmas festive meet, horizons were widened with a meet at Harrogate, and another planned at Leeds.

Virtual events

The annual Act of Remembrance on Great Gable was the first victim of the lockdown. Having decided early October that we could not control numbers, and that a large gathering would reflect badly on the Club, the decision was taken to cancel the event. A pre lockdown visit to the Lakes meant I was able to make some recordings at St Olaf's, on Great Gable and the following day at the Lisa memorial bridge. With input from Laura Shields extracts of these plus photos of the 12 memorial summits allowed a virtual Act of Remembrance to be produced and shared via YouTube at 11am.

Recognising that new members had less opportunity to meet others and get involved with Club activities we set up a zoom Welcome event for everyone who had joined since lockdown. This allowed us to talk about huts, membership and meets whilst giving a virtual tour of our website. We trialled the breakout room facility to allow associate members to chat with some of the committee members. This proved successful and a similar format has been used since then.

Following the success of this we were brave enough to plan an online information evening for aspirants. Adverts were initially via members or other Clubs then extended to BMC Instagram resulting in significant interest, so we ended up running 3 events.

Slideshows

The winter slideshows allowed members to meet virtually whilst hearing about trips to various areas. All had a mountain theme but there was a range of activities. We covered treks and peaks in the Himalaya, Andes and Southern Alps. We had adventures on tall ships, prospecting for gold and exploring volcanic activity. Members were on skis

and snowshoes, sang their way around The Balkans and made radio connections on Wainwrights. We also enjoyed tales of climbing at home and abroad.

Publications

The Duddon and Wrynose guide was published just as lockdown lifted, resulting in good sales as people took UK holidays.

We now have a formal agreement to use the routes database and have taken steps to ensure all those working on guidebooks have 3rd party liability cover.

As new climbs have been developed route diagrams have been made available free of charge on our website.

We were delighted that Lakes Sport and Slate was shortlisted in the guidebook category of the Banff Mountain Book Festival.

Responding to feedback from members the delayed 2020 Journal was quickly collated and published in June. Thought then went into the preparation of this Journal and how we celebrate 100 years of guidebook writing.

We reluctantly decided this year that to protect members and make it easier to meet GDPR requirements we would publish a handbook without addresses.

Other Committee matters

A review of hut byelaws relating to children in huts was undertaken. There was a wide range of views, but the eventual decision based on hut warden's risk assessment was that children under 13 years of age would not be allowed to stay at Salving House or Beetham.

Consideration was also given to the issue of family meets. There was consultation and a review of hut occupancy data. Based on this information agreement was reached that up to 6 family meets could take place each year.

When we started reviewing the membership byelaws it became evident, we needed to do something significant to protect the future of the Club. We have about 20 new members each year, but this is offset by around 30 leavers and with an average membership age of 69 we anticipate the number of leavers will increase. Associate membership is seen as a barrier to joining and was felt to have little benefit apart from requiring short term involvement in Club activities. Whilst looking to increase numbers of active members who will use the huts we wanted to support and encourage new members to take an active role in the Club. It remains to be seen whether the proposed changes are agreed at the AGM.

Brackenclose by Andrew Paul

The builder took over the site in November 2020 but very little happened before March. The contract, signed in November 2020, included a completion date of the end of November 2021. Given the date when the work started, it was clear early on that the due date would not be met. The project has, inevitably, experienced delays due to Covid, and some to bad weather.

On the positive side, we have had very few delays due to material supply issues; for instance, the slate for the roof was ordered from Burlington in the spring and was available when needed. Another heartening aspect has been that there have been very few variations from the architect's plans, hence little additional cost. When work on the foundations commenced, we quickly found that the extant

foundations, in the men's dorm and the entrance hall, were not up to standard, and would need to be replaced. Secondly, the concrete roof over the pantry could not in fact link in with the proposed extension to the flat roof and would need to be demolished.

By May the walls were being erected, and by October the hut was weatherproof, although there were delays in laying the slates. Weatherproofing allowed the internal work to start, irrespective of slating. Fortunately, the part finished roof didn't suffer from Storm Arwen which caused massive destruction to a lot of Lakeland woodlands, in fact there were only two trees down in the entire Brackenclose woodland, and these were well away from the hut. It has been great to see recent pictures of the newly slated roof, windows, internal partitions, and plastered rooms. The builders' current estimate is for completion and handover in April, but please remember that bunks then need to be built, delivered, and erected on site (we have a joinery firm lined up for this), and a working meet will be needed to clean and re-establish the kitchen and living area. So, it is not going to be open for all on May 1st!

Plans meanwhile are underway for a Brackenclose opening event later in 2022.

Karn House Flood by Graeme Ralph

It's not every day you get a phone call to tell you that a hut car park has turned into a pond, but that was the call I received one evening very early in 2021 from Hamish, our next-door neighbour at Karn House. Hamish admitted that it had been there for a while and given the extended very cold conditions he apologised for not realising sooner that everything round about was solid, and that a new pond should have set alarm bells ringing. I

gave him the code for the emergency key holder and waited for his call back which didn't take long. He described the inside of the hut as complete devastation with water running out of the front and back doors, so he turned off the water at the mains to prevent further damage. The epicentre of the damage was the kitchen/utility room/dining room/drying room but the lounge also badly affected as well as the hall; all the water pipes run in the loft space above the downstairs rooms.

We immediately notified our Insurers, and their appointed flood repair team – Disaster Care - swung into action. Their first job was to remove all the soaking floor coverings and plasterboard from the walls and ceilings and to install numerous heaters and dehumidifiers which ran 24/7 for a month or so until all the timber framing was completely dry. Whilst this was happening our plumber fixed all the pipe leaks – 18 in all – and repaired the oil boiler to help with heating and drying the building. Disaster Care also removed all the kitchen equipment and electrical items, all of which were beyond further use, along with much of the lounge furniture. The saddest loss was the library, all of which was so badly affected by water that it couldn't be kept, and all had to be replaced.

Once dried out the insurers appointed an all-trades company to take on the restoration of the building and the hut soon started to look more like a building than simply a shell. All new electrical items were ordered from local suppliers, as well as lounge furniture, carpets, and lino. Unfortunately, Covid meant that this all took longer to arrive than under normal circumstances, but as the hut was closed by Covid restrictions anyway it was only in the early days of reopening that this was noticed by guests at the hut and was soon rectified in the autumn. Sadly, although the Insurers were brilliant

to deal with and paid everything we requested promptly and without complaint, the all-trades builder communicated poorly and required lots of encouragement, meaning there are still some snagging issues outstanding a year after the incident occurred.

Special thanks to Jeff Breen for collating and co-ordinating the replacement of all the library, which is now much more extensive, and to Jim Lothian for being my right-hand man when dealing with site visits with our insurer and the builder. Mary Lothian was also a great help in choosing new floor coverings, not forgetting those who attended a slimmed down maintenance meet to get the hut ready for post Covid reopening.

Learning points were that firstly guests should not be altering heating systems in the huts – the boiler at Karn was switched off at the mains, so that even though the thermostat was attempting to keep the building frost-free, the boiler couldn't respond! We have now fitted an automatic water shut-off valve which will kick-in if there is ever a leak in future before it causes serious damage.

Classic Rock Meet, June 2021



The Lakes and the Club

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Buttermere from High Stile

Six Months in the Life of a Rookie Hut Warden

Mark Gear

It was late summer 2012. I had completed my Munros and Corbetts for the umpteenth time at the end of May - the final two being Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan and Sgurr Gaorsaic in West Affric on a sun-drenched day with my partner Helen, from a base at Camban bothy - and was looking for a new challenge. I had been a Member for a decade, but after an active three years of Associate Membership that had included three highly enjoyable Maintenance Meets at Karn House I had been ploughing my own furrow, using the huts, as you do. I now wanted to give something back to the Club and get to know some more of the other Members at the same time. When a circular e-mail from Hut Secretary Keith Wright landed in my Inbox during October seeking a new Warden at Waters Cottage, I knew this was for me, despite a lack of DIY skills. A couple of chats with Keith followed, and I was reassured to learn that organisational abilities were more important than prowess with hammer and nails. Well, I had no shortcomings in the organising department.

Although meetings and committees are not really my thing, it seemed like a good idea to show my face at the AGM that November. I made a day trip of it, taking in a quick Corbett in the Borders - Broad Law - on the way down from my home in Perth. Before the AGM I met Keith for the first time, and Karl Nelson, Assistant Warden, who had been steering the ship since the previous Warden, Peter Cunningham, had been badly hurt in a cycling accident earlier in the year. I guess I passed muster, because a couple hours later I was on my way back up the M74 having been made Warden on a year's probationary basis.

So, a good excuse to go and revisit all those hills in and around Glencoe that I had not been up in ages and start the umpteenth +1 round!

At this point I thought it prudent to go and have a look at what I had let myself in for. I hadn't stayed at Waters in years; the last time had been a heavily oversubscribed Meet one February when I had ended up sleeping under the table in the Civil Defence Building (CDB) kitchen - no, I wasn't unduly under the influence - grabbed a short day in the Mamores and then headed home, 100 miles in the car, rather than endure another night in the place. THIS time was very different, driving up the very next day after the AGM, walking into the Corbett Meall a' Phubuill beside the Glenfinnan road - yes, I do know Glenfinnan is not exactly on the way from Perth to Kinlochleven, but it's near enough - and spending a night in the hut, nobody else there. I hadn't really appreciated that since my last visit the CDB had been brought up to a high standard, and the Cottage had been recently refurbished, after the pipes burst in the very cold winter of 2010 and flooded it out. So, I was very comfortable, the hut was in excellent shape thanks to the efforts of Peter and Karl, and the next day I had a couple of half day trips up Corbetts, nearby Mam na Gualainn and Beinn Odhar by Tyndrum on the way back down the A82.

Later that week I had a site visit with Peter - local Assistant Warden Cynthia Grindley came by to say hello too - so that he could show me where everything was, hand over all the various keys, let me see the current bookings and empty the safe. Only now did I realise just how quiet Waters is outside the winter and spring seasons.

Nevertheless, soon after returning home I put together an Excel spreadsheet to administer hut bookings. The weather on the day of the site visit was mild and wet, so after a couple hours at the hut and admiring the local waterfalls, I went out for a walk up the Ben Nevis access track. I have memories of it from the 1980s, getting my Renault 4 stuck on the steep and rocky bits, but now it was smooth as a baby's bum! Just as well, given the low clearance of my current car, a Seat Ibiza.

There was no reason to look for changes in the Assistant Wardens helping with the hut, but Andy Carlin, a close friend of Peter's, stood down soon after he did. In his place I invited Alan Warwick, whom I had first met at Karn House and run into again at the AGM. His builder's skills would more than make up for the knowledge and experience that I did not have. With Karl, Cynthia, and Tony Halliwell - the bookings man for the Ben Nevis access track key - remaining in post I had all the assistance I would need.

I was back at Waters later in the month, 'flying solo'. On the way up I enjoyed a wintry day on Meall Lighiche and Sgor na h-Ulaidh in the Coe. That evening I was busy with electric drill and screwdriver, fixing a key safe to the Coal Store door for the use of Climbers Club (CC) members under the newly agreed enhanced access arrangements. We recorded only twelve bed nights from this source that first winter, but I'm pleased to say that uptake has improved steadily since; perhaps word has got around of the quality accommodation we provide. Next day I cycled in to do the two Glenfinnan Munros, stopping off at the CC hut in Roybridge - Riasg - for coffee and a shower on the drive home. No comparison!

My first Hut Sub Committee Meeting and

Committee Meeting in Langdale were about this time, and after the discussions there I had the plumbers from Ballachulish out, removing the defunct boiling water geyser and replacing the leaking taps in the Cottage Kitchen. Updating the hut Risk Assessment (RA) loomed large after that and was a good reason for a few more nights at the hut. But first it was play, returning to Glenfinnan for Streap, although I did drop in on our then electricians, based at Fort William's Annat Industrial Estate, on the way there. I had to strong arm them to sign off on the new fire alarm installed shortly before my tenure commenced. It was tough going up on the hill, breaking trail in virgin snow, yet I still had the energy the next day to get out on the eastern end of the Mamores range. It was a joy to be able to walk straight out the door of the hut and not have to scrape the frost from the car, but it was a hard day of four Munros, starting an hour before dawn, getting a bit lost in the dark on the path up to Loch Eilde Mor, and returning to the valley in the smoky cold dusk of one of the shortest days of the year. These are popular hills, but amazingly there was untrammelled snow to be post holed, descending from Binnein Mor and heading for Na Gruagaichean. On the third day, weather beginning to turn, I buckled down and got the RA job done; thankfully, our then Compliance Officer Simon Jefferies had done much of the preparatory work, populating a template Word document for me, but I still had to list all the cleaning products stored under the sinks and try and identify the places where the risk of accidents was highest. On the bright side, the RA has been easy to keep up to date subsequently.

31st December 2012 was my first Quarter End, so on 1st January 2013 I 'first footed' Beinn Mhanach in the Bridge of Orchy hills and carried on staying at Waters and empty the safe. I wanted my first

Income and Expenditure Claim submitted to the then Treasurer Bernie Bradbury to be 100% accurate! Over Xmas I had dropped in on Beacon Fire Protection, our suppliers on the outskirts of Penrith - while en route to Yorkshire and a few days spent with my partner's family - to pick up an additional fire extinguisher, and now I was able to install it at the hut. Alan was also there, and we had a thorough crawl over the fabric of the building. There was a rumour of asbestos in a couple places, but our (careful) investigations proved this not to be the case. When I left the next day, he was happily tinkering with an automatic closer I had acquired for the door between the storage corridor and the CDB; we had to do something to try and reduce the heating bill and making sure this door was closed when not in use seemed to be a good place to start. I also had brackets for hanging up the extinguishers, and a whole load of emergency signage to put up.

I escaped my warden duties for the rest of January, spending three weeks in Ecuador with Helen, cruising amongst the wildlife of the Galapagos Islands and trekking through the Avenue of the Volcanoes. Norman Haighton, Warden of Birkness at the time, kindly covered bookings in my absence. But I was back in Kinlochleven mid-February, and what would you know - Alan was there again too! There were the usual bits and pieces to attend to - testing the fire alarm, reading the electricity meters, checking the emergency lights, emptying the post box etc. etc. - and I was disappointed to find that quite a few rooms needed the Hoover, other recently departed users having been less than diligent in tidying up behind themselves. But the next day I got out on the 'Three Brothers of Kintail' - the east end of the ridge on the north side of Glen Shiel - which was memorable for a cold, biting wind and yet more wading through deep snow. What doesn't kill you... Walking west to east, I had stashed

my bike at the Cluanie Inn, and rode it back to the car. Mostly downhill, but chilly!

Less than a week later when I visited Waters again it was purely for pleasure. There had been a sudden thaw, right through the deep snowpack, and then an equally rapid freeze, leaving the high hills cloaked in a mantle of firm neve. It was the start of a week that saw some of the best weather and snow conditions combined in the Highlands for decades, and the ice climbers had a field day. I may have given all that up years ago, but I still benefited from it now, hitching a ride up the Ben Nevis access track to have a splendid day traversing Carn Mor Dearg, the eponymous arete and on to the big bad Ben itself. The following day I headed back towards Glen Shiel, for a triplet of Munros based on Sgurr nan Conbhairan. I always think of these as the 'coach party hills'; on a previous traverse, in deep snow one winter in the noughties, Helen and I arrived at the start and were relieved to find a large party breaking trail ahead of us.

There were other days out that February - A' Chralaig and Mullach Fraoch-choire, the Grey Corries, the Easains by Loch Triage - but based at Riasg. It's an okay place midweek, in between weekend invasions. My next visit to Kinlochleven was early March, when Karl was in residence, and smoke from sausages frying in the Cottage Kitchen set off the fire alarm. We replaced the batteries for the Ben Nevis access track key safe, and by coincidence I also had some new non-stick frying pans for the Cottage, as suggested by Jeff Harris. Wardens do sometimes listen to the suggestions of hut users! Hill action was the wee Corbett Glas Bheinn, straight from the hut door again; it was so cold that the normally boggy approach track was frozen solid.

For the rest of the month, I was away sports climbing in Sardinia, and I fully expected to return to springtime, but that year the Scottish winter held on, and on. So, on the evening of 1st April I found myself driving once more to Waters, having stopped en route at B&Q to buy a new toilet roll holder for one of the Ladies Toilets. It can be a glamorous job, being Hut Warden. The next day I made best use of the lengthening daylight hours by walking 'The Ring of Steall Plus'; six Munros comprising the western end of the Mamores range. Admittedly, the snow was becoming a tad patchy on the ridge crests, but the cornices were still in place, and it was yet another day for the 'spiky feet'. The next morning, I was a bit pooped - understandably - but still made myself useful sweeping out the Cottage Kitchen before wielding the mop on the floor.

But spring did finally arrive. A week exploring Crete with Helen - I had to give my apologies for the early May series of Committee Meetings - and in the middle of the month I was at the hut early one morning spraying 5 litres of Round Up on the car park to knock the weeds on the head. Soon after I took my bike onto the Corran Ferry - they don't charge for bicycles or passengers, only cars - and cycled down the west side of Loch Linnhe to access a couple of Corbetts, Fuar Bheinn and Creach Bheinn. More of a challenge that way.

My first six months of being the warden at Waters has been a lot of fun!

A Cautionary Tale

John Pulford

On Monday 24th May, I left home at the unearthly hour of 7.15am, to reach the Bower House Hotel in Eskdale Green, to meet up with other South Lakes U3A walkers. Two different parties set off into the hills, one for Scafell Pike, the other, including myself, plus Jo, Frances and Paulene, and, of course, Shep the collie, walked the full length of Netherbeck to the Scoat Fell ridge then up to the summit of Haycock for lunch - finally out and back to the summit of Caw Fell to complete my sixth round of the Wainwrights. Rather than going back over the summit of Haycock, we traversed underneath the summit until we reached the top of the steep slope beside Ladcrag Beck. Heading down this slope, suddenly I was in the air - somersaulting according to my friends, and no doubt screaming as loud as possible. I came to rest, fortunately, on my backside rather than on my head, and even when the others arrived, I was in a basic sitting position. Because it happened so quickly, I can only speculate what occurred, I think I must have put my weight on a stone which moved and tipped me up. After a few minutes getting my breath back, I felt able to carry on down the steep, grassy slope to the main (albeit rocky) path in Netherbeck, helped by my friends but not necessarily Shep who still wanted his ball throwing. I ignored him. A couple of hours later we reached the road - thanks immeasurably to my helpful and supportive companions. At a suggestion that we should get some help, I said 'No', I regard it is a matter of honour in the Fell and Rock that, after an accident, if you can walk out, then you do so. And the last thing I would have wanted would be to distract the Wasdale MRT from rescuing idiots from Scafell Pike. Also, I was unsure what Covid rules a team must follow at that time, not to mention unnecessary use of PPE.

Not wanting to miss out on the two nights at the Bower House in Eskdale Green, I decided to stay there (possibly, with hindsight, unwisely). I didn't do much on the Tuesday, other than have a wander round Ravenglass, and a coffee on the way back, then sat in the bar until everyone else returned. On the Wednesday, I realised I should get to the Westmorland General Hospital (WGH) as soon as possible so drove home after breakfast, via the coast road rather than over Birker Fell (as trying to get lower gears was quite painful, and on the coast road I was more likely to get in to third and stay there). Back home, straight to the hospital for what I assumed would be an x-ray to confirm rib damage. I was then told I was going to the Royal Lancaster Infirmary (RLI), for a CT scan. 'Would that be tomorrow?' I speculated, - 'No, now ... there's an ambulance waiting for you.' So down to Lancaster and into the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for a scan that showed broken ribs and a punctured lung - at least I was in the right place, even if my (courtesy) car was in the car park at the WGH, and would be for nearly another five weeks. It was a courtesy car because I had had a prang in my car at the end of March, and the repairers were having difficulty obtaining the parts.

The staff in the ICU were so impressed that I had walked out for two hours to the road that I became known as a 'tough cookie'!! Which name Ron Kenyon decided to use on a climb on a newly discovered outcrop near Sunbiggin Tarn in the Lune Valley.

If you are a bit squeamish, it might be advisable to miss the next paragraph.

So, having had a CT scan and x-rays, the doctors at RLI said that my left lung was partially filled with blood and gore, so the first thing that had to be done was drain that off, so a drain was inserted in my left side, into the lung, to get rid of all of that, which was successful after a couple of days. Then it was a case of trying to fill the lung up again with oxygen, which was less successful by natural means. So, it was decided I had to be anaesthetised to be able to have a tube down my throat to pump oxygen into the lung. On the Thursday morning I was sent to sleep. On the Friday, my cousin Jill, who is my next of kin and therefore the only visitor allowed, came to see me – of course, I was still anaesthetised, I suspect she got the same response from me as usual. On the Saturday morning I gradually came round, after having had some pretty unpleasant dreams, which, fortunately, I can't remember.

The nurses in the ICU were generally very helpful and kind, particularly with regard to looking after my toilet requirements, which were based on bed pans and pee bottles and, eventually, I was able to use a commode. The doctor's rounds were less helpful. The doctor arrived with a cohort of hangers on, I'm not sure whether they were junior doctors or trainees, they were never introduced. Also, they all wore face masks, so I hadn't a clue what they were saying about me.

Even after having the oxygen pumped into me, my oxygen level was still lower than it should have been, so I continued to have oxygen fed into me, mainly through tubes into my nose, which made putting contact lenses in, and taking them out, somewhat tricky. Fortunately, some of the ICU nurses were able to help, in particular, one who was used to doing the same for her daughter. After a few days of this, I was eventually transferred to

a respiratory ward, and, fortunately, into a private room, with my own wash basin, but still no toilet. After a day or so, it was decided I could have use of an oxygen cylinder, which meant I wasn't tied to the oxygen supply in the room, and was able to unplug that, plug in to the cylinder, and could make use of the toilet facilities, which felt like a major step forward. I was also able, initially with the help of physios, to walk around the ward, at least in a limited manner.

All this time, I was aware that the club's financial year end on June 30th was looming. In addition to that, June 30th was deadline day for sending in applications for the latest Covid grants from the local authorities. Fortunately, Wendy Stirrup was able to help with those, and the club successfully received £24,000 in grants from the Cumbrian local councils.

The doctor situation wasn't necessarily improving whilst in the respiratory ward - it was a different doctor each day. One said they were getting a second opinion but when I queried this a few days later with another doctor, I was told they had about eight different second opinions!! After a few days in my private room, I was eventually transferred into a general room (but still in the respiratory ward). The doctors had decided I had a touch of asthma, after giving me some steroid tablets which, apparently, confirmed this, so I was prescribed with inhalers.

That night, the duty nurse was particularly diligent, and when he came to me, he was happy with the oxygen level, and said that the physios had already discharged me, so I was hopeful that I would be home soon. And, sure enough, the first person to see me the next morning was a discharge consultant, who said that once I got the go ahead from the doctor, and received my medication

and the discharge letter, I would be taken to the discharge lounge to wait for my transport, which was my friend Ian in Kendal, with whom I would stay for that night.

Ian had, very kindly, sorted out the car situation. Enterprise retrieved their car from WGH; and Kendal Autobody returned my car to my house, which meant my car was at home when I arrived back there. Ian and my neighbour, Mel, had both been very supportive, often travelling down to Lancaster with items I required. Ian had even managed to blag his way into the ward on one occasion, causing the nurses to question who he was. In fact, my next of kin.

So, back home, and after five weeks (mostly) lying on a bed, or, occasionally, sat in a chair, the recuperation began. It started with a few gentle walks from home round the fields (reminiscent of the first lockdown), gradually building up to Sour Howes and Sallows in the Far Eastern Fells. All of the time with the Cleveland Way at the end of September at the back of my mind. In August, I was invited to WGH for a lung capacity test, which showed normal.

Then, towards the end of August, I tried cycling again. No breathing problems, but my legs, and especially my backside (!!) had become unaccustomed to it. Gradually they improved. Also in August, I had an outpatient consultation at RLI, with (surprise, surprise !!) another doctor. This one wanted more blood samples and another x-ray. A follow up appointment took place in September (guess what – a different doctor), this time I was given a complete discharge, with a suggestion that I should try without using the inhaler.

Then it was the Cleveland Way. I missed one day –

Robin Hood's Bay to Scarborough – mainly because of the recurrence of an old injury in my left knee. I took the bus from RHB to Scarborough, and when the others arrived at the B&B, absolutely knackered, after nearly nine hours walking, I realised I'd made the right decision.

However, the encouraging point for me was that, up to that day, I'd had eight days continuous walking, covering nearly 100 miles, without any noticeable aftereffects from the accident. So, not quite back to normal, but more or less there. My knee has improved after the walk, primarily I suspect because of the awful weather since the walk, which meant an enforced rest.

Unfortunately, I was noticing my breathing a bit more, and one of my neighbours commented on that, so, back to the inhaler, at least for the time being.

And now, I'm in a retirement apartment in Penrith, with views of the summit of Helvellyn from my kitchen, and lounge windows. So, it's a different GP practice, and soon I'm going to get an appointment to talk about my breathing issues.

An Outing with a Wainrighter

John Moore

It all started innocently one June day at Birkness when a senior member, amid outings for his second Wainrights tick list, invited me to join him in a traverse, by an unusual route, of two obscure (to me) summits. Our expedition began in the Bowness Knott car park where the first hint of the tribulations to come appeared in the form of midge clouds besieging the car windows, hungry to get at those inside. Brows grew moist and sweat dripped as we laboured up the increasingly steep and fetid north-western flank of Herdus (an Entwistle and therefore of no consequence I was told). Nevertheless, we trudged across dissected peat to Cairn '562' and our leader's first objective, Great Borne. As we tramped along the crest to Starling Dodd discussion began about the choice of route to descend to Ennerdale. At this point, wisely in retrospect, our fourth companion 'jumped ship' and headed for Buttermere and the bait of 'The Fish'

This left three of us. Afterwards, all denied responsibility for the fateful decision to descend south-westward to a 'clearly visible' forestry road, 'not far' into the Bowness plantation. The steep, untracked descent was not intolerable until we reached Clews Gill and moss-covered, granite boulder fields immersed in thigh deep bracken. At this point it began to rain and the midges and horse flies swarmed to the attack. We stumbled and slid to the forest boundary fence where we exchanged boulders, gullies, and bracken for an impenetrable mesh of head high spruce saplings, wet undergrowth, and slimy deadwood underfoot. The 'obvious' forest track turned out to be half a kilometre away and out of sight. By the time I reached it, I had become separated from the party

who I could hear crashing through the vegetation. To my dismay, the track went uphill rather than down to the lakeside.

Alone now and expecting any moment to be confronted by Viet Cong with Kalashnikovs, I struck off downhill into the closed canopy rain forest of larger trees sprouting from a mass of deadwood and protected by spiky broken branches which, given the opportunity, poked in every human orifice. Underfoot as the slope steepened the ground became a green, slimy, deep morass with stinging nettles. My altimeter showed that I was but 50 metres above the lake, so I fought on – besieged by assorted creeping, slithering, and flying creatures, alert for leeches and expecting to hear Japanese accented voices, calling on me to 'sullender' from loudspeakers hidden in the trees.

The angle of the slope eased unexpectedly, and I emerged on to an 'animal trail' – I was saved! The remaining couple of hundred metres in the footsteps of browsing roe deer, were passable and 30 minutes later I arrived at the car where I spent the next hour distractedly and vainly attempting to massacre midges while I awaited the return of my friends who, in one case tearfully, had chosen to follow the forest track uphill route and thereby enhanced their jungle-bashing descent experience.

I dedicate this tale to the memory of Iain Whitmey, a good friend and mountain companion who enjoyed Wainrights by obscure routes.

After dinner speech: at which dinner?

Rod Smith

When I received a letter inviting me to be the speaker at the 2019 Annual Dinner of our Club, I was humbled by the honour and thrilled at the prospect of delivering it live in front of so many friends in the Club. But, said my wife, we will be in Hong Kong in October! Forward to 2020, yes, I be pleased to do it this year. Covid started to become an issue in March, but October was so far away, I was sure to be sorted in time. But, of course, it wasn't, and plans were made to hold a virtual Dinner on 31 October 2020. I prepared a nice set of slides with some great mountain views, and, in the event, the IT fell down, so it had to be a short informal talk. Let me share with you some of the things I thought might have interested you.

This is maybe our 104th Annual Dinner. The first was held in 1907 at the Commercial Hotel in Keswick and the 103rd in 2019 at Shap Wells. There were gaps during the 1st and 2nd World Wars. The most frequently used venue has been the Royal Oak in Keswick which hosted 41 dinners. Whether the Club authorities nominate this occasion as the 104th Dinner remains to be seen.

Hattie Harris ended her Presidency of the Club at the AGM held earlier today. Her period in office has seen the disaster of the fire at Brackenclose, followed by the Covid pandemic. We could not have wished for a wiser and steadier leader during these vicissitudes and our heartfelt thanks go to Hattie for the efficient way she has guided the club through these torrid times.

My first consciousness of mountaineering was the breaking news on Coronation Day, 2nd June 1953, that Everest had been climbed. The first expedition

set out from Britain 100 years ago in 1921. Styled as a reconnaissance, the party approached from the north in Tibet. A route via the Rongbuk East Glacier to the North Col was found by Mallory, and this was the key for the expeditions of 1922 and 1924. The Club's participants in 1922 were Somervell and Wakefield, and in 1924 Somervell again was joined by Beetham. On the first of these expeditions, Finch and Bruce reached the remarkable altitude of 8,320m, a height even more remarkable when the tweed clothing, heavy nailed boots and lack of knowledge of altitude on the human body are considered. Finch was a champion for oxygen, but the weight of the huge steel cylinders then needed to store liquid oxygen were probably a greater penalty than an advantage. An avalanche killed 7 Sherpa porters, an event which foresaw many other deaths on the mountain before 1953 (and a huge number afterwards). Before leaving for the 1924 expedition, Mallory said, in answer to a reporter, "Why climb Everest? Because it's there" A phrase subsequently made famous, but probably one of the most mindless comments ever on the motivation for mountaineering.

1924 was the year Mallory and Irving were last seen in a break in the clouds by Odell, going strongly for the top, thus starting many years of speculation, did they get there? The answer to this has always been, in all reasonable probability, no. Even the discovery of Mallory's body in 1999 has not completely closed the question. For me, my links with these distant events were forged by being seated next to Odell at dinner in Clare College, Cambridge. I fear I can report nothing new from our discussion which occurred at a time when Odell was well past his best and shortly before he died in 1987. But there

is a remarkable link with the history of our club. On Wednesday 8th June 1924, Wakefield, then President, was unveiling the war memorial on the summit of Great Gable, at the same time as Mallory and Irving were climbing into the clouds.

And another curiosity was that all the members of the 1922 Expedition were awarded Olympic Gold medals. That of Wakefield was taken to the summit of Everest by Kenton Cool, an Everest 'commercial guide', in 2012.

Many years and another World War later when Hillary and Tenzing reached the summit from the Nepal side, they unlocked an explosion of interest. Hunt's book, The Ascent of Everest, lecture tours, and Tom Stobart's film all contributed to an explosion of interest, which many of our members will recall with great pleasure and as initiation to their own mountain interest. Poor old Everest itself has been reduced to a commercial circus, over



Taken about 40 years ago, this picture with Sherpa children has haunted me ever since. What have their lives been like?

which it is best to draw a veil. But trekking in Nepal has become a route to the Himalaya for many modest mountain walkers.

When I climbed the stairs belayed with my mother's clothesline, a wartime gas mask and dad's Bergen rucksack, my parents knew that the seeds had not only been sown but were germinating. CHA holidays followed, many at Forest Side, Grasmere. I started rock climbing near my Saddleworth home, on Laddow Rocks. I recall Staircase and North Climb on the first day. I can close my eyes and remember the sequence of holds on rough gritstone. I was sent on a Mountaineering Association course based at Glen Brittle, on Skye. Cioch Direct was an exciting and memorable first day. I went on a Ramblers holiday to the Stubai in Austria. The Liesenser Fernerkogel was my first alpine peak. If you can't talk to your companion on the ascent, you are moving too fast, said our guide as we settled into an alpine plod, up from the Franz Senn hütte. Later in the same holiday, I witnessed the sudden death of a colleague as he fell from an exposed path just ahead of me. Maybe this event is why I am a low-risk taker in the mountains and maybe why I am still here to share my adventures with you. The closest I came to meeting my maker was a fall into a swift flowing glacial stream in Svalbard. As the water closed above my head, the thought flashed through my mind, what a silly way to end it. I washed up on a stone covered shelf on a bend further down. It had all happened in an instant, and my survival was entirely fortuitous.

Then, over a period of about 15 years I acted as a leader for Ramblers and Waymark holidays. What adventures occurred! I managed to drop all the cash in banknotes down an Italian hole-in-the-floor toilet on the first day out on a Monte Rosa tour. A hasty episode of money laundering followed. The

clients were not told. Trips to the Alps (many times), Norway, Baffin Island, Everest Base Camp followed. What a great introduction to the responsibilities of taking care of companions in high mountains of the world. And not a Health and Safety certificate in sight!

Since those youthful days, I have been lucky enough to enjoy the mountains in many parts of the world including Greenland, the Karakorum, Japan, South Africa, both climbing, skiing and trekking. But I have always looked forward to and enjoyed coming back home to the Lakes.

Many years ago, I was in a tiny tent on a high glacier, attempting the first ascent of a peak in the Stauning Alps of north-east Greenland. Heavy wet snow was falling and compressing the space inside. We were kept waiting for two days. My colleague was not a talkative type, I was reduced to reading a well-thumbed copy of Rouge Herries. How I wished I could be transported back to a Lake District summer as I read the forward:

So small is the extent of this country that the sweep of the Eagle's wing caresses all of it, but there is no ground in the world more mysterious, no land at once so bare in its nakedness, and so rich in its luxury, so warm with sun and so cold in pitiless



The Needle window, St Olaf's Church, Wasdale

rain, so wild and lonely.... During the flight of the Eagle two hundred years are but as a day – and the life of man, as against all odds he pushes towards immortality, is eternal.....

We all share a love of the Lakes. We are enabled to enjoy visits staying in our wonderful huts. In an evening after a long day on the fells, what is better than sitting in front of the fire, perhaps enjoying a malt, swapping yarns with our fellow members. Let us hope that soon we can return to some kind of normality, Brackenclose, the jewel in our crown, will be restored, even enhanced, and we can continue to enjoy the delights of Cumbria. May our new President, Wendy Stirrup, enjoy a smooth period of office. Let's look forward to celebrating the centenaries of our Club's Everest pioneers.

In this spirit, I ask you to join me as I propose the future health and prosperity of the Fell and Rock Club of the English Lake District!

Bill Peascod: Master of Reinvention

Deborah Walsh

It was one of those magical hours ... the dawn of a beautiful, still, English summer's day... The last star faded; in the distance a blush of light threw the Cumbrian fells into profile; beside me the bottoms of hedgerows rustled with tiny mysteries... It was the start of a journey that led out, to the sun and the hills.

Prologue to Bill Peascod's autobiography 'Journey after Dawn' (1985).

Written almost fifty years after the event, these lines record the first step in Bill Peascod's journey away from the physical and intellectual confines of the west Cumbrian mining community into which he was born and towards a life of discovery and self-reinvention. This was a long journey, that took him to the other side of the world and eventually, back home again. It is now over a century since his birth, an event marked by the installation of a blue plaque at his first home in the village of Ellenborough near Maryport. It bears the words 'Bill Peascod' 'Miner, Climber, Artist'.

William (Bill) Peascod, born and brought up in a mining family during the 'hungry' 1920s and 30s. At the age of nine his mother died, a victim of TB. In his autobiography, he describes a world in which 'solutions to problems were found most frequently by the swing of an open palm'; yet this is only part of the story. Within these terraces of miner's cottages, he recalls an abundance of love, loyalty and warmth; the comforting domestic routines where cleaning became almost a fetish – only ever disturbed by a 'fratch' which would set the whole street agog.

From his large extended family, Bill singles out Uncle Percy as a source of fascination. Strong, bluff and only ever speaking in dialect 'every noun of which was embellished by at least one descriptive swear-word', his possession of a small menagerie in

the stone shed behind his cottage was a powerful lure. In particular, Bill recalled the box of ferrets, 'Their little red eyes and sharp teeth were to me the epitome of wickedness - we watched them with never diminishing awe'. It was a world which was neither urban nor rural, an uncertain hinterland of hawthorn, gorse, rushes and rough grassland



Bill Peascod on Pedestal Wall, Pillar Rock 1940



Bill Peascod on the Great Flake,
Central Buttress, Scafell, July 1982

inhabited by aged pit ponies and pigeon lofts. In sight of the high fells to the east and the pit winding gear to the west. In this small wilderness Bill found his first 'mystery and delight'.

All this changed at the age of 14 when Bill reluctantly followed his father into the mine at Clifton. This was a dark time. For a while he attended art classes but the effort to come to terms with working life was too great, art 'confused and conflicted with the business of going down the mine... it was as much as one could do to survive in that environment'. It was three years before the 17-year-old Bill set out towards Buttermere to find something as far removed from coal mining as he could ever conceive. It was the beginning of a love affair, one which would endure separation and

continue for the rest of his life.

Venturing out from his home near Workington Bill would walk via Loweswater, climb Lorton Gully to the summit of Grassmoor and return home in the same day. Buttermere seemed to have an irresistible draw and he would visit there and return home via Ennerdale, an arduous thirty-mile trip. Scrambling led to climbing, and he recalls soloing gullies, optimistically trailing a fifty-foot rope behind him, hoping it would 'catch' if he fell off. In time he would find companionship and long days on the fells with the Workington Rambling Club, but it was through the Fell and Rock-Climbing Club that Bill's climbing career was to flourish and through which he was to make lifelong friends.

Bill's introduction to the Club came in 1939 in Birkness Combe through a chance meeting with G. R. Speaker, the then President. Recognising Bill's talent and hunger for the mountains, Speaker not only proposed him for membership, but continued to guide and encourage him. On that first day in Birkness Comb he had urged the young man to slow down, to savour the delights of the crags and to understand the mountains. A sentiment echoed by plain speaking Jack Carswell, who after fishing a floundering Bill off Eliminate C on Dow Crag, told him 'You've come too fast and too far, too easily... Get into nailed boots and learn your craft.'

Other friendships developed. Bill recalls how alone in the Brackenclose hut in the late 1930s, A. T. Hargreaves and his wife Ruth befriended him and took him climbing. Also, how the Thompson brothers, if they passed you on the road, would flag your car down and stop their own and jump out. They would then immediately relate what they had climbed the preceding weekend, what they were about that weekend and what they intended for the following weekend. They would then jump



Eagle Crag 1984 by Bill Peascod

into their car and head for the hills. However, it was through scouring the handbook for climbers based in his own neck of the woods that Bill came upon the name Bert Beck, a Workington school teacher ten years his senior. The rest is climbing history.

Tom Price recalled first meeting Bill in the 1940s when a coterie of local climbers was in the habit of gathering on Tuesday evenings in the Traveller's Rest in Workington. He also recalls that along with Bert Beck, he and Bill were party to the formation of the Workington & West Cumberland Mountaineering Club, which held a 'highly successful inaugural dinner at the Fish in Buttermere and then disappeared without trace, headed writing paper and all.' In fact, the W&WCMC, in which all offices were held by either Bill or Bert,

produced its own journal which included several articles, editor's comments, a complete list of climbs done during the year, reports of the Kindred Clubs (including 'the Herdwicks'!) and other items of mutual interest. Two copies were typed, one each.

Bill's career as a rock climber is detailed in his autobiography, *Journey After Dawn*, published posthumously in 1985. In short, he put Buttermere on the map as a climber's valley and not only made important new routes there and elsewhere in the Lake District but discovered whole new crags, as in Newlands. Most of this enormous activity took place in a quite short span of time. On 23 June 1937 he pioneered one of Lakeland's great routes, 'Eagle Front' with Bert Beck. It was the hardest climb in Buttermere at that time and remains a superb climb today. In the following years he developed routes on Grey Crag, High Crag and Yew Crag, all in Buttermere. In 1946 he started developing Buckstone Howe above the Honister Pass. The slate-like rock of this south-west facing crag dries quickly and Bill led three new notable routes: 'Sinister Groove', 'Groove Two' and 'Cleopatra', all technically difficult routes and Honister Wall, described as a modern classic climb. 'Delilah' on High Crag, climbed in 1951, was Bill's last new route before he left for Australia. Behind him was a legacy of over fifty climbs, some of which can justly be described as great. As Bill Birkett puts it, 'It takes a man with a special kind of dedication to climb in an unpopular area, on cliffs that are large and serious due to their remoteness, looseness and vegetation. Bill Peascod was such a man.' Tom Price in his obituary of Bill Peascod describes him as 'an early example of the new kind of climber typified by Joe Brown and Don Whillans, who brought to the sport not only a fresh approach uncluttered by tradition and received 'wisdom', but arms and hands made powerful by hard physical work.'

In 1940, with the encouragement of Bert Beck, Bill began to take evening classes at Workington Technical College. In 1947 he qualified as a chartered mining engineer and left the pit to take up a teaching post. In the same year, 104 men lost their lives at the William Pit, Whitehaven following a violent explosion. As a member of the mines rescue team Bill was employed in searching for survivors and bringing out the dead. His account is harrowing. The discovery of twenty-five missing men 'a vast tangle of humanity locked together in death and carpeted in grey dust' was something which was to live with him for the rest of his life. 'Where do I go from here? was the question I would be asking myself for some time' Five years later Bill left for a new life teaching in Australia.

Climbing, of course, did not cease, and he pioneered many new routes. Based in New South Wales, notable new ascents included the Bread Knife in the Warrumbungles in 1954. And others followed in the Glasshouse Mountains. But Bill's 28 years in Australia were largely defined by his struggle to carve out a career as an artist. In an interview in 1959 he described his 'fierce urge' to paint and the influence his experience of the mines had on this. His 'burnt paintings' series, which involved the use of a blow torch to create scarred landscapes seem cathartic, overlaid by beauty and mystery, as one Australian reviewer described them the 'dark poetry of earth and sky'. Yet despite his success in Australia, including exhibitions in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, Bill longed for his native soil, and returned to Cumbria permanently in 1980.

As we sat there, I thought of another dawn, nearly fifty years ago, in the early summer above Loweswater - a dawn full of promise and discovery to come - and of the young impressionable coal miner who, coming out of the dark and stink and sweat, off night shift, up into God's clean air, had felt compelled to ride out on his bike to find it. But this dawn here, even in the winter, held its own wonder. And the promises were still there to nurture.

Coledale Force, FRCC Journal 1985

Bill's later landscape work, which consumed the last five years of his life has a very different quality. Much influenced by his time in Japan and Japanese art it had become much more delicate, fragile and fugitive, where the merest line creates the illusion of a mountain emerging from the mist. When Bill brought his Japanese wife Etsu to Buttermere for the first time, it was a landscape she already knew, 'this is what you have been painting all along' she told him.

Ultimately Bill Peascod was a man defined and driven by a creativity which expressed itself in both his art and his climbing. Meeting Bill for the first time in the early 1980s, Bill Birkett has written of his 'surprise and admiration' for the ease with which he tackled Lakeland VS climbs after thirty years' absence. 'He climbed Eve (MVS) on Shepherd's Crag in Borrowdale, a climb which he had made the first ascent of almost exactly thirty years earlier and where he did at least five routes on a very cold February day. Watching him bridge delicately, precisely and quickly up a VS corner crack, it was as if he had never been away.' If his legacy lies in his body of work, his unique vision and expression of landscape, it also lies in the crags around Buttermere. His final contribution to the FRCC Journal, written shortly before his death, suggests a vindication not only of the advice given to him some 40 years earlier - to see, and feel, and savour the delight, but also of that continuing, undiminished urge to climb and to create.

Early days at Wallowbarrow

Al Phizacklea

The following article is a transcription of a letter sent from Walter Dowlen to Tony Greenbank in December 1991, no doubt in response to a request by Tony to clarify some of the early historical information about climbing at Wallowbarrow.

Tony wrote the Wallowbarrow section of the 1994 Dow, Slate and Duddon guide, and he later passed on the letter to me. I have only just re-discovered this letter, so I've reproduced it here to supplement the new Duddon and Wrynose guide. I can only apologise to those who worked on the new Duddon guide that I hadn't unearthed this letter earlier.

*Huddersfield
Dec 3 1991*

Dear Tony,

Good to receive your card – what could be better on a long winters evening than reliving the exciting deeds of long ago!

So here is my complete Wallowbarrow CV.

Vince Veevers introduced me to the crag in August 1951 (my first OBMS course was a temp). Vince liked Wallowbarrow "Far better than Dow in the wet" he often said. At that time there were two routes in use; Wall and Corner and Introductory Rib – which was called The Shark's Fin. My first day (29/8/51) consisted of doing Wall and Corner nine times and Shark's Fin twice! I don't remember noting any other lines – I was too busy.

When I returned to OBMS as a permanent instructor in July '52 Wallowbarrow had fallen into disfavour. Dick Marsh (who was Chief Instructor) didn't like it – he always referred to Wallowbarrow Crag climbs in disparaging terms. In any case, the school had the use of a barn about one third of the way up the Duddon side of the Walna Scar track and this was used as a base for Dow.

It was nearly 4 years before I climbed at Wallowbarrow again (22 and 23 /6/55) – this time with boys and J.C.L. On this occasion I did Trinity Slabs for the first time – it was well scratched.

A few days later came the first ascent of Thomas. I was on good form (having done Central Buttress

twice and Overhanging Wall (no piton for aid) in the previous fortnight).

I was actually hoping to climb a line finishing with what is now the last pitch of Perseverance, so after the first steep bit we continued up the groove on the left of the rib of Thomas. I could not get up the final groove section, so we climbed the wall on its right. Even here I had several sorties, as there were quite a few loose holds. Thomas – because of the leader's doubts. On this day we also climbed the slab up which Digitation now goes and from Oak Tree Ledge went leftwards to the top. It didn't seem a 'proper line', so it was unnamed or claimed. After another gap came the period of greatest activity.

18.3.56 With Sam (Dave Samuel) and Malcolm Slesser.

We repeated the route up Oak Tree slabs – left finish. This began with the step off the block of Digitation. Malcolm and I did Thomas – but still using the groove for the middle section. The finish was the top of Logan Stone. Finally, Sam and I did a peg pitch on the right of Wall and Corner. I was still under the Chamonix influence, and we called this Saturday Crack (Fissure SAM – Dowlen, Samedi = Saturday!

25.3.56 With Don Bennet

Started up what is now the start of Logan Stone but then went left and finished up Nameless (which we called Bramble Buttress). The name Logan Stone has a Dartmoor heritage (remember I was a student at Exeter). Logan stones are rocking blocks. In the 1957 FRCC guide it mentions "at the R.H. end of this ledge stands the Logan Stone itself" and later "Step onto its top (unsafe for an outward pull)". Some years later a party of Marines dislodged it and then spent some hours trying to haul it back up the crag!!

8.4.56 With Jerry Smith (hot from his very successful holiday in the Ruwenzori Mountains)

Logan Stone was done as per the guide for the first time, then Thomas – climbing the proper buttress route. Jerry was keen to do something new so after a quick dash up Saturday Crack (to give Jerry some practice in "artif" – as he was climbing regularly in the Cairngorms) he set off up Bryanston. By the time he had finished it was almost completely dark and I went up the crux wall using several handfuls of rope! For this reason – being a purist – I didn't feel I could claim to be on the first ascent – hence the apparent solo effort recorded up to date.

Jerry had been a pupil at Bryanston School and we intended to have two routes Bryanston Buttress and Gordonstoun Groove (Perseverance) next to each other. In the event the buttress got left out, and G.G. never got done.

1.6.56 With Ann and John Hollin

We did Trinity Slabs and Nameless – this way by the route now recorded for the first time. I can't remember clearly why I changed it from Bramble Buttress to Nameless, but it was because Ann didn't think much of the route and said, "It isn't worth a name."

11.6.56 Same party as above - Thomas, Wall and Corner.

21.6.56 With Ann and Geoff Holmes

Geoff was someone who sailed at the Ranelagh club in London where Ann had been a keen member. He turned up in Eskdale and so we took him climbing (he had climbed before).

We did Logan Stone, Thomas, Nameless and a vague line above Oak Tree Ledge and finally G.H. and I did the first ascent of Merlin. The name derives from the fact that the boat Geoff owned was a Merlin-Rocket.

Since this burst of activity, I have only been back on a few occasions (I left Eskdale in August 56) the last being 5 years ago when Ann and I did Thomas.

During our Carlisle years I once went with Geoff Morrall and took some very atmospheric pictures of him in etriers on Saturday Crack.

Hope you are in good climbing fettle. I have been pounding the local crags this year and a few weeks ago Geoff Morrall came over for a day. We had last climbed together in May 1964 – Sidewinder on Buckstone How. He was his old ebullient self and seemed to climb quite effortlessly!

Thinking of Geoff reminds me of something – perhaps your place in the corridors of Guidebook Power will enable you to put right a 'Great error' which I have tried for 21 years to correct.

On 13th October 1962 Geoff, Ann and I were exploring on the crags north of Castle Rock. We did a very pleasant route of about 100ft – Severish – requiring plenty of gardening. So, we wrote it up in the Raw Head route book. Bramcrag – Little Taff. Geoff's name, because it looked like a little Cenotaph Corner!

A couple of weeks later we were in Raw Head again and I found a marginal note saying "This is not Bram Crag. Bram Crag is above the Quarry". Note signed NJS. Not being in the same league I contented myself with another note "It is directly above Bram Crag Farm."

You can imagine my feelings when, in 1970, the Eastern Crags guide appeared and our route was

listed as Sandbed Corner, first ascent 22/5/64. Three letters to the FRCC have not prevented three subsequent guides perpetuating this error. Those name purists should note that in the FRCC 1959 guide to Eastern Crag, page 32 it refers to Bramcrag Gully or Sandbed Ghyll!

Just to finish off let me tell you of my red dot project. As I keep brief records of all my climbing, I have an aim which is to have done a climb of at least VS standard on every date in the year (not all in one year of course). In our diary which sits next to the phone dates which are still unfilled are marked with a red dot. So, if anyone rings up to invite me out for a day, a quick look will tell if that date is reserved for red dotting. Not to be confused with Continental red pointing.

Trust this finds you in good nick, all the best for Christmas and throughout 1992.

Your old mate

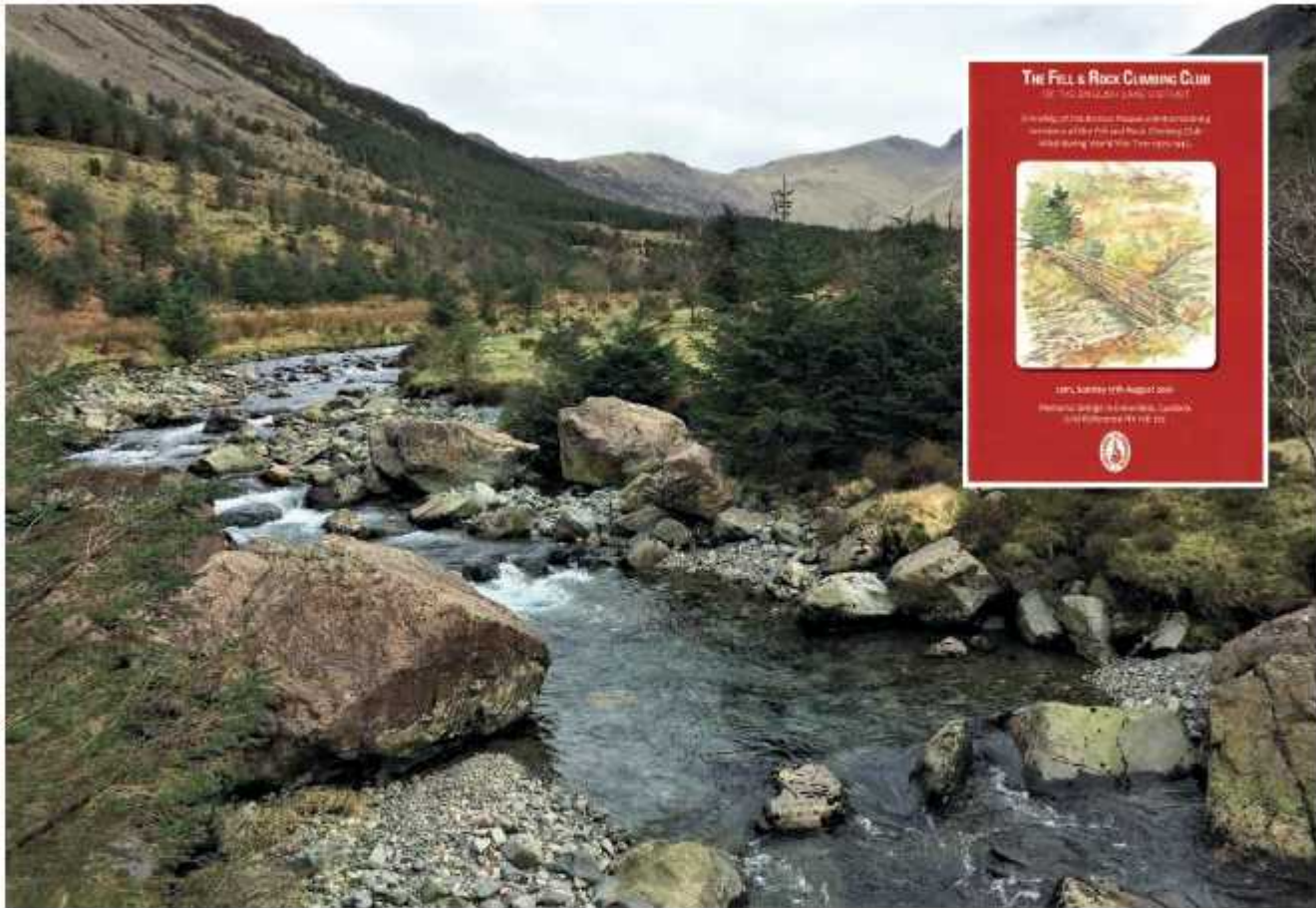
Walter

Walter Dowlen (1928 ñ 2018) was a member of the Climber's Club; he was born in Trinidad and later moved to Barbados when he was 6. It was in the West Indies where he started exploring the sea cliffs as a young lad, opening their potential. He moved to Exeter to study at the University in 1947, where he started climbing on established crags and becoming a member of C.C. in 1953. He worked at Eskdale Outward Bound between 1952 and 1956, it was during this period where he developed the crags at Wallowbarrow and met Tony Greenbank. He and his wife Ann worked in Eastern Australia in the late 60s but returned to Huddersfield in 1972 where he lived for the rest of his life. He continued climbing until 2006, where increasing problems with neuropathy forced him to stop, resulting in the loss of the use of his legs. In Walter's obituary, it was noted that he almost achieved his red dot ambition, with December 21st being the only day that remained a red dot!

Tony Greenbank was a well-known member of the FRCC who sadly passed away in 2020.

The New Commemoration Plaque at Ennerdale

Lis Cook and Peter Smith



Ennerdale from Memorial Bridge. (photo Peter Smith)

Remembrance Sunday 2019: many FRCC members were making their way to the summit of Great Gable and others were attending St Olaf's Church at Wasdale Head, where the service this time was to have a deeper significance. Earlier that summer, the original plaque for The Great War had been moved into the churchyard and the parish was thrilled to have this memorial in their immediate locality. After

the service, one member made his way through the churchyard to the plaque for some more quiet reflection and began to read through the names etched upon it, something he had done many times before. This occasion was to be different, and the realisation was sudden: why did the Club's memorial for The Great War list names individually and the WW2 plaque refer only to 'members who fell in the



Awaiting proceedings. (photo Stephen Reid)

World War of 1939-1945? There was, he realised, no equivalent plaque. And so began a long and interesting journey for that member, Peter Smith.

The memorial on Gable is so very well known to club members but we wonder if quite as many are familiar with our second memorial in Ennerdale? The FRCC Journal of 1960 includes an article by then Treasurer, Dick Plint, describing how this came about. In the late 1950s, repairs were needed to the rickety bridge across the River Liza, an important crossing point on the track to Pillar Rock. This was replaced by a new and substantial footbridge, built



Hilary Moffat. (photo Stephen Reid)

by Cumberland County Council, and partly funded by the Club, as a memorial to members killed in WW2, using the balance remaining from the 1914-1918 War Memorial Fund. Various designs were considered and the Memorial Bridge, as it came to be known, was duly constructed. A bronze plaque was affixed to a boulder at its northern end (this process, we are told, took the edge off 24 chisels). On the anniversary of VE Day, 8 May 1960, folk gathered 'from all points of the compass' to attend a service of dedication. The hope expressed was that we would, in future, pause by the plaque and remember 'the sacrifice of those men who, like ourselves, had found in the hills and on the rocks a source of re-creation and inspiration'.

Now we may pause by the bridge and admire not one but two plaques, but that is to get ahead of ourselves with the story. Late in 2019 a schedule of national events to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day in May 2020 was announced. Peter saw the opportunity for the Club to be involved in these and to recognise, more fully, members who had been killed in WW2. He proposed the commissioning of a new plaque. After discussions in early 2020, this was made to a design by FRCC member Chris Sherwin and manufactured by Lancashire Castings in penny bronze with a lacquered finish. It bears the names of the Club members who were killed on active service during WW2.

Peter collected the plaque from the foundry and, on 21 March 2020, journeyed to Ennerdale with fellow Club member Trevor Lowe. They enjoyed a day of wall-to-wall sunshine and blue skies and attached the new plaque to the boulder underneath the original. This has been done very artfully, with blind fixings - no bolts go through the face of the plaque - leaving a lovely clear finish.



Peter Smith flanked by Nathan Fox (in green) and Trevor Lowe (in black). (photo Stephen Reid)

And who ever expected what was to follow? During January and February, cases of Covid19 had been increasing around the world and, just two days after that visit to Ennerdale, the whole of the UK went into lockdown. Wide-ranging restrictions were placed on our freedoms for much longer than any of us ever imagined: huts were closed, and meets were cancelled. We were forced into a stark new world of travel restrictions, social distancing, limited socialising, face masks, shielding and self-isolation. The proposed date for the unveiling of the new plaque, 8 May 2020, came and went, as did a second, 15 August 2020, which would have commemorated the 75th anniversary of VJ Day.

There were, however, important kernels of activity during the summer of 2020 which kept Peter's plaque project alive, and which are of significance to the history of our Club. Before the pandemic took hold, Peter had suggested to Stephen Reid that putting up a new route on Pillar Rock would be a fine way to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Stephen willingly subscribed to the plan, partly in memory of his father, grandfather and uncle who had all served in the World Wars, and partly because he had something in mind. For this next part we are

indebted to his narrative.

First, Stephen reminds us of the partnership between Charlie Holland and Harry Kelly across 1919 and 1920, their exploits including major new climbs on Pillar Rock. Holland's feats are even more noteworthy because of a severe war injury which had required the rebuilding of his shattered arm, but they are unsurprising in one who had twice been awarded the Military Cross 'for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty'. The 1919 FRCC Journal includes an article by Holland, 'New Climbs in Wasdale', in which he outlined potential new lines on the Wasdale and Ennerdale Crags. He ended with the observation:

'If anyone is desirous of adding an eighth to the Jordan climbs on Pillar let him examine the rocks above the slab of the "Slab and Notch," especially the arête.'



Audrey Plint speaking, brolly by Wendy Stirrup, Richard Williams behind. (photo Sue Vaughan)



Maureen Linton-Lee unveiling the plaque. (photo John Holden)

Stephen continues: 'it seems odd that Kelly never tried the arête, but if he did, it is not mentioned in his diaries. However, anyone who did try to climb it ground up would have been deterred by loose rock on the crux'. On a visit in 2018, to explore and clean, Stephen resolved to save the route for another day. That day came on 14 September 2020 when Peter Winterbottom, Tony Daly and Stephen put up 'V for Victory' (30m E1):

'Walking up to Pillar, the North Face was dripping which did not augur well, but we were there, so pressed on up the Shamrock Traverse to Pisgah. Here, Pete and Tony got to the top of High Man by repeating a route Chris King and I had put up in 2005, 'Over the Jordan' (E1). It was fairly wet in places, hard for the grade, and a good lead by Pete After that, Pete abbed down the arête and removed a few more loose rocks and then led it in fine style. Tony followed and I was 'Tail End Charlie'. The climbing is actually a very

nice HVS in standard, involving some excellent lay away moves to get established on the arête, but the protection is not brilliant and higher up there is still a fair bit of loose rock to be avoided, so we gave it E1 for seriousness.'

The position of the climb is spectacular. From the summit of Pillar Rock, you see - fittingly - both Great Gable and (Just) the River Liza footbridge. And, as Stephen concludes:

'It seems appropriate that a possibility pointed out by a veteran of WW1 should finally be climbed over a century later as a memorial to those members of the FRCC killed in WW2, and one hopes Holland would have approved, though I feel he might justifiably have added: "What kept you so long?"'

After a summer of some respite, Covid restrictions returned later in 2020 and dashed hopes (alongside

our meets list) until well into the following year. Glimmers of normality beckoned in May 2021, when we were allowed to meet outside in groups of up to 30. Peter placed his faith in the maxim 'Third Time Lucky', organized the event around Birkness for 15 August 2021, took in his stride closure of said hut in the weeks immediately preceding (water supply critically low) and ... at long last the celebratory unveiling of the plaque finally went ahead. Fittingly, the Memorial Bridge itself had been lovingly renovated by members of the National Park (Ray Millard, Ian Wilson and Tom Hrynkow) in time for the great day, the FRCC making a generous donation towards the cost of this.

And so, on 15 August 2021, a group of members gathered by the south side of Liza Bridge. The whole day, as with the project overall, was beautifully choreographed by Peter and would not have happened without his tireless work. Our VIPs were transported safely up Ennerdale courtesy of the Cockermouth Mountain Rescue Team and others walked over from Buttermere



Maureen Linton-Lee bagged a ride in the Land Rover.
(photo Sue Vaughan)

and Rosthwaite in slightly inclement weather. The Order of Service designed by Chris Sherwin guided us through proceedings, President Wendy Stirrup opening these with a welcome and thanks to all those involved. She was followed by Nathan Fox of Forestry England, who spoke about the present-day management of the area and plans for re-wilding - beavers, one day! - and by Audrey Plint, who recalled the history of the bridge and the Club's work in the 1950s, as touched on above.

Richard Williams then spoke of his input into the design and construction of the 1960 bridge and Hilary Moffat recounted its opening in May that year. Peter Smith described the commissioning of the plaque and Trevor Lowe its journey to Ennerdale. Stephen Reid spoke movingly about Charlie Holland and the 'V for Victory' first ascent and Maureen Linton-Lee reflected on the muted celebrations ending WW2: she was on Great Gable in an atmosphere of 'quiet relief, thoughtfulness and thanksgiving':

Maureen then read out the names commemorated on the plaque, crossed over the bridge, and unveiled the plaque. There followed two minutes of silence for remembrance and reflection, after which Audrey closed proceedings with an epilogue composed by her father and read at the unveiling of the first plaque in 1960:

*May the sound of this beck running over its bed be
their Eternal Last Post and the song of the wind in the
crag above their everlasting Reveille.*

There is a postlude to this story that needs to be told. Early in 2022 certain anomalies relating to the names on the plaque in Ennerdale came to light.

This was truly a case of history repeating itself, since names on the Great War memorial had been found to be incorrect (some 80 years after the event), and this had led to the erection of a new plaque on Great Gable in 2013. Now, as then, the Club has felt it important that our memorials bear accurate testimony to those they commemorate. When you next travel through Ennerdale you will see a plaque in memory of the following ten members, all killed in the prime of their life on active service during WW2.

Duncan Adam (member 1938): Lieutenant, RE, 853 Bomb Disposal Company. Killed in action on 6 November 1940, with two members of his Company, attempting to defuse a bomb near Yeovil which exploded. Age 37; buried at Yeovil Cemetery.

Norman Edward James Daley (member 1939): Corporal, Royal Corps of Transport. Killed in action at Cassino on 15 May 1944. Age 27; buried at Cassino War Cemetery.

Francis William Ellis Dixon (member 1941): Sub-Lieutenant, RNVR, 841 Squadron, HMS Daedalus. Killed in action while piloting a plane that made a successful attack on a heavily escorted merchant ship in the Channel. Engine damage necessitated a forced landing and he sank almost immediately with the aircraft on 3 August 1943. Age 22. His observer attributed his own escape mainly to the coolness and gallantry of the pilot.

Richard Arthur Fanshawe (member 1934): Warden, Air Raid Precaution. Killed by enemy action on 11 May 1941 during the largest Luftwaffe attack on London of the entire war. A bomb landing at 22 Elvaston Place, Kensington, was subsequently ignited by fire and killed 19 people. Fanshawe met his death while performing duties he need not have

done, and it was only his keenness and fearlessness which led to his death.' Age 35.

John Curties William Hawkins (member 1939): Lieutenant, RA. Killed in action while being evacuated from Dunkirk on a destroyer on 2 June 1940. Age 22; buried at Dover (St. James's) Cemetery.

Ralph Hope (member 1936): Flying Officer, RAF. Killed in action in the Battle of Britain on 14 October 1940 while trying to destroy a German aircraft over Surrey. Age 27; buried at Woking (St. John's) Crematorium.

Phillip Jefferson Jackson (member 1935): Aircraftman 1st Class, RAFVR. Killed in action during a Japanese bombing raid on Singapore on 29 January 1942. Age 29; buried at Singapore.

Clifford Lloyd Brown Janes (member 1939): Flight Sergeant and Hurricane pilot, RAF. Killed in action when he crashed on night patrol at Misurata, Libya, on 25/26 July 1943. Age 30; buried at Tripoli.

Frederick Francis Thomas (member 1941): Flying Officer, RAFVR. Killed while testing a Spitfire in Darwin, Australia, on 17 June 1945. Age 22; buried at Adelaide River War Cemetery.

Tom Willetts (member 1938): Sub Lieutenant, RNVR. Killed in action when HMS Hood exploded on 24 May 1941. Hood and the battleship Prince of Wales had been ordered to intercept the German battleship Bismarck and the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen, en route to the Atlantic, where they were to attack convoys. Early in the Battle of the Denmark Strait, Hood was struck by several German shells and sank within three minutes with the loss of all but three of her crew. Age 24.

Forgotten Warriors

Alan Warwick

This sad story evolved through a series of coincidences; my wife, Olwen, and I, have been involved with the charities of the Merchant Navy Association and the R.A.F. Since 2002. Magoo's bothy, in the Scottish Highlands, was a bothy restoration project which we undertook in memory of a helicopter pilot and navigator who were killed whilst on peace keeping exercises in Kosovo. This work was carried out during the summer and winter of 2002. Working alongside RAF personnel we formed lasting friendships and became more aware of the many aircraft which crashed in the United Kingdom.

When attending a Merchant Navy Memorial Day at Tower Hill in London around 10 years ago, the guest speaker said that "There are worse things than dying, and that is being forgotten". Those few simple words have remained with me since – prompting Olwen and I to set off early one Wednesday morning (4th November 2020) to go to a Halifax bomber crash site which we had visited the previous year. Because of Coronavirus restrictions we thought it would be appropriate for us to honour the fallen during Remembrance time, in our own way. The crash site is located high up in the rocks of Little Dun Fell, at a place called Middle Tongue; the bomber came to its sad demise on April 12th 1944, whilst returning from a night-time coastal exercise killing all its young crew of nine.

Before our visit to the site, I delved more into the history of this crash which occurred 78 years ago – the crew consisted of 5 British, 3 Canadians and an American and, by all accounts, they had been flying for many hours (records imply over 8 hours) and a long night must have taken its toll. At 01.37 hours,

it struck the boulder field of Middle Tongue. A heavy Halifax bomber, with its 4 Rolls Royce Merlin engines; the crew would have stood no chance and would have been killed instantly.

In May 1994, being the 50th anniversary, friends and relatives of the deceased held a service at the site, which was conducted by the Reverend Alan Herbert, chaplain of the Appleby branch of the Royal British Legion and a small memorial plaque was fixed to a boulder which bears the names of all those who died.

On the day of the crash an RAF Mountain rescue team set out to recover the bodies; amongst the team was George 'Scottie' Dwyer, well known for his climbing and guiding skills, who would have been a good man to have onboard. Mick Tighe, who we have known for many years, and who runs the Scottish Mountain Heritage Trust, has an Aladdin's cave of climbing memorabilia and, to my amazement, also has 'Scottie' Dwyer's diary. Information of the rescue that day (which Mick kindly sent me) was recorded in the diary as follows – "At 2.30 a.m. was called out on a MRS job, we went to Kendal and from there to Appleby where we contacted the police who directed us to the nearest approach to the plane crash. We were fortunate in locating the crash very soon and approached it as quick as possible. On our arrival, we found the plane smashed to bits and 9 bodies among the wreckage, all badly burned and smashed. We got the bodies down to ground level and away in the ambulance by 5 p.m. We were back in camp by 8 p.m. that night. A warm sun had been shining all day and it showed its effect on our faces."



Before Olwen and I left the crash site we placed a small Indian granite cross, (which I had made) adorned with poppies, below the plaque, for perpetuity. This is a simple reminder to us all, during these challenging times, what these brave warriors gave for our freedoms.

Incidentally, 'Scottie' Dwyer died peacefully in his home at Tal Y Waen, Capel Curig on April 22nd, 1974, aged 65.

Ships that pass in the night

Maureen Linton-Lee

During my youthful days of tramping the hills, most of my time was spent in the Lakes and Scotland with only occasional trips into Snowdonia. To get enough out of these comparatively rare visits, any weekends there were enjoyed on the higher peaks. The circuit of the Snowdon Horseshoe was my favourite route, but there was never enough time to visit and to explore the lower hills and valleys

However, opportunity for local exploration presented itself when I spent a short time as a voluntary helper on the domestic staff at Plas y Brenin. Free time was generous but usually in short spells which allowed for only short wanderings, although these were very enjoyable and rewarding. But one day I was given the day off. This meant free time after morning duties were finished until I had to start again at teatime. Could I get round the Horseshoe in time? I had no transport so it would depend on getting a lift along the road, but it was certainly worth a try.

Not long after setting out a car stopped for me. The driver, a courteous elderly gentleman was going to Beddgelert so could give me a lift as far as the road junction to Pen y Pass. We chatted. He had recently returned home after many years abroad and had spent the previous week touring Snowdonia, visiting places he remembered from years ago. This was the final day of his trip.

He asked my plans and I replied that I was going up Snowdon. He had been to the summit by train a few days earlier and had been impressed by the number of walkers and climbers he had seen through the train window making their way up on foot. He enquired about my route. I briefly outlined the skyline route of the Horseshoe. He was fascinated

by this but by now we had reached the road junction. However, he insisted on driving me up to Pen y Pass and on the way asked for more detail. I was soon carried away by happily describing Crib Goch, Lliwedd and the two lakes in response to his enthusiastic questions.

At Pen y Pass I got out of the car. He got out of the car too and loitered a little. He then rather diffidently asked how long would it take him to reach the first lake? He had given me an unexpectedly good start to my day, and it seemed churlish to just leave him. I could take him as far as Llyn Llydaw, from there bring him back to his car and then start my way to Crib Goch.

We reached the lake and we walked around it until we stood on the far side of Llyn Llydaw where he gazed around taking in the views. But I had described two lakes so where was the other? I explained that it was hidden in a fold of the hill much higher up. With his smart tweed jacket, cavalry twill trousers and stout brogues he was well dressed for the country rather than for the mountains but his interest and his fascination with his surroundings was infectious. My plan for the Horseshoe was fading ... "Would you like to see the other lake?"; "Oh yes please".

He was a strong walker and we chatted as we walked up to Glaslyn. Here he was totally within the mountains which seemed to be a new experience for him. His joy was obvious as he took in all around him, the little lake, the cliffs of Lliwedd, the crags of Crib Goch and the peak of Snowdon itself. He seemed to be in a new world and enjoying every minute.

He was looking at the summit of Snowdon above us and I just knew what I had to say. "Would you like to go up?" His response was immediate "Really, would you? Oh yes please?" I felt some concern about the smooth soles on those polished brogues. For those were the days before we carried poles, so I had none to offer him, but it was a lovely day and there were plenty of people about.

We climbed up the Miner's track with me keeping close behind him in case of a slip. As we reached the railway his day was made complete when a train passed. He excitedly exclaimed that passengers were looking out at him as he had looked out at walkers and climbers just a few days earlier.

He was now viewing the scenery from quite a different perspective, and it meant so much more to him, but time was passing for me and we couldn't

dawdle on top. After a quick drink in the summit cafe, we started the descent with me keeping closely ahead of him this time. He did slip but just once, the only damage being a muddy jacket and trousers. He couldn't have cared less; he was so happy. We continued the descent and returned to his car.

He drove me back to Plas y Brenin where he asked if he might invite me out to dinner but of course I was working and unable to accept. In fact, I was already late so had to leave him hurriedly. But his profuse thanks left no doubt that he had had a day to remember.

A little later, when showered and changed, and about to go on duty I was told that I had a visitor. He was waiting in the entrance hall and wished to say that he couldn't leave without seeing me just once more as I had given him such a memorable day. Then he went.

He had also given me a day that I will never forget; even now after sixty years. Although we chatted so much, I don't remember if we even exchanged our names. I think that I would have remembered if we had done

Whoever you were Sir, thank you for a very special and happy mountain day.





The re-dedication of the club's war memorial

Mark Scott and Brenda Whitmey

July 17th to 21st 2019

This article is dedicated to the late Iain Whitmey whose commitment and hard work made this event the great success it was.

The background to the reinstalling of the original Great Gable memorial plaque in the churchyard of St Olaf's at Wasdale Head goes back to 2006. Research by a Club member revealed that two of the names on the plaque were incorrect and this was pointed out to Club's Archivist Iain Whitmey. Visits were made by Club members to the summit of Great Gable and the errors rectified. However, these

alterations did not 'weather in' as was hoped and the decision was taken by the Main Committee to have a new one made. The big question then was, what should be done with the original plaque?

During 2017-19 the plaque had gone 'on tour', displayed in a variety of museums, libraries, records offices, and schools across the county. On its return and after long discussions and many suggestions, the unanimous decision was made that, if possible, St. Olaf's Church at Wasdale Head should be its final resting place. For some years, this had been the venue for members unable to attend the Remembrance Sunday gathering on the summit of Great Gable. Its proximity to Brackenclose was also a factor, and therefore it seemed the ideal location.

Iain tentatively made the initial approach to the Rector of St. Olaf's, the Reverend John Riley and was amazed by the enthusiastic response he received. However, the official proceedings through the Parochial Church Council, Diocese and then the Faculty to ensure there were no public objections, were protracted. Iain persevered and after site meetings and discussions, the plans and paperwork were submitted, and agreement was finally reached. We were also delighted that the Bishop of Carlisle wished to lead the service in person.

In the meantime, Mark Scott took on responsibility for organising the construction of the plaque plinth. It was decided to ask club member and expert stone-waller David Birkett to build the plinth, to



Unveiling of the plaque by Iain Whitmey and James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle



Hatty Harris - former FRCC President

which he readily agreed. As an insurance policy against theft or damage Mark first took the plaque to a bronze casting workshop near Dacre, Ullswater. A mould was made which used a cast of the original font to correct the names on the original plaque. It took approximately two weeks to make the mould after which the plaque was delivered to David Birkett in Little Langdale. Not until all permissions had been granted could David begin the task of building the plinth and attaching the plaque with security bolts, especially forged to match the original bronze bolts and Brenda Whitmey could send invitations to club members and guests.

On Thursday 18th July the members and guests began to arrive in Wasdale for the weekend. Despite the fact that Brackenclose was not available due to the fire, accommodation was found at various hotels, B&B's and the Youth Hostel. On the Friday morning a group of approximately 15 members, including the President, Hatty Harris met with a combined group from the National Trust and the National Park

at the Lake Head NT car park, Wasdale. The weather was not promising as the party headed upwards at steady pace to meet the group from Langdale on the summit of Scafell Pike. The timing was perfect, they did not have to wait long in the damp and windy conditions before Peter Smith began the Peace Day Centenary commemoration with a short speech. After lunch and photographs the party descended Scafell Pike at a much faster pace than it had ascended (see Journal No. 87, 2020 for Peter Smith's full account of this).

Finally, on Sunday 21st July 2019, a bright summers day, all the planning and hard work came to fruition. At 11.00am St. Olaf's church bell began to toll for people to gather. The Rt. Revd. James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle, Rev. John Riley, Rector of Gosforth and Rev. Gavin Walker led the prayers. Then the President, Hatty Harris gave an address followed by two minutes silence. Readings were also given by Club members Maureen Linton-Lee and Nick Millward. The plaque, which was draped with a white ensign from HMS Lion, which was present at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, was unveiled by Iain Whitmey. Mark Scott made an oral recording of the whole service and sixty-four signatures were gathered in the Wasdale Head Climbing Book.

Afterwards, the Wasdale Head Inn provided a very substantial buffet where the members and guests enjoyed good food and chatted with friends old and new.

Many thanks to all who were involved in the project, making the day such a fitting success, especially: the late Iain Whitmey, Chris and Ellie Sherwin who designed the invitations and the service sheet, Gillian Race of the Wasdale Head Inn for providing the buffet lunch and Deborah Walsh of The Armit Museum, Ambleside for help with background information.

Mountain Pie

Johnny France

Easter came early that year. Snow coating the Lakeland fells and a sharp east wind blowing spindrift.

I walked up alongside Rydal Beck. None of my mates had turned up yet, so I decided to explore the valley formed by the Fairfield Massif.

The ground was hard frozen and above, the sky, steel grey. Eventually I reached Calf Cove and spied

a line that wove between small crags. I sought out steep patches of Neve to practice cutting steps. I was edging and balanced on precise nicks just as Gaston described in his books on alpine climbing, his emphasis on poise, balance - and above all style; so French.

The final push to the plateau was barred by a cornice, formed by days of strong, easterly wind. Although only a few feet high, the sudden shift



from a moderate slope to a vertical, with teddy-boy quiff to cut through gave a frisson of danger. I was punching big holds to shove my mitts into and carving out a U-slot in the whipped Brylcreem. I popped my head up into the gale, granules of ice peppered my face and stung my eyes. One long, last reach with the axe and I crawled up into the blast. A few feet away a tombstone-sized rock afforded shelter from the storm. I'd made it not a moment too soon. The sky was darker, and suddenly hail and snow became horizontal. I climbed into my bivi bag and hunkered down behind the rock.

The bag's plastic membrane stopped the chill and soon I could look out from my bubble in the lea of the storm. Within the layers of captured body heat I felt the reverie. A calm space inside a maelstrom. It was a feeling that would become familiar in future adventures, coming to me whenever I found a nook to shelter in, in some wild place. Soon the wind subsided, and the grey blew away. Bright sunlight spangled the fells. I crawled into the light from my orange cocoon. Shaking snow and hail from my lair, I packed up and headed to Dovedale, scrambling down the edge of the magnificent bulk of the crag, its gullies choked with cascades of blue ice.

On down to the hazel woods, still bare of leaves. Out of the corner of my eye a flash of amber as a fox darted back into the mossy boulders.

By an old farm, a shepherd was tending spring lambs. I stopped to pass the time and before I knew it, I had a lift back over the pass to Ambleside. The blue series Land Rover singing its characteristic diff whine and squeaky drum brake halt. I slid out, thanking the old boy for the lift, and wandered off to the cafe. Egg and chips finishing the day. The fire was now lit, and my heart lost to the high places.

The Banished Queens and Other Poems

Jim Sutcliffe

The Queen of Svalbard

I met the maiden on the moor;
Her raven locks were flying in the wind
Rapid pace testament to urgency,
Her upward glance catching my anxiety,
Ragged raiments flying before her, the sleet
And hail dragging all sound, splintering
Across the gloomy firmament. I cannot
Serve! I heed the call, my flight is fixed,
Alteration is not possible. Your wish
Is my command to fly! The sea freezes,
Already the geese wing their way,
The wolverine repairs to her lair.
The time has come! All demands to stay
Hold no weight. I cannot answer
Your requests. I heed the call to accept
My role to rule over my lands of lonely
Winter, to ascend the icy throne as
The Queen of Svalbard.

The Queen of Ellesmere Island

From the serried chimney stacks
Of Saxony, safely reinforced havens,
Bound with boughs and woven thatch,
Warmed by internal fires and ovens
In strongly built stone houses, we watch
And await the silent signal
To launch our vast wings southwards.
From the towering turrets of Toledo
Our shadows flicker on stone walls
And turgid waters of the Rio Tajo
Where the gathering cormorants' fall

Becomes a dive to grasp the squirming
Victim in tireless talons, our raucous calls
Along the deep canyon streets echoing
Pay no heed! Attend our fate! Our reign
Is transferred to Arctic archipelagos
Far from the formal fortresses of Spain.
Far from friendly faces' welcoming warmth,
Far from all forms of contact, we fall
Into the silence and the fear of the insane.

Queen of Lofoten

Dawn on the Sierra de Monte Perdido,
Sees the swirl of circling wings
Rising into the sky, so slow,
Each vortex with its slant disappearing
Carried always ever higher above
The stoney summits. Peeling off,
The long line of giant birds
Starts to stretch out northwards. Away
We must fly to a new throne where ice
Encrusts the rocks and silence reigns.
But wait. There go those feet again
Behind me ever more, carrying tempting,
Sumptuous, fragrant morsels, sounds
Of tables being moved, chairs scraping
On boards. All is changing; now the dove
Carries its beneficent message: all must
Fly back to green valleys, welcoming, warm
Hands waiting to hold, hearts longing to love
To follow the riotous bands fleeing harm
And rejoin the swarming multitudes above.

The Sparrow

She pecks at scraps thrown, when
Aghast, folk lean back in awe,
Of the great edifice above. Two towers
Offer sanctuary among strips of straw
Carefully strewn, for sumptuousness.
Past the great rose window she rises,
Strange light glinting in its vastnesses.
Higher she flies and even higher,
Over crenellations, buttresses and towers
Until, heavenward soaring past the spire,
She floats free to her comfortable lair.

A spark, borne on the breeze, surprises
The somnolent bird, alert to danger,
Feeling the prickling fear of fire,
Perceiving the flèche, that arrow of God
With flickering red fingers of ire,
Creeping and crawling along the spire.
With feathers flying, danger of dying,
Soaring above incinerating timbers
The spearing spire crinkles then tumbles,
Sparkles and flashes, crumbles and crashes
A showering artifice of ashes and cinders.

A watcher from afloat on the river
Might have noticed, among the falling
Debris, a brief fluttering of feathers,
Lighted as by lamplight, a flapping
And falling, seeking and diving for water,
Of a small, land-living, air-breathing creature,
Unnaturally seeking salvation in alien
Environment. The watcher might have called
For emergency services to rush to attend
The dreadful conflagration, all the time,
With wonder about the fleeting shadow's end.

She falls, then rises and following the masts,
She sees the efforts of men to stem
The flames, to bring them to control at last.
Her freedom flight might have been seen
By a sapeur-pompier, checking the roof
For serious damage to a vital support beam,
A fleeting flutter of feathers glimpsed
In the corner of an eye. The spirit flies free;
Aerial splendour calls to her again,
Onward surge an upward curve, and then
A future which no human eye might ever see.

Magnetic Field

I tracked her orbit round the room
My visual scanners on auto-hold
Her attraction cast its powerful beam
Across the realms of wondering of old,
Powerful radiation made her visibility
Break through the space distortion of anxiety.

Once again the static of scraping
Chairs across the ether of plates,
Food and heavy aromas wafting,
Of the welcome from one who waits.
Much interference brings confusion
Creating barriers to communication.

Auto-lock on visuals again
Reveals her transitioning location;
Incoming! Data analysis shows when
Scanning is locked on my position.
Two-way traffic is a possibility
Avoiding reasons for exclusivity.

Your table is ready; all will be provided,

The sidelong glance, the welcome smile;
All fine care will be undivided
With total sanction offered all the while.
What variables still exist in orbits
Now avoid some trajectory exits.

The Return of the Swallow

I saw the searcher among savannas,
A flitting thing, tiny, floating in air,
Aloof from surface tensions, where
The beast of the Great Plains gathers.
She flexes her feathers to fold
Her skirts around her vulnerable form;
This pretty little wilful wanderer of old,
Prepares to dare to face the storm.

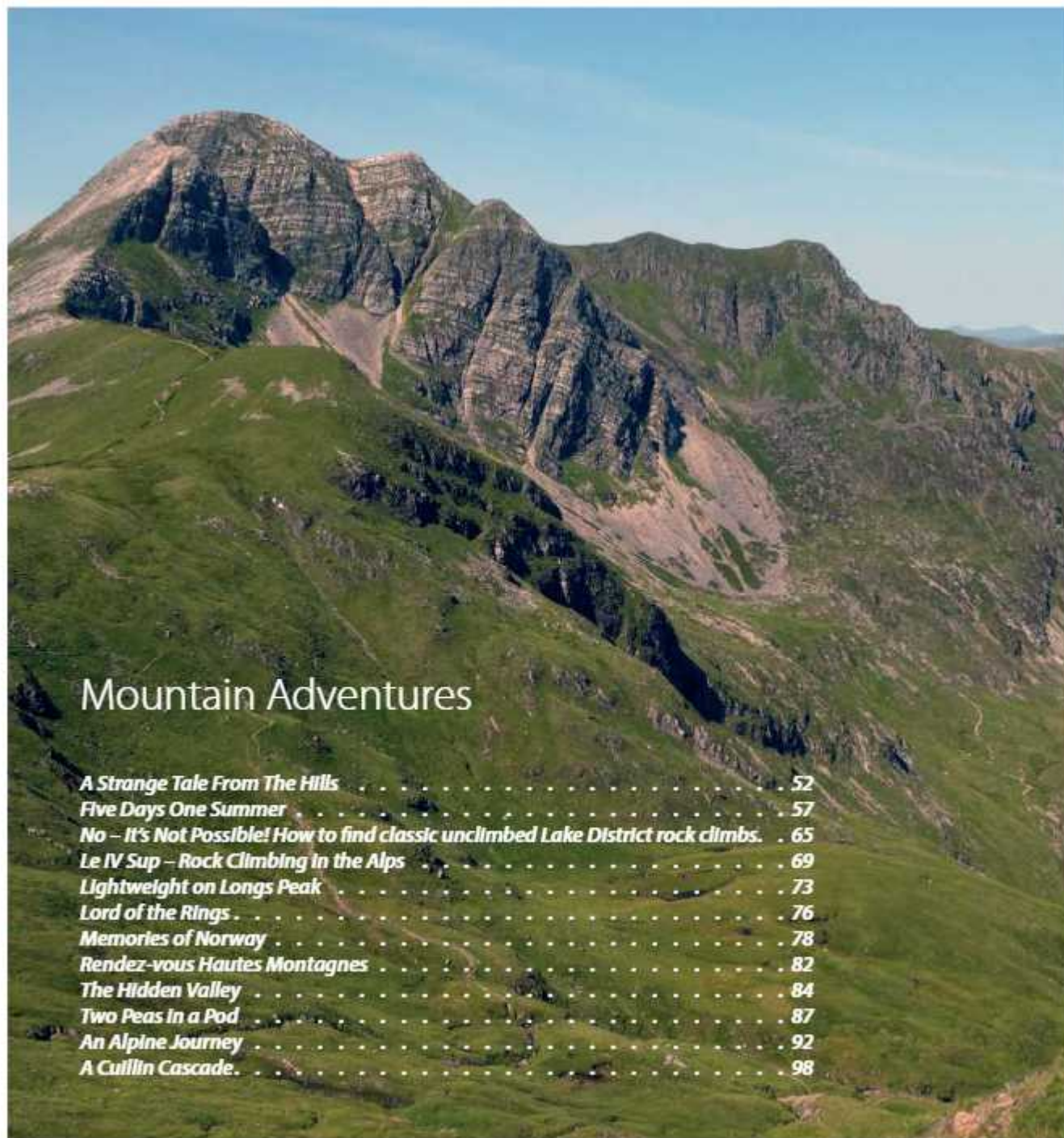
Swooping down, to the baobab tree
The limpid pool below calls to her,
With secretive swirls the surfaces sway
Towards the unseeing sipping bird.
Thrashing tail waters splash and spume;
A tiny escapee, feathers flinging upward,
The daring fearful shape of floral bloom
Escapes fangfull jaws, flying outward.

A frightening flash splits the dark
Canopy, dense with equatorial leaves,
Rest calls our timid friend back;
Sustenance snatched, respite is brief.
Northward, the pull exerts it's relentless
Strength, magnetically inclined to seek
The sunward move over equatorial mass
Towards unseen risks and outlook bleak.

Dry air greets our friend and the bright
Sun scorches reflective rocks, undulating
Images roll in the air, confusing sight
As she wavers, her direction wandering.
Stone and sand, endless dunes of sand,
Wavering ripples stretching and bending,
Northwards still the pull exerts and
Fluttering in thermals, flight never ending.

Lashing waves and howling winds
Hurl the valiant, exhausted bird
Against the rock and battlements behind
Guarding lands where fables are heard.
Rain lashes our vulnerable friend,
Storms blasting from the north;
Magnetic attraction without an end
Pulls our valiant comrade forth.

Ten thousand metres above this flight path
I stand on a firm fuselage and watch
Tropical cumulus towering, illuminated
By their own internal lightning flash.
Privilege and countless litres of precious
Oil allow me to squander earth's resources
To follow that of my formidable friend
In all her simple beauty and steadfastness.



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A Strange Tale From The Hills

Michael Cocker

It's a curious account, essentially a ghost story, possibly the only one in British climbing history. The core of the well-known legend is that in January 1916 Charles Holland was walking below Scafell Crag, somewhere near Hollow Stones, when he unexpectedly met his old friend and climbing partner Siegfried Herford. They talked for a while until Herford took his leave saying something to the effect that he must be on his way as he had an appointment in the next valley. A few days later Holland heard that Herford had been killed in France on the same day that he believed they had been talking together. For several decades this story circulated by word of mouth until, in the 1960s, the Lakeland author Arthur Harry Griffin included it in one of his books firmly, establishing the now familiar version. However, a letter recently discovered amongst the Herford family papers, written just after the First World War, tells a different but equally strange story.

Siegfried Herford was born in 1891. His father, Harold Herford, was Professor of English Literature at Manchester University and his mother, Marie, was of German descent. Siegfried grew up in an atmosphere of liberal minded Unitarianism. He was academically gifted, physically strong, and naturally athletic, with a shock of light-coloured hair and striking blue eyes. He started climbing seriously whilst studying engineering at Manchester University and was soon at the forefront of the sport. He climbed extensively in the Lake District as well as the Peak District, Wales, Scotland and the Alps and established dozens of new routes. His most outstanding climb was the first ascent of Central Buttress (Hard Very Severe, 5a) on Scafell Crag, with George Sansom, Charles Holland, H.B.

Gibson, and D.G. Murray in April 1914; a route that was years ahead of its time in both concept and technical difficulty and arguably the biggest breakthrough ever made on British rock. During the First World War, Herford worked as a war correspondent initially and then as an ambulance driver before joining the 2nd Sportsmen's Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers. For some unknown reason he was turned down for a commission and served as a Private. He was killed on 28th January 1916 when a rifle grenade exploded in the trench he was occupying, blowing him apart. At the time of his death Herford was 25 years old.

Cecil Frederick Holland (1886 - 1968), known to everyone as Charles, was the son of a Church of England minister. He was educated at Westminster School and Oxford University prior to becoming a school master. He first encountered Herford in Snowdonia in the summer of 1912, after which they climbed regularly together, most often at Wasdale. Holland was short, tough, and stoical, 'with chiselled, rather piratical features'. During the war he served as a 2nd Lieutenant with the Gloucestershire Regiment and was awarded a Military Cross and Bar. In 1918 a substantial portion of the humerus bone of his right arm was removed by a shell and had to be repaired by surgeons constructing a bridge out of slivers of the remaining bone. Despite this he soon returned to climbing and wrote the first guidebook to Scafell Crag, which was published in 1924.

On 7th June 1921, Marie Herford wrote to her sister Augusta and related the contents of a letter the family had recently received from Charles Holland describing a strange experience that occurred in August 1918. Holland, who was still in the army,

had three days leave and, without telling anyone or making any prior arrangement, went to Burnthwaite Farm, at Wasdale Head. Around 11pm that evening, a friend who had been out walking all-day on the fells, arrived back at the farm, and appeared shocked and upset to see him. It transpired that the friend, who in the letter is only referred to as 'A', had been 'wandering about on the slopes of Scafell when he saw about noon a tall man in a white sweater approaching'. They got into conversation and talked for a while about climbing and shared one of 'A's sandwiches. During the conversation the stranger said to 'A' 'I suppose you know that H [Holland] will come to Burnthwaite today', which, of course, he didn't. The stranger then, quite suddenly, disappeared, leaving 'A' alone on the hillside feeling very uneasy and unable to explain what had happened.

That evening, when 'A' arrived back at Burnthwaite, he was disturbed but not surprised to find Holland staying at the farm. According to Holland, 'A' had never met Herford and was normally a calm and rational individual with no interest in religion or the occult. Holland asked him for a description of the man he had encountered and was told that 'he was tall, unusually well built with a shock of lightish hair and eyes of a striking blue colour'. Holland was convinced from the description that it was Herford and that accepting one of his sandwiches was 'most characteristic' as Herford rarely carried any of his own and was always inclined to share other peoples. In her letter Marie Herford confirms this characteristic saying, 'I know that S [Siegfried] mostly only had some chocolate and lumps of sugar with him, he said he didn't want to bother stuffing his pockets with sandwiches'.

The letter goes on to describe the family's reaction to Holland's story. They hadn't met Holland but had

received two or three letters from him after Siegfried was killed and understood from these 'that he was a religious man who had a strong faith in a life after death.' 'You can understand' writes Marie 'how much this matter has been in our minds'. She says her own attitude regarding life after death had always been 'agnostic, perhaps more leaning to the negative side', but since receiving the letter her views had gradually changed, in that she now wanted to believe 'in a possible intercourse between the dead and the living' but was torn both ways. Perhaps most moving of all is the passage where she describes the pain and disappointment, she felt in that, if Siegfried had 'returned', he should appear to someone 'to whom it is nothing but a strange experience, whilst I would almost give the rest of my life if I could see him again or even only hear him speak to me'.

Professor Herford, who Marie says was 'very sceptical in all experiences of this kind', confidentially discussed the content of the letter with the Professor of Psychology at Manchester University, who was very interested in psychic research. The psychologist informed him that it was exceedingly rare for people to experience both the sight and voice of the spirit with whom they considered themselves to be in communication. Marie concludes this section of the letter saying she had not talked about this matter with anyone else because she couldn't bear the idea of it being 'discussed' and that the two people concerned, Holland and 'A', didn't want it publicised.

Unfortunately, Holland's letter to Siegfried's parents is not among the family papers and, as far as is known, there is no other surviving correspondence on the matter. The identity of 'A' remains unknown.

Marie Herford's letter is a near contemporary record of the events and by an impeccably reliable source

and so it is probably as close as we are ever likely to get to a true account. This raises the question as to when the story became embellished to include the more dramatic claim that the strange encounter occurred on the same day that Herford was killed in action.

Holland never wrote specifically about this, but occasionally spoke about it with friends. In the early 1930s, when he was walking back from Pillar Rock with Harry Griffin and George Basterfield, Holland related this tale very seriously and sincerely and, according to Griffin, without embarrassment or explanation. Holland was apparently convinced that Herford had 'come back' at the moment of his death to speak with an old friend and to see the hills he loved. Basterfield had heard the story before and knew that Holland couldn't be dissuaded of it. Griffin refers to this event in two of his books and is possibly the primary source for what has become the established version of this story.

The first written account appeared in Griffin's book 'In Mountain Lakeland' published in 1963.

Another well-known Lake District climber has written of a strange experience in the fells that happened during the First World War. His closest friend had been one of the outstanding rock-climbers of his age and had then gone away to fight for his country in France. One day the man who told the story had been climbing on Scafell Crag and on the way down Hollow Stones in the sunshine of a lovely summer afternoon he was most unexpectedly joined by his old friend - unexpected because he had not heard that he was home on leave. They walked down the fells side by side talking of the days they would have together when the war was over, and then the soldier had to cross over into another valley,

promising he would see the other later. For days the man thought about his old friend and then one day he had a letter from France. The friend had been killed in action (or had died on active service) - on the very afternoon that the man who told the story positively believed he had talked with him on the way down to Wasdale Head. You and I may be unable to offer any explanation, but the storyteller believed that his great friend had been granted, at the very moment of his death, a last sight of the hills he loved and a last chat with his closest friend.

Griffin doesn't identify Holland or Herford in this narrative but does so in a later publication and in personal correspondence with the writer. He does, however, clearly state that the meeting occurred on the day that Herford was killed, although he describes it as being on a summer afternoon rather than in January. Griffin allowed himself some literary licence in his description and may have deliberately embellished the story but, more probably, he was repeating a version that had been in circulation for some time; his memory of the account given to him by Holland thirty years earlier, now faded and distorted. Holland was still alive when 'In Mountain Lakeland' was published but there is no suggestion that he ever questioned the account. As mentioned earlier, Holland never wrote specifically about this event, even though in the text above Griffin suggests that he did, but he did allude to it a couple of times in articles he published in the FRCC journals: for example, in 'The Great Central Buttress of Scafell', he says 'I, at any rate, firmly believe that the spirit of Herford is still abroad among the hills, and I know that someday I shall meet him there'.

When I was researching the Wasdale Climbing Book, I discussed the ghost story with Siegfried

Herford's biographer, Keith Treacher. Treacher had first heard of it from the mountaineering author Showell Styles 'back in the dark ages' and for a long time believed that it was Holland who was supposed to have encountered Herford's spirit on the day that he was killed, but when preparing the biography, he checked the dates and found that Holland was serving in France in January 1916. Treacher must have read Marie Herford's letter when working through the family papers, for in our correspondence he said: 'there is a letter in which he [Holland] recounted the story to Herford's parents but didn't add that he was the man sitting at the col. At this distance in time, I feel we must accept that it could have been anyone, which adds a fascinating dimension to the incident'. In the biography, Treacher repeated the story but overlooked the fact that the meeting was reported as occurring in August 1918. He did, however, include the sharing of the sandwich, which to my knowledge, is not described in any account other than Marie Herford's letter. For no apparent reason Treacher also changed the location of the incident from the Hollow Stones to the col at Mickledore. These omissions and alterations were almost certainly unintentional for in all other respects the biography is excellent and scrupulously accurate.

The story doesn't end there, for in the late 1920s Arthur B. Reynolds (1903 - 1960) had an unusual experience at Esk Hause. Reynolds was a cabinet maker who lived in Windermere for some years, and was associated with the leading post war climbers who were active in the Lakes. He often climbed barefoot and was involved in several first ascents, including The Crack on Gimmer Crag. Reynolds was also a strong fell walker. During one solitary walk he had stopped to rest at Esk Hause when a stranger with fair hair and blue eyes, dressed in a white rolled neck sweater and riding breeches (the

popular climbing attire of the pre-war generation), approached and sat down next to him. They exchanged polite conversation for a while before Reynolds got up and started to walk away. After a few moments and for no reason, he stopped to look back and saw that the young man had unaccountably disappeared. Reynolds was puzzled but continued to make his way down to the valley where he told his friends about it. Sometime later he was in a local inn (probably the hotel at Wasdale Head) where he saw a photograph of a young climber hanging on the wall and immediately recognised it as the same person he had spoken to at Esk Hause – the picture was of Siegfried Herford.

In his autobiography, the Buttermere climber Bill Peascod records another alleged encounter with Herford's spirit which he heard from G.R Speaker. Gustave Robert Speaker (1875 - 1942) was a friend of Charles Holland and one-time president of the FRCC. At the age of sixty he led Central Buttress on Scafell Crag, but was killed a few years later in a climbing accident on Great Gable. One day, Speaker was sitting alone at the top of Central Buttress when a figure appeared out of the mist from the direction of the finish of the climb and walked towards him. They did not converse but Speaker was apparently utterly convinced it was Siegfried Herford. Odd experiences of this kind continue to be reported to this day, the most recent by Bill Birkett in his book *Scafell: Portrait of a Mountain* and Jeff Coates in the magazine *Lakeland Walker*.

Few individuals today would openly admit to believing in ghosts but a hundred years ago people were less sceptical. During the Victorian and Edwardian eras there was considerable interest in séances and Spiritualism. This reached a peak during the First World War when visions of guardian angels, phantom archers and cavalymen

were quite common amongst the troops and featured in newspaper and magazine reports of the time. During the same period the ghost story was a popular form of entertainment. This context, combined with a nation trying to come to terms with the carnage and unprecedented loss of life during the previous five years, may have made some individuals psychologically more susceptible to assuming supernatural explanations for unusual experiences. Once a phenomenon has been reported by a credible witness others may have a lowered threshold for accepting a similar interpretation of events.

Despite the above, it remains a strange story not all of which can easily be dismissed or understood. Why, for instance, did Charles Holland wait until 1921 to write to Herford's parents about something that happened in 1918, and who was 'A'? For the rest of his life Holland remained convinced that Siegfried Herford returned from the dead and that from time to time his spirit wandered the fells. As Treacher writes in his biography, 'it is ironic that a man as rational and scientific as Siegfried should be remembered by what is effectively a ghost story, evocative of his intimate association with Scafell'.

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Five Days One Summer

Mark Gear

It was the middle of July 2021. High pressure sat over the UK for the best part of a fortnight, but for the first half of that it was "in the wrong place". Centred to the south, there was a westerly drift of moist Atlantic air clagging in the hills of the West and Northwest Highlands, giving a dreich mix of low cloud and drizzle. Better to go elsewhere; I had some fun days in the Cairngorms to the east, and the Galloway hills to the south. But eventually the anticyclone re-centred itself to the north, meaning the airflow changed round to the east. Whoopee! Perfect conditions for a trip to the hills in the west.



I drove over to Waters Cottage on the Monday evening. Arriving in Glencoe, I enjoyed a half hour photographic bonanza, stop-start driving down the glen, taking digital images of all the west and north facing crags basking in the westering sun. This brought back memories from my rock-climbing days of many outings chasing the big, classic routes on these high mountain cliffs; most successful, but some not. Guerdon Grooves, Bludger's Revelation, Apparition and Trapeze had gone relatively smoothly. Shibboleth and Lecher's Superstition were just too hard for my leading range, which only reached E2 on a friendly crag on an unusually good day. Slime Wall is appropriately named, being slow drying and quite intimidating... In the end I never managed to get up there with a partner who was a better climber than me, on a day when these routes were likely to be climbable. But the one that really stung was Yo-Yo. The first time I tried in 1990 the infamous seep at the start was bone dry, but it was too cold to climb on a north face, a bitter easterly wind blowing, so we took ourselves off to do west facing The Big Top instead. Ten years later it was warm enough, but the route still wet! At that point I realised it needed two weeks of drying time - one week just didn't cut it. On that occasion we headed up to Stob Coire nan Lochan to make Unicorn our consolation prize. And finally there was 2010, when I reckoned the route was ripe for the plucking, but my partner and I got lost amongst the maze of short walls and ledges cutting across the face while trying to find a safer way to the crag. Our aim was to come in from the top via "Pleasant Terrace"; there is a particularly rotten slab to scramble up on the

< Sgor an Iubhair and Stob a' Choire Mhail
from descent of Sgurr a' Mhaim



View SW from descent of NW ridge,
Sgorr nam Fiannaidh

standard approach. We ended far below the crag and didn't have time or energy to walk back up and try again. At this point, I abandoned the quest; 7 years later I gave up serious climbing.

Waters was near deserted, and warm inside. No issue with opening the windows to ventilate and banish the pesky coronavirus then! In fact, the weather was so hot in the west, and the ground so dry, that the midges had been completely knocked on the head. VERY unusual for the time of year. But that heat made demands, and one was on my

beauty sleep. God knows, I need it, but any sensible day out on the hills was going to mean an "Alpine" start. Fortunately, I am a "morning person" - my body clock runs on a 23-hour cycle - and getting up early is my forte.

DAY ONE

With my alarm set for 5AM, I was breakfasted and along to Caolasnacon to start up the west ridge of the Corbett Garbh Bheinn 45 minutes later. Despite the early start and being almost entirely in the shade, the 800m. climb had me dripping with sweat. I was carrying two litres of water in my "Platypus" and would need every drop of it. But



Ossian's Cave and N Face, Aonach Dubh
from Glen Coe

the reward was at the summit; great views over a sea of cloud to the east, of Ben Nevis and the Mamores to the north, and across to the pinnacles of the Aonach Eagach in the south. That's where I was headed, dropping steeply for 300m. - some of it a scree run - to a col and then plodding back up the north ridge of the Munro, Meall Dearg. From the top there is a literally jaw dropping panorama of the corries and peaks of the Bidean nam Bian massif to the south. Then came the pinnacles, and I tried to stick religiously to the crest to maximise the enjoyment. There was barely a breath of wind...

But alas all good things must come to an end, and eventually I had to grind up the worn path to the Top of Stob Coire Leith and thus along to the second Munro, Sgorr nam Fiannaidh.

The descent from here down the north ridge direct back to the car is a nightmare of steep ground, outcrops, deep heather, and thick vegetation/ tree growth lower down. I know, 'cos I've been that way at least twice! But today I had a cunning plan. Instead, I descended the relatively gentle scree path that connects the Aonach Eagach to the path up the Pap of Glencoe, enjoying views of Beinn a' Bheithir, Glencoe village, Loch Leven and Garbh

Bheinn, Ardgour. When my route joined the tourist path to the Pap, I met a whole succession of people sweating up in the hot sun. At the bottom on the Clachaig back road I had stashed my mountain bike in an inconspicuous shady spot the previous night. So, after 6 hours on the hill all I had to do was ride back round to Caolasnacon. En route I dropped in on Cynthia Grindley for a chat; she was housebound with a broken ankle and a pot on her lower leg. I sensed a caged tigress itching to get back out on the crags...

So back to the hut and an afternoon of resting and sloth, although I did find time to attend to my warden duties and stroll down to the library to tap into their WIFI. On the way back, a couple of cold bottles of lager from the Co Op were essential supplies. Dinner was a mountain of pasta and salad, and in anticipation of an even earlier start the next day I was in bed at the ridiculously early hour of 7:15PM!

DAY TWO

I was up at 4AM, which gave me a start from Achriabhach in Glen Nevis at 5:15AM. The car thermometer read only 8 deg C, Baltic! A 30-minute leg stretch up the tarmac to the road end car park soon warmed me up, and then another 30 minutes saw me through the Steall Gorge to the meadows and the three-wire bridge. The JMCS Lochaber Section Steall Hut was already in the sun; occupants must need thick blackout curtains to sleep late here in summer. I filled my "Platypus" to the brim – two and a half litres - from the outflow beneath the diminished Steall waterfall, then carried on across still gooey ground to the start of the excellent stalker's path firing up the steep north ridge of An Gearanach, the first Munro of the day. This gives a steady climb, and having a slight westerly aspect was still largely in the shade. Bliss. As I climbed

higher the view back over my shoulder to the bulk of Ben Nevis and the slender cone of Carn Mor Dearg just got better and better. Reaching the top two and a half hours after starting I was surprised to have company; two twin pole-equipped backpackers, who had presumably camped high last night.

A mild scramble over the Top of An Garbhanach led to a descent to a col and ascent of a worn zig zagging path to Stob Coire a' Chairn - Munro #2. From here the northeast face of Am Bodach, Munro #3, looks very impressive. It's a steep climb with a loose path which is often hidden under neve in winter conditions to give a mild Grade I snow climb. Here the "Ring of Steall" outing turns west, and a rather nondescript stony ridge leads on to the demoted Munro Sgor an Iubhair, but things turn lively again as one ventures out onto "The Devil's Ridge", otherwise known as the top of Stob a' Choire Mhail. The path is fine - for the most part - but the ridge is incredibly narrow and exposed, so again I was happy to have near windless conditions. It's a fine sight in winter, when a cornice overhangs to the east and one must crampon gingerly along on the west side below the crest. There are a couple of steps to overcome; the first a straightforward descending avoiding manoeuvre to the west to pass some shattered pinnacles, the second an unavoidable slab which luckily has big holds. There was a scrap of shade below the crag and taking a big swig of water I left my rucksack to make the long, steep climb to Munro #4, Sgurr a' Mhaim.

From here I had to retrace my steps to the near side of Sgor an Iubhair; no hardship, as I got to traverse The Devil's Ridge twice! Then a beautiful switchbacking stalker's path took me down to a gorgeous blue green lochan nestled in a hollow just off the true crest of the ridge. Taking another



Ben Nevis from ascent of An Gearanach

big drink, I refilled the water bladder to two litres; that amount had been drunk already. I also wet my head scarf, something I do whenever I pass even a tiny lochan; helps to keep the brain from frying. Now seeing a steady trickle of other people, I slowly made my way up the blinding white screes of the east ridge of Stob Ban; the White Hill is aptly named. I was sticky with sweat on reaching this, the fifth Munro of what I call "The Ring of Steall Plus". Onward there is a transition to red granite rocks, and the path follows the rim of Choire Dheirg - the Red Corrie - with easier gradients, thighs still

complaining though, to the cairn atop a cairn which marks the summit of Mullach nan Coirean; Munro #6.

The way off was by a path down the northeast ridge. This gave a birds-eye view of the Polldubh crags, the venue you head for when the high crags in the west are unexpectedly clagged in and wet. If these conditions are expected, you go east to the Cairngorm. At the bottom a constructed path headed into the felled and replanted plantations, leading onto a forestry track with lovely shade and a final path down to Achriabhach and the Lower Falls. Here the local youths were jumping off the

rocks into the plunge pool below, despite the low water levels! I had chosen my parking spot well when I set out 10 hours ago, as most of it was in tree shade. The "Platypus" was now dry again. The thermometer hit 28 deg C driving down into Costa del Fort William, and so back to the hut.

Somehow, I managed to stay up late tonight; 8:15PM.

DAY THREE

I took a rest day. A lie in to 6:30AM, then after breakfast I washed my car. For some time, the hot water tank at Waters had been leaking, though the showers still worked, and at 8AM the local plumber Steve turned up in his van to fit a replacement. It was good to put a face to the name.

Having dealt with the car I started treating the car park side of the garden fence with "Cuprinol" wood stain. I had slapped it on the hut side myself last summer when the Maintenance Meet was cancelled by the pandemic. Over a couple of hours, I managed to get half of what remained done before the hot sun became too much to bear. A little touching up of the masonry paint on the windowsills, and I called it a day. Whilst I could have left these jobs for the 2021 MM - which was almost certain to go ahead at the end of August - my experience is that the weather is only dry enough to do these outdoor jobs perhaps 20% of the time, so it was "money in the bank" to get them done now.

During the afternoon I hid from the sun with a good book, and that evening welcomed the first weekend arrivals. Bedtime was still early...

DAY four

Today I was venturing to the south side of Glencoe; a shorter drive, so I compromised with a 4:30AM

reveille. This still saw me walking from near Signal Rock soon after 5AM under a ceiling of low cloud, striding through long grass, wet with a heavy dew to a bridge that crosses the outflow of the Fionn Ghleann. Here I turned left and proceeded south up the right side of the burn, following an old fence line. There was little path, and the ground was still quite wet; my boots and socks were soon soaked. At 250m. a.s.l. I went into the cloud; past a stream junction, I crossed with the fence to the left-hand side. At the next junction I filled my "Platypus" and turned left to forge straight uphill. It was steep, but at 500m. a.s.l. I emerged above a sea of cloud. WOW... Continuing to climb, I reached the crest of the north ridge of the Corbett, Beinn Maol Chalum, dumped the rucksack and followed another fence line up to the cairned summit, reached after two hours on the move. The view east to the Blackmount and Starav hills over the cloud sea filling Glen Etive was superb. Further round to the right, "little" Beinn Trilleachan was completely cut off by the surrounding mists.

Returning to collect my sac I made a diagonal descent of the steep hillside to the Bealach Fhionnghaill, passing below a rhyolite crag which I do not think has been documented and might repay exploration. A fence line led up again, following the crest of the northeast ridge of Stob an Fhuarain. Despite many years wandering these hills this is a ridge I had never followed before; there were a couple of rock steps, easily outflanked to the left. Reaching the Stob, a Top, Sgor na h-Ulaidh looked dramatic across the intervening col. Most folk come up the ridge to the north, Aonach Dubh a' Ghlinne, and now I met a well-worn path that took me across to the Sgor, which is the Munro.

To descend, I followed the fence line plunging north-west from Corr na Beinne. There is a path,



Stob Ban from descent of Sgor an Iubhair

but it is rough, and lower down it tried to suck me into a cul de sac of mossy, oozing, slabby outcrops. To escape this, I traversed up a little and right to find an easier way down. Even on familiar hills you must keep your guard up! At the col below Meall Lighiche I found myself straying into a shepherd's sheep gathering, complete with dogs, so quickly climbed a short way up the other side; their plan seemed to be to drive the beasts down the glen to the north. This final Corbett of the day was a steep but grassy climb, coming on to a worn path by a fence line on a broad crest that led left to a small cairn. Bidean nam Bian looks pretty good from here. My way off was down the steep ridge over Creag Bhan to reach the Allt na Muidhe and a welcome drink of water; the platty was empty again. Hopping the shrunken burn, I followed a lovely buttercup and orchid strewn track down Gleann Leac Na Muidhe, with a diversion path right round the "big hoose" flagged with slates and laid with railway sleepers. However by now the soles of

my feet were very sore, probably because they had been wet for hours in rubbing boots. Back to the car at midday, the A82 hooching with RVs and other vehicles, to complete a 7-hour day.

Once I had recovered a bit back at the hut, I wielded the wood stain brush on that section of the fence that was yet untreated and still in the shade. Then I took an hour off to surf the strong Wifi signal down at the Co Op and let the sun sink lower in the sky, giving the hut tree shade. After another hour or two the Cuprinol job was complete and I had a great sense of satisfaction, but boy did my knees ache from kneeling on the ground for hours at a time!

Dinner tonight was a chicken Korma curry and rice, washed down with my second bottle of lager. To bed at 8PM.

DAY FIVE

Today I had to head home if I didn't want my girlfriend to kick me out! But that didn't mean I

couldn't "push the envelope" in deciding to make a crazy long drive up to Glen Shiel and beyond to gather in the Munro Beinn Sgritheall and its two close Corbetts. So, the alarm was set for the earliest yet, 3:30AM, and I was packed up and clear of the hut 30 minutes later; mid-summer, and it was still dark!

The drive through Fort William, Spean Bridge, Invergarry and Shiel Bridge to Arnisdale on the north shore of Loch Hourn was two and a half hours. During that time the dawn slowly bled into the sky. There was some thick low cloud over Loch Lochy, and very poor visibility in mist passing the Glen Garry viewpoint. Yet at the summit of the A87 it all magically disappeared. Unsurprisingly, there was little other traffic.

I started walking up the signed path to Beinn Sgritheall, through a recently established fenced community woodland, at 6:30AM. This worn route to the Bealach Arnisdail is steep and tucked into a southwest facing slope beneath the adjacent Corbett Beinn na-Eaglaise, so at this time of day it was in the shade all the way. I filled my "Platypus" as high up as convenient, where the path crossed the stream draining from the pass. I met a couple coming down; they had bivvied on the summit last night. At the bealach there is a lochan, which was the last opportunity for a while to wet my head scarf. A steep, eroded path leads up from here, quite loose in places, following a fence line onto the southeast top of the hill. A top, not a Top; it fails to make the 914m. cut off. All the way up the views across Loch Hourn to the remote hills on the far side - Sgurr na Ciche, Luinne Bheinn, Ladhar Bheinn and Beinn na Caillich - were to die for. From the top a broad ridge swept down and then back up again to the summit. I stashed my sac once more, not wanting to waste energy lugging litres of water any

further than necessary. Another bivvying couple were leaving the shattered trig point (probably caused by a lightning strike) as I arrived. If I had one complaint at this point, it was that the view to the Skye Cuillin was a bit hazy.

I retraced my steps to the bealach, passing a few other folks making their pilgrimage to the summit. I now had to confront one of the steepest slopes I know of that isn't a cliff; the ascent onto Beinn na-Eaglaise. This "goes" by heading up left to the steeper ground, and then trending back right, zig zagging on grass, to reach a blunt ridge and so the crest, just yards from a small cairn. A line of unusually tall fence posts strides along here, and down to the col below Druim nan Bo. This is a predictably grassy spot - it translates as Broad Ridge of the Cattle - and from here I curved round to easy but long slopes leading up to Beinn nan Caorach, the second Corbett of the day. My legs were tired.

The descent from here was by a very steep slope, initially of short heather, then grass, to a stony ATV track in Coire Chorsalain. The already sore soles of my feet really began to complain as I followed this down past the shrivelled Eas-na-Cuingid waterfall to the cut grasslands of Glen Arnisdale. To walk across these was a delight, followed by purgatory on the continuing gravel track to the road, then tarmac back to the car. This completed 6 hours on my pins, which was quite enough for today.

So, to the long 4-hour drive home, stopping for photos of the classic Five Sisters of Kintail view at Mam Ratagan, and teetering on the edge of falling asleep at the wheel on the A9. It had been a long day, but fortunately I was able to get my sleep cycle back to normal in the next few days, helped by near exhaustion!

No – It's Not Possible! How to find classic unclimbed Lake District rock climbs

Dave Bodecott

Friends in the pub, local country-folk but non-climbers, were in a state of disbelief when I commented that we had done some classic new routes. "No you can't - that's not possible in the Lake District these days", they said. Indeed, it is counter-intuitive - you would think they had all been done, but apparently not.

There are still a few hard unclimbed lines left in the Lakes – some E2s and E3s, but generally above E6, possibly up to E10. James McHaffie, Adam Hocking, Dave Birkett, the Mathesons and other locals plus a few outside raiders have worked steadily through these hard new routes in recent years. A few decent warm dry summers would bring more of these lines into condition.

But for the classic middle-grade stuff between V Diff and E2, conventional wisdom is that nothing remains - all climbed and ticked off many years ago. Not so!

In 1992 we noticed several steep unclimbed lines on some of the most popular local crags like Shepherd's, Castle Rock and Quayfoot. I was never attracted to first ascents, or getting the name in the guidebook, but the existing experts who did lots of new routes didn't seem to notice all these wonderful unclimbed lines. Some needed a bit of cleaning.

The first discovery was Ovation in 1992, an E1 on Shepherd's. The name followed the Shepherd's vernacular. Previously a grassy drainage line, it was



Martin Armitage
on second ascent of
Birtness Grooves HVS



Guy Widdowson on
Bootlegger's Groove III
Gable Crag, 2010



Hind Crag Buttress
Boxing Day 2013

cleaned up in the rain one evening and a loose block trundled. To the left of and harder than Aaros, fingery, the route now has two stars and stays beautifully clean.

Also in 1992, Birtness Grooves (HVS) on Border Buttress, Eagle Crag Buttermere was climbed in a good dry spell. Perfect rock, two excellent groove pitches. Parts of the route may have been climbed before. Despite having a shady aspect, a drought renders the whole area a rough rock paradise. Guidebook writers should accept this rather than rubbishing routes because they are wet. Even the classics like Carnival, Central Chimney or Eagle Front are wet in all but the driest weather.

There followed in 1995 a wandering and enjoyable eliminate linking good pieces of rock but with little new climbing; Magnetic North on Shepherd's - another E1, one star and a great way up the crag when all the other routes have been done. Start up

Crunchy Frog, swing right onto new ground, then the hanging slab of True North to finish rightwards up the North Buttress groove. Then further routes on Quayfoot like Morceau (HVS, 1995) that follows a huge natural break, and Crusader (E3, 1994) on Castle Rock led by Tony Daly. Crusader follows the true downward continuation of the long and curving, but now disappeared, North Crag Eliminate gangway.

Some unclimbed winter lines followed - huge features on Gable North Crag, five new routes in all between 1995 and 2000, graded anywhere from III to VI, with the likes of Bonington, Armitage, Kenyon and others. On Bottleneck blues (IV) I made the fateful mistake of succumbing to Sir Chris's two-straw trick, so he got to lead my route! Bootlegger's Groove is probably one of the best winter grade 3 climbs you would find anywhere. Three long pitches, 500 feet, good belays, climbed with Martin Armitage, again named to align with



Borrowdale Stare
Guy Widdowson 2014



The 'Alpine' ridge of Southern Buttress Hind Crag

the local vernacular (as was Hooch VI, named by Ron Kenyon). The route follows corners, cracks, and grooves parallel to, but right of the avalanche-prone Central Gully, serious for poor belays.

Bottlescruie IV/V was named after a wine bar on Holborn Viaduct, always nice to have a play on words. The route wanders drunkenly right to left (starting below and right of Summertime Blues) across very thin technical ground. Mallory's Corner is another IV taking a big corner parallel to and left of Bottleneck blues.

The beauty of these routes is that they are all solely winter courses – no classic rock is damaged.

There were more unclimbed lines on Gimmer Crag (Elektra, HVS and Whitless, E1) with Steve Reid. Elektra could be described as a Dream Merchants line-alike – straight line upwards for the best experience. On Castle Crag, Zoar, famously named

by Colin Read was given a straighter direct start, then Zoar left-hand in 2006. Up Watendlath, Supercrack [sic] climbed a totally ignored well-protected and interesting diagonal crack. It was graded HVS but is now E2 5c with one star.

We have no idea why none of these routes hadn't been spotted before. Some are off the beaten track, perhaps they would be busier in a different part of the country.

My climbing partner until recently, Guy, is a snappy dresser, especially around Christmas or New Year when he has been known to climb as Father Christmas, a Christmas elf, or even to strip off and dive in the nearest beck to celebrate the turn of the year (sometimes not alone). We tended to go to weird places, out of the way, off the beaten track. We have done routes (sometimes with others) like Ferrous Buttress, Dalehead Pillar, the Hind Crag ridges for example. We are not the only ones, but



One of the routes
on the right wall
Guy Widdowson 2014



New lines on Miner's Crag
2017



Medea S

over the years we have found some existing route gems that no one ever does, that sometimes never make the guidebooks, and often never have star status. But they are often fantastic routes in the right weather.

The descent from Hind Crag down the north side enabled a major discovery. In 2014 we found a clean, dry, sunny 50 metre VS on perfect rock in Borrowdale. It now has three stars, we named it "The Borrowdale Stare" (VS, 4b). Impossible to achieve, one would think?

We had been visiting Hind Crag regularly to do the existing mountain routes - Hind Crag Buttress (1924 Angelo Dibona) and Southern Buttress (1959 Don Greenop), both fine mountain routes.

The days of climbing the HVS-E2 routes on the south gully wall, that were often climbed in the early 80s, have ended since the wet summers have returned them to nature.

More recently, we would often go to Hind Crag in the Winter, Boxing Day or New Year as the routes were always dry and in the sun in the right conditions. Over numerous visits, we climbed all the variation starts to Hind Crag Buttress on the lower slabs (unrecorded, then claimed by others later).

We found the Borrowdale Stare on the way down the descent route. This descent was famous for avalanching three people in wet snow conditions on January 15th, 2010. One chap went 600 feet down the gully without adverse effects. The route was staring at us for a few years - previously unknown, then we decided to climb it in 2014. The route is now a Borrowdale classic with a few other new pitches and variants nearby.

Fast forward to 2017, we asked, 'where can we find some more unclimbed sunny VS classics in the Lakes'. Impossible? No - not impossible!

We climbed two of them in the Spring/Summer of 2017: Messalina and Medea on Miners Crag. Huge classic unclimbed lines on clean rock in the sun. We named them following on from Bill Peascod's tradition of lascivious women (Cleopatra, Jezebel, Delilah, etc). Bill was a great Buttermere and Newlands pioneer around 1950. I met him once at Sir Chris's 50th birthday party, lovely man and very interesting, multi-talented.

Why had no one ever done these routes? Seems bizarre.

Pictures of Messalina and Medea illustrate the huge features they follow. The lines have been cleaned, they are in the sun and will stay clean and will make one or two star minor classics - it was still possible in 2017!

New classic lines in the sun are still possible - I can think of at least two in the E1-E3 range - big lines, easily accessible, waiting on first ascents.

With the possibility of going into another cold period, this opens numerous winter possibilities too - there are still some classic Lake District gullies that have never had winter ascents, but they are quite hard.

If there are any young FRCC adventurers out there interested in this style of climbing - 'hors des sentiers battus', please get in touch, I could be a good partner or second, and I will keep you alive. Experience and local knowledge are useful in finding these new routes.

Le IV Sup – Rock Climbing in the Alps

Anne Daykin

Most climbers are very familiar with 'Classic Rock' and many slowly tick their way through its pages. Each double page contains a brief description of a classic British rock climb and its ascent, and although the climbs vary in length and difficulty, none are harder than VS.

Some years ago we came across a French book called 'Le IV Sup – Les Must des Alpes' by Pascal Tanguy. It is a coffee table book in the style of 'Classic Rock'; and this particular copy belonged to a friend of ours. It had been reduced to a stack of loose pages because he didn't want to carry around the whole book, so simply ripped out the relevant page for a route he fancied climbing! The French grade 4+ roughly equates to British 4b, although the routes in this book vary from four pitches to fourteen

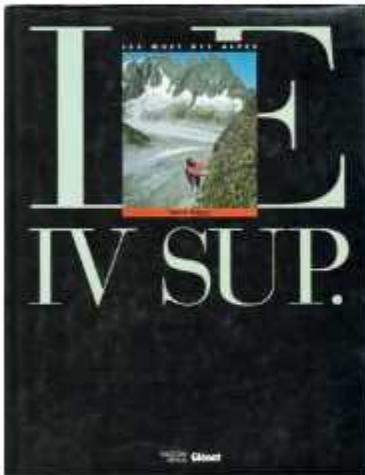
or so, and include classic ridge-scrambles, trad routes and bolted climbs. No pitch exceeds French 6a, and no route should be beyond the capabilities of a competent team of VS climbers with a sense of adventure and the willingness to pull on the odd bolt. So, armed with a set of photocopies we set about climbing the French version of 'Classic Rock'. With around one hundred routes to climb, this is an ongoing project, and it has led to many great holidays in the French Alps. So, what might a typical summer be like?

One trip was to the Mercantour National Park, the Maritime Alps less than two hours away from a cheap

flight to Nice, where climbed three different routes which epitomise the variety of Four Sup adventures. First up, Cayres De Cougourde – The Directissime a la Trois. The Cougourde is a spectacular dome of rock with four distinct towers which dominate the beautiful Vallee du Haut Boreon. Many walkers and climbers stay in the Cougourde refuge, but we preferred to camp wild. It is an idyllic setting, a high alpine valley bright with flowers and threaded by a clear mountain stream. In about an hour from here one reaches the foot of the direct route on the third tower: fourteen pitches of immaculate gneiss, with adequate bolt-protection and steady climbing around VS. We didn't have the route to ourselves; we were followed closely by a French couple. So closely



Cayres De Cougourde - Directe A la III
Just in from left skyline



in fact that I feared treading on the Frenchman's fingers as he followed me up, but he was fun to share a belay stance with and gave me instructions on how to make Genepi liqueur. Genepi, he told me, is a protected plant and you are not allowed to pick it in the National Park, but (with Gallic shrug as he tucked the little flowers in his pocket) "Who cares?" On the summit we enjoyed a late lunch with spectacular views while Monsieur and his partner raced off. The descent is an interesting grade 3 scramble down the other side of the mountain and completes a great day out.

Cime De La Maledie

– La Traverse Integrale des Arêtes Est/Ouest

This route is PD+ with only one passage at 4+, a small overhang (which had a tatty bit of rope hanging down it). In climbing terms, it is the easiest route we have done so far in our IV Sup quest but it is a long day out, along the frontier ridge between France and Italy. The approach, the climb, and the walk-out each take about the same length of time, so this is very much a day out in the mountains and not for those only interested



Cayres De Cougourde - after the route

in vertical pleasure. The approach for Maledie is from the Refuge de Nice, and we walked there from Madone de Fenetre in about four hours. It isn't the shortest approach, but it is where we happened to be. Again, we carried a tent and lay outside it late into the night, watching the shooting stars flash across an enormous sky. The next day we planned to set off quite early because after our climb we intended to walk the four hours back to our car, but somehow it was nine o'clock before we headed up the hillside, anticipating the pleasure of a long day walking and scrambling in the rocky mountain terrain. The approach is wild and barren with snow patches even into the summer and takes about three hours. The actual ridge is exposed and exhilarating, with spectacular views of peaks and ridges disappearing into the distance. Though it is over all too soon we still had a long way to go. We negotiated a complex descent between snow-slopes and down to Lac Long, a gorgeous deep turquoise colour with shining white ice-flows. It was aptly named, and with no path through the massive boulders alongside, the walk out seemed to go on for hours. It was a great day out, but it was 7pm



Directe a la III
Anne followed by 'the flower picker'

when we arrived back where the tent was stashed, and still four hours back to the car. At this point we considered that perhaps we should have walked in from the Vallee de la Gordolasque, a mere one hour below us, or even that we should have carried extra food just in case, but with neither of these options available we pitched the tent again, shared our remaining mars bar, and went to sleep.

Glegn - Le Diedre Vernet

A pleasant and scenic walk brought us, late in the evening, to Lac Gravierette where we set up our tent and viewed the mountain which was our aim for the next day. It was a balmy evening and barely a ripple on the lake, not a soul to be seen. A perfect moment familiar to mountaineers everywhere.

The next morning, we were glad we'd walked in the day before, as the approach to the climb was longer and more difficult than our photocopy implied, and a large snow slope led up to the southwest face we were aiming to climb. It was entertaining (and chilly!) shimmying "a cheval" along the top of the enormous bergschrund and at least a couple

of hours after leaving the tent before we were established at the foot of the large corner. Diedre Vernet is an obvious and compelling line up the steep SW face and presents no problems in terms of choosing the right line. The climbing was never overly difficult, but the setting feels remote. With ten pitches, only the odd bolt or piton to mark the belays and no-one else around, this route provides a fine adventure. From the top of the 2888m summit of Glegn we could see the lake where we had camped, far below us. We coiled our ropes in the sunshine and set off on the long descent.

This is just a snapshot from one summer, but not all the routes in our Four Sup hit list involve long walk-ins or camping. The Voie du Diedre on the Montagne de L'Epenet in the Vercors is a mere ten minutes from the road. The Fissure at Ailfroide is just a short stroll from the campsite and provides a great day out in traditional style, while its neighbour Snoopy is a classic bolted ten-pitch route on clean granite slabs. One year we watched with binoculars from the comfort of our tent as a couple of climbers tried to escape by abseil and were eventually



Cime De La Maledie,
traverse integrale



The backpacking climber

rescued in the dark by the gendarmes.

Le IV Sup covers the mountain areas of France from Mont Blanc to the Mercantour, and from Aravis and Bornes in the west to Vercors in the east. Perhaps stretching the remit, a little, there is also a chapter on Corsica. Many of the routes are popular classics, but some have long fallen out of favour and require a steady head. This contrast was obvious on our trip to the Aravis. Here we climbed on the Dalles de Rosiere and on the Dalles du Planay on consecutive days. On the first day, an hour or so of pleasant walking through the pine forest brought us to the crag, a broad sweep of limestone slabs sculpted into vertical channels by the passage of water over time. It was busy with climbers and the bolt protected routes were so numerous it was hard to work out which was which. Conversely, the next day another pleasant forest walk (though somewhat longer and steeper) brought us toward the Dalles du Planay.



Giegn - Le Diedre Sud-Ouest

However, the final approach involved thrashing through a jungle of vicious vegetation, and it was clear no-one had been there for some time. This crag was also a beautiful sweep of limestone with water-worn canules so sharp-edged that a slip would have caused a nasty laceration. Our book gave us three routes, each four or five pitches long and equipped with bolts. However, the bolts were sparse and difficult to spot and the natural protection scant. With a poor-quality photocopy as a topo, and vague understanding of the general description in French, Ken headed upwards into the unknown, hoping that he would reach a belay before he ran out of rope. It was absorbing climbing, tiptoeing across blank slabs to link the sculpted runnels that provided pinch-grips and lay-aways, never sure when the next protection would appear. It felt like a serious day out, but we put our faith in Monsieur Tanguy and trusted that nothing in his book was beyond our capabilities.



Dalles De La Rosiere - well protected

Postscript: Photocopying the pages of a French climbing guide was originally just to have another source of information when planning holidays to different areas of France. It wasn't meant to be a tick-list, and we certainly haven't climbed these routes to the exclusion of others. But Four Sup has become like an old friend, and we wanted our own copy. These days the internet gives one access to all the second-hand bookshops in France, but it still wasn't easy to find. Published in 1990 and long out of print, it is now considered collectable, and there are few copies on the market. It was some time before we located a copy of Le Four Sup at a reasonable price and managed to buy it. Just like owning a copy of 'Classic Rock', leafing through the pages is a pleasure, and brings back memories of some great days out. The photos all show climbers dressed in the bright pinks and patterned trousers that were popular in the eighties, and it is like waving a magic wand over our blurred black-and-white photocopies. But rest assured, booklovers, our hard-backed old friend will stay on the bookshelf while we continue our climbing adventures. We won't be ripping out pages to tuck in our pocket – a photocopy will suffice.

Lightweight on Longs Peak

Dan Hamer

Longs Peak first came to my attention whilst I was tent-bound in Antarctica in 1981. I'd spent the previous three months collecting rock samples with UIAA Mountain Guide, Roger Mear. At the end of the summer field season, we'd pitched camp on the Nye Glacier and were waiting patiently for a pick-up by air. The De Havilland Twin Otter aircraft was busy collecting field parties from a variety of locations scattered along the length and breadth of the Graham Land Peninsula and it took several days before we received the welcome news that it was our turn. During the evenings, we had sat comfortably in the pyramid tent entertaining each other with stories. One of Roger's tales had described an epic ascent of a route on the Diamond - the dramatic east face of Longs Peak in Colorado.

Several decades later, I took my family to the United States for a holiday. We hired a car and spent a month travelling east to west across the continent from New York to San Francisco. Just short of the Continental Divide, we camped for a few idyllic days near Estes Park in the Rocky Mountains. Here the fresh smell of damp earth – petrichor - and the skyline of jagged, snow-capped peaks, rising above the conifers ringing the campsite, had re-vitalised our senses after the uniformity and relative dullness of the prairies.

Leafing through a hiking guide over a glass of IPA at a nearby microbrewery restaurant, I was surprised to find that we were camped only a few miles to the north of the mountain. I quickly gleaned that Longs Peak was a 'fourteener' and at 14,259', it was the highest summit in the Rocky Mountain National Park. Reading on, I found that the standard walking route began at a Ranger Station, some 10 miles

distant by road. The route involved an ascent of more than 6,000' over 5 miles. The guidebook noted that most parties take two days to make the climb and camp in a hanging valley on the northeastern flank of the massif. Deciding to make use of one of our rare static days to get a closer look at the Diamond, I went to bed early that night.

Next morning, I slipped away from the campsite at 05h00 and drove swiftly to the Ranger Station. There had been rain overnight and the road was still damp in places. Dawn was breaking between heavy clouds massed on the eastern horizon as I switched off the ignition in the car park. To the west, the prospect looked brighter and there was plenty of blue sky. The mountain itself was still hidden by cloud but I remembered that the day before, the clouds had gradually dissipated throughout the morning, leaving the middle part of the day virtually cloudless. However, angry looking thunderheads had appeared in the late afternoon. I consulted the daily weather forecast at the Ranger Station and was encouraged to read that a similar pattern was predicted for the day ahead.

There were more than twenty other vehicles parked at the Ranger Station and about a dozen people were milling around preparing for the ascent. Several were packing camping gear into enormous rucksacks. One party was comfortably ensconced in collapsible camping chairs, eating a cooked breakfast, and discussing tactics! In complete contrast, I donned lightweight boots sitting on the cold tarmac. Grabbing my day sack and modest provisions, I set off through the conifers behind the Ranger Station. Checking my watch, I noted that the time was a few minutes after 06h00.

Alone in the half light of the shadowy trees, on a narrow track snaking upwards beside the Alpine Brook, I suddenly remembered the wildlife park we had visited near Rapid City and bears! They're not supposed to attack people unless provoked, and are rarely seen at close quarters in the wild. However, my pace quickened and my eyes darted uneasily from side to side. The inclined lighting played havoc with my imagination. Bears were dancing behind every tree, and I couldn't get that idiotic refrain - 'If you go down in the woods today...' out of my head! During the next hour and a half, I thought I heard at least half a dozen bears but the largest mammal I saw was a squirrel! It was with considerable relief that I emerged from the forest onto more open ground.

The temperature was cooler in the alpine meadows and there was a light breeze from the west. Although the summit remained hidden, the sun's rays were rapidly gaining strength and the cloud cover was beginning to disperse. By 08h00, I was breasting the 10,000' contour. Ahead of me, the track made a rising traverse around a shallow couloir beneath the subsidiary peak of Mount Lady Washington to a shoulder on the right. Six or seven parties were strung out along the track, labouring for the shoulder. I stepped out again and as I left the last few stunted trees, I passed a battered sign which warned climbers not to proceed in the event of thunderstorms.

It took almost an hour to reach the Granite Pass at the shoulder and I leapfrogged all the parties that I had seen ahead of me. I was travelling fast and light, whereas they were fully laden for a weekend on the mountain! Their envious comments as I skipped easily passed them only served to spur me on. Once above the Granite Pass, the ground began to steepen and the track zigzagged upwards to the lip

of the hanging valley on the north eastern flank of the summit pyramid. Several small tents had already been erected here and I judged from the number of parties following behind me that competition for the remaining level pitches was going to be intense.

From the lip of the hanging valley I could now glimpse the upper section of the Diamond to my left. Through my telephoto lens, I could see a party of climbers on a porta-ledge in the centre of the wall. They were relaxing in the sunshine. Above them, the flat-topped summit pyramid finally appeared as the last few wisps of cloud trailed away to the east. To the right of the summit, a ridge of pinnacles dropped steeply northwards to a col at the head of the hanging valley. It was 09h00 and I was now close to 12,000'. I decided to press on, at least as far as a prominent notch in the north ridge known as the Keyhole.

The initial approach to the Keyhole was easy. However, at some point in the recent geological past there was a glacier in this hanging valley, and an active one too. As the glacier had melted away, the detritus it had contained came to rest on the floor of the valley. The result was a chaotic mile of coarse block field. Negotiation of this section took up most of what remained of my first wind, and I thought the Keyhole might be the point at which I would have to turn around. Besides, from the Keyhole, the route becomes more serious, although at this season it would be largely free of snow.

The view from the Keyhole over the adjacent Glacier Gorge was breath taking. The rock itself looked superb - coarse-grained, orangey granite. It was hard on the fingers but provided excellent friction. It was too inviting to sit down and much too early to descend, so I began scrambling diagonally upwards across the easy angled broken slabs, unsure exactly

how far I would be able to continue.

My rate of progress was slower now, and more care was needed. Once across the slabs, I reached the foot of a scree-filled couloir and began plodding methodically upwards beside a tongue of hard-packed, debris-laden snow. This was the most energy-sapping section of the route - a good 800' of steep scree, partially frozen beneath the surface and highly unstable, but by this time I'd got the bit between my teeth and I wasn't going to give up easily.

Low cloud was drifting in from the west by the time I reached the top of the couloir and scrambled up a short wall to a comfortable platform. The route then crosses the upper walls of the west face by a series of broad but spectacular ledges called the Narrows. The setting was magnificent with the mist scudding past and it was noticeably colder at this altitude. I had to stuff my hands into my pockets periodically to keep the circulation going. The final section of scrambling to the summit, across the crack-lined slabs of the Homestretch, took ages. I was feeling the altitude by now and could only manage twenty or thirty paces at a time before pausing to catch my breath. The stops became longer and more frequent in duration until finally I hauled myself onto the summit at 10h45.

I scoffed my meagre rations by the cairn and chatted briefly to a couple of Americans who explained that they were in training for Killimanjaro. They were encouraged to hear that the standard route on Kili involved no scrambling. I wished them luck and set off down again. This wasn't so much fun. The rocks on the upper section were straightforward. The worst bit by far was the block field in the hanging valley. I was tired by this time and had to sit down at the Keyhole for a few

minutes and again at the lip of the hanging valley. Several late arrivals were frantically searching for level spaces between the enormous granite blocks, while those already established were sitting smugly in the entrance to their tents cupping hot drinks in their hands.

Further down, I came across a couple of Rangers at the point where the track to the Diamond branches off from the main summit trail. Somewhat bizarrely, they were leading a llama. They congratulated me on reaching the top and were impressed that I had set off from the Ranger Station early that same day. "Not many folks do that pal." This brief pause made me realise that without any cloud cover, the Diamond would have been plainly visible from this location on my ascent.

It was 13h30 when I re-entered the conifers, and there was no time to think about any 'picnicking bears' because peals of thunder were already echoing around me and there were spots of rain in the air. I sprinted down the last section to the car park and reached it just ahead of the rain. A few minutes later, as I was quenching my thirst, snug and dry in the driver's seat, a tremendous downpour obliterated everything from view. As the rain lashed against the windscreen I reflected on my day. I'd set off merely with the intention of getting a decent view of the Diamond. If it had been visible on my ascent, from the point where I met the two Rangers with the llama, I would probably have headed up to the base of the wall and missed the opportunity of reaching the summit. I hoped the climbers I had seen earlier on their porta-ledge had completed their route and were safely ensconced in a tent somewhere. As for myself, I would be dog tired the next day, but I reckoned I'd earned another glass of IPA at the microbrewery in Estes Park!

Lord of the Rings

Ian Armstrong

Climbing this route was a long game of chess. Firstly, lining up my own fitness, crag conditions, availability, and an appropriate partner. Four Pawns pushed forward as the opener; fit from lockdown training, weather good, a surplus of leave and a strong, keen partner in Mark whose face lit up at the suggestion.

The game then commenced in earnest, pieces move back and forth jostling for opportunity. Leave booked and cancelled as weather changed. Lost a Pawn early on due to work commitments clashing with good weather, lost a Bishop on a trip to Almscliff. Sacrificed a Knight arriving in a misty wet Wasdale early one morning and beating a retreat to Borrowdale. Worried that the crag had the stronger position, fearing it would Queen take Pawn soon with its annual monsoon, we attacked again.

Sacrificing the remaining Bishop booking the day off, we castled King's side by booking the van into the National Trust campsite to ensure a good night's sleep and an early start. Then the aggressive moves were made, an evening stroll up to the crag to stash all the gear and a large bottle of water, Queen and a Rook gone, we were left in a vulnerable position. Check to the crag.

Moving out of Check, we arrived down Wasdale and set up camp and headed to the pub feeling nervous good intentions evaporated and we had beer and pork pies, more pawns gone. Boosted psychologically by this positive move we slept soundly and woke to ... mist and midges, back in Check.

Committed now, we moved out of check and walked above the inversion to a beautiful day, the early morning sun catching Scafell crag, driving us

on to Mickledore, the East Buttress and the gear. All we have remaining is a Knight, a Rook and a few Pawns, this could be tricky but possible. We can still move up, down and sideways.

Knight's moves for the first two pitches, Holy Ghost, and a long look sideways. Lost, we had accidentally



avoided the 5c downclimbing with some 5c up and across climbing. We could see the flake crack from the guidebook photo and aimed for that, still unsure as to whether we were right or not and our rope management causing us some difficulty, how does it manage to twist up like that?

The flake crack was intimidating but easier than it looked once established in the jams, a good high runner just around the arete then some more traversing. Our first serious downclimb was down the yellow slab, Mark confused chess with boxing and released his inner Tyson, punching a cam into the hilt, another Pawn gone.

It was almost stalemate when we reached the Centaur, having used the wrong ledge system, repairing our error caused some rope jamming (did I mention how good our rope work was?). A chance encounter with Jenny Wright and Tim Millen climbing Centaur helped avoid some terrifying self-belayed faff. Steep climbing and more traversing and down climbing took us to the Mayday belay. That's it, arrived Check to us, Mayday direct done, and it will be plain sailing (ha ha).

Mayday direct looks impassable currently, dry but buried under deep moss, we followed Rise of Angmar to the belay, very good, sustained climbing, hard moves into balanced positions with gear of varying quality. Feet damp and slippery from wet ledges and all day in rock shoes made this tricky.

More scary down climbing, knight's moves again; down, right, down, right and we were in Mickledore Grooves, on another damp midge infested ledge. Almost there. Both hit by a wave of tiredness and relief, this felt like the hardest VS pitch in the world.

Checkmate. No time for celebrations, straight to the abseil point and carefully down, double checking everything. Change shoes, pull the ropes then whiskey from the hip flask, well earned. 13 hours of climbing.

The route surpassed expectations, I was expecting an Old Man of Hoy type experience, five star adventure on one star climbing. Lord of the Rings gave five stars for both. Five star company also.

Thanks Mark, good game, where next?



Memories of Norway

Dave Staton

Store Skagastolstind, 2405m, first climbed by Cecil Slingsby in 1876

During the Covid 19 lockdown I started reading some back numbers of the Journal. I was quite inspired by the various tales of daring exploits. Many of those I read related to accounts of near-death experiences or at least they seemed so to me, given the severity or remoteness of the trip. Well,

I thought, I have been in some pretty tight corners myself over the years but nothing unusual in that for a rock climber. Could I write about an experience which had inspired me and remains an indelible memory 60 years later? The ascent of Store Skagastolstind in the summer of 1961 was such an experience.

Between 1958 and 1960 I was a student at Matlock Teacher Training College. I was one of the first

men to be admitted to a College which until 1958 had been for women only. Apart from the obvious distractions every spare minute was spent on the Derbyshire edges or instructing at Whitehall outdoor pursuits centre. With me on the course was Roy Pomfret who had been seconded from the Outward Bound School in Eskdale where he was the Senior Instructor.

Previously he had served in Army Outward Bound and he seemed to fall naturally into any task

requiring meticulous organisation, whether it needed organising or not. Following college in 1961, Roy, who by this time had returned to Eskdale suggested a trip to Norway and possibly the Lofoten Islands. I think Roy asked me because I owned a 500cc Matchless motorbike and could generally be relied upon to climb within my grade and not fall off. By today's standard this means I was a bit of a wimp but at least I could rock climb better than Roy. For his part, Roy offered to do the organising. I was a crag rat though I could read a map and walk on a bearing. Apart from hillwalking in winter I had no experience of big mountains under alpine conditions. I did own a very old ice axe which had been given to me by someone who was retiring from work but who was probably younger than the axe.

Roy had been to Norway before and wanted to have a crack at Storen in the Hurrungane Range. Storen means 'Big' though it is only the 3rd highest peak in the country. However, it looks like a real mountain and had a bit of a reputation at the time. We then planned to continue into the Jotemheim, climb Galdopiggen and, given time and good weather, travel north to the Lofoten Islands north of the Arctic circle.

We boarded the SS Venus which was known as the 'vomiting Venus' for obvious reasons. She was built in 1931, did war service for the Germans and was sunk by allied bombers in 1945. The wreck was raised in 1948, rebuilt and remained in service for the next 20 years. Quite a history! As the picture shows there were no 'roll-on roll-off' ferries in those days.





Arriving in Bergan the first thing to do was to buy some crampons which I had foolishly failed to do before leaving. Eventually we found a likely shop, but only after a long search in the back

storeroom was a pair found. They were heavy and non-adjustable but amazingly they sort of fitted. To say the bike was overloaded would be an understatement. Despite keeping the climbing gear to a minimum it was all very heavy. A single full weight rope, ice axes, crampons, a couple of slings with screw gate army karabiners and the standard issue Outward Bound tent with no flysheet or groundsheet. Remember that Roy worked for Tom Price (FRCC member) at Eskdale. Tom had little regard for fancy gear, believing they were no substitute for ability, enterprise, and initiative. Those days were character building!

However, once the bike was upright and in forward motion the next challenge was to keep it that way on the unsealed roads which we hit just outside Bergan. Generally, the gravel surface was good, and we were able to keep a steady speed of 40 to 50 mph. However, in wet conditions on roads used by timber lorries, the surface became rippled, particularly on corners where vehicles had braked. At such times progress was reduced to a walking pace.

Initially we had fine weather and made good progress riding past thundering waterfalls and along the picture perfect shores of the Hardangarfjord and Sognefjord towards our first destination of Turtagro by route 55, known as Sognefjellsveg. The road was built in 1938 largely by

pick and shovel. Beyond Turtagro the road climbs to 1434m, the highest in northern Europe.

Turtagro is simply the site of an imposing hotel built in 1888 for mountaineers, walkers, and tourists. We pitched our tent nearby amongst the dwarf juniper within sound of a glacier fed beck. Our plan was to walk up to a col known as Skagastolsbu where there was a mountain Hut at 1758m, and the following day ascend Storen.

To reach the Hut we followed the Skagastolsdalen valley past a lake to ascend the Skagastolsbreen glacier to the col between Dyrhaugstind at 2147m and Storen's SW face. The Cabin on the Band (Hytta pa Bandet) as it is known is owned by the DNT (Den Norske Turistforening). The DNT maintain mountain trails and cabins. The cabin had 4 bunks and was equipped with wood and basic provisions. I particularly remember a tin of peaches!

This being my first big mountain adventure I was in awe of the scale of the mountains and in particular the exposure of just going to the loo across smooth granite slabs outside the hut. The picture shows Roy with a shovel, so I assume he had just made a visit!

One great advantage to climbing in Norway in summer is that it never really goes dark, so the danger of becoming benighted shouldn't arise. The morning of our climb dawned fine, and we made a leisurely start. We quickly reached the glacier known as Slingsbybreen, named after Slingsby. Storen was towering above us to our left and the glacier was quite steep with many crevasses.



These could have been avoided, but Roy considered that as I was very much the novice, I needed a bit of instruction in crevasse rescue and crossing snow bridges.

This duly accomplished we continued upwards beneath the southeast face of Storen. As the gradient eased, our route then crossed the snow to reach an extensive expanse of gabbro slabs. Time to remove the crampons and stow the axe in the sac. Now this was what I was used to. It was little more than scrambling but we kept the rope on. My memory is a little vague of the detail, but I do recall trending left across the slabs until we reached some ledges below a very steep face. We traversed the ledges known as the gallery for a short distance to arrive at a cleft which after a few feet opened into a narrow gully filled with snow and ice. This was our route and the crux of the climb. It is called Heftyes Renne (gully) first climbed by Johannes Thommassen Heftye in 1880. I now stood at the foot of the pitch, ice axe at the ready, feeling the exposure and not at all sure that I could lead it (for the technically minded the pitch is graded 4+). However, with my mentor giving encouragement I inched my way up. I found good purchase for the axe in the ice above and with small holds on the sides for my feet made hesitant progress. The difficulties were relatively short and soon the gully widened for me to take a belay and bring Roy up. There followed another pitch, or maybe 2, up easier ground to reach the summit where there was just room for us both to perch.



Note the ubiquitous balaclavas - derigueur at the time.

Descent was by the way we had come down the gully to reach the Gallery. Much easier going

down by abseil albeit steep and very exposed, or so it seemed to me at the time. No fear when one is 21! From the Gallery we retraced our route back across the slabs to the glacier. Our intention was to ascend to the col between Storen and Vesle known as Mohns Skard. This is where in 1876 Slingsby left his companions Mohn and Lykken to continue alone to the summit. However, our



way to the col was barred by a large bergschrund which appeared to cross the entire base of the headwall. Eventually we found a narrow point where we could climb across to reach a steep snow field beyond. Once again, I found myself in the lead brandishing my ancient ice axe. No front pointing with fancy crampons ... this was rhythmical step cutting. Eventually I made progress and the angle eased and I was able to take an axe belay and bring Roy up.

The views from Mohns Skard were spectacular. A narrow ridge leading to the summit of Storen looked inviting. Could we make a second ascent in a single day? The ridge was free of snow though the rock was very rounded and covered in scallop like lichen. I made a tentative start, but progress was slow. It was little more than a scramble, but I was very inexperienced. The exposure, some loose rock and lack of belays made me fearful. Given the lateness of the day we decided to retreat.

By now the snow was very soft and deep. Roy



suggested that we should jump the bergschrund given the steepness of the slope. Not sure if the risk of avalanche was even considered. We kept the rope on and went one at a time. The theory was to brake with our axes in the classic style described in all good mountaineering books of the time! Thankfully we made it and descended the Slingsbybreen, this time avoiding the crevassed area. By the time we reached the hut it was still daylight and a beautiful evening with striking views southeast down Midmaradalen.

We woke the following morning surrounded by thick cloud and several inches of snow. Time to descend back to Turtagro and the tent. A few days

later the weather had improved sufficiently for us to climb Norway's highest mountain, Galdhøpiggen at 2469m. The route was very straightforward and in comparison to Storen an easy walk.

We never made it to Lofoten getting only as far as Trondheim, 560 Kilometres from the Arctic Circle. On our return journey the bike chain snapped and without a spare link or garage in the vicinity, the bike had to be loaded onto the Hurtigruten ferry at Sognefjord back to Bergen whilst we returned by train.

For those who have climbed Storen more recently and have a better knowledge of the route please excuse my memory - it is rather a long time ago. Nevertheless, the excitement still remains - it was awesome!



View of the SW face from the Hut

Footnote: Since researching this account my respect for Slingsby has grown. He certainly deserves to be known as the father of mountaineering in Norway. On the day he climbed Storen he started from Vormell, traversed Rolandsnosi above the Midtmaradalen valley reaching the col between Storen and Vesle (Mohns Skard) eleven hours later. He then left Mohn and Lykken to scramble alone to the summit. Together they descended Slingsbybreen returning to Vormeli 18 hours later - quite a day!

Rendez-vous Hautes Montagnes

Anne Salisbury

Rendez-vous Hautes Montagnes (RHM) is an International women's climbing network, established in 1968, and each year women from around Europe gather to rock climb together.

Background to Rendez-vous Haute Montagne

In 1968 Baroness Felicitas von Reznicek (1903 - 1997) who lived in Engleberg, Switzerland, founded the Rendezvous Hautes Montagnes (RHM), a coming together of women alpinists, on the summit of Titlis. In 1968, Czech mountaineers were not allowed to attend without official invitations from an organisation. The Baroness and friends set up the organisation to invite the Czechs they had known before the 1968 political suppression, when travel had been easier. The first meeting was attended by Nea Morin, Margret Darrell, Eileen Healy and Esme Speakman from the UK who were all Pinnacle Club members. The Pinnacle Club has been closely associated with the RHM throughout.

Since then, there have been annual meetings of women climbers from all over Europe, always meeting in a different place, overcoming political and ideological boundaries, and climbing together. RHM has a fund set up some years ago which helps the host countries put on these events and keep the costs down for participants who may not normally be able to afford a week in another country.

< Assegai, Trowbarrow

At the 2008 anniversary meet, several of the original members were invited and made speeches and toasts at the evening meal. This event was also attended by the president of the Swiss Alpine Club.

The RHM network is open to all women who can lead climbs of Grade 5 (Hard Severe and above in the UK) and can independently undertake their routes. There is no instruction. It is expected that each woman knows how to keep herself and others safe. RHM has no constitution and no laws; it is a loose network, not a club.

In 2013 two Italian women, Isa Bonicalzi and Claudia Cuoghi, took over the role of President.

Langdale 2019

13th - 20th July 2019 saw the UK host their fourth summer RHM climbing meet. This was based in the Lakes at the National Trust campsite in the Langdale Valley. There have only been three previous meets in the UK, 1989 North Wales, 1997 North Lakes, 2005 North Wales.

Old friendships were renewed and new friendships made throughout the week through the common interest of climbing.



Cracked Actor, Trowbarrow





Sixty five women gathered for this 51st summer meeting in the wonderful Lake District which saw warm and dry conditions for the first five days, when groups climbed on Gimmer Crag, Bowfell, Pavey Ark and Dow Crag as well as the lower crags of White Ghyll, Raven Crag, Kettle Crag and Raven Crag Walthwaite. The traditional climbing techniques used in the UK provided

opportunity and challenge for those more used to bolted rock climbing on the continent.

Later in the week, when the weather turned wet, a group of thirteen went ghyll scrambling in Scale Ghyll and the following wet day a group of twenty-two walked around Cathedral Caverns! Drier conditions saw final days spent at Castle Rock and Trowbarrow Quarry.



Final meal at Stickle Barn

The week finished with a dinner at the Stickle Barn, where a great raffle with many prizes saw almost all participants take something home. At this event, the following year's summer rock climbing event was announced (Slovenia 2020) and thanks given to the organisers of this year's event: Stella Adams, Jo Barnes, Fiona Sanders and Rya Tibawi.

Everyone who attended took home with them a great respect for our climbing traditions and a wonderful impression of the generosity that enabled the meet to take place. The event was sponsored by the Climbers Club, Alpine Club, BMC, FRCC and The Pinnacle Club.

Since 1999, annual winter meets for ski touring and snow and ice climbing have also been held.

Any women climbers interested in taking part in summer or winter activities should visit www.rhm-climbing.net to find further information.

< Enjoying the fabulous weather

The Hidden Valley

Alan Phizacklea

This is a tale of climbing in a hidden valley found in a quiet backwater of the Lakes.

This may sound strange, as surely every inch of The Lakes has been explored and catalogued and is known to all? But from a climber's point of view the rocky outcrops and slabs we found in this valley remained hidden, ignored and undeveloped. This is the valley of Tarn Beck, drained by the beck of the same name which feeds the River Duddon, just north of Seathwaite and the warm welcome of The Newfield Inn.

Just why did this place remain undeveloped until 2019, when nearly 90 new routes were added in a remarkably short burst of activity? How had it escaped the attention of climbers who had competitively scoured the Duddon Valley for decades? It almost seems too strange to be true.

I can go back to 1988 when an enforced period of idleness brought on by industrial action meant I had time on my hands to look for new rock, and this is when I first visited the Tarn Beck valley. In truth, I was looking for something that had impact, a new 'Burnt Crag' which needed to be a hundred feet high, vertical and clean. In truth, there is no such wall of rock that matches this criterion in the Duddon; all I saw was a short clean wall which seemed suitable for bouldering, and nothing else. The largest piece of rock was also the dirtiest, and on this I added Gurt Thrang next to an old Bill Barnes line called Gaily Thrang. If there was ever a single route which had the purpose of putting people off a climbing area, this one fitted the bill perfectly. Steep, mossy rock; limited protection and a battle with a vindictive holly soured my desire for this area. The day was

saved by adding three pleasant short routes on 'the bouldering wall', which gave very tricky but technical climbing on excellent rock. These were tucked away as a short paragraph in the 1994 Duddon guide without any prominence and it became known as the Henry's Cat Wall, named after my partner of the day, Henry Buxton. The rocky hillside to the south of this wall was simply dismissed as an area suitable for scrambling and bouldering, because it contained a couple of scrambles in Brian Evans' original scrambling guide.

Because it remains hidden from the main Duddon road, and because there is no need to walk along its green swathe to reach any other crags, for the next twenty-odd years I passed this valley by, never giving it a second thought. Obviously, no-one else had cause to explore this place either, even though the Duddon Valley experienced an intense phase of development around the Harter Fell and Wrynose areas. It remained an ignored backwater from a climber's perspective, apart from Craig Matheson's ascent of a desperately overhanging and poorly protected arête he found directly opposite the waterfalls that drain Seathwaite Tarn. An earlier attempt resulted in a broken ankle, but he returned to claw his way up the hardest route in the valley to give the innocently named Mr Cuddles, which weighs in at an impressive E8.

I recall that John Holden and I walked around the lower valley in 2015, but this was on a poor wet day, and the rock was green and seemingly broken into short tiers, reinforcing my earlier prejudice that there was nothing there worth investigating. But there was rock, and lots of it – all it required was a change of attitude and an acceptance that even 12 metres

of rock is worth climbing, but only if it is found in a naturally clean state.

It was on my birthday in October (sic) 2018 that John and I abandoned our visit to Brandy Crag as it was a cold, windy day. I recall we met the 'Penrith Mafia' in the car park at the entrance to the forest, and felt guilty that they were pressing on to climb on Buck Crag, whilst we were retiring to the pub. To preserve some self-esteem, we decided to investigate a short clean wall that was easily visible from the reservoir track that leads to Seathwaite Tarn which had the enticing name of Sunny Pike, which had often attracted our curiosity. Exactly how high was this wall? It turned out to be 14m high! So, we climbed the most obvious line that day, inevitably named Birthday Crack, which turned out to be a neat little VS. Buoyed by the potential, we returned the following month and picked off another four routes; these weren't the highest quality but being less than a 10 minute walk from the car this is one of the nearest crags to the road – and it hadn't been climbed on before! We took a wander through the adjacent intake field where we discovered the local archaeologists' group partial restoration of two bronze-age round houses, a stark reminder of the depth of history contained in this secluded valley. Just around the corner from these houses we caught sight of a lovely clean slab, which was entirely hidden from view, and completely unsuspected. The two routes we added turned out to be the last of the year, and because the new guide was due out soon, one of these was named 'The Valley of a Thousand Routes'. The return walk back to the car led down the old peat track past the broken outcrop of Crag Band, home to one of the scrambles mentioned earlier. Because the setting sun threw a warm glow across the rock it took on an attractive air, and it seemed to hold some promise. Also spotted from the path was a slab, hidden behind a small copse of conifers, also looking

attractive and clean. Suddenly the area seemed to hold a considerable amount of potential!

On the first calm day in January, we called back at Sunny Pike to pick off the rest of the remaining lines before following the intake wall around to the attractive slab, where we added a single route. Naming this discovery Tongue House Slab after the adjacent farm, we returned with John Daly, one of the most prolific new-routers in the Duddon Valley scene. This was during the well-publicised heatwave of February 2019 where we climbed in t-shirts, picking off a couple of pleasant thin slabs, completely unprotected except for the distant comfort of side runners. I thought one was particularly intense and it tested me to my limit, being somewhat overweight and unfit. With my fragile ankle, I found myself desperate to find every bit of protection available, even if that was marginal skyhooks perched on miniscule flakes.

Several months later, Keith Phizacklea added the best route at these slabs up the sharp central arête which was completely devoid of protection, called The Brothers, E4. Hearing of the activity, Rob Matheson and Steve Scott visited, and dispensing with the notion of ropes, soloed all the routes in short time, straightening out a couple of the earlier lines. They suggested that there was nothing above 5b on these slabs; therefore there was nothing above E2. Nick Wharton also paid a solo visit, and backed up Rob and Steve's comments. Now these remarks riled the earlier activists, who countered that the routes were originally graded for a roped ascent. Yes, it proved that Rob, Steve and Nick could solo short, blank slabs with ease – but we were writing the guide for the traditional climbers who don't solo gritstone slabs for fun through the winter. We concluded that experienced climbers would find the grades ridiculously easy, but the less-abled climbers would

find them terribly unprotected, and as guidebook producers we have a duty of care to look after these folk. So don't listen to the controversy, just go there and enjoy a delightful set of pure friction slabs. Rob and Steve also re-visited Henry's Cat Wall and appreciating the excellent nature of the rock, brought the crag to maturity with a couple of new routes.

Our next visit to the valley was in March, where we retreated from a cold, shaded crag high up the Duddon to return to the Tarn Beck Valley, which was clear of the cap of cloud enveloping the higher fells. Intrigued by the extensive sprawl of Crag Band, we picked off a couple of routes on the lower slab thus initiating the Band-themed route names. Once we realised that the crag was bigger and better than we first thought, we returned week after week, adding dozens of routes on immaculate rock of all grades between Severe and E2. We invited Joe Holden along who was immediately attracted by a short overhanging wall which offered some hard potential.

The tiered nature of the crag meant that certain walls remained hidden from view, one such feature we named The Bandstand, a steep wall tucked at the back of a flat terrace which hid it from the base of the crag. This provided some lovely short lines, such as Bandstand Groove (E1) and Reckless Abandon (E2), which was given the label of the best layback in the Duddon. Never one to miss an opportunity, John Daly literally sniffed out the Hidden Slab, which can only be accessed by an abseil from a vague saddle on the crest of the crag, and this presented three delightful lines between E2 and E3.

Joe's attention was focused on the steep wall, top-roping the central line before leading it to give Abandon Ship, which was confirmed at E6 6c by Andy Mitchell, who led the second ascent. This line received another 4 repeats in the same month,

including one from Joe's girlfriend Siara Fabbri, an intensity of ascents which must be something of a record for a new E6 in The Lakes. News was obviously getting out to the wider climbing world! Joe also completed the technically easier, but bolder companion route at E7 6b, following a rope-stretch ground fall on his first attempt. This in turn was inevitably repeated by local hot-shot Craig Matheson, who was in unstoppable form in that year. It was John Daly and me who called this feature Joe's Wall and we always referred to it as thus, but John Holden was accused of naming a crag feature after a family member – when he had nothing to do with it!

At the other end of the grade scale, we climbed the clean slabs adjacent to the original scramble route at V. Diff, but at 90 metres in length this turned out to be the longest route in the Duddon!

More recently Rick Graham and Ted Rogers have joined in with the new routes rush by adding a dozen routes, and they were reported to have said they haven't done a poor route there; coming from that team that's a fine compliment!

This area and particularly Crag Band will come as a surprise to most climbers who open up the new Duddon Guide. We never bothered to publicise it on the web, as the details were expected to be published in full the following spring. But to find a new crag with a stock of nearly 60 routes recorded in six months is a rare find indeed, and this will guarantee a burst of interest over the next few years. There are now as many routes here as Wallowbarrow Crag and one wonders whether it will mature into a suitable alternative to that popular venue? But please, please visit Crag Band in early May, when the bluebells are out along the approach track from the Fickle Steps car park, and you'll be enchanted by the beauty and charm of this long-lost corner of The Lakes.

Two Peas in a Pod

Dan Hamer

The Peapod is a classic gritstone route. A striking crack line that splits the main section of Curbar Edge from top to bottom. The name derives from a recess at half height which resembles an open peapod. Somewhat inevitably, it was first climbed by Joe Brown and Slim Sorrel during that extraordinarily productive post-war decade on British rock. It's a strenuous route and success requires a combination of jamming, back and footing and a propensity for contortionism. Modern protection has taken some of the sting out of the route's original reputation but exiting the pod remains awkward for many climbers and it still merits a grade of Hard Very Severe (5b).

I made my first visit to Curbar in 1978, shortly before departing South with the British Antarctic Survey (BAS). Part of BAS's induction procedures consisted of an Adventure Training and Safety Course in Derbyshire, which provided a welcome break from office-based preparations. The course also presented me with the opportunity to spend an evening or two on the grit.

Unfortunately, none of the other new recruits I had met had expressed any serious enthusiasm for rock climbing. I thought the chance had gone begging. However, at the last minute, I was encouraged to hear that our party would be joined in Derbyshire by a PhD Student, who was described as a keen rock climber. As a result, I was in a more positive mood as we left Cambridge for the journey northwards to the Peak District.

Our destination was a farm in the outskirts of Baslow, and when we arrived, my prospective climbing partner was already ensconced in a corner of a field, brewing tea beside his Vango Tent. He had an

open, smiling face, with a high-bridged nose, set between lively, though somewhat impish, grey-blue eyes. His mildly unkempt appearance and sunburnt complexion created the favourable impression that he'd just alighted from a sleepless overnight lift at the end of an energetic spell in the Highlands.

When I introduced myself to him, he explained that he hailed from Sheffield and had got a lift to Baslow early in the afternoon. However, I was disappointed to find that he was lukewarm about wanting to climb that first evening. His vague hints at a recent accident went unnoticed and I was intrigued to learn that he hadn't done any climbing for several months. Frustrated by this reticence, I continued to pester him with pleas for a partner until eventually he relented and agreed to join me at Curbar, at the end of our first training session the next day.

We spent the evening at the Wheatsheaf pub in Baslow, together with the rest of the BAS party. Added to our interest in geology, and a passion for climbing, we shared a common taste in music and read similar books. His NERC-sponsored project was co-ordinated by the Sedgwick Museum in Cambridge. He was off to Antarctica to collect plant fossils and BAS was providing the necessary logistical support. By closing time, we were firm friends.

The following day, we were put through an introductory course of roped climbing at Gardom's Edge, which included belaying, abseiling and prusiking. Most of the other recruits found this both exciting and challenging, as none of them had any previous experience of rock climbing. The forecast for the day had been mixed but there was no rain. I was encouraged to note that the rock had remained

dry and conditions for the evening looked promising. Around five o'clock, the instructors brought the first day's formal session to a close and everyone except the two of us descended to the campsite. We made our way to Curbar Edge instead, where we'd both decided that the most obvious route to attempt was The Peapod.

The main section of Curbar is an imposing wall, approximately 20m in height. The lower section of the wall comprises a massive bed of coarse-grained Millstone Grit. There's a distinct horizontal break at two thirds height, and above this, the upper portion is more regularly layered. The wall is split by a trio of regularly spaced cracks and The Peapod takes the middle one.

The route comprises three sections. The lower part is a regulation jamming crack. This leads to the obvious pod-shaped sentry box in the centre of the wall which gives the route its name. Exiting the pod is generally considered to be the crux. The steep crack above is an awkward off-width that slopes to the left. However, the angle gradually eases towards the top. It looks straightforward enough from below. They always do!

My companion was happy to hold my ropes, so I confidently attacked the initial jamming crack. Unfortunately, I soon discovered that it wasn't as simple as I'd imagined. I made little headway and the in-cuts at the base of the pod remained agonisingly out of reach. I persisted without success for a quarter of an hour before admitting defeat and handing over to my reluctant partner. By this time, I'd become more aware of his reticence and had adopted a more sympathetic and encouraging approach. As he applied himself to the task, I noticed for the first time that his elbows were badly scarred and that there were livid rope burns across the back of his knees.

Over the next half hour, we each had several attempts but consistently failed to get more than a metre off the ground. During this time, however, I gradually received a full account of his recent escapade on White Slab at Cloggy. This was the first occasion he'd put his rock boots and harness on since the accident. His apparent reserve and inability to better my efforts were fully understandable.

At the fourth attempt, I finally succeeded in locking the fingers of my left hand into the lower crack, lunged for the in-cuts, and hauled myself unsteadily into the base of the pod. Sadly, the elation of this temporary triumph quickly evaporated as I gained height inside the pod. I faced left and made a half-hearted attempt to back and foot. It did not feel secure, and I was unwilling to advance beyond the widest point of the pod without better protection above me. I had no camming devices or suitable wedges to insert, so I lowered off from a precarious Moac and handed over again to my second.

He was now beginning to recover some of his erstwhile confidence and enthusiasm. Armed with a couple of medium-sized hexes from his rucksack, he strode deliberately into the pod, making much better progress than I'd achieved and managed to establish one of the hexes firmly at the top of the pod. However, the exit from the pod baffled him. After several strenuous but fruitless attempts, he lowered off muttering to himself how much he hated gritstone cracks.

We sat on the ground chatting for a few moments and then I decided to have one last attempt. I took the remaining hex and managed to re-gain my companion's high point with a minimum of effort. Although we were roughly the same height, it soon became apparent that our back and leg measurements were quite different. I was able to

take a hands-off rest at the top of the pod with comparative ease. This drew a barrage of comments from below. After a quick shake out of my hands, the notorious exit from the pod proved relatively simple. To my amazement, I gained access to the upper crack with some style! The comments from below became less sardonic and more appreciative. I began to enjoy the climbing.

From here to the top, the only problem was a lack of suitable runners. I placed the hex as high as possible and attacked the upper crack in a mood of concentration and mounting excitement. It went much easier than I'd expected. At the top, I engineered a belay and brought my companion up to join me, where he warmly shook me by the hand. We'd successfully climbed our first route together.

By the time we'd descended to the start of the climb, a couple of lean giants had arrived. They were evidently preparing to follow us up The Peapod. 'That seemed to tek a bit o' effort!' said the darker one, in a mocking tone. We were unaware that they'd been observing our antics and this comment subdued me. I was eager to pack up and get away as soon as possible. After our protracted struggle, I wasn't keen to stand around and watch a couple of locals breeze up the route. My companion, however, seemed inclined to linger.

As they roped up and approached the foot of the crack he winked and mouthed "This should be interesting." It was a puzzling remark, but I stopped packing and sat down on the grass beside him. The darker giant rubbed the soles of his rock boots, stretched pointedly, and reached for the in-cuts near the lip of the pod. He grasped them with ease and in one fluid movement was standing in the base of the pod. My heart sank. It had taken us an hour to get into the pod! 'Keep watching' was my companion's

gleeful response.

Then, as the dark giant stared upwards, it dawned on me that the next section wasn't going to be so easy for him. He started by methodically arranging his protection as high up in the pod, as possible. Then the fun began. He was too tall to back and foot. My companion's face had creased into a broad smile, and he was beginning to offer helpful suggestions. They received a cool response from both lead climber and second.

Frustration mounted as the dark giant faced left, then right, then left again and finally tried to stem by facing inwards with the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet flexed. In this fashion he slowly inched his way upwards until the pod closed around him and ejected him backwards into space! He only fell a few metres but the suddenness of his parting company with the rock had caught his second off guard and he was dragged excitedly to his feet. Sharp words were exchanged between leader and second.

The dark giant was mildly shaken. He lowered off and untied from the rope to let his fairer companion have a look. Alas for them, the second was of a similar height. Although the lower crack was a breeze, the pod proved to be his undoing. We watched them continue to swap ends in an atmosphere of mounting hilarity. Neither could exit the pod. My companion was rolling uncontrollably in the grass beside me, and I'd also started to add helpful comments. Towards nine o' clock, we grew bored with their lack of progress and decided to head for the pub. It proved to be the final straw for our two friends. As Curbar Edge disappeared from view, we caught a glimpse of them on the skyline setting up an abseil to recover their gear. It had been an eventful and entertaining evening.

A month later, my companion sailed for the Antarctic aboard the RRS John Biscoe, the smaller of BAS's logistical support vessels. I followed in the RRS Bransfield a few weeks later and was put ashore at an Argentinian Base at the northern tip of the Graham Land Peninsula. I spent the next four months in Antarctica collecting rock samples and I didn't meet up with my friend again until the end of the field season. It was a significant reunion and instead of flying back to the UK from Port Stanley, as per my original schedule, I arranged to sign off the books for a couple of months, to join him and two others for a trip to the southern Andes. Our subsequent journey from the Falkland Islands into Patagonia and then northwards to re-join the ship in Rio de Janeiro, remains one of the most formative and satisfying periods of travel in my life.

During the subsequent three years, we consolidated our climbing partnership, making dozens of trips throughout the UK. We clocked up a creditable list of harder routes in the Lake District, North Wales, the Southwest and of course the Peak District. I brought him to a score of FRCC Meets as my guest, including the Club's first 'official' sea cliff climbing meet at Gogarth in August 1980.

In the late summer of 1982, we led through on Carnage Left Hand at Malham. He was climbing well that day and I recall making heavy weather seconding the crux pitch. At the time, it was just another route. However, shortly afterwards he left for the United States to take up a research fellowship at the Institute of Polar Studies in Columbus, Ohio. I never saw him again.

One afternoon a year later, my BAS Supervisor came into my office and asked me if I knew of an address for my climbing companion's parents. I was busy processing geochemical data and regarded

the intrusion as ill-timed. I didn't have any details to hand and suggested that he should try the Personnel Department. I thought no more of this incident until the following lunchtime, when I was sitting in the concourse, beneath the Sedgwick Museum in Cambridge, sipping coffee with members of the Geology Department. Suddenly, his name was mentioned, and someone asked when he was expected to return. His former supervisor from the Antarctic Project turned to the enquirer with a care worn expression and said simply, 'Sadly he won't be joining us. I've just heard he's been killed in an avalanche in Peru.'

As these words echoed around the concourse in the stunned silence that followed, something vital inside me was snuffed out. The faces in front of me blurred. I thought I was going to faint but managed to control my faculties sufficiently to place my unfinished coffee on the table and excuse myself. I rode my bicycle back to BAS in a condition of high emotion. As I entered the building, the expression on everyone's faces confirmed the unthinkable.

Gradually the details filtered through. He'd finished his period of research in Columbus and was set to return to Cambridge. However, the opportunity had arisen to accompany a geological excursion to Peru. He'd been there previously as a student from Liverpool and I could imagine his enthusiasm. At the end of the field trip, he'd taken a few days off to go climbing and had teamed up with a Kiwi partner. Together they'd successfully climbed one of the higher peaks in the Cordillera Blanca. During the descent, they were caught in an avalanche. He was swept into a crevasse and was already dead when his more fortunate companion was able to reach him.

PostScript:

For many years, the Geological Society of London offered funding from the 'Timothy Jefferson Research Fund' to prospective applicants who were:

... under 28 years of age; for a field project for research in Earth Science. Not for military activity or development.

However, more recently a note appeared on the Society's website stating that they were:

... no longer able to offer the 'Timothy Jefferson Research Fund' which is spent out. Timothy was a highly talented young geoscientist whose PhD focused on Antarctic palaeobotany. He was awarded the Palaeontological Association's Presidents Prize in 1982. Timothy was also a very talented climber, and tragically died in an avalanche while climbing in the high Andes of Peru. In 1985, his family and friends generously endowed the 'Timothy Jefferson Research Fund' which has provided funding approaching £40k over the intervening years. The Society is grateful to those who made this possible.

An Alpine Journey

John Hartley

From Widdop it started—the story of two Lancashire lads on their mountaineering journey through the Alps, from the Dolomites in the east to the Dauphine and Vercors in the southwest during a number of summer seasons in the early sixties.

Rod Brown (member) and I both hail from Burnley and along with other members Jim Sutcliffe and David Evans we walked the moorland tracks to Widdop on an almost weekly basis. There we met John Wilkinson and Albert Ashworth. Coming from the opposite direction of Halifax were Edwin Leggett and Dave Bull. Quite a useful nucleus of talent.

While climbing at Widdop and other local crags as a teenager I had read and re-read the books of three famous continental mountaineers, Herman Buhl (Austrian) Gaston Rebuffat (French) and Giusto Gervasutti who was Italian. You will see how their influence was born out in our journey.

Rod and I both attended university courses which gave us the opportunity for a month in the Alps during the summer. Our first expedition was to the beautiful Brenta Dolomites where we made our base at the Brentei hut run by Nella and Bruno Desassis. Bruno kindly took us under his wing, suggesting particularly good routes for us to try.

Out of a total of about ten or so routes, those which I particularly recall, two of them are on the Campanile Basso the most attractive and challenging peak in the Brenta group, and one which you cannot help photographing. The Via Fehrmann was the first, a majestic diedre of some 550 metres formed between the southwest wall

and the west shoulder of the Campanile, steep but sound rock, now with plenty of protection from nuts and Friends. We were in the age of big boots and slings. The second was the Preuss Wall described in the guidebook as “A fine climb on small but sound holds; exposed.” I can second that, above left onto an arête felt like being on top of a turntable ladder with no handrails, the fire engine being parked over a one thousand feet drop! The descent from the summit of the Campanile is not without interest, a series of abseils, some free.

Bruno recommended the southwest face of the Torre di Brenta, a narrow but vertical face, the final part guarded by a line of overhangs. The climbing was elegant, and the route found a way through the overhangs without climbing anything which was actually overhanging but there were some pretty airy traverses.

Opposite the Brentei Hut is the large bulk of the Crozzon di Brenta, the north ridge of which we climbed earlie, and the highest peak in the group, Cima Tosa. Bruno suggested his route on the northeast face which he put up with Ettore Castiglione and had not been repeated. It was going to be a long day out, a two thousand five hundred feet route and a long descent down the back of the mountain. Nella gave us a flask of lemon tea. There were lot of strenuous chimneys; the upper ones were iced up with melt water from the summit snows. Halfway up we found a little cairn (Bruno had told us where to look) and there we added our signatures to those of two of Italy's great climbers.

Part way through our stay in the Brenta, Peter Grindley (member) and Edwin Leggett joined us, and they climbed the Via Fehrmann. After a few more routes we embussed into Peter's A35 van for a drive across the Dolomites to the Lavaredo peaks to "have a look" at the Comici Route on the North Face of the Cima Grande. Our base was the Lavaredo hut, where on our first night, Edwin was subjected to a course of instruction by some Italia lads on how to eat spaghetti. Their efforts were not very successful as Edwin insisted on continuing with the Halifax system of chopping it all up which he regarded as more effective than rolling it all up in a ball. The hut was in uproar. It was a very jovial night.

At dawn the following morning Rod and I were not quite so jovial as we walked round the end of the Tre Cime beneath the north face. It was now September, and the rock had that icy bite to it. At that time, we climbed in the usual manner, using pitons for aid and all went well except for one incident. Fortunately I was seconding at the time, and had just clipped a rather dubious bent peg when it ceased to perform its essential function and I was treated to view of the wall some fifteen feet out. I initiated a swing on the rope and was able to grab with my left hand the bottom rung of an etrier which Rod had left on a particularly blank wall. Never before or since have I managed a one arm pull-up! The rest of the route went according to plan. We bivouacked near the summit and descended the normal route to meet up with our friends and finally wend our way home.

I do not know how many British teams had completed the route at that time (1960), perhaps three or four, something which gave us some satisfaction, particularly as the first Brit was Widdop-trained John Wilkinson.

All aspirant Alpinists head for Chamonix and its famous Aiguilles. During a number of visits, we completed a dozen routes or so. Ones which still lie in my memory are the North Ridge of the Peigne, an early ascent of the Contamine Route on the south side and the East Ridge of the Dent du Crocodile. That was a hard and strenuous route. I recall Rod leading a really awkward and vertical crack right at the start of the difficulties and my little artificial pitch on pegs upside down under a flake. Altogether a great route on a high peak just shy of twelve thousand feet.

After the Crocodile and some other routes on the Aiguilles, we decided on a change of scenery. We loaded the van and set off on the lengthy drive to Courmayeur (pre-tunnel) and set up camp in the Val Veni. The southern Italian side of Mont Blanc is very wild and isolated, guarded by steep and chaotic glaciers. Our objective was the Ratti Vitali route on the majestic west face of the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey, a magnificent rock climb in fabulous scenery. The approach was a steep path - iron ladders in the odd place - to the Gamba hut, now replaced with a new stone structure, for an overnight stop. It wasn't quite overnight as we got up at some hour I did not think existed and climbed over the Col de l'Innominata to gain the tumbledown Freney glacier. This is a dangerous place, hence our early start time for the glacier crossing as it was coming light. The snow was firm and crunchy under our crampons so in the interest of speed the ropes remained in our sacks, and we set off at a run. Twenty minutes it took, and we were staring up the first awkward chimneys. Thereafter we enjoyed reasonably straight forward climbing up to the crux section of the wall. This consists of two pitches, the first free and the second mainly artificial. I bagged the free pitch, which was a magnificent open corner which seemed

to overhang in two dimensions. Above this was a commodious ledge where I sat in comfort to watch Rod make his way up the impending corner. Following, I expended much sweat and effort in recovering our equipment and then followed on with an absorbing and very exposed traverse leading to the summit rocks, still quite difficult at grade V. From our bivouac below the summit the following morning there were wide and clear views particularly of the Pillars of Freney. The first ascent of the Central Pillar was, of course, made by Chris Bonington (member) and Don Whillans.

Another of our Alpine ventures was a visit to the Dauphine in the southwest corner of the Alpine chain which did not seem to have received much British attention. It appeared a wild area and difficult to navigate, not at all like the Chamonix Aiguilles. Our base was La Berarde, reached by an exciting road governed by a one-way system based on certain hours for up and other hours for down.

Rod had heard of the Aiguille Dibona, a fine peak with a comfortable hut at its foot. Perfect! When the Aiguille comes into view on the hut walk it is breathtaking, a huge blade of rock, as iconic a shape as the Matterhorn. Our chosen route was the south face direct by way of the Madier Crack. A 20 minute approach led to fine climbing on perfect rock. Rod led the Madier Crack in great big boots with great aplomb. It was like a gritstone jamming crack.

The weather looked settled, so we were on for our main objective, the Allain-Leininger route up the South Pillar of the Meije. The Promontoire Hut, the usual starting point was under re-construction so we bivied nearby. A long, scrambling traverse brought us to the foot of our 3000-foot route. The climbing on the first section was enjoyable and open but then we were embroiled in steep,

awkward chimneys, and cracks. The route was always absorbing and in the late afternoon we reached the easy rocks below the summit and raced up the last few hundred feet. The views from our summit, which was only a few metres short of the magic 4000, were awesome. There was the Barre des Ecrins, the highest peak, and, along the ridge from us the Dito de Deo which appeared to defy all the laws of gravity. I ran off a few photos and we left to descend the Voie Normale. It was bivouac time again, but this time in a howling gale. My recollection is of hanging onto the bivi tent all night. We returned to camp as the weather was worsening and the following morning the South Pillar looked a real horror story, all covered in fresh snow. I think ours was the first British ascent. I understand that Don Whillans and ace American climber Gary Hemming made the ascent some two years later, so we felt quite chuffed about our effort.

Cloud and rain continued to envelop La Berarde, so we packed up and set off for the Vercors, a lower limestone area to the west. This was a good move as the weather was much better. We saw for the first time Mont Aiguille. This is like a giant domino set on its side atop a plinth. There is absolutely nothing like it. There was time for two routes, the second was the North Pillar and was the better and longest, taking a line straight up the east end. The summit is a flat, grassy meadow but with no wildlife around. Next was to pack up the A35 van and head for home. What a vehicle! Cheapest motoring ever!

The Northeast face of the Piz Badile, a mountain in the Bregaglia group situated on the border of Switzerland and Italy, has featured in the books of two of my heroes. Their account of huge, overlapping slabs of granite, forming a vast Alpine face, fired my imagination. After a long train and bus journey, four of us, Rod, Edwin, Mike White

(member) and myself, arrived in the village of Promontogno, bought provisions and struggled under heavy sacks to the Sciora hut. As we had not experienced the smooth granite of the Bregaglia we tried a few taster routes, including the North Ridge of the Badile and the Bugeleisen on the Piz Gemelli.

I could not find out any information of British ascents and as it was supposed to be the most delicate climb in the area at the time, we ventured onto it and were treated to amazing open and delicate climbing with little protection. Modern rock boots and protection devices will make it less of a challenge today, but in mountain boots with the odd sling and old pegs as runners it felt quite an enterprise .

Lyn Noble and Colin Mortlock were camping near the hut, and they shared the same objective as us, the Cassin Route on the Northeast Face. The weather was set fair, but Mike was not feeling well and insisted the three of us press on. We crossed the difficult glacier in the evening and found a good bivi site near the foot of the face. Another cold morning start up the first corners, then we were out in the sun. Lyn and Colin, who had set off out from the hut that morning, passed the three of us as we approached the snow patch in the middle of the face. Above that the rock steepened and the route followed one corner after another, separated by an overhanging traverse. I recognised the position of one of Rebuffat's photos from the book 'Starlight and Storm', so the camera was passed to Rod for an action replay. More overlapping slabs led to the summit chimney which we followed until a traverse to a rib in the Central Couloir led to the sunshine and the summit.

I had heard of the Biancograt as one of the most beautiful snow ridges in the Alps. Moreover, it led

to the summit of the Piz Bernina, the most easterly 4000 meter peak in the Alpine chain. We left the Bregaglia and took a bus ride (also one of the most scenic in the Alps) to St.Moritz.

A dusty walk to Pontresina and the Schierva Hut followed. We enjoyed a short night's rest on the crowded hut floor and, feeling somewhat 'second hand' the following morning, scrambled up to the col at the start of the ridge. From there we could see the full height of the ridge and in the early sunlight on a perfect day, what a prospect! The snow was perfect and unhindered by the rope, we summited about 8.0 am to magnificent views all around. The exciting bit came on the glacier during the descent, when I fell through a snow bridge! We were roped at this point and the lads soon pulled me out.

My trusty van set out for the Alps again, this time heading for the Zinal Valley with the object of bagging some four thousanders. First was the traverse of the Zinal Rothorn, a great day out. The rocks on the final rock ridge were rather snowy, but the snow became a real hindrance on the way back across the glacier. I tried crawling to spread out my weight. Next was the Obergabelhorn by its Coergrat, a fine snow ridge leading to the summit. We enjoyed the fairly straightforward climb and on this day the light was perfect. We looked across to the North Face of the Matterhorn, almost within touching distance whilst in the other direction lay the Dent Blanche and, in the far distance, Mont Blanc, the monarch of the Alps.

There was still a lot of snow in the Valais, so it was over to Chamonix we headed. As I mentioned earlier, we had spent quite a lot of time on the Aiguilles, so now was an opportunity to follow in the steps of Herman Buhl and our own Ian Clough, both of whom had, at different times, traversed the

Aiguilles from the Grand Charmoz to the Aiguille du Plan. We planned to be "up country" for three days and packed our sacks accordingly with food, stove and climbing gear. What a weight!

The start was from the Envers des Aiguilles hut, across to and then up the Republique Arete of the Grand Charmoz. The weather was rather unsettled, but by breaking the traverse into sections and bivying at the end of each, we would always be in a reasonable position for retreat. Yes, it rained on us going up the Grand Charmoz, but hopes were raised by some sunshine, and by late morning the Mummery Crack was behind us (a bit of a thrutch I thought) - a good job there were no ladies about having "an easy day". The summit of the Grepon achieved and the abseil off the top block with the whole of the 2000 foot East Face below completed.

At the head of the Nantillons Glacier was an area of rocks which provided a comfortable bivi site where we enjoyed a large meal, not just to satisfy hunger, but to reduce the weight of our sacks. We could, of course, retreat from this position if the weather so dictated. The morning, however, was bright and fine, so it was up one of the ordinary routes on the Aiguille de Blaitiere to visit the central summit. There followed a myriad of climbing pitches and abseils, including an abseil down the South Ridge of the Fou until we came up against the huge buttress at the base of the Aiguille du Caiman. From the Col du Caiman the way was down a vertical wall of 300 feet running with melt water from the snow on the Col above. At the end of the first abseil, it was more rope acrobatics to get to a safe belay position. Then one more abseil landed us on the ledge system at the foot of the East Face.

Our second bivi was on these ledges. Again, escape was possible to the Envers de Blaitiere Glacier

if need be. Once we had found the route the following day, the climbing was excellent and, with a few pitches of grade V, quite hard enough at this point in the proceedings! I recall the last pitch with real pleasure, a grade V crack providing excellent holds and jams above a smooth slab, below which the scenery disappeared to re-appear as the glacier some 1000 feet below. A comparatively easy ridge led to the Dent du Crocodile, and another led to our final summit, the Aiguille du Plan. Our thankful descent was a squelch down the glacier to our camp in Chamonix. It had been, as Ian Clough had commented after his traverse, a "grand few days in the country!"

My reading of Gervasutti's book and our views of the Punta Gugliermine from our route up the West Face of the Aiguille Noire, drew my attention to the route on the South Face, known as the Gervasutti Pillar. The following year saw us tracking up to the Gamba Hut again and crossing the Freney Glacier at a 20 minute run to reach the foot of the pillar. The climbing was delightful, delicate, far more delicate than we had experienced in the Mont Blanc massif, with small belay ledges, rather Dolomitic. Near the top was a diagonal abseil which rather concentrated the mind, but thereafter we reached the top of the Pillar with little difficulty. It had been our intention to continue over the Aiguille Blanche to the summit of Mont Blanc, a combination which at that time had not been completed.

Whilst on the Pillar wisps of cloud swirled around which did not augur well for our continuation route. We found a comfortable (relative term) bivi site before the pull up the Aiguille Blanche and we waited to see what would happen. It happened, alright! A violent thunderstorm rolled in with lightning and thunder crashing all around. We put the Ironmongery away round a corner and sat

blinded by lightning through eyes tight shut and the fabric of our bivi tent. After the thunder and lightning came the snow, soft and silent but lethal on the high ice ridges.

Morning saw a break in the bad weather, so we took the obvious opportunity to scuttle down to the valley with all speed. Our ascent of Mont Blanc by this combination was not to be, but the Gervasutti Pillar provided a long-remembered climb and the climax to my Alpine Journey.

A Cuillin Cascade

Leslie Shore

The boat cruise from Elgol, Island of Skye, for disembarkation by the shore of Loch na Culice, an inlet of Loch Scavaig, for a base to climb the Dubhs, was beguiling. I joined David McLennan and his fellow members of the Strathaven Climbing Club on the quay at Elgol for the cruise. David and I were once members of the Glencoe-based, defunct, Starav Mountaineering Club. A good weather forecast for the May Day Holiday weekend had drawn us to the quay. Having fled the island several time before in bad weather, we had earlier hedged over committing ourselves to the club's meet.

Just after 8 pm on a Friday, we boarded the Eilean a'Cheo (Isle of Mist) for a twenty minute cruise across Loch Scavaig in crystal clear visibility. The sea was calm. First, I was enthralled by the boat's bow views of the fjord-like scenery of the Black Cuillin. Later, my eyes scanned the steep, rugged hillside of Gars-Bheinn on the boat's port side to see countless dry stream beds etched into the hillside. A rare drought dwelt upon the Cuillin. A listless herd of seals and a bunch of eider ducks occupying an island of planed rock, greeted the boat's run into a landing on the shore of Loch na Culice.

My tent was pitched close to the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland's Coruisk Memorial Hut as dusk fell. The tent's pitch was a bone-dry, yellow coloured, hard, thin layer of turf. Strathaven Climbing Club members occupied the hut. A banner bearing the words 'The Cock Inn' hung inside the hut at its entrance. On tap in the hut were two 'pins' containing different types of beer. As the stranger, being one of the first to be offered a pint of beer was a friendly gesture. Yet, I declined the offer wanting to get a good night's rest.

Snug in my sleeping bag, I became aware of a deep hush. The air was still and stuffy. My fitful sleep ended abruptly at 4 am. due to the persistent call of a cuckoo. At around half past eight o'clock, David and I set off for the Dubh Slabs. The weather was dry and kind. The tips of the Cuillin peaks bayoneted a blue sky.

I became awake to the day's challenge on seeing three climbers ascending the lower section of the Dubh Slabs. Soon afterwards, we soloed up a gully to reach the base of an extensive, gently-angled, slab. Charley and Kit joined us minutes later and we generally took independent lines to pad up the slab. Upon reaching a crucial horizontal shelf, I met Rob, the meet leader, with another climber. They had been to the top of the 2403 feet high Sgùrr Dubh Beag but had chosen not to do an abseil as a means for continuing. The three of us then joined Charley, David, and Kit to follow a traverse line used by the route's pioneers in 1874. The traverse, an exposed line across hillside overlooking An Garbh-Choire, crossed dry, crisp, turfs of grass, and a number of obstacles of rock met were easily turned.

The end of the traverse brought us to the landing site of the abseil from the top of Sgùrr Dubh Beag. 'Doing the Dubhs' proceeded with me, as a part of a chain of climbers, clambering westwards up an arête. At one place on the arête, my right boot got trapped in a crack. David, amused by my plight, pulled me upwards, and after much fidgeting the boot was freed. We scrambled onwards up on to a blunt tower, where a direct descent was judged unwise. Before taking an easier way, I spied a group of Strathaven members sitting on a slope just tens of feet below the apex of the eastern end of Sgùrr

Dubh Mor. I thought they were taking lunch.

We fell silent finding the group was encircling a prone Gordon, who had earlier collapsed. Talk was in hushed tones. The diagnosis of Billy's, a volunteer member of Lochaber Mountain Rescue, was that Gordon had suffered a mild stroke. A mobile phone call had been made for help and about twenty minutes later an RAF Rescue helicopter hovered above us. A crew member was lowered by winch to the ground to assess Gordon's condition before both of them were lifted up to the helicopter. So began Gordon's flight eastwards to Inverness Hospital where Billy's diagnosis was confirmed. I felt some emotion as the helicopter flew away having witnessed only for the second time in my life the care, skill and proficiency of an RAF mountain rescue team in action. Gordon benefitted from the rescue since he made a full recovery.

The gathering of climbers then continued. After crossing the apex of the eastern top of Sgùrr Dubh Mor, we filed westwards to claim the cairned summit of the Munro. A while later, upon touching the cairn atop Sgùrr Dubh na Da Beinn, which lies on the Cuillin main ridge traverse, I felt elation at having done the Dubhs. Hereabouts there was a discussion about ways of descent and David counselled it would be better to exit via Coir' an Lochain to Loch Coruisk. Billy and Charley had descended by way of the An Garbh-choire before, and their words won favour.

However, just over an hour later, Billy, Charley, and I were the first climbers to stand at the foot of a boulder field having experienced a tortuous descent. I glanced upwards to see the rest of the group stepping downwards cautiously. My grazed fingertips and palms confirmed having just handled some of the roughest rock found in the Cuillin. For

a good while afterwards, I stayed with Charley's pace for the final drop down to Loch Coruisk as light rain began to fall. Upon crossing the hut's threshold, steady, torrential, rain poured from dark-grey clouds. For a moment, I felt joy in having done one of the finest, easiest, longest mountaineering outings in Great Britain.

The day was a special one also for David. He celebrated fifty-one years as a climber. That evening, sitting in company at the hut's table, I feasted on Marjorie McLennan's tasty venison stew with pasta. Toasts of china cups of wine were raised as a prelude to swallowing a couple of pints of beer.

On flitting alone from the hut to the tent in torrential rain, I heard a deafening noise, which sounded like a low-powered jet engine. Pitch-black darkness denied me a view to see the source of the noise. David had to bawl to tell me that conditions were still dreadful when crawling into the tent around midnight.

The night's constant deluge of rain took various forms. There were spells when the rain ran off the tent's roof with a 'shussing' noise like an old wireless not properly tuned. The sound was hypnotic and acted like a sleeping pill. Then there were interludes of rain pattering musically four beats to the bar, which caused me to stir from sleep. I was shaken to life upon hearing rain hit the tent's roof like a bass drum being struck with malice at one beat to the bar. The mystery loud noise roared nonstop.

Next morning, my palms sank into mud doing a press-up to leave the tent into tipping rain. Upon standing up, the source of the noise seized my interest. A great cascade of water tumbled down a gully positioned at the centre of crags curving around Loch na Culice. The 'Mad Burn', Allt a'

Chaoich, coursed down the gully. After escaping from the foot of the gully, water spread out like white-forked lightning before spilling into the sea.

The chat in the hut was for evacuation to Elgol. Rob used a short-wave mobile phone to call the boat company who had delivered us to Loch na Culice's jetty. His calls went unanswered. We did not know then, but the company did not operate on a Sunday. It was a welcome surprise when, around 11.00 a.m., a large power boat sped into Loch na Culice to berth at the jetty. The boat contained young people clad in bright orange wet-weather clothes and wearing lifejackets, who once ashore, walked like a queue of penguins to view a rain swept Loch Coruisk. Rob approached the pilot of the boat about taking us to Elgol. The pilot declined to take on the task, but he radioed another boat operator, who was willing to do so. A decision was then made that for the evacuation we'd split ourselves into two groups. David and I, with no qualms, volunteered for the second group and so the last run to Elgol.

With the evacuation plan settled, the keeper of 'The Cock Inn', Charley, announced last orders. A pin of dark ale remained to be drunk. Pint glasses were soon filled. The downing of ale lifted jovial spirits even higher. The pin was rapidly emptied.

Our last chore was to take down my tent. Upon removing the inner tent, David and I stared at where the groundsheet had lain. Flowing across the ground were thin veins of water united as a wide web. How had we managed to remain dry in the tent overnight? One camper had slithered up and down his tent's groundsheet overnight in failed attempts not to dip his sleeping bag's foot into a swelling pool of water.

When a large boat swept into Loch na Culice, just

after noon, I heard someone call, 'The boat can carry all of us.' I slung my rucksack on my back, grabbed other items of mine, and sped to the jetty. I boarded the Islander, which was larger than the Eilean a'Cheo. Standing on deck, I realised David was not aboard. The loading of the boat would have been hindered by me returning ashore so I decided to stay put.

The boat set off for Elgol. As the boat's prow jerked upwards to ride rough waves, rainwater poured off the roof of the steering house onto my rucksack, whose flap was ajar. Sea water swept over my rucksack as the boat rolled severely. Stepping from the Islander on to the quay was an anticlimax.

Some disembarking club members on the boat's last run to Elgol ribbed me about having deserted my fellow camper. I carried two empty pins of beer from the boat to a parked car, not as penance, but as a tiny gesture of help. In good humour, David listened to my explanation for my boat escape from Loch na Culice on our road journey southwards. On a narrow stretch of the Loch Lomond road, we met a stationary car with its front bumper ripped off. As the driver, David promptly slalomed around the hindrance. We would have had a lengthy halt if he had not risked overtaking a big lorry earlier.

That evening at David and Marjorie McLennan's home at Burnside, Glasgow, I sat at the table unwashed, wearing clothes unchanged for three days. The next day, back in Ulverston, Pamela, my wife, warily handled soiled, sodden clothes to put them in the washing machine. Marjorie served a succulent roast lamb dinner. Had I been uncouth sitting down at the McLennans' table? I'm sure that the telling of our weekend's experiences, especially our account about the 'Mad Burn', sweetened dinner conversation.

Wendy on the Napes - Classic Rock Meet, June 2021



Images of the Life of the Club



1. Young members White Ghyll
2. Stu on Cruel Sister
3. Bleaklow meet
4. Music meet at Rawhead
5. Beck Wythop before debolting



6. Alison's Brackenclose mugs (on sale for the Brackenclose fund!)
7. Eden valley meet
8. September 2021 - Committee not on Zoom.
9. Eskdale guidebook meet
10. Journal editor on Distilled - Attermire Sports meet



11. Jim relaxing in Chalons-sur-Saone

12. Skye Meet May 2022 Pinnacle Ridge

13. Hatty preparing Brackenclouse

14. Max Biden on Capella, Pavey Ark

15. Shildaig Puddles May 2022

16. Remembrance Meet on Great Gable

17. Janet on Eagle Front

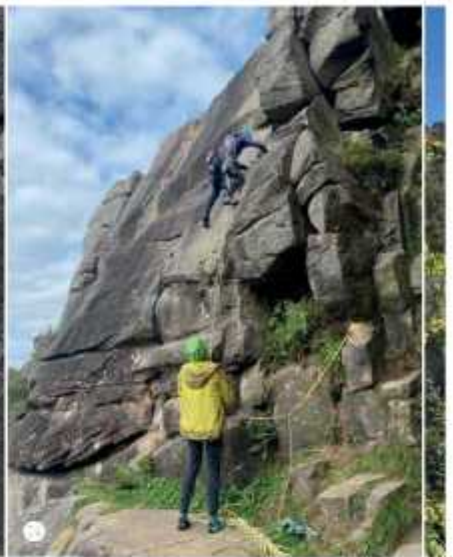
18. Nige and Megan below Pavey on the new members meet

19. Lovely meal at the new members meet at Rawhead

20. Galloway sea cliffs meet









- 21. Doves Nest
- 22. Ascending Blahnukur, Landmannalaugar, Iceland
- 23. Pinnacle Ridge, Sgurr nan Gillean
- 24. Froggatt and Day Meet
- 25. Pic Pontu, Fixin
- 26. James Gregory on The Mother in Law, Ardhessaig
- 27. Hazel in Cornwall
- 28. Summit of Skiddaw
- 29. Glen EV, Braemar
- 30. Weather not always good Sheildaig
- 32. Hadrian's Wall on the Ben
- 33. Aurora over the hut at Landmannalaugar
- 34. Great Gable plaque - on the FRCC Memorial Round



A Century of Guidebooks



Stanley Watson
on Innominate
Crack

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A History of Lake District Climbing Guidebooks (Part 2)

Stephen Reid

This article follows on from that published in the FRCC Centenary Journal of 2006 and should be read in conjunction with that. It details all new Lake District climbing guidebooks published since 2006, as well as some more obscure guides that had been overlooked. It also corrects a few errors in the earlier article.

Although only 18 years have elapsed, it is an apt moment to bring things up to date as the club's first ever guide, *Doe Crag* by George Bower (edited by Harry Kelly), was published in the FRCC Journal in 1922, 100 years ago.

As before, magazine articles and narrative books have on the whole been omitted (unless historically significant), as have the seemingly endless stream of print on demand and other cheap reprints of the modern internet age which are of little interest to the guidebook collector or indeed the climber. However, this time I have included scrambling guides (as long as they include a few recognised rock climbs), and also what is hoped is a fair attempt at historical coverage of South Lakes limestone and the Eden Valley. In fact, the article now extends its remit to the whole of Cumbria.

Once again, I would be pleased to hear of any omissions.

The FRCC's *Lake District Rock* (second edition and published under the Wired label) won the prestigious Mountain Guidebook Award at the Banff Mountain Book Competition and Film Festival in Canada in 2015.

Its predecessor won the Titus Wilson Prize at the Lake District Book of the Year Awards in 2004, and between them the two editions have sold over 20,000 copies.

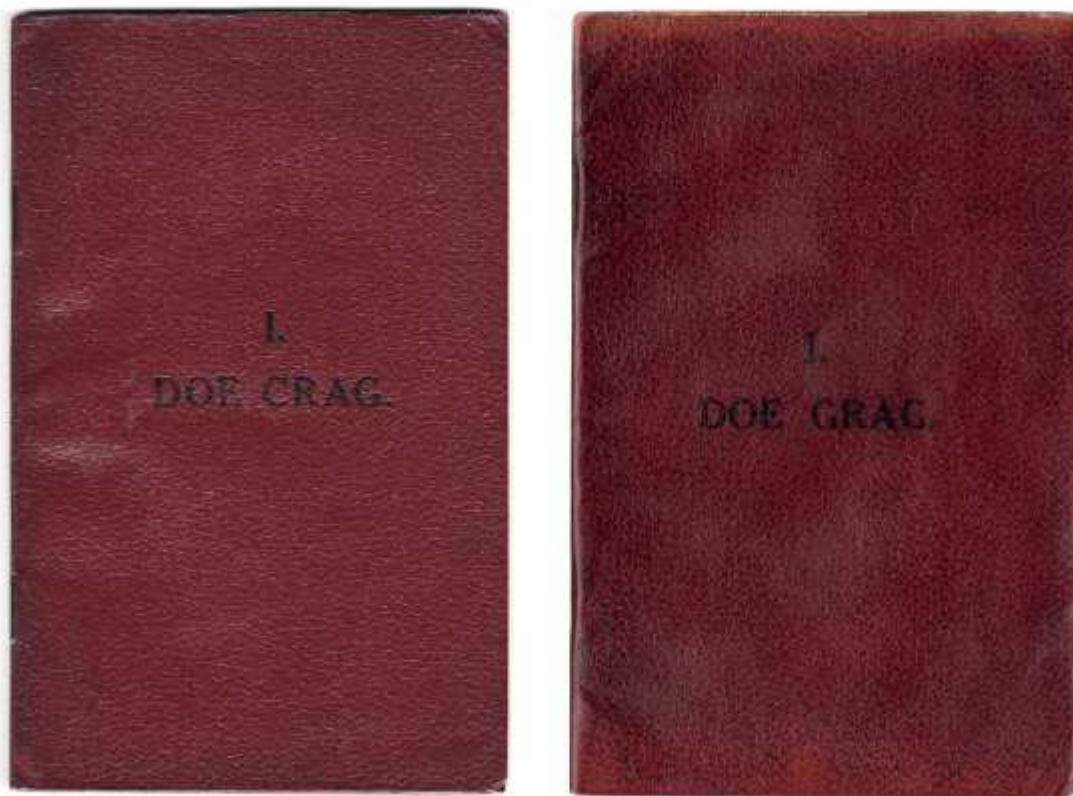


FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB

1st Series

The 1st Series "Red" guides, such as *Doe Crag* (pictured below) were listed in the 2006 article as being published simultaneously in the FRCC Journal and in guidebook form, but it turns out that this was not the case with the two appearing at different times and often in different years. It would seem likely that, even for the second guide, *Pillar Rock*, although the publication years are the same, the Journal article appeared prior to guidebook publication.

In addition, Alan Moss pointed out in *British and Irish Climbing Guidebooks 1894 to 2011 – A Collector's Guide*, that the first guide, *Doe Crag*, also appeared with a cover reading *Doe Grag*! Presumably the guide was reprinted at some point, or at least more covers were printed, though which appeared first is not known. One feels the only apt remark from the person who first spotted the error would have been, "Doh!"



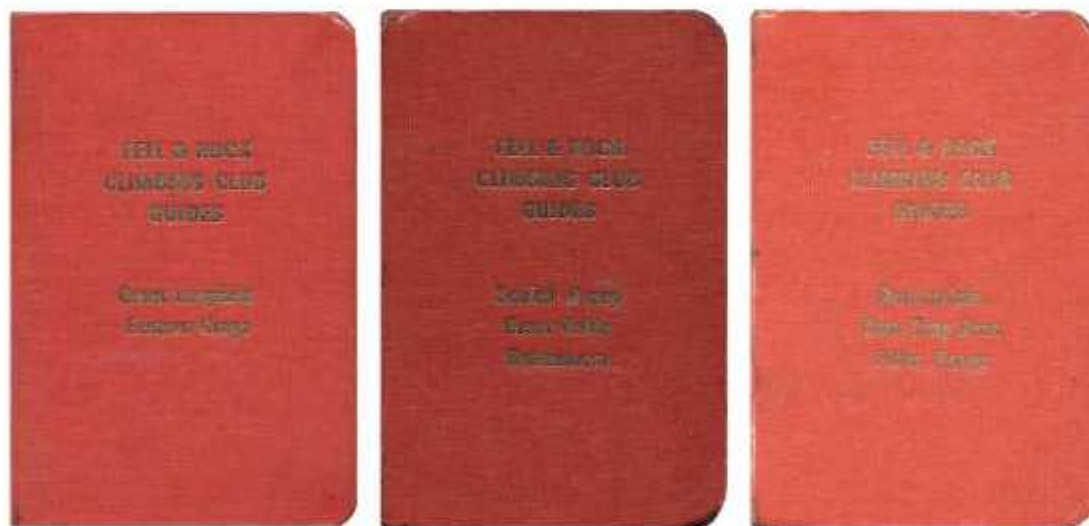
Doe Crag or Doe Grag?!

Two slightly different covers on the first edition of the 1922/3 FRCC guide to Dow.

1st Series				
TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	EDITOR	DATE IN JOURNAL	DATE AS BOOK
I. Doe Crag	GS Bower	RST Chorley	1922	1923
I. Doe Crag	Reprinted with 'Crag' spelt 'Crag' on the cover, or maybe the correct spelling is the reprint.			
II. Pillar Rock	HM Kelly	RST Chorley	1923	1923
III. Scawfell Group	CF Holland	RST Chorley	1924	1925
IV. Great Gable and Borrowdale	HS Gross & AR Thomson	RST Chorley	1925	1926
V. Great Langdale and Buttermere	G Basterfield & AR Thomson	RST Chorley	1926	1927

4th Series

4th Series guides bound together in three volumes:



1. *Great Langdale & Eastern Crag,*
2. *Scawfell Group, Great Gable & Buttermere,*
3. *Borrowdale, Dow Crag Area & Pillar Group.*

In the 2006 article, I mistakenly stated that the eight buff coloured guides of the 3rd Series (confusingly labelled "Second Series") were "bound together in sets of three volumes in hardback red covers for use in FRCC Huts and as presentation copies." Moss points out that he failed to locate these volumes and I suspect that the mistake is mine and it was only the 2nd Series, bound in one volume, and 4th Series (dating from 1967 onwards), bound in three volumes, that were made into such sets.

Moving on to more recent times, following the success of the full colour selected climbs guide *Lake District Rock* (2003), the decision was easily reached to maintain the same format with all future FRCC guides. However, Al Phizacklea, who had excelled himself by producing colour diagrams for all the crags featured in *Lake District Rock*, understandably balked at providing a set for every crag in the Lake District: the decision to produce crag diagrams from colour photographs was thus in a way made for us. Whilst not without its difficulties (there is no wriggle room with a photograph, the lines have to be exact, no easy matter with a multipitch mountain crag) the results were spectacular and have completely transformed the look of FRCC guides, as can be seen in the illustrations of diagrams through the ages.



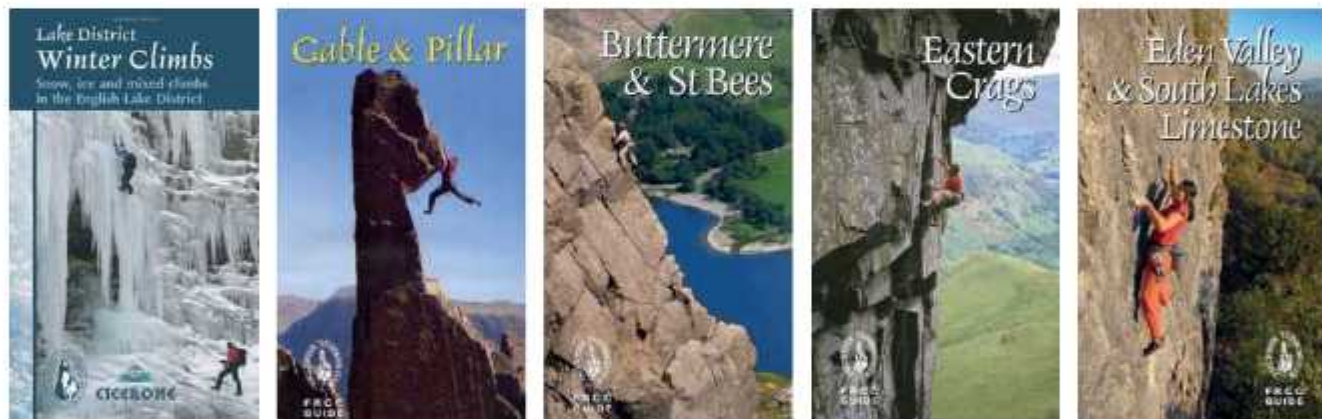


Evolution of the A Buttress, Dow Crag diagram

1. Photo diagram from *Dow Crag* (1922/3).
2. W Heaton Cooper's artwork from *Dow Crag, Great Langdale & Outlying Craggs* (1938).
3. Al Phizacklea's masterful diagram from *Dow, Duddon and Slate* (1994).
4. Al gets out his colouring set for *Lake District Rock* (2003).
5. Back to photo diagrams for *Lake District Rock* (2015).

The guides remained the same dimensions as before and had the same plastic cover and marker ribbon. Innovations included a timely section on the natural environment written by Simon Webb of English Nature and Peter Davies, a retired National Park Warden, and Kevin Howett of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland contributed notes on breeding birds such as peregrines. The first ascents list was illustrated with early climbing photographs, portraits of notable pioneers and relevant quotes from articles and books. Stephen Reid remained the editor and in fact was co-author of the first of the new look rock guides, *Gable & Pillar*. A decision was also taken to expand the coverage of the FRCC guides to the county boundary and so club guides definitively described the climbing in the Eden Valley and on South Lakes limestone for the first time. In all cases this was done with the agreement and cooperation of the existing guidebook producers, and in fact the definitive guides to those areas had been out of print for some time.

The first of the new editions was not however a rock climbing guide but a winter one. A winter climbs guide to the Lake District, under the title *Lake District Winter Climbs*, had been published by Milnthorpe based Cicerone Press since 1979. A second edition (1985) and a third (1997) were followed, along with several reprints, but by the time of the final reprint (2005) the formula was looking a little tired.



8th Series (contd) Plastic Cover, Picture on Front, Blurb on Back				
TITLE	COVER	AUTHOR(S)	EDITOR	DATE
Lake District Winter Climbs	(snowy!)	Brian Davison	Stephen Reid	2006 With Cicerone
Gable & Pillar	(yellow)	Phil Rigby & Stephen Reid	Stephen Reid	2007
Buttermere & St Bees	(dark blue)	Colin Read & Paul Jennings	Stephen Reid	2008
Eastern Crags	(green)	Al Davis & Nick Wharton	Stephen Reid	2011
Eden Valley & South Lakes Limestone	(magenta)	Ron Kenyon, Nick Wharton & John Holden	Stephen Reid	2012

Cicerone were approached and agreed to a collaboration, the FRCC were to supply the material and they would handle the layout and printing. Well known winter climbing activist Brian Davison agreed to write the guide and an urgent hunt was launched for crag photos showing winter conditions. Then Photographs Editor, Nick Wharton must have caught the Treasurer at a good time as it was agreed that the FRCC should hire a helicopter on a clear day when there was snow on the fells so that Nick could take a large series of missing crag shots in one go!

Despite continuing arguments that it was not worth doing a winter guide as winters were not what they used to be, by 2012 the FRCC/Cicerone collaboration had already sold out and so many new routes had been climbed that a simple reprint would not do: work started in earnest on the second edition. It was at this crucial moment the Editor's house was flooded and, realising that he could not continue editing guidebooks with builders tearing up the ground floor, Reid grasped the opportunity and handed over the editorship to Steve Scott: he had by that time been editing the guidebooks for thirteen years (longer than anyone except for Harry Kelly) and was rewarded with honorary membership of the FRCC.

Under Scott, the guides underwent an overhaul almost as dramatic as that when they changed from black and white to colour. Firstly, the decision was made to "modernise" the look of the guides by using heavy quality flapped card covers rather than plastic and, whilst Langdale had a black spine, subsequent guides had the cover photo carried round the spine. To accommodate ever more new routes, the size of the guides was increased to 18cm x 12cm, about a big as one could go and still claim they were pocket sized, and first



Steve Scott on the Old Man of Hoy
Photo: Nick Wharton

ascent details were included with the route rather than in the back of the book (with the exception of *Lake District Winter Climbs*). Including marker ribbons with the new binding would have been very expensive, and in any case the flaps meant that one's place could be marked without a ribbon, so these were dropped.

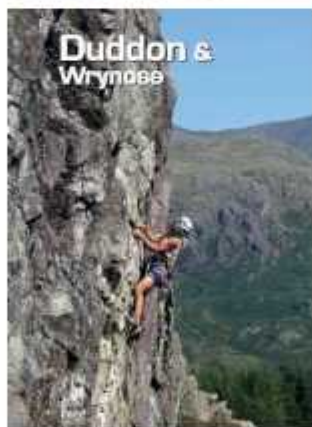
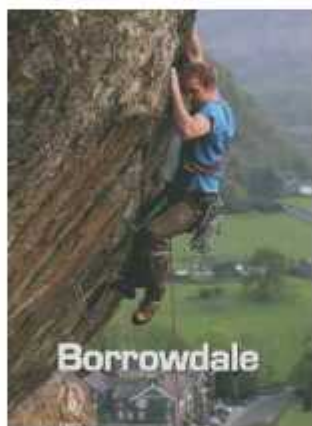
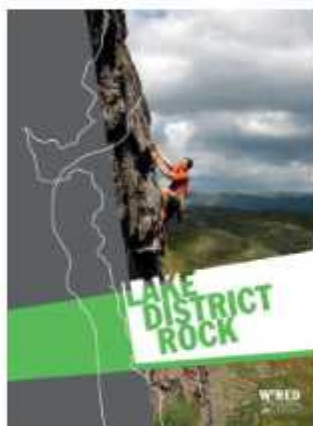
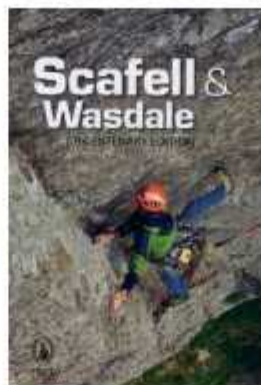
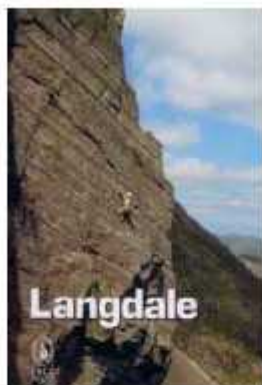
To save on costs, layout and design were soon (post Langdale) taken in house and Peter Sterling, a Climbers' Club member living near Kendal was given the work. In another departure, advertisements were included – these had last appeared in 1927! Whilst early results were occasionally a little mixed, later guides have vindicated this decision with quality as good as anything on the market. The initial printing of *Lake District Rock* was selling out fast and it was obvious that its replacement would have to use colour photodiagrams - fortunately the club had amassed a good set of Lake District crag photos, but an urgent program of plugging the gaps was undertaken.

At the same time, the guidebook publishing clubs, together with the BMC, concerned, that the popularity of Rockfax guides might spell the end of the clubs' definitive guides, launched a new series of guides under the Wired label. These were to be club produced but published to a recognised formula and, what's more, A5 (21cm x 14.5cm) in size. They were to be selected climbs guides and were intended to provide serious competition to Rockfax, which indeed they do.

WIRED GUIDES

The A5 format was then carried over to the Borrowdale guide and the intention is to continue to use it for any guide where the majority of climbs are single pitch, whilst the mountain guides will remain more pocket sized. With the increase in the number of routes as well as the demands on space made by comprehensive photodiagrams, moving to A5 for some guides was perhaps inevitable and it is notable that the Scottish Mountaineering Club has found it necessary to do the same. Another common innovation that both clubs share is moving poor routes and poor crags to free downloads on their respective websites, thus all these new guides could be described as selectively definitive. Whilst some of these innovations might perhaps cause Harry Kelly to spin in his grave, the guides have been as well received as ever and *Lake District Rock* was the Guidebook Category Winner at the prestigious Banff Mountain Film and Book Festival in 2015. More recently, the club produced its second Wired guide. *Lakes Sport & Slate* details all the sport climbs on South Lakes Limestone, in the recently developed Bramcrag Quarry, and on the sandstone cliffs of St Bees, as well as all routes on Lake District slate, whether bolted or not (this guide was also a finalist at Banff). Use of a drone for crag photographs, professionally supplied action shots taken by David Simmonite, and an increasingly sophisticated layout has resulted in a stunning guidebook that one hopes will make the Rockfax team suitably green with envy! The latest in the series of definitive guides, *Duddon & Wrynose*, has not only maintained this high standard but has also been selling like hot cakes.

9th Series		Mixed Covers, often with an advertisement on the back		
TITLE	COVER	AUTHOR(S)	EDITOR	DATE
Lake District Winter Climbs	Plastic. 17cm x 12cm	Brian Davison	Steve Scott	2012 With Cicerone
Langdale	Card. 18.5cm x 12cm	Max Biden	Steve Scott	2013
Scafell & Wasdale	Card. 18.5cm x 12cm	Al Phizacklea	Steve Scott	2014 (centenary of first ascent of CB!)
Lake District Rock	Card. 21cm x 14.5cm	Guidebook Committee/Wired Guides	Steve Scott	2015 A Wired guide
Borrowdale	Card. 21cm x 14.5cm	Justin Shiels, Andy Dunhill, Ron Kenyon & Richard Tolley	Steve Scott	2016
Lake District Rock	This guide was reprinted in 2017 and 2019 but bears no marks to distinguish it from the 2015 edition.			
Lakes Sport & Slate	Card. 21cm x 14.5cm	Guidebook Committee & others/ Wired Guides	Steve Scott	2020 A Wired guide
Duddon & Wrynose	Card. 21cm x 14.5cm	John Holden, Justin Shiels, Jim Loxham et al.	Steve Scott	2021



Most recently, Trevor Langhorne (top) has taken over as Guidebook Secretary and David Simmonite (centre) as Photographs Editor. However, Trevor gave up the post in 2022 and has been succeeded by Roger Everett (bottom), who as one time SMC Guidebooks Editor brings a wealth of experience to the role.

Ron Keyon had held the post of Guidebooks Secretary from 1999 - 2021 with a short break of three years - for which he would no doubt have been made an Honorary Member, were he not one already.



FRCC Recent Developments & Other Pamphlets



With the FRCC website being used to record new routes and comments, there no longer seemed to be much point in producing annual Recent Developments supplements and these were dropped after 2003... only for the idea to be revived in 2018 as a one off(?) production. This brought all existing FRCC guidebooks up to date with the exception of those covering Dow, Duddon, Slate, Eskdale and Sport as “new guidebooks... are in advanced stages of preparation” – which turned out to be true for *Sport and Slate* at least!

TITLE	COVER	AUTHOR(S)	EDITOR	DATE
Lake District New Climbs & Notes 2018	Card, pamphlet, 18cm x 12cm, 63 pages.	Trevor Langhorne & Ron Kenyon	Steve Scott	2018

In addition, a large number of pdfs detailing archived and new routes and have been made available to download free from the FRCC website. As each new guide was printed, a pdf of routes that were too poor to be included or had fallen down was created. The new routes pdfs date from a change in website provider in 2016 as carrying over the descriptions in their existing form would have been too costly – *Lake District New Climbs & Notes* of 2018 replaced these. More recently free to download pdfs have been created of new crags or crags that have seen a lot of recent development - these have mainly been the work of Ron Kenyon and Al Davies. Most of these pdfs are undated and, in some cases, may have been available in more than one version.



Gable Pillar Archive
2007



Langdale New Routes
2016



Nitting Haws
2016



Lockdown Buttress
2021

TITLE	DATE	COMMENTS
Gable Pillar Archive	2007	Poor routes omitted from the guide.
Clint Scar	2008	West Cumbrian outcrop.
Buttermere & Newlands Archived Routes	2008	Poor routes omitted from the guide.
St Bees Interim Guide (1975)	2008	This is a pdf of the guide to St Bees trad routes by Bill Young and Mike Burbage first published as part of a new routes pamphlet in 1975 and listed in the 2006 article.
Burnt Crag	2010	These excerpts from the 1994 Dow, Duddon & Slate guide were intended as a stop gap measure!
Dow Crag Part 1	2010	
Dow Crag Part 2	2010	
Hodge Close Quarry	2010	
Seathwaite Buttress	2010	
Stonestar Crag	2010	
Wallowbarrow Crag	2010	
Eastern Crags Archived Routes	2011	Poor routes omitted from the guide.
Eden Valley & North Cumbria Archive	2012	
South Lakes Limestone Archive	2012	
Langdale Archive	2013	
Scafell & Wasdale Archive	2014	All these pdfs are of new routes that were recorded on a previous version of the FRCC website. It would have been too costly to convert them to the new format.
Winter Climbs New Routes & Comments	2016	
Borrowdale Archive	2016	
Gable & Pillar New Routes	2016	
Buttermere, Newlands & St Bees New Routes & Comments	2016	
Eastern Crags New Routes	2016	
Dow Crag New Routes & Comments	2016	
Scafell & Wasdale New Routes	2016	
South Lakes Limestone New Routes	2016	
Langdale New Routes	2016	
Nitting Haws	2016	One of many crags that did not make it into the 2016 <i>Borrowdale</i> guide – in fact, the guide was so slimmed down it was nicknamed 'Borrowdale Selected Climbs' by locals.
Kirkstone Upper Crag Interim Crag	2017	
Kirkstone Upper Crag Interim Crag V2	2017	A few minor grade changes.
Thrang Crag, Langdale	2017	

Lake District New Climbs & Notes	2018	The pdf of the booklet above.
Runestone Quarry	2021	Update to <i>Lakes Sport & Slate</i> .
Thrang Crag	2021	Updates to Langdale
High Upper Scout Crag	2021	
Stile Crag	2021	
Pike How	2021	
Birk Knott Crag	2021	
Gimmer East	2021	Update to <i>Langdale</i> . There were 5 versions all published in the same year.
Lancrigg Crag	2021	Update to <i>Langdale</i> .
The Bell	2021	A crag in the Coppermines area.
Lickle Crag	2021	All are updates to the new <i>Duddon & Wrynose</i> guide which certainly seems to have inspired developments!
Upper Horse Crag	2021	
Black Wars East & West	2021	
Below High Pike	2021	
Foss How North Upper	2021	
Green How	2021	
Looking How	2021	
Quarry Crag	2021	
Upper Kern Knotts Crag	2021	Updates to <i>Gable & Pillar</i> .
Raven Crag	2021	
Woof Stones	2021	Update to <i>Borrowdale</i> .
Castle Crag, Wythburn	2021	Updates to <i>Eastern Crags</i>
Lockdown Buttress	2021	
Kirkstone Buttress	2021	
Kirkstone Upper Buttress	2021	
Pets Bridge Crag	2021	
Piot Crag	2021	
Dunmail Raise Crag	2021	
Middle Busk Scar	2021	Update to <i>Eden Valley & South Lake Limestone</i> .

OTHER GUIDES

Walter Parry Haskett Smith

Haskett Smith, the man who was more responsible than anyone for the birth of the sport of rock climbing, produced the first dedicated British climbing guidebook with his two volume *Climbing in the British Isles* (Longmans, 1894/5). What is less well known is that he wrote a letter detailing all the then known climbs on Pillar Rock which appeared in the *English Lakes Visitor and Keswick Guardian* of 23rd September 1882, albeit being submitted via a third party, John Maitland, at that time living in Keswick. Maitland was a friend of Haskett Smith's mentor, Frederick Bowring. Whether Haskett Smith sent Maitland the letter and asked him to arrange for it to be published, or whether Maitland just forwarded it on because he felt the public would be interested, is not known.

THE ENGLISH LAKES VISITOR AND KESWICK GUARDIAN—SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1882.

Altogether seven routes are described with three variations – however one climb ("Straight up from the Liza") is only reported as a rumour and is discounted by later writers as merely referencing The Old West

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>NORTH SIDE.</p> <p>1. Straight up from the Liza (but known only by hear-say).</p> <p>EAST SIDE.</p> <p>2. From old wall to ridge near Low Man.</p> <p>2a. Variation by passing round to the steep grass. (New.)</p> <p>3. Ordinary easy way.</p> <p>3a. By ledge and corner, steep grass, and small chimney.</p> <p>3b. By notch, and 8ft. drop, so called.</p> <p>4. By notch, joining 3 at grass above the jammed rock or stone in chimney.</p> <p>5. By the <i>arête</i> (a) by the left. (New.)</p> <p>5b. Do. by the right. (New.)</p> <p>SOUTH SIDE.</p> <p>6. From "Pisgah Gap" separating Rock from Mountain.</p> <p>6a. On right hand side. (New.)</p> <p>6b. On left hand side. (New.)</p> <p>WEST SIDE.</p> <p>7. From Gillerthwaite side. (Ennerdale route.)</p> | |
|---|--|

Route. The Variation on the Old Wall Route, and the Arete Right-Hand have never been recorded in any guidebook. What is remarkable is that Haskett Smith first climbed Pillar Rock only on the 29th July 1882 (in fact it was his first ever climb), and so, in under two months, he had climbed every route and variation known, and put up six new ways, all solo. And of course, it was Haskett Smith's own North Climb of 1891 which really was the first climb "straight up from the Liza".

As a rule, magazine and newspaper articles would not merit consideration for this article, but this is so early and so significant that it deserves to be recorded.

English Lakes Visitor	WP Haskett Smith via John Maitland	Letter detailing climbs on Pillar Rock	1882
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Herman Ludolphus Prior



Guide to the Lake District of England, 3rd edition



Guide to the Lake District of England, 5th edition

The earliest true guidebook so far unearthed of relevance to this article is the third edition of a *Guide to the English Lake District of England* by HL Prior which was published by J Garnett of Windermere and is a small hard back book measuring 17cm x 11.5cm. True, it is largely a walking and tourist guide, but it includes descriptions of Broad Stand and Mickledore Chimney on Scafell, as well as Slab and Notch on Pillar.

Surprisingly, on Pillar, it describes the 8 foot Drop Route, which involved a scary jump down onto the "Steep Grass" in the upper part of Great Chimney, to the Modern Way or even the Easy Way, but it should be remembered that what are now clean rock routes were in those days covered in dense

bilberry, juniper and heather and back then it may well have seemed the safest option. It also contains a diagram of the latter climb, probably the earliest printed British crag diagram.

Prior credits Charles William Dymond who had climbed Pillar Rock and described the Easy Way version of Slab and Notch in 1866 – the first written description. The actual year of printing is uncertain as it is undated, though the British Library lists it tentatively as 1882.

Another version of this guide that I have managed to inspect is the fifth "nonpareil" edition. This is a rather charming small leather-bound pocketbook measuring 11.25cm x 8.75cm with two maps contained in pockets in each inside cover. It also contains a larger version of the diagram. Again, the actual year of printing is uncertain, though the British Library suggests 1885. It's certainly a good trick not to date your guidebooks as they then don't go out of date! Of the editions listed in the chart below, I have only seen the third and fifth. The British Library holds a seventh edition which I have not seen, but one imagines that all the editions listed would have contained the same climbs. Whether they also appeared in first and second editions is a matter of conjecture.



The diagram of Slab and Notch Climb from the 5th edition of Prior's guide.

Prior (1818-1903) was a lawyer who turned to writing novels and then Lake District travel guides, and his *Guide to the Lake District of England* was just one of several such works that he produced.

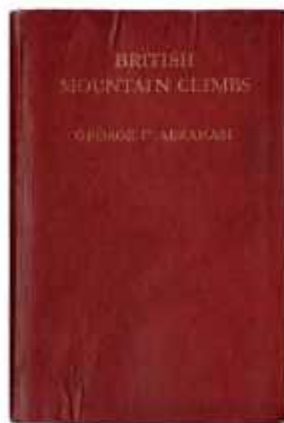
Guide to the Lake District of England, 3rd edition	HL Prior	J Garnett, Windermere	c 1882
Guide to the Lake District of England, 4th edition	HL Prior	J Garnett, Windermere	c 1884
Guide to the Lake District of England, 5th edition	HL Prior	J Garnett, Windermere	c 1885
Guide to the Lake District of England, 6th edition	HL Prior	J Garnett, Windermere	c 1887
Guide to the Lake District of England, 7th edition	HL Prior	J Garnett, Windermere	1890

Owen Glynn Jones

In the original 2006 article, the publishers of the first three editions of *Rock Climbing in the English Lake District* by Owen Glynn Jones were muddled up, for which apologies are offered. They should be:

Rock Climbing in the English Lake District 1st edition	Longmans Green, London	1897
Rock Climbing in the English Lake District 2nd Edition	G.P. Abraham & Sons	1900
Rock Climbing in the English Lake District 3rd Edition	G.P. Abraham & Sons	1911

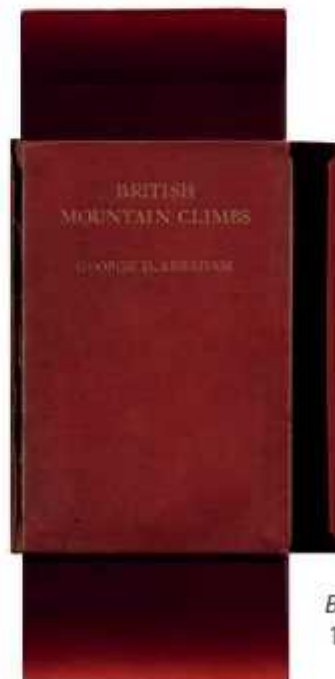
George Abraham – Mills & Boon



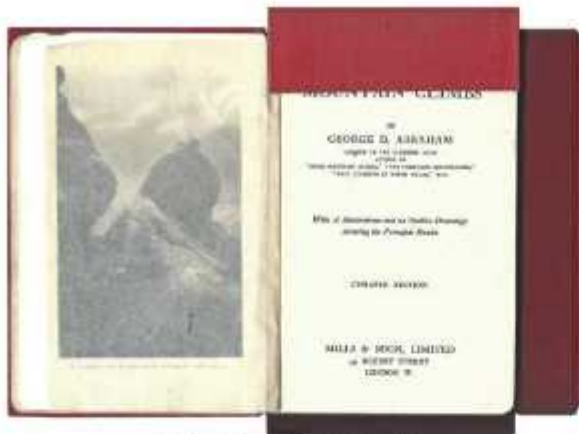
British Mountain Climbs
1st Edition of 1909



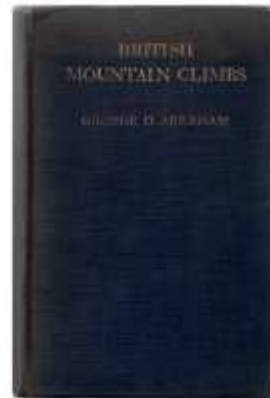
British Mountain Climbs
1st Edition Black Text



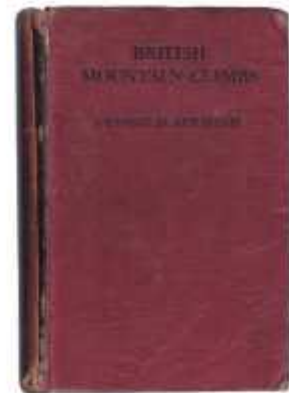
British Mountain Climbs
1st Edition Box Binding



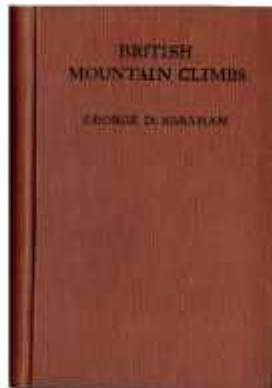
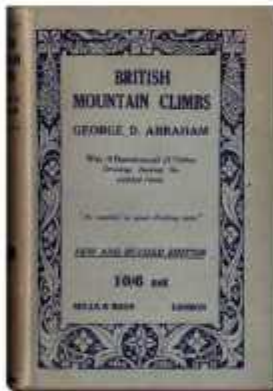
British Mountain Climbs
1st "Cheaper Edition" Box Binding



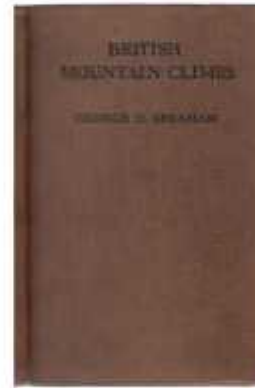
British Mountain Climbs
1st Edition Blue Cover



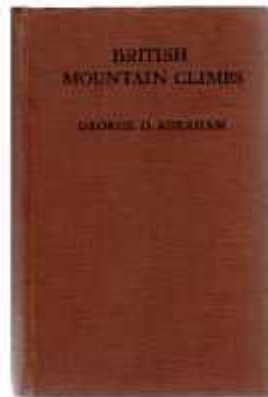
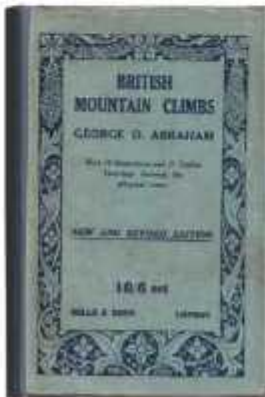
British Mountain Climbs
2nd Edition Red Cover



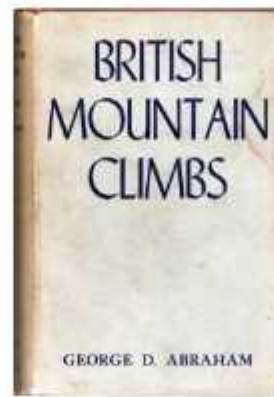
British Mountain Climbs
2nd Edition Brown Cover (with and without dust jacket)



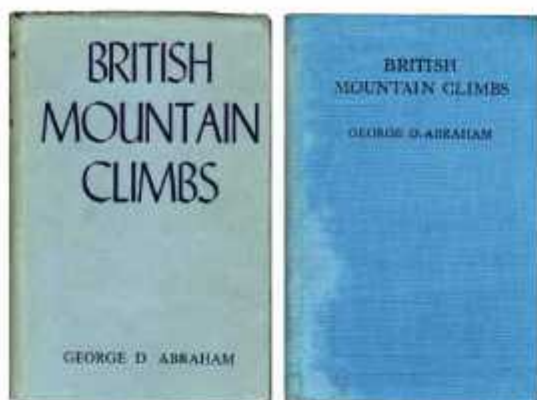
British Mountain Climbs
3rd Edition (missing dust jacket)



British Mountain Climbs
4th Edition Brown Cover (with and without dust jacket)



British Mountain Climbs
5th Edition (with dust jacket)



British Mountain Climbs
6th Edition (with and without dust jacket)

There were more versions of *British Mountain Climbs* than those described in the 2006 article. In particular, the “Cheaper Edition” mentioned is known to have also included the box-bound version as well as the standard version. Given that this incredibly popular guidebook’s first edition lasted well over a decade, there seem likely to have been reprints, which would account for the “Cheaper Editions”, and also the change from gold to black type on the cover within the first edition. These red and black covers seem then to have been carried forward to the second edition before being changed to brown and black, presumably another reprint.

British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Red Cover, Gold Lettering)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1909
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Red Cover, Gold Lettering, “Cheaper Edition”)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1909
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Red Cover, Black Lettering)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1909
British Mountain Climbs (Box Bound, Red Cover, Gold Lettering)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1909
British Mountain Climbs (Box Bound, Red Cover, Gold Lettering “Cheaper Edition”)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1909
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Blue Cover, Gold Lettering)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1909
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Red Cover, Black Lettering, 2nd Edition)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1923
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Brown Cover, Black Lettering, Dust Jacket, 2nd Edition)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1923
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Brown Cover, Black Lettering, Dust Jacket, 3rd Edition)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1932
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Brown Cover, Black Lettering, Dust Jacket, 4th Edition)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1937
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Brown Cover, Black Lettering, Dust Jacket, 5th Edition)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1945
British Mountain Climbs (Hardback, Blue Cover, Black Lettering, Dust Jacket, 6th Edition)	GD Abraham	Mills & Boon	1948

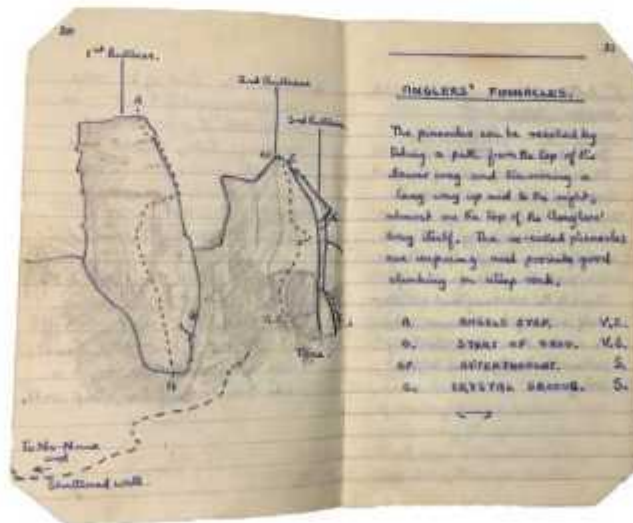
British Mountain Climbs also exists bound in four Volumes (England, North Wales, Scotland and Skye), without title pages or index. All the copies the author knows of are in the same format and are bound by Henry Young & Sons of Liverpool, but it is not known whether they obtained unbound pages direct from the publisher or climbers took bound single volume copies to them for rebinding.



Pillar Mountaineering Club

The Pillar Mountaineering Club was formed in West Cumbria in 1962 at the instigation of Doug Elliott (FRCC) and many of its members are now FRCC members. One PMC member, Trevor Martin, then 19, produced a handwritten guide to the outcrops of Ennerdale (Anglers Crag, Bowness Knotts (sic), Crag Fell Pinnacles and Grike), that weren't covered in the FRCC guide of the day.

It was described as a PMC guide and contains one or two climbs that have never been in any FRCC guide, but unfortunately does not give first ascent details. The only known copy is now in the collection of Geoff Cram. It's a remarkably painstaking work, almost in the tradition of Wainwright!



Cover and pages from the PMC's Ennerdale Outcrops .

Ennerdale Outcrops	Trevor Martin	Hand Written	1963
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A few pamphlets have come to light that were missed from the 2006 article.

Ray McHaffie

The well-known inveterate discoverer of new routes in Borrowdale climbed three new routes on Black Crag in 1995. Who produced the photocopied single A4 sheet of their descriptions is uncertain.

Black Crag, Borrowdale	A4, 1 page	Ray McHaffie	1995
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Colin Read

Lakes based climber Colin Read and his climbing partner Graham Swainbank secretly developed a large crag high in Langdale during the summer of 1999. When Colin felt they had climbed everything worth doing, he produced a desk top guide – which showed, unsurprisingly, there was little left unclimbed for anyone else!

Shelter Crag	A4, 8 pages	Colin Read	1999
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Stuart Miller

Local mountain guide Stuart Miller produced an undated photocopied A4 three page guide to the Thirlmere Boulders around 2001. These boulders are mostly submerged under the waters of the dam, but when the level is low, they appear; the rock is very clean and rough.

Atlantis	A4, 3 pages	Stu Miller	c 2001
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Jim Arnold

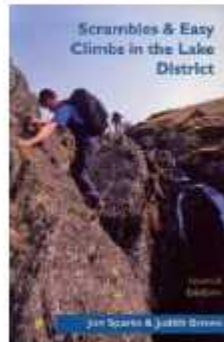
North Lakes climber Jim Arnold also produced two photocopied sheet bouldering guides. The first was in an Eden Valley MC Newsletter of March 2001. Later bouldering guides of his appeared on the Lakesbloc website (see below).

Carrock Fell Boulders	A4, 1 page	Jim Arnold/EVMC	2001
Thirlmere Boulders	A4, 1 page	Jim Arnold	2001

Climber Magazine

In conjunction with Rockfax, and with an aim to publicising the new Rockfax *Lakes Bouldering* guide (2006 – described in the 2006 article), Climber magazine produced *Carrock Fell*, a pre-publication giveaway which contained most of the Carrock Fell chapter from the book.

Carrock Fell – Lakes Bouldering Miniguide	A5, 16 pages, Full colour	Jonathan Lagoe, Andy Hyslop	2006
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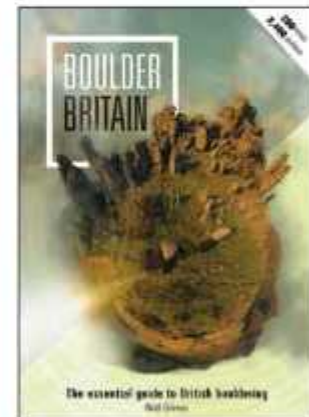
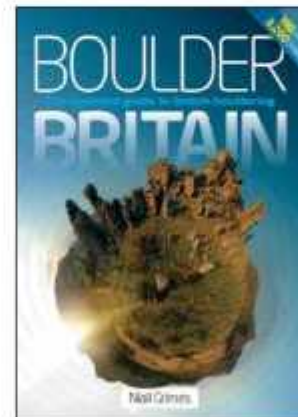
Grey Stone Books

The second edition of this guide to 67 routes in the Lake District from scrambling Grade 1 to rock climbing V Diff by Jon Sparks and Judith Brown was much improved with the addition of colour photos and photodiagrams. A pocket guide, it measures 17cm by 12cm.

Scrambles & Easy Climbs in the Lake District, 2nd edition	Jon Sparks, Judith Brown	Grey Stone Books	2011
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Ape Index

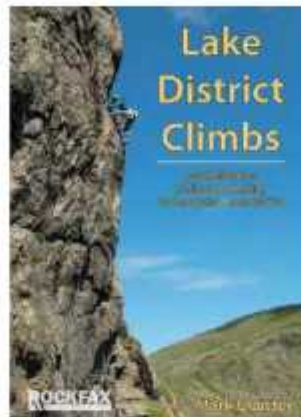
Niall Grimes, well known climber, raconteur, and part-time guidebook supremo for the British Mountaineering Council, had the bright idea of producing a selected bouldering guide to the whole of the UK. As one can imagine, selected or not, it's still a fairly plump volume, and is now in its second edition and selling well. Naturally many of the famous Lake District bouldering venues are included.



First and second editions of *Boulder Britain*. The 2016 reprint was almost identical to the first edition except that some advertisements were changed. The second edition is an enormous 512 pages, and superbly illustrated.

Boulder Britain	Niall Grimes	Card cover 21cm x 15cm	2011
Boulder Britain	Niall Grimes	Card cover 21cm x 15cm	2016 reprint
Boulder Britain	Niall Grimes	Card cover 21cm x 15cm	2020

Rockfax

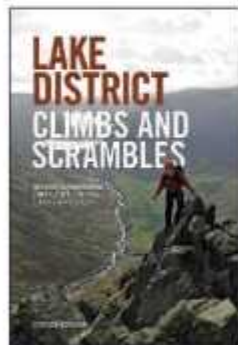


Rockfax do not have a particularly good reputation among many of the established clubs who take a jaundiced view of their selected climbs guides which, as they see it, could not be produced without the aid of the clubs' definitive guides, and cream off guidebook sales. Certainly, the author of this article can vouch that he met the Rockfax author at Pillar Rock when he was researching *Lake District Climbs* and that he was seen to be consulting the FRCC *Gable & Pillar* guide at the time!

There is no doubt though that the FRCC guides would not be anything like as good as they are were

it not for Rockfax forcing the pace of development. All one can add about their most recent Lake District guide is up to their usual fine standard. The earlier guide, *Northern Limestone*, covered sport crags all over the north of England, including Chapel Head Scar (see below).

Northern Limestone	Mark Glaister	Card cover, 21cm x 15cm	2014
Lake District Climbs	Mark Glaister	Card cover, 21cm x 15cm	2019



Vertebrate Publishing

Vertebrate Publishing was set up by Jon Barton whose firm Vertebrate Graphics did such an excellent design work for FRCC rock climbing guides from 2003 to 2012. Barton bought the publishing house Bâton Wicks from Ken Wilson and has since published numerous books of all types including a superb new edition of *Hard Rock* edited by Ian Parnell.

The writer of this small guide was retired journalist, Stephen Goodwin, who had been on the founding staff of the Independent newspaper and was one time editor of the *Alpine Journal*. It details scrambles and climbs up to Hard Severe in standard.

Greg Chapman started producing downloadable guides to the boulder problems of the Lake District on his Lakesbloc.com website as early as 2003. His research finally made it into book form with *Lake District Bouldering*, a massive tome that extended coverage to the whole of Cumbria and North Lancashire and which has rightly proved extremely popular.

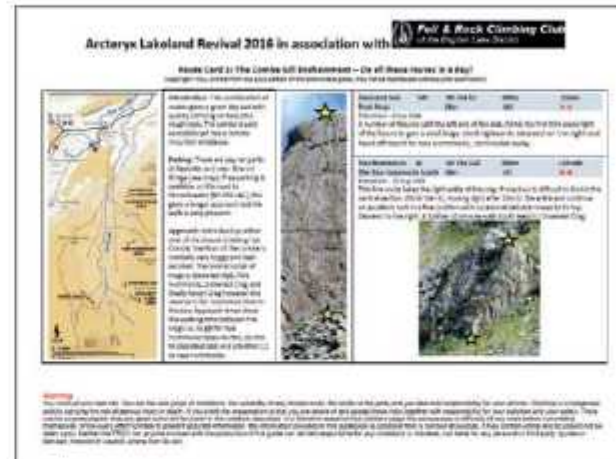


For more about bouldering, see below.

Lake District Climbs and Scrambles	Stephen Goodwin	Card Cover, 17.5cm x 12cm	2015
Lake District Bouldering	Greg Chapman	Card cover 21cm x 15cm	2019

Arc'teryx

Not the first name one would think of as a British guidebook producer, Canadian manufacturer of up-market mountaineering kit, Arc'teryx, nevertheless produced a series of "route cards" for a marketing ploy known as the "Lakeland Revival" which was designed to encourage trad climbing in the area (and presumably sell more Arc'teryx kit!) These weekends ran from 2015 – 2020 when coronavirus put a temporary spanner in the works. The cards were produced with the assistance of the FRCC, though 'card' was a misnomer - they were actually pdfs that could be printed off to order. There may well have been more than those listed.



A typical Arc'teryx production,
Route Card 1, Combe Ghyll Round from 2016

Route Card 1: The Combe Gill Enchainment	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 2: Sergeant's Crag Gully	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card Number 3: Rough Magic, Gabbro Buttress, Gillercombe	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 4: The Shroud, VS 4c, Black Crag (North Buttress)	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 5: Fool's Paradise, Gowder Crag	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 6, The Borrowdale Stare, Hind Crag North Gully Wall	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 7; Endurance, HVS 5a, Sergeant's Crag Slabs; Slab Happy, E2 5c, Blackmoss Pot Slab	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 8, The Question, E2 5c, Upper Heron Crag	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 9, City of Love and Ashes, Lining Crag	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 10, Vortigern, E1 5b, Castle Crag & The Sting E2 5c, Steel Knotts	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 11, Goat Crag Upper, Watendlath	Arc'teryx	2016
Route Card 12, Whole Grain, Grains Ghyll Crag	Arc'teryx	2016
Langdale Enchainment: Picco-Harrison Integrale	Arc'teryx	2017
Hidden Classics: North-West Climb & South West Climb, Pillar Rock	Arc'teryx	2017
Trevor's Pick of the week. Walking in the footsteps of giants. A great day on Great Gable	Arc'teryx	2017
Enchainment Route Card 1: Pavey Ark (Grade D)	Arc'teryx	2018
Enchainment Route Card 2: Gimmer Crag (Grade VD)	Arc'teryx	2018

Enchainment Route Card 3: Gimmer Crag (Grade S)	Arc'teryx	2018
Enchainment Route Card 3: Harrison Stickle Middle Way (Grade S)	Arc'teryx	2018
Enchainment Route Card 3: Harrison Stickle the tough way (Grade VS 4c)	Arc'teryx	2018
Enchainment Route Card 3: Pavay Ark the tough way (Grade VS 4c)	Arc'teryx	2018
Enchainment Extension Sheet	Arc'teryx	2018
Enchainment 1: Pavay Ark (Grade D)	Arc'teryx	2019
Enchainment 2: Pike of Stickle (Grade VD)	Arc'teryx	2019
Enchainment 3: Gimmer Crag & Beyond (HS 4a)	Arc'teryx	2019
Enchainment 4: Gimmer Crag (Grade MVS 4b)	Arc'teryx	2019
Enchainment 5: Harrison Stickle (Grade VS 4c)	Arc'teryx	2019
Enchainment Extension Sheet	Arc'teryx	2019
Enchainment: Pavay Ark (D)	Arc'teryx	2020
Enchainment: Gimmer Crag (VD)	Arc'teryx	2020
Enchainment: Stickle Tarn (S)	Arc'teryx	2020
Enchainment: Gimmer Crag (VS 4c)	Arc'teryx	2020

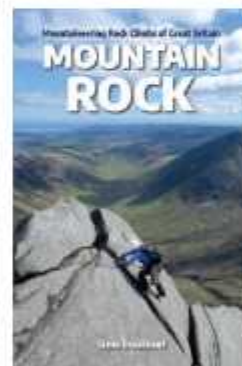
The Oxford Alpine Club

Founded in 1876, the Oxford Alpine Club is one of the country's oldest mountaineering clubs and was established to enable Oxford University alumni who share an interest in mountaineering to keep in touch and meet up for climbing trips and expeditions. Under Steve Broadbent, the club's publishing arm has prospered and is responsible for many guidebooks, primarily on Morocco, but also covering ice climbing in various parts of Europe.

Mountain Rock was a bit of a departure from previous guides, but clearly a labour of love, and is best described as a cross between *Classic Rock* and a guidebook. Beautifully illustrated, it describes climbs all over the UK, including about 40 routes in the Lake District, all on high mountain crags.

Mountain Rock was well received, and a follow up volume describing classic (ie mainly grade III and below) winter climbs in Britain, *Snow & Ice*, was written by Lina Arthur. Just over 30 Lakeland routes are described though other nearby climbs are also included and the whole is excellently illustrated.

Mountain Rock	Steve Broadbent	Card cover, 19cm x 12.5cm	2020
Snow & Ice	Lina Arthur	Card cover, 19cm x 12.5cm	2021



THE EDEN VALLEY & NORTH CUMBRIA



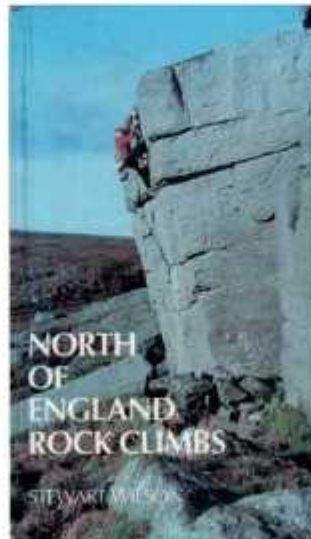
The two versions of an *Interim Guide to Rock Climbs in the Eden Valley*. 1974

Windmore Crag. 1976

The first proper guide documenting any climbing in the Eden Valley area was only published in 1974 and in fact, most of the outcrops were only developed from the 1960s onwards, with major venues like Armathwaite only being "discovered" in the 1970s. This was predated by an article, *Climbers' Guide to Headend Quarry*, which appeared as an article in a Border Bothies Association Bulletin in the 1970s – however a copy of this publication has not been traced and neither the author or the exact date is known.



*Rock Climbers' Guide:
North of England*
1980



*North of England
Rock Climbs*
1992

Among the many Eden Valley activists were Stewart Wilson and Ron Kenyon who were responsible for the first properly published guidebook to the area, *Rock Climbers' Guide: North of England* (1980), though it also covered crags in Northumberland, Durham and Yorkshire; the second edition extended this to include South Lakes limestone in the shape of Hebblethwaite Hall Gill, Hutton Roof, and Farleton.

Thereafter, with the blessing of Wilson, coverage was taken over by the FRCC with *Eden Valley & South Lakes Limestone* (2012) – see above.

GUIDE	AUTHOR(S)	PUBLISHER	YEAR
Climbers' Guide to Headend Quarry (in the Border Bothies Association Bulletin)	Writer unknown	Border Bothies Association	1970s
Interim Guide to Rock Climbs in the Eden Valley Pink cover, 25 stapled sheets, 18cm x 21cm.	Stewart Wilson, Ron Kenyon	Eden Valley MC	1974
Interim Guide to Rock Climbs in the Eden Valley Yellow cover, 25 stapled sheets, 18cm x 21cm.	The original guide had a pink cover with typewritten text but, towards the end of production, the team ran out of pink card and a few were produced with yellow covers hand written by Kenyon.		
Windmore Crag	Kel Neal	Private	1976
Rock Climbers' Guide: North of England Paperback, 17cm x 11.5cm	Stewart Wilson, Ron Kenyon	Pointer	1980
North of England Rock Climbs Hardback, 19cm x 11cm	Stewart Wilson	Cordee	1992
Recent Developments in the Lake District 2001 - 2002 (as per the 2006 article)	Stephen Reid	FRCC	2002
Lake District Rock (as per the 2006 article)	FRCC Guidebook Team	FRCC	2003
Eden Valley & South Lakes Limestone	Ron Kenyon, Nick Wharton, John Holden	FRCC	2012
Lake District New Climbs & Notes 2018 (See FRCC section above)	Trevor Langhorne, Ron Kenyon	FRCC	2018
Headend Quarry Miniguide 3 page downloadable pdf guide with pages number from 2 – 4. Strangely there is no page 1!	Steve Broadbent	Oxford Alpine Club	2018

SOUTH LAKES LIMESTONE

In 1946 a note on *Whitestones Crag* appeared in the Rucksack Club Journal mentioning 9 routes including two VS slabs and a girdle all climbed by GF Parkinson, WH Rae and G Dwyer (quite possibly the guide, Scottie Dwyer) in 1944 and '45, though they mention that the easier routes were well scratched. Pedants will note however that White Stone, although most definitely in the South Lakes, is not limestone. Climbing on true South Lakes Limestone was documented as early as 1960 by Edward Pyatt in his *Where to Climb in the British Isles* which mentioned climbs on Scout Scar and Fairy Steps but unfortunately does not describe them, and it seems that the first printed guide to climbing on South Lakes Limestone was an article entitled *Climbing at Humphrey Head* by Mick Goff in the Kendal Mountaineering Club Journal of 1968. However, the first true guidebook was *Lancashire: A Guide to Rock Climbs*, by Les Ainsworth and Phil Watkin, which was published by Rocksport in 1969 and included climbs at Farleton Crag and Quarry and White Stone. The list below includes everything from guidebooks to simple topo sheets. In addition, the following articles have appeared in magazines that are of interest but aren't guidebooks – the list is probably incomplete:

Climbing at Humphrey Head, Mick Goff, Kendal Mountaineering Club Journal, 1968.

Tremadothwaite, Al Evans, Climber and Rambler, Mar 1975 (about Chapel Head).

A Guide to Chapel Head Scar, Al Evans, Craggs 6, 1976.

Metamorphosis: The transformation of Scout Scar, Bill Birkett, Climber and Hillwalker, Nov 1993.

White Scar, Jon Sparks, High 172, 1997.

Bouldering in the Carnforth Area, John Gaskins, On the Edge 92 1999.

Chapel Head Scar, Tim Glasby, Mark Glaister, On the Edge, Oct/Dec 2004.



Lancashire: A Guide to Rock Climbs
1969



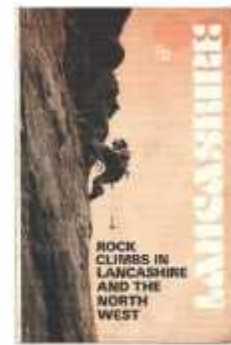
Lancashire Update One
1972



Lancashire Update Three
1972



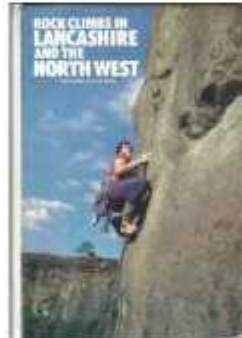
Hutton Roof Crag - Birkber Edge
1974



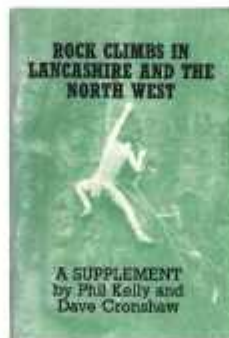
Rock Climbs in Lancashire and the North West
1975



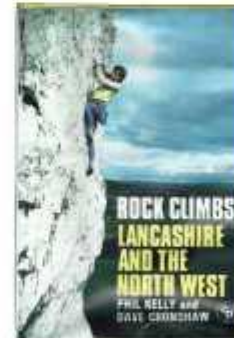
Rock Climbs in Lancashire and the North West Supplement
1979



Rock Climbs in Lancashire and the North West (including Isle of Man)
1983



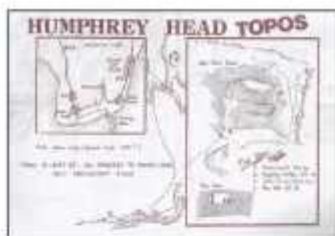
Rock Climbs in Lancashire and the North West: A Supplement
1986



Rock Climbs: Lancashire and the North West
1987



New Climbs 1986
1987



Humphrey Head
1991



Scout Scar
1991



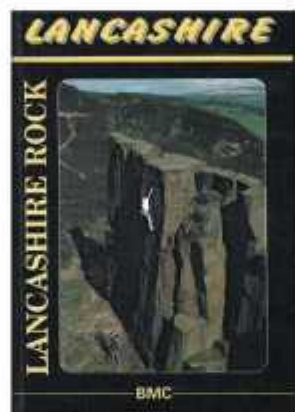
Chapel Head Scar
1991



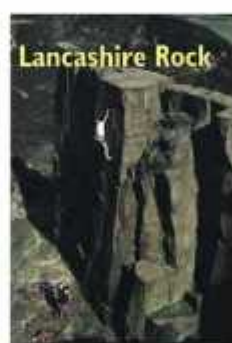
Millside Scar
1995



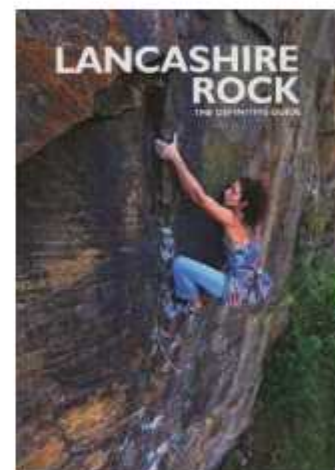
Recent Developments at White Scar
1996



Lancashire Rock
1999. "The Brick"



Lancashire Rock
2006



Lancashire Rock: The Definitive Guide. 2016

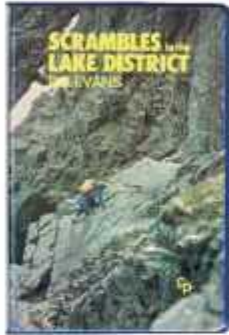
GUIDE	AUTHOR(S)	PUBLISHER	YEAR
Lancashire: A Guide to Rock Climbs. Card cover, 15cm x 11.5cm	Les Ainsworth, Phil Watkin	Rocksport	1969
Lancashire Update One. Paper cover, 14.5cm x 10.5cm	Les Ainsworth, Rob Meakin	Private	1972
Lancashire Update Three Paper cover, 14.5cm x 10.5cm	Les Ainsworth, Dave Cronshaw, Mike Haslam	Private	1972
Hutton Roof Crag - Birkber Edge. 30cm x 20cm	J Parker	Typed sheets	1974
Rock Climbs Lancashire and the North West 2nd edition Cloth covers, 17.5cm x 11.5cm	Les Ainsworth	Cicerone	1975
Rock Climbs in Lancashire and the North West Supplement Cloth covers, 17cm x 12cm	Les Ainsworth, Dave Cronshaw, Al Evans	Cicerone	1979
Chapel Head Scar	Les Ainsworth, Al Evans (probably!)	Typescript	1979

Rock Climbs in Lancashire and the North West (including Isle of Man) 3rd edition. Plastic cover, 18cm x 11.5cm	Les Ainsworth	Cicerone	1983
Rock Climbs in Lancashire and the North West: A Supplement Card cover, 17.5cm x 12cm	Phil Kelly, Dave Cronshaw	Cicerone	1986
Rock Climbs: Lancashire and the North West, 4th edition Plastic cover, 17.5cm x 12cm	Phil Kelly, Dave Cronshaw	Cicerone	1987
New Climbs 1986	Gary Gibson	BMC	1987
Chapel Head Scar (several versions)	Martin Bagness	Topo Diagram	1991
Humphrey Head	Martin Bagness	Topo Diagram	1991
Scout Scar	Martin Bagness	Topo Diagram	1991
North of England Rock Climbs, 2nd edition (See Eden Valley section above)	Stewart Wilson	Cordee	1992
Provisional guide to Slape Scar	Karl Lunt	Typescript	1992
Millside Scar	John L Holden	Topo Diagram	1995
Recent Developments at White Scar	Mick Lovatt, Steve Wilcock	Typescript	1996
Lancashire Rock, 5th edition Hardback, 22cm x 15cm x 677 pages and known as "The Brick"!	Les Ainsworth, Dave Cronshaw	BMC	1999
Lancashire Rock, identical, but a special edition of 50 copies for contributors	Les Ainsworth, Dave Cronshaw	BMC	1999
Recent Developments in the Lake District 1999 - 2000 (as per the 2006 article)	Stephen Reid	FRCC	2000
Lake District Rock (as per the 2006 article)	FRCC Guidebook Team	FRCC	2003
Lancashire Rock, 6th edition, a much smaller version of the 5th edition Plastic cover, 19cm x 13cm	Les Ainsworth, Dave Cronshaw	BMC	2006
Lancashire Rock, 6th edition reprint	Les Ainsworth, Dave Cronshaw	BMC	2009
Northern Limestone (See Rockfax section above)	Mark Glaister	Rockfax	2014
Lancashire Rock: The Definitive Guide Card cover, 21cm x 15cm	Les Ainsworth, Ian Carr, Dave Cronshaw	BMC	2016
Eden Valley & South Lakes Limestone (See FRCC section above)	Ron Kenyon, Nick Wharton, John Holden	FRCC	2012
Lake District Rock (See FRCC section above)	FRCC Guidebook Team	FRCC	2015
Lake District New Climbs & Notes 2018 (See FRCC section above)	Trevor Langhorne, Ron Kenyon	FRCC	2018
Lakes Sport & Slate (See FRCC section above)	Guidebook Committee & others	FRCC/Wired	2020

SCRAMBLING GUIDES

In the 2006 article I specifically excluded scrambling guides (which for the Lake District, largely means those published by Cicerone Press), but then included two books that described a mixture of scrambling routes and lower grade climbs. With hindsight, the exclusion of pure scrambling guides looks a bit arbitrary given that they include such well known climbs as Broad Stand and Slab and Notch – although they are included now, the lists only include those scrambling guides that include climbs.

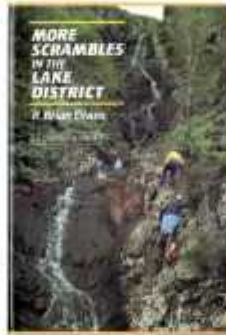
Cicerone



Scrambles in the Lake District
1982



Scrambles in the Lake District
2002



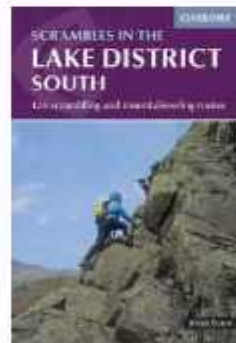
More Scrambles in the Lake District
1990



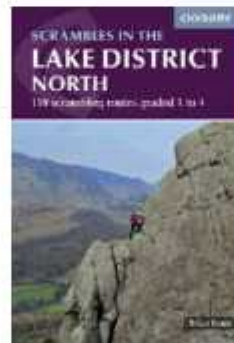
Scrambles in the Lake District. Vol. 1, Southern Lakes
2005



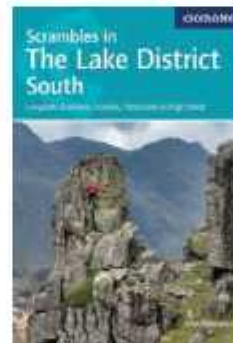
Scrambles in the Lake District. Vol. 2, Northern Lakes
2005



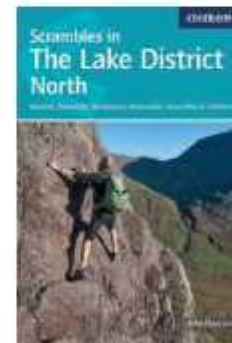
Scrambles in the Lake District South
2016



Scrambles in the Lake District North
2016



Scrambles in the Lake District South
2021



Scrambles in the Lake District North
2021

The first Lake District scrambling guides were the work of Brian Evans who has a good claim to have originated the genre. His original guide was *Scrambles in the Lake District* which sold in large numbers and was reprinted many times. He followed this up with *More Scrambles in the Lake District*. Eventually

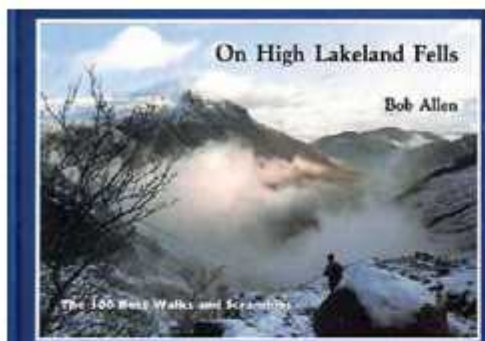
the two guides were amalgamated and reissued in two volumes covering the South and North Lakes. The 2005 editions introduced considerable use of colour, which continued thereafter. All the Evans guides had encapsulated plastic covers.

In 2021 the guides were rewritten completely by John Fleetwood and issued in card covers protected by a removable plastic sleeve.

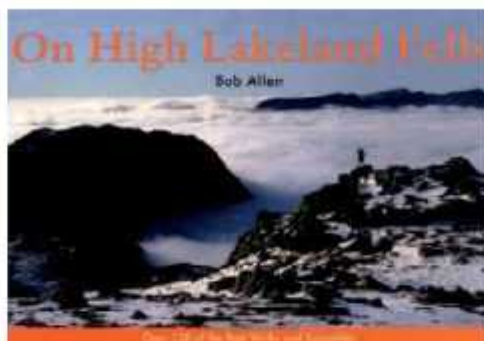
All these guides measured around 17cm by 11.5cm.

Scrambles in the Lake District	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1982
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1982
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1983
Scrambles in the Lake District, revised	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1985
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1988
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1990
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1991
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1994
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1996
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	1998
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	RB Evans	Cicerone Press	2001
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint, new cover	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2002
Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2003
More Scrambles in the Lake District	R Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	1990
More Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	R Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	1994
More Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint	R Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	1999
Scrambles in the Lake District Vol 1 Southern Lakes, new edition	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2005
Scrambles in the Lake District Vol 1 Southern Lakes, reprint	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2007
Scrambles in the Lake District Vol 1 Southern Lakes, reprint	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2011
Scrambles in the Lake District South, new edition	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2016
Scrambles in the Lake District South, new edition	John Fleetwood	Cicerone Press	2021
Scrambles in the Lake District Vol 2 Northern Lakes	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2005
Scrambles in the Lake District Vol 2 Northern Lakes, reprint	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2007
Scrambles in the Lake District Vol 2 Northern Lakes, reprint	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2011
Scrambles in the Lake District North, new edition	Brian Evans	Cicerone Press	2016
Scrambles in the Lake District North, new edition	John Fleetwood	Cicerone Press	2021

Pic Publications/Frances Lincoln



On High Lakeland Fells
1987



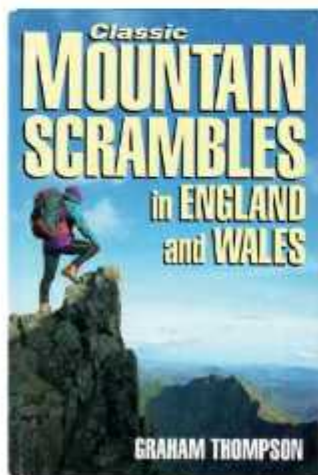
On High Lakeland Fells
2005

Bob Allen was a well-known climber, FRCC member and author of numerous books, of which this is the only one featuring climbs. It includes the usual suspects of Broad Stand and Slab and Notch and measured 18cm x 24cm.

On High Lakeland Fells, hardback	Bob Allen	Pic Publications	1987
On High Lakeland Fells, hardback, reprint	Bob Allen	Pic Publications	1988
On High Lakeland Fells, paperback, new cover	Bob Allen	Frances Lincoln	2005

Mainstream Publishing

Graham Thompson was a climbing instructor based in the Lake District and also a writer and photographer for Trail Walker magazine. The English scrambles in this guide are actually all in the Lake District and include the usual Slab and Notch and Broad Stand as well as easy climbs on Grey Crag and elsewhere.

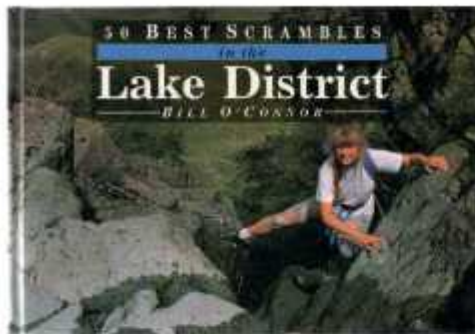


The guide measured 24cm x 16cm.

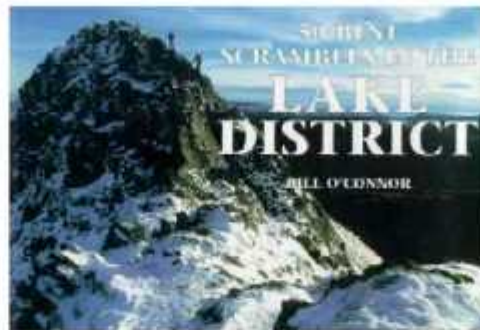
Classic Mountain Scrambles in England and Wales, hardback	Graham Thompson	Mainstream Publishing	1994
Classic Mountain Scrambles in England and Wales, hardback, reprint	Graham Thompson	Mainstream Publishing	1997

Classic Mountain Scrambles in England and Wales,
1994

David & Charles



*50 Best Scrambles in the
Lake District*
1995



*50 Best Scrambles in the
Lake District*
1997

This cross between a coffee table book and a guidebook (16cm x 24cm) was written by mountain guide Bill O'Connor who lived locally at the time.

Despite the title, it actually included a lot of rock climbs.

50 Best Scrambles in the Lake District, hardback	Bill O'Connor	David & Charles	1995
50 Best Scrambles in the Lake District, reprint, paperback	Bill O'Connor	David & Charles	1997

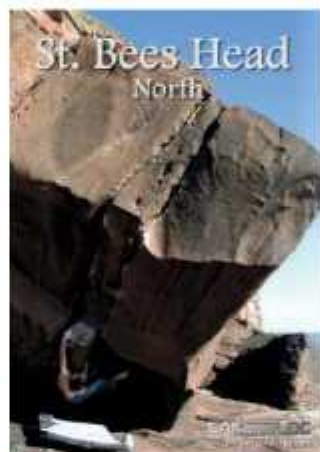
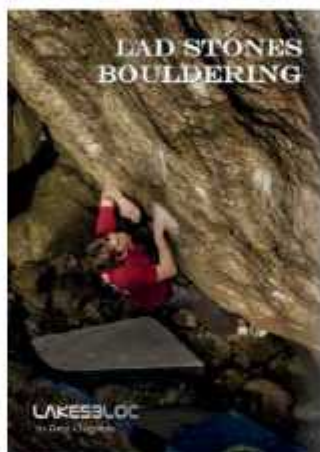
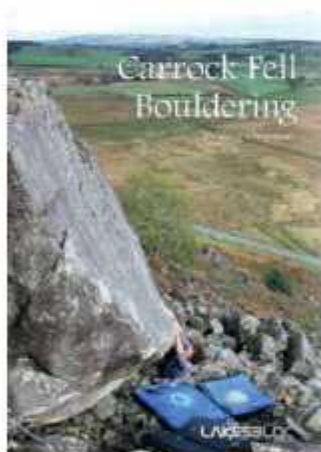
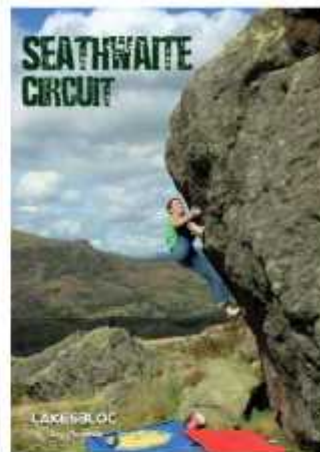
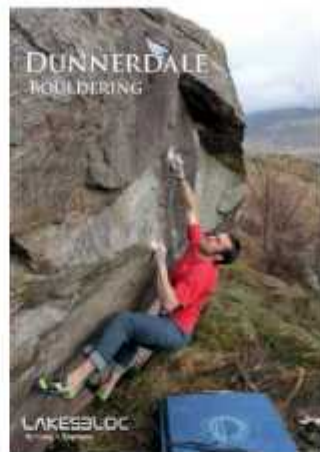
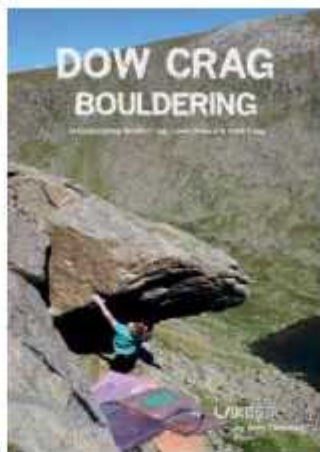
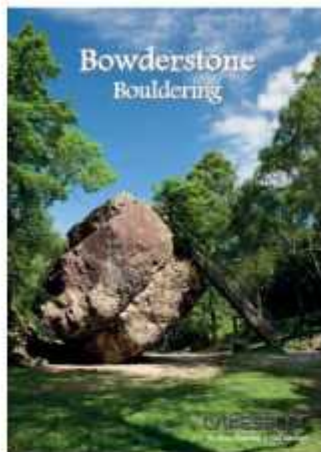
BOULDERING TOPOS

Bouldering articles and diagrams are almost as old as the history of climbing. Aleister Crowley recorded boulder problems in Mosedale in the Wasdale Hotel Visitors' Book in 1898 and JP Rogers described bouldering in the area of the Pudding Stone in *Boulder Valley*, FRCC Journal, 1916. In more modern times, John Gaskins's *Bouldering in the Carnforth Area* in *On the Edge* 92 (1999), included some rock in Cumbria and there have been a number of websites featuring information on Lake District bouldering, including Bruce Jardine's NWBouldering.co.uk (2003 to 2004), Ian Tilney's Fullondyno.net (c 2005) and Philip Wake's lakesbouldering.co.uk (2003 - 2013) – however, it is not thought that any of these produced downloadable pdfs or other documents of Lake District venues.

The best known website, and still running, is Lakesbloc.com (alternatively, .co.uk in the early years), (2003 to date) the work of Greg Chapman, author of *Lake District Bouldering* (see above). Once the book was in print, Chapman understandably removed many of the pdfs that were previously available free on his website. The list below is a mixture of what remains and many, if not all, of the older ones. Not all of them were as well produced as those illustrated - many were only text and a diagram or two - and a few were not compiled by Chapman at all. Many of those that are listed went through several versions, occasionally with slight name changes, and, as hardly any were dated, dates have not been assigned.

Opposite:

Examples of the covers of some of the more professional of Greg Chapman's pdf guides (row 1 and 2) and two spreads from *Carrock Fell Bouldering* (row 3).



Bowderstone Bouldering

Introduction
This guidebook covers the Bowderstone bouldering area, which is a collection of large boulders scattered across a grassy field. The rock is a soft, grey sandstone, and the boulders are of various sizes and shapes. The area is popular for bouldering and is accessible to all.

Routes

- 1. **Top of the Rock** (5.10) This is a classic boulder problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 2. **The Edge** (5.11) This is a more challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 3. **The Wall** (5.12) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

Other routes

- 4. **The Rock** (5.13) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 5. **The Wall** (5.14) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

DOW CRAG BOULDERING

Introduction
This guidebook covers the Dow Crag bouldering area, which is a collection of large rock faces and boulders. The rock is a hard, grey sandstone, and the boulders are of various sizes and shapes. The area is popular for bouldering and is accessible to all.

Routes

- 1. **The Rock** (5.10) This is a classic boulder problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 2. **The Edge** (5.11) This is a more challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 3. **The Wall** (5.12) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

Other routes

- 4. **The Rock** (5.13) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 5. **The Wall** (5.14) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

DUNNERDALE BOULDERING

Introduction
This guidebook covers the Dunnerdale bouldering area, which is a collection of large rock faces and boulders. The rock is a hard, grey sandstone, and the boulders are of various sizes and shapes. The area is popular for bouldering and is accessible to all.

Routes

- 1. **The Rock** (5.10) This is a classic boulder problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 2. **The Edge** (5.11) This is a more challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 3. **The Wall** (5.12) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

Other routes

- 4. **The Rock** (5.13) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 5. **The Wall** (5.14) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

SEATHWAITE CIRCUIT

Introduction
This guidebook covers the Seathwaite Circuit bouldering area, which is a collection of large rock faces and boulders. The rock is a hard, grey sandstone, and the boulders are of various sizes and shapes. The area is popular for bouldering and is accessible to all.

Routes

- 1. **The Rock** (5.10) This is a classic boulder problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 2. **The Edge** (5.11) This is a more challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 3. **The Wall** (5.12) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

Other routes

- 4. **The Rock** (5.13) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.
- 5. **The Wall** (5.14) This is a very challenging problem, involving a sequence of moves that require a strong grip and a good understanding of body positioning.

The list of titles below is arranged alphabetically (ignoring the word 'The'), with the exception that closely related pdfs are listed together with subsidiary ones being indented.

Armathwaite	Kentmere: Yertis Wall Sector
Split Rock - Armathwaite	Kern Knotts Boulders
Bell Stones Bouldering Circuit	Kettlewell Crag
Black Crag Bouldering	The Langdale Boulders
Black Crag Addendum	Langdale Boulders
Blake Rigg	Cam Crag Boulders Langstrath
Bowderstone Bouldering	Langstrath Bouldering
Brant Fell Bouldering	Long Crag Bouldering
Carrock Fell Bouldering	Rakerigg Crag
'Secret Cave' - Carrock Fell	Rannerdale Rock Topo
Cringlebarrow	Rolling Rock – Raven Crag, Threshthwaite Cove
Dow Crag Bouldering	Sampson's Stones Bouldering
Dunnerdale Bouldering	Seathwaite Circuit
Eskdale Granite Bouldering	Seathwaite Boulders – Hind Crag & River Face
Tear Drop Boulder – Eskdale Granite	Settle Earth Boulders (Longsleddale)
Miterdale Boulders	Shoulthwaite Bouldering Circuit
Mighty White Boulder (Miterdale)	Simon Stone (Swindale)
The Universe Boulders (Eskdale)	St. Bees Head Bouldering
Fairy Steps Bouldering	St. Bees Head – North
Fairy Steps - The Shuck's Lair	Fleswick Bay Boulders
Farleton Area	The Outlander Boulder (St Bees)
The Limestone Link	St. Bees Head – South
The Garburn Boulders (Kentmere)	St John's Boulder
The Gillercombe Boulders	Stirrup Boulders - Wasdale
Gillercombe and Sourmilk Bouldering	Tilberthwaite Boulders
Gouther Crag Bouldering	Virtual Crag: Tilbertwaite
Great Bank Bouldering	The Lad Stones - Tilberthwaite
Hardknott Pass South: Horsehow Crag Boulders	Lad Stones Bouldering
Hell Moss	The Thirlmere Boulders
The Heron Stones	Trowbarrow Quarry Bouldering
The Honister Boulders	Red Wall Plus (Trowbarrow)
The High Rock - Honister Pass	Tongue Scar Bouldering
Kentmere Bouldering	Wallowbarrow Gorge Boulders
Kentmere Valley Bouldering	The Wrynose Breast Block



APP GUIDES

Are guidebooks downloaded to your phone really guidebooks? A good topic for pub discussion when rained off Shepherd's, Gimmer or Chapel Head perhaps! Whether they are guidebooks or not, many people, in particular those under 40, seem to be permanently attached to their smart phones and the information they provide (whether true or false!) and they are certainly seen more and more out and about on the crags.

How suitable then are they for the Lakes? On the one hand, a smart phone is considerable smaller and lighter to take up a route than the guidebook these days, most of which seem to be approaching the size of a family bible, and your phone is also a camera – so two birds killed with one stone. But the risk of dropping a £500 smart phone down the crag, as opposed to a guidebook worth less than a tenth of that amount, along with problems of discerning what is on the screen in the bright sunlight that is often so prevalent on high Lakeland crags, waterproofness and limited battery charge, mean that it is hard to see app guides catching on totally for multipitch mountain crags in the UK. They are better suited perhaps to single pitch outcrops and continental sport crags. One thing that this review is pretty sure of is that none of these apps will be around in a hundred years' time (by which time we'll probably all have chips implanted in our brains containing whatever we need), unlike the "proper guidebooks" detailed above.

As of 2022, the FRCC's brief experiment with this format has been halted due to lack of take up and the expense of further developing an already expensive program, whereas Rockfax, which has its own app, currently has available the entire contents of *Lake District Climbs*.

Top Left: The Rockfax *Lake District Climbs* App on a smart phone.

Bottom Left: The somewhat tired-looking FRCC App.

IN CONCLUSION

The decade and a half since the last review has been a tumultuous time for FRCC guidebooks with huge changes in design, format and marketing. Full colour with photo diagrams of virtually every single crag and buttress has become the norm, with the recent innovation of drone shots to better show crag layout and the use of professional photographer David Simmonite, together with superb layout by Pete Sterling, excellent editing by Steve Scott (who seems to possess in spades the boundless energy, enthusiasm and nit-picking ability required for the task), and fine crag diagrams by Al Davis, have certainly resulted in guides with tremendous wow factor. The adoption of the Wired Guide marque for the two bestselling guides, and their being stocked in Waterstones and other major bookshops, has been widely perceived as a good thing even if it ties the editors hands a bit when it comes to design. Not every innovation has met with total approval though. The move of some guides to A5 format has been argued on the grounds that they need to compete with Rockfax on the shop shelf, but makes them a pain to carry up routes on multipitch crags, and the use of cardboard covers, though justified on environmental grounds, has resulted in covers that don't last as well as the old plastic ones.

Sales have been good, especially of the selected climbs and sport guides, but also of definitive guides to more popular areas such as Langdale and Borrowdale, with the Duddon becoming a new surprise addition to this category. Things augur well for the new edition of *Lake District Rock* which should come out in 2022/3, along with *Dow & Eskdale*, meaning that for the first time for many years the club will have a full set of definitive guides in print.

One of the major problems facing the FRCC in the years to come is the average age of the membership of the Guidebook Sub-Committee which, like that of the club as a whole, continues to rise at an alarming rate. However, three recent recruits to the team have all been young (certainly in FRCC terms) and it is to be hoped this trend continues, and that when Steve Scott feels he has done his fair share of dotting 'i's and crossing 'T's, there will be a suitable protégé waiting to take over the reins.

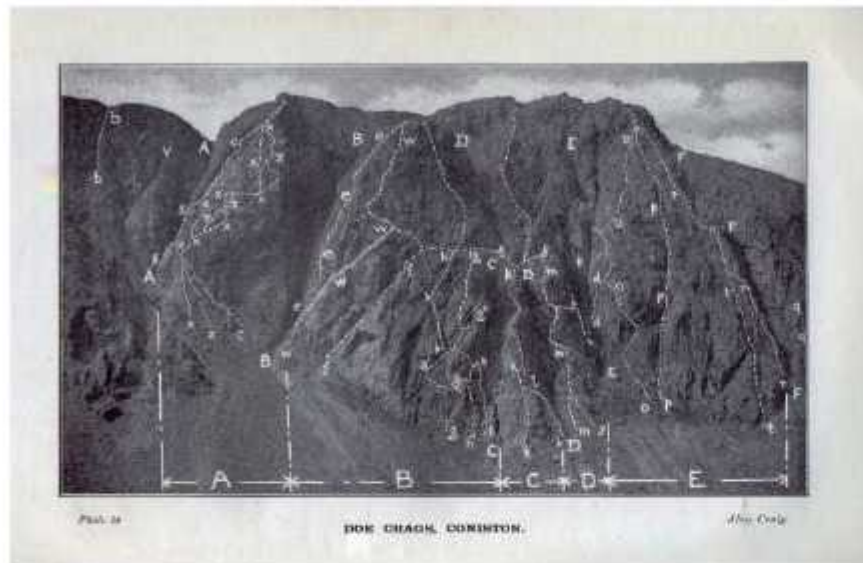
The 2006 review concluded with the words that, "the Club shows every sign of remaining the major force in the production of Lakeland climbing guidebooks, and its guidebooks have long been, and continue to be, numbered among the best in the country." I am very happy to report that this is still the case.

Acknowledgements

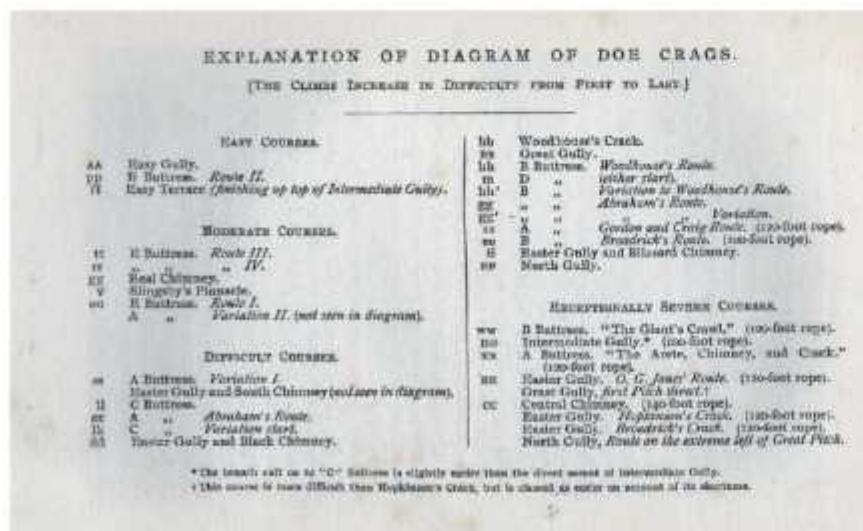
This article could not have been completed without the help of that inveterate collector of climbing guides, Alan Moss, who also contributed many of the photos. The South Lakes Limestone section was almost entirely the work of Les Ainsworth, and in truth could have filled a book such is his knowledge of 'Lancs' climbing. Jonathan Williams was most helpful concerning Cicerone Press publications and Ron Kenyon likewise proved to be fund of useful information on all things Eden Valley: he also highlighted the discrepancies in publication dates of the 'Red' guides, which were confirmed through research at the British Library by Alan Strachan. Others who have rendered invaluable assistance include, Martin Bagness, Steve Broadbent, Greg Chapman, Geoff Cram, Niall Grimes, Peter Haigh, John Holden, Trevor Langhorne, Trevor Martin, Al Phizacklea, Steve Scott, Nick Wharton, Richard Wheeldon, Katy Whittaker and the staff at Carlisle Library.

Celebration of the First Guidebook to Climbs on Dow Crag

Ron Kenyon



The first guidebook produced by the FRCC was to Doe Crag. Details were published in the 1922 FRCC Journal and the Doe Crag Red Guide was produced and registered in 1923. The final routes recorded in the guidebook were the Girdle Traverse on 8th October 1922 and then Eliminate B on 15th October 1922.



To celebrate this first guidebook to Doe/Dow Crag there are included, spread through this Journal, a collection of articles, starting with Intermediate Gully in 1895 through to modern routes with an original route description, photograph and article on the route. Photo-diagrams (or topos) seem like a modern idea however in the 1910 FRCC Journal there was the photo-diagram of the whole of Dow Crag linked to an article by T.C. Ormiston-Chant about 'Climbs around Coniston'.

We have reproduced the photo-diagram and explanation of the routes.



From Reticence to Revelation

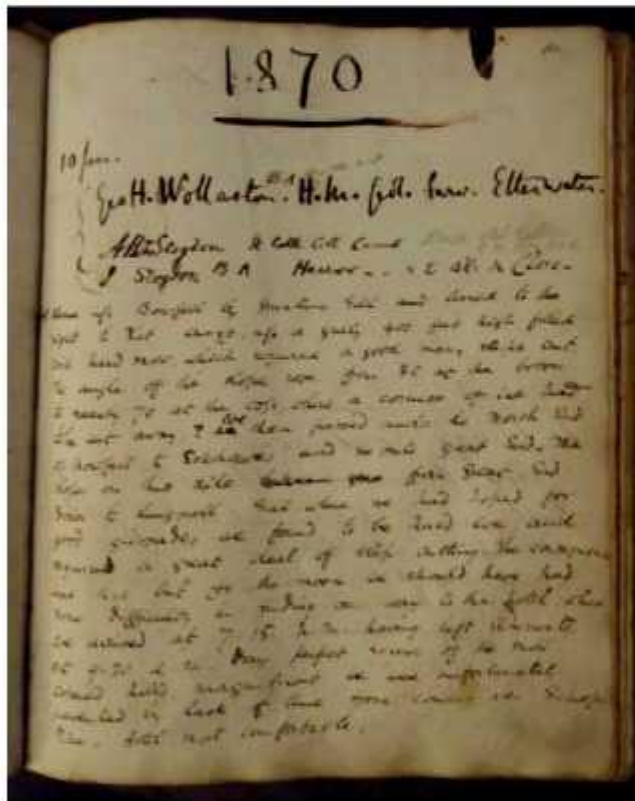
- The changing attitudes to climbing records 1859 – 1919

Michael Cocker

When members of the newly formed Alpine Club started to make occasional visits to the Lake District in the 1860s, they left little in the way of written records. This was, in part, because there was no tradition or forum for recording any kind of mountaineering activity in Britain at that time. It was also because these holidays were viewed as little more than a short break from the working life, an opportunity to maintain fitness and, if

conditions were favourable, to get some off-season practice cutting steps in snow and ice. A trifling bit of sport, as for them the real arena for endeavour and adventure was the Alps. Alongside this was a steadily increasing number of tourists who enjoyed hill-walking. Most confined themselves to the well-established paths and popular summits, but a small number started to engage in more exploratory activities. Among both of these groups were some reluctant to leave any record of their activities because they believed that the hills should be left undocumented for each party to discover for themselves. Over the next 60 years, as hill-walking and scrambling gave rise to rock-climbing, and outdoor activities, became more accessible to wider sections of the population, these attitudes gradually changed, to the point where it was deemed necessary and desirable to publish rock-climbing guidebooks. This article attempts to trace these changes, the main emphasis being on the activity in the Lake District with only brief reference to other areas.

Two notable climbs had been made early in the 19th century. Samuel Taylor Coleridge's epic descent of Broad Stand, on Scafell, in August 1802, and the first ascent of Pillar Rock by a local shepherd, John Atkinson, in July 1826. Although Coleridge described his adventure in a letter to his mistress and Atkinson's ascent was sufficiently unusual to be reported in a local newspaper, any subsequent knowledge of these climbs was only acquired by word of mouth. As a consequence, they were very rarely repeated and then only by locals. The first tourist ascents weren't made until around 1850.



The first winter climb recorded in the Lake District: South Gully on Bowfell by John Stogdon and two companions on 10 January, 1870



The Wasdale Head Inn, then known as the Huntsman's Inn

One of the earliest members of The Alpine Club to visit the Lake District was the notable scientist John Tyndall, who came for a walking tour in April 1859. He climbed Helvellyn in a storm and later wrote that it was 'a day of wondrous atmospheric effects - indeed we had scarcely seen anything grander amongst the Alps themselves'. In Wasdale he was given some general directions for the ascent of Broad Stand, but even with this information he had difficulty finding the correct route, which at the time was partly covered in snow and ice. However, once located, he thought it 'a pleasant bit of mountaineering practice and nothing more'. The account of this holiday, which he published in the *Saturday Review*, was the first by an accomplished Alpinist to enthuse about climbing in the Lake District.

In August 1863 the first new route recorded in the Lake District (since Atkinson's ascent of Pillar Rock) was made by JWE Conybeare and six others, all

academics from Cambridge. They ascended the east face of Pillar Rock by a line similar to that now taken by the Slab and Notch Climb and recorded this in the Visitors' Books at the Huntsman's Inn (today the Wasdale Head Inn), with a laconic entry which simply stated that they had made an ascent of the east face of Pillar Rock by the 'New Route' 3.

The distinguished academic, author and alpinist, Leslie Stephen, had failed to find a way up Pillar Rock on his initial endeavour in 1861, and was only successful on his second attempt four years later after reading Conybeare's note in the Visitors' Book. Stephen recorded his successful ascent in the Visitors' Book and included a sketch. This, unfortunately, was at first defaced then the page later stolen.

The earliest guidebook to mention the routes up Pillar Rock and Broad Stand was Herman Prior's *Ascents and Passes in the Lake District*, which was

published around 1865. Of Pillar he wrote that 'the rock had been climbed by various adventurers whose names are said to be deposited in a bottle there' and that 'the attempt obviously requires a finished cragsman'. And of Broad Stand that 'between Scawfell and Scawfell Pike lies a face of bare rock which even The Alpine Club would decline to attack without ropes'. The book was reviewed in *The Alpine Journal*, which is an indication that there was at least some acknowledgement of the mountaineering potential in the Lake District. The review, however, was not complimentary and suggested that Prior overestimated the difficulty of these ascents. The overall tone was one of amused tolerance and slight disdain; a view that would probably have been shared by the majority of members at that time. Later editions of Prior's guide included more detailed descriptions of these routes.

The next significant inscription in the Visitors' Book at the Huntsman's Inn was one by TLM Browne, a lawyer and member of The Alpine Club who, in August 1869, drew the attention of 'mountaineers' to the unclimbed summit of Scafell Pinnacle and the 'remarkable' feature of Deep Gill, adding that he thought the pinnacle 'looks stiff'. This entry was an indication of a growing awareness of the mountaineering challenges to be found on the Lakeland fells. The first known ascent of Deep Gill was made in winter conditions by Charles and Lawrence Pilkington in 1882, and Scafell Pinnacle by Walter Parry Haskett Smith, who climbed it solo, in 1884.

The first winter climb recorded in the Lake District was by the Harrow schoolmaster John Stogdon and two others when they ascended South Gully on Bowfell, in January 1870. Stogdon left a detailed description in the Visitors' Book and later read a paper before The Alpine Club giving an account

of their ascent. In this he suggested that winter climbing in the Lakes could offer everything necessary for a full mountaineering experience, with the exception of crevasses. He also drew attention to the winter climbing potential on the Red Tarn Face of Helvellyn. His paper appeared in *The Alpine Journal* and was the first, in that publication, to describe any climbing in Britain.

During the 1870s, another group of schoolmasters, mainly from Winchester, made annual gatherings at the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel, in Snowdonia, with the expressed intention of exploring the mountains in winter. This group included Frederick Morshead, Adams-Reilly and CE Mathews, all members of The Alpine Club and some of the ablest mountaineers of their time. They called themselves the 'Society of Welsh Rabbits' and were almost certainly the first to complete the Snowdon Horseshoe in winter conditions. It is also likely that they made first ascents of several of the easier snow gullies in the area. Unfortunately, they left no record of their activities, but Mathews later wrote an interesting article in *The Climbers' Club Journal* recalling the early days at the Pen-y-Gwryd.

This indifferent attitude to domestic climbing records was in marked contrast to the meticulous notes kept on Alpine ascents, which often included, not only details of the route taken, but observations on the weather conditions, atmospheric pressure, and other information. This was partly because mountaineering activities at home were regarded as trivial by comparison with the Alps but also because there was a feeling that the British hills should be left undocumented so that each party could discover them afresh and for the first time for themselves; a position that might be described as one of romantic reticence. Others simply thought it was boastful to be writing about one's own

adventures. A good example of the more reticent school was Frederick Bowring, a classics scholar, and a lawyer, who had been exploring the mountains and moorlands of Britain since the 1850s. He probably knew them better than anyone else when, in the summer of 188, he met and encouraged the young Oxford undergraduate, Walter Parry Haskett Smith, in his embryonic explorations at Wasdale Head. Other prominent figures reluctant to leave

any records, were Charles and Lawrence Pilkington and the five Hopkinson brothers, all members of The Alpine Club who climbed regularly in the Lake District during the 1870s. We know very little of any of their activities and it is possible that some of the easier gullies and more exposed scrambles, that are now credited to later generations, may have been climbed during this period.

From 1881 onwards there was a more systematic exploration of the gullies and rock faces around Wasdale Head, with the main protagonists being John Robinson, a local farmer, and Haskett Smith. They started to make regular entries in the hotel Visitors' Book recording their activities and others soon followed their example. And it is thanks to them that we have a good record of the early history of rock-climbing in the Lake District. Not everyone, however, was happy about this and several of their entries were defaced with inscriptions such as 'pure brag, sir' and 'Haskett Smith, blowing his own trumpet again' scrawled across them.

In November, 1884 an important two part article by CN Williamson, 'The Climbs of the English Lake District', appeared in the magazine, "All The Year Round'. This was the first comprehensive survey of rock-climbing in the area and contained detailed descriptions for most of the existing climbs. It was a welcome source of information for the few climbers already active and stimulated interest in many who would later become well-known climbers themselves. It remained the definitive published reference for the best part of a decade.

As the exploration around Wasdale developed and the number of active participants grew the Visitors' Books eventually became so filled with climbing entries that, in 1890, a book specifically



Bouldering Guide to the Y Boulder in Mosedale, taken from Wastwater Hotel Visitors' Book 1898. Compiled by Aleister Crowley; diagram by L A Legros

for climbing records was donated to the Wastwater Hotel (as it was then known). This book, which never had a proper title, was generally referred to as the Wasdale Climbing Book and remained in regular use until the last page was filled in 1919. It contains the handwritten records of practically every significant ascent and variation made in the area during that period, as well as crag diagrams, with photographs and contemporary newspaper and magazine articles pasted in. It was the start of a definitive and continuous record compiled by the leading climbers of the day and practically the only source of information available before the days of club journals and climbing guidebooks. Similar books were kept at the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel in Snowdonia and the Sligachan Hotel on the Isle of Skye but the Wasdale Climbing Book was the one in most constant use and the main inspiration for much of what followed.



Wasdale Hotel Visitors Book

carried on the crag or in a rucksack. Much of the information in them was taken from the old Visitors' Books or the climbing books at Wasdale Head and the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel. Haskett Smith also drew extensively from his own experience and those of friends like John Robinson and Frederick Bowring. These books gathered together all the available data on climbing south of Scotland and gave a considerable boost to the developing sport. In his introduction Haskett Smith wrote:

When anyone with a climbing instinct finds himself in a strange place his first desire is to discover a climb, his second is to learn what its associations are; what it is called and why? has anyone climbed it, and what did he think of it? To such questions as these this book endeavours to provide an answer.

This was a marked change from the romantic reticence of earlier generations. A third volume to cover Scotland was planned but never published.

The next significant development was the publication of OG Jones's book *Rock Climbing in the English Lake District* in 1897. This was a substantial volume, well-illustrated with photographs taken by George and Ashley Abraham, who had a photography business in Keswick, and was completely different in concept to Haskett Smith's books. Much of Jones's book describes his own experiences and reads more like a series of adventure stories than a guidebook. In the introduction he listed the climbs in order of difficulty, classing them as, Easy, Moderate, Difficult and Exceptionally Severe. It was the first adjectival grading system and the basis of that being used today. The Abrahams completed the now classic trilogy with *Rock Climbing in North Wales* (1906) and *Rock Climbing in Skye* (1908).

In April 1898 the first guide to bouldering appeared in the *Wastwater Hotel Visitors' Book*. This listed 22 problems on the Y Boulder, in Mosedale, and was compiled by Aleister Crowley with a sketch drawn by LA Legros. The most unusual of these was a feet first upside down ascent made by Joseph Collier. It's curious that Crowley included this in the *Visitors' Book* rather than the *Wasdale Climbing Book*. This may have been because bouldering wasn't considered a suitable subject for the climbing book, but it is more probable the climbing book wasn't available at the time.

The Climbers' Club was formed in 1898 and from the start produced a journal, which immediately became an important medium for the dissemination of information about old and new climbs. It also contained informative papers on rope work and belaying techniques. The Fell and Rock Climbing Club, which was founded in 1906, also produced a journal which contained details of old and new climbs as well as more general articles with the main focus being on the Lake District.

The old argument regarding the publication of information about climbs, however, was not over, and a significant number were still inclined to the traditional reticence and thought that there was a danger in disseminating this knowledge indiscriminately. There was also resentment towards the Abraham brothers from some quarters because they were professional photographers who made money out of their publications.

In 1909 The Climbers' Club published *The Climbs on Lliwedd* written by JMA Thompson and AW Andrews. Thompson, who lived in North Wales, was taciturn by nature and against the idea of any kind of publication. He was only persuaded to do this because he realised there was no longer

any way to check the distribution of information, much of which he believed misleading, and there was no-one else as well qualified to produce the guide. Climbing in the Ogwen District came out the following year and was written by Thompson alone. These were the first climbing guides ever produced to a single crag or valley. They were literary in style with frequent classical references, the description of a single route often required several pages. In the same year the Abraham brothers published *British Mountain Climbs*, a more up-to-date version of Haskett Smith's books, which also included Scotland.

The last inscription in the *Wasdale Climbing Book* before the First World War, was by Seigfried Herford recording the first ascent of Central Buttress on Scafell Crag. It was five years before any further entries were made and these were mainly by a new generation of climbers. The war created a watershed in climbing history, effectively dividing the period before it from what came after, and changes in the political and economic climate saw a broadening of the social classes attracted to the outdoors. The hills were no longer the exclusive preserve of The Alpine Club or wealthy tourists from the professional and upper middle classes. Hill-walking was increasingly popular, and rock-climbing had become a recognised sport with the support of several clubs and publications. There was a greater need for access to the knowledge and skills that these activities required, and the post war generation of climbers would go on to produce the Fell and Rock Climbing Club's first series of rock-climbing guides. What had once been withheld with a desire to preserve the aloofness and mystery of the mountains was now made available to all those who were interested. The cat, so to speak, was well and truly out of the bag!

Intermediate Gully

Andrew Paul

It was the weekend of the VP's meet 2018. Paul and I were looking for a route which we hadn't done before, something interesting but not too challenging, as time was limited. I had climbed Hopkinson's Crack the previous month, and on the way, there had become aware of the deep cleft to the left of D Buttress. It looked very traditional.

I recollect the start as being ridiculous, a left leaning chimney up which one had to slither like a migrating eel. I wriggled and stretched but made little progress & there just wasn't room to move. Perhaps tweed was necessary in order to adhere to the rock and prevent gravity eroding upward motion. After several struggles I handed over to Paul, who was similarly unsuccessful & so we wandered up rightwards, circumventing the chimney.

The guide indicates that there are a further four pitches, but I only recollect a couple. At one point I ended up belaying out on the right of the crack and Paul launched over a bit of an overlap into a wide crack & perhaps there were a couple of layback moves, which, as the guide indicates, were quite strenuous. By way of contrast, the subsequent pitch, which the guide indicates is the hardest, & unsympathetic chockstone & considerable difficulty I remember as being straightforward & a bit of bridging round the protruding boulder and it was all over. So, there we are & not the stuff of legends, but a pleasant outing.

We still had an hour or so to & in another route, so we galloped down Easy Terrace, then & up C Ordinary, which left us with the satisfaction of having got the best out of the available time.

Intermediate Gully

FRCC Guidebook to Doe Crag 1922/23

Severe: strenuous; 80 foot rope

There are members of the Club to whom 'Intermediate' is more than a climb; rather its ascent is one of the solemn rites connected with the practice of a cult. To one such disciple did I write, asking for a description of the preparations necessary on the part of those, who would attain to this circle. The reply came by wire: "Train on Raw meat and Stout, use Bulldog buttons...". In the framing of the following notes, it has been assumed that the would-be climber is suitably prepared.

Eighty feet of scrambling lead to the foot of the first pitch (20 feet) which is climbed facing left. Pulling hard on the jammed stones with the right hand, jamming the right leg, and using a recess in the left wall for the left hand, one is able to pull up into the cavity above, (belay on floor).

The second pitch, of 12 feet, is much easier. The climber backs up, facing right, until good holds are obtained on the chockstone, and to the right of this.

For the third pitch (15 feet) the leader should face inwards until the chockstone can be embraced, after which he faces right, and uses back and knees and tongue. In wet weather there is an ominous cessation of the noise of running waters during these operations. A few feet higher is a grassy ledge leading to the foot of the Arête on 'D' Buttress on the right, and level with which, on the left, is the start of Branch Chimney.

The fourth pitch, immediately above, is probably the most serious problem of the climb, especially for a short man. The second may belay over a flake used for the start, or the leader's rope may be threaded behind a jammed stone at the same level. A man of short reach must get his left knee on this stone and make a shift with a poor hold for the right hand until this hand is able to grasp a fine hold just above. A sloping ledge for the right foot gives a rest. For the next movement, where the crack is very narrow and smooth, with small, jammed stones, it is probably best to face left, and to use a poor hold for the left hand. Climbing is then easier, although the angle steepens to form a sort of pitch (climbed on the left) before a belay is reached, after running out over 70 feet of rope. Leaders occasionally bisect this pitch, using a thread at the top of the first steep section.

The fifth pitch (20 feet) of guileless appearance, exerts a curious influence on certain people. Staid and sober members of the Club have been observed making desperate efforts to stand on their heads, whilst others, apparently suffering from a reaction after the strenuous pitches below, have settled down in a recumbent position, with the left ear on the left wall, and the feet on a smooth wall yards away to the right. Such effects, however, may be warded off by making use of a sharp hold for the right hand, which enables one to rise up, with some pretence of grace, onto the chockstone.

In the negotiation of the sixth and last pitch, a lodgement is first effected on a flat ledge on the right hand side. A stride is then made across to a groove on the left hand side, good holds being found on the chockstone. With 45 feet of rope, the leader reaches a belay near the foot of a dip in Easy Terrace.

The section of the gully above Easy Terrace, being of the nature of an anti-climax, is seldom climbed, although it possesses one pitch of some interest.

14th April 1895 E A and J H Hopkinson-Campbell

On Guide Writing

FRCC Journal 1933

In a preface to The Climbers' Club guide to Lliwedd it is stated that the sole justification of a guidebook is the fact that there is a growing body of climbers who are unable to obtain information on climbing matters by any other means. This preface was written in 1909, and the argument must certainly apply even more strongly at the present time.

It is for the novice and the stranger that the guidebook should be written, not for the comparative expert, who can obtain from his fellow club members etc details of any climbs with which he is unfamiliar. It follows that the guidebook should indicate the position of the climbs without ambiguity and should enable the reader to estimate the character and severity of the climbing from the descriptions. It is not expedient, therefore, to incorporate the style of a journal article in a guidebook, since the lighter and often personal comments in an article are probably incomprehensible to outsiders, and, in consequence, would tend to make a guidebook obscure.

It may be of interest to say that the Keswick guide, Wright, who, whatever we may think of his activities, has the best opportunity of gauging the views of strangers, tells me that the greater number of climbers with whom he has come into contact are of the opinion that all the guidebooks should follow the Pillar model.

The desirability of having rock-climbing guidebooks has long been a matter of controversy, one school maintaining that all guidebooks, maps, cairns etc should be destroyed and the district left in the form in which it was discovered by the pioneers. Unfortunately, the scratching and battering to which the rocks have been subjected, both by the pioneers

and by the countless swarm of their successors, has made concealment impossible. It seems better, therefore, since the evidence of his eyes will indicate where former climbers have passed, that the modern searcher should be told into what difficulties each track will lead him and should be given sufficient data to enable him to estimate whether his abilities are sufficient to overcome them.

Those who disapprove of extraneous help, and who prefer the charm of re-discovery, have no necessity to purchase the guidebooks, and may save their money at the possible expense of becoming crag-fast.

In any case they will be under the pleasant delusion of all minorities, that they are the only exponents of the true faith, and that their hardships and perils are but the usual obstacles placed in the path of the righteous.

As the guidebooks are written for strangers, it is evident that they must be prepared under some uniform plan, so that the climbs in different districts can be correlated. It follows that the guide writers should sink their individuality for the common good and attempt to standardise their descriptions and classifications as far as possible. They have no need to be brilliant exponents of the art of rock-climbing, provided that they can call upon others to carry out the difficult routes.

From the foregoing it is plain that the first essential of a guide writer is his ability to call on a willing band of assistants, who, in addition to doing all the hard work, are sufficiently free from ambition to sacrifice their limited time in the examination of unheralded and often mediocre climbs. It is a real hardship when the rocks are in perfect condition to forego the pleasures of Scafell or Pillar for the necessary but rather uninspiring investigation of Green Gable Crags



or the Bowder Stone Pinnacle.

It is probably my only qualification as a guide writer that I could be certain of the willing help of the partner with whom I have been climbing for some years and could also rely on the assistance of several other helpers.

No sooner had I expressed my willingness to tackle the job than my partner was asked to take on the Borrowdale section. This, in itself, was no great addition to our labours, but on further investigation we were horrified to learn that the term Borrowdale included all outlying climbs between Shap and the sea not provided for under the main crags.

We now tremble at the postman's knock lest a letter bearing the Manchester postmark should arrive commanding us to extend our researches to the basalt cliffs of Northumberland or the mouldering ironstone of the Cleveland hills.

It is the custom of the more reputable firms in this country to provide their district representatives with a car and allowances. We feel sure that our fellow members, when they realise the extent and difficulty

of our task, will vote us a 1934 model for the carrying out of the remainder of our work with dignity and despatch.

This year we were dependent in the main on an Austin-seven, loaned with the assurance that it would never reach the Lake District, and on the willing, but not always reliable, assistance of our friends. We were fortunate in that our only serious breakdown occurred at the foot of the crag which we intended visiting, namely, the Castle Rock of Triermain, thus most of the climbs were completed, while the more mechanically minded members of the party worked with the transmission. Even the expert in Himalayan transport discovered that antiquated machinery was more difficult to deal with than recalcitrant natives.

Once having succeeded in bringing the transport as near as possible to the foot of the crag, it becomes necessary to deal with the climbs themselves. It can easily be understood that the necessity of measuring and describing the well-known routes on the Napes Ridges tends to become monotonous. We succeeded in obviating this to some extent by confining our activities in good weather to the more severe routes and tackling the easier stuff in rubbers when the weather deteriorated. We have been recommended to tackle the classical courses in boots under bad conditions, to recover to some extent the emotions of the pioneers, but I venture to assert that these climbs become even more entertaining if climbed under these conditions in rubbers. Such climbs as the Arrowhead are distinctly more exhilarating in rubbers when the polished holds are greasy. Even mountaineering expeditions, such as Raven Crag Gully, are very amusing in rubbers, particularly when confronted by a waterfall pitch, giving the choice of going slow and getting wet, or rushing it, with the probability of skating off some slimy hold.

Of even greater importance is the fact that there is a great saving in energy if the walk up to the climb is done in tennis shoes. In hot weather they are much more comfortable. When it is desired to do as many climbs as possible in a short space of time, they are much quicker to take off and much lighter to carry if it is intended to descend by some other route, while in many cases there is no necessity to change at all. In one respect only have I found rubbers a failure, and that is in the negotiation of mossy boulders. This was forcibly brought to my knowledge when descending the most unpleasant mixture of wood and boulder below the Bowder Stone Pinnacle, for after a hasty step across a gap I found myself at the bottom of a deep hole with painful results to my anatomy. The Bowder Stone Pinnacle is not a place that I am at all likely to revisit.

While there are many other places which we left without regret, and while I am quite certain that on the completion of our work none of us will willingly revisit the Napes, yet the writing of the guidebook has made us familiar with many excellent climbs which we should never have otherwise visited. First among these is the Castle Rock of Triermain, which at present provides two routes of very good quality besides several others of interest.

Boat How is another crag of great possibilities, but here we were handicapped by the weather and also by the ingenious way in which the cairns leading to the crag had been placed at points where their presence was only discovered by stepping on them.

From our acquaintance with these and other lesser-known climbs we have now got decided views on the work of the enthusiastic pioneer and recorder of small outcrops.

I have no wish to belittle the efforts of those climbers

who prefer the unexplored by-ways of the district to the carefully annotated climbs on the major crags, but I have every reason to wish that they would not feel obliged to record every small climb on every little crag. I must confess to having been a party to such doings some years ago and can only plead ignorance and a desire to see my initials in the Journal. We are all interested in the discovery of new climbing grounds and are anxious to know the quality and nature of the climbs thereon, but detailed descriptions of obvious routes up 30-foot precipices are neither necessary nor desirable.

Again, many such climbs are very artificial, and, being seldom visited, it is often difficult for the guide writer to follow the precise route of the pioneers. The cairns are demolished by sheep, marks of human progress are obliterated, cigarette ends and apple cores have been scattered by the wind. The resulting confusion can only be solved either by giving a general description of the climbing possibilities of the crag, or by climbing everything regardless of previous exploration. Both methods are liable to give offence to the pioneers. These climbs are often the basis of entertaining articles in club journals, but in most cases further details are unnecessary.

The case is different from that of the bigger crags, which are of sufficient celebrity to attract the attention of novices and strangers and are, therefore, deserving of detailed treatment. In the case of the smaller crags we are dealing with a different type of climber, a climber of considerable skill and experience, who prefers the charm of the unknown to the well-marked trail of his predecessors. These climbers need no further guide than a general idea of the nature of the crag with the merits of any particularly interesting climb indicated.

I fail to see the use of recording a number of climbs



Pinnacles Wall.



Tippet's Wall.

up a face of rock on which the technical difficulties are of the same character in each case. The merit of Kern Knotts as a climbing ground is that, in a very circumscribed area, it gives a large number of entirely different problems of all degrees of difficulty — some delicate, some strenuous. On the other hand, we made a climb last year on the big slab on Sron Na Ciche to the right of Mallory's route. This slab occupies an area of considerably greater extent than the whole of Kern Knotts, yet, having climbed it by one route, reference to any other is superfluous, since the problems involved are identical.

It would, I think, be a great boon if the recording of all climbs under 50 feet in height, and those which give climbing of a similar character to others in close proximity, should be abandoned, since they only express the self-gratification of the climbers concerned.

The same remarks apply with even greater force to many of the variation routes which have been recorded. Some have been made for amusement, and others because, as remarked by Longland, the leader was either scared or had lost his way. In general, the original route up a rock face was the easiest possible,

and any variation of such a route should only be permissible if it helps to straighten out the climb and avoid original deviations, descents, etc. Otherwise they should be left in oblivion and not recorded to the bewilderment of future climbers. A good example is the face of rock above the Dress Circle containing Eagle's Corner and Tricouni Rib. In their upper sections both these climbs are difficult to follow, and since the rock is climbable by an infinite variety of routes, many variations have been made. There is no great difference in difficulty between any of these variations, and I think that the party climbing these routes should be permitted to vary their line if they wish, without being obliged to follow any definite variation. Thus, it is possible to climb the wall on the left of the final Arête on Jones's route up the Pinnacle from Deep Ghyll. I have never seen this recorded, so that any leader attempting it still has the pleasure of finding his own way, with the assurance that if he is unable to do so he can always escape by way of the Arête.

The only exception is the case where it may be desirable to record a convenient means of escape for a party who have encountered difficulties beyond their capacity.

I have written at some length on these points, partly because of the load they have placed on the shoulders of the guide writer, and also because I believe that the practice of recording all insignificant climbs is being overdone. I may say that we have endeavoured to examine and describe all climbs and variations so far recorded, for having once been recorded, it is better that they should be put in a proper form.

If it should be remarked that we have recorded such climbs ourselves, it should be remembered that we have no desire to revisit many of these crags simply because some evilly disposed person has recorded

a 30-foot Moderate. We have, therefore, done them ourselves.

There is one further point which deserves mention: that is the question of classification. This is probably the most difficult problem with which the guide writer is faced, on account of the impossibility of entirely eliminating the personal element. It is well-known that the difficulty of a first ascent is nearly always over-estimated, and that familiarity results in the toning down of the original view. This is quite understandable, since the nerves of a leader making a new climb are always at a greater tension than when he is leading a pitch of known difficulty, but what cannot be allowed for in classifying a climb is the actual form of the leader when any particular climb is done. Thus, there is actually little difference in the severity of any of the harder Kern Knotts climbs, yet we found, early in the holiday, that the Central Face Climb was very hard, while towards the end the Flake Climb, Sepulchre etc, seemed quite simple. Thus, one's impression of a climb depends less on the intrinsic difficulty than on the form and condition of the leader at the time of the ascent. When in good form there are few problems met with in climbing which are not perfectly simple, just as there are few which are easy if the leader suffers from an inferiority complex. It is one of the demerits of classification that it tends to instil this complex into the leader by describing the climb as very severe. The only remedy is to assume that, when in form, nothing is really difficult, and to forget about severity until the top of the pitch is reached. It is then permissible to preen oneself on having surmounted an apparent impossibility and tell one's followers how easy climbing really is.

CJ Astley Cooper

On Climbs, 'Good' and 'Bad'

FRCC Journal 1950

Having spent much time in recent years making fresh routes and exploring new climbing grounds, I have often felt that something just done was a poor climb, hardly worth doing, and one to forget; but occasionally one has felt that it was a beauty, and its contemplation has given a sense of pleasure. I was thus led to wonder what the factors were that made some climbs so much more delectable than others and the question proved difficult to answer. It may be a surprise to some that it was soon apparent that mere degree of difficulty was not the real, the deciding factor. True, there are some people, particularly young climbers, who have only one measure, one valuation, for a climb—its difficulty; if it is a severe it is, ipso facto, very good; if it is in the easy or moderate categories, it is no good at all. But here I venture to think a mistake is being made; it is not the inherent quality of the route or climb that is being valued but the power of that route to tax the ability of the climber; and the valuation, though it pretends to evaluate the climb is nothing more than a measure of the skill of the climber who is thinking of doing it—a very different matter.

'All in a row the routes are classified, The neophytic vision modified, And worth is measured by the skill supplied.'

... as a certain parodist wrote in the 1946 Journal, getting a bitter sting into the tail of his parody.

I therefore tried to analyse some of the best climbs and determine the real factors which make a climb delectable, and in the hope that the fruits of this cogitation might be of interest to others, I have jotted them down. I have given them in their order of importance as that appears to me.

Desirable Qualities in a Climb

- (1) Be on sound, clean rock throughout. Ledges unencumbered by earth and loose stones, or platforms and terraces of scree, for such provide a ready source of falling stones—a constant danger, dogging the sport throughout from petty rock scrambling to great mountaineering. The rock should be free from earth and vegetation as such releases water slowly and so prevents speedy drying of the climb after rain.
- (2) Should lead to a definite summit, whether of mountain (most desirable), crag or outcrop, and not be merely a route traced on a part of a face. Best of all it should be a natural way up a difficult feature; a patent challenge to our ability.
- (3) Belays present where required - the harder the climb the greater their need. Good climbing is doing dangerous things safely; and nothing gives that safety so well as adequate belays in the right places. Moreover, good rope-work, including the proper use of such belays, is one of the pleasures of the sport.
- (4) Be of adequate length - at least in the neighbourhood of two hundred feet, and as much more as possible. Climbs of about a hundred feet, though they may be very difficult and otherwise good, seem to lack something; they are too short to give the true feeling of mountaineering.
- (5) The climbing should be continuous, and not interrupted by walks up scree and other slopes. Adequate halting and gathering places, however, add to the enjoyment of the climb.
- (6) Have a S.E. to S.W. aspect - so that one may hope to experience the joy of climbing in sunshine.

- (7) Variety of situation and, therefore, of climbing tactics required to proceed adds to the interest of the route, as do unexpected or unusual features, like the Collie Step or the so-called Knife-edge Arête.
- (8) Difficulty is the last on the list, for a true mountaineer, no matter what his ability is, may get real delight from climbing a good moderate course, but no one other than an expert (horrible, though hallowed, term!) should ever lead, and therefore be in a position fully to appreciate a severe climb.

But given a number of climbs of equally good quality but different degrees of difficulty, then the hardest one that any particular person may safely accomplish will probably give him the greatest pleasure—the pleasure of exercising to the full his scansorial powers and the added pleasure of achievement.

I have not touched the matter of accessibility; some climbs are handy, others are remote—Middle Fell Buttress, Haskett Gully. There are people who may enjoy a climb more if they have had to make an effort to reach it, but there are others who may have their appreciation dulled by fatigue. There is another side to this matter of accessibility; too easy an approach, too near to pedestrianism may mean spectators—I ceased to climb on the West side of Castle Crag some years ago as I found I was in danger of becoming the local performing flea. Scraps of conversation floated up to me: 'Look, there he is—I told you we would see him,' and scraps of slate dislodged by would-be spectators above floated down.

Few climbs will pass with credit under all eight criteria, few will be ideal in all respects—even the splendid routes up the Pinnacle Face do not bristle with belaying spikes and gathering places, but they

so eminently comply with other requirements that the sum of their merit is indeed high. The reason for the popularity of such climbs as The New West and Eagles Nest is easy to appreciate, but it is difficult to say why so very many routes well within the powers of most climbers are so seldom if ever used—perhaps a perusal of this table will give the answer.

Bentley Beetham

ēCī Ordinary

Anne Salisbury

The 16th September 2021 dawned as yet another superb weather day. What a summer we've had! Marieke and I had decided on Dow Crag and we weren't disappointed.

Murray's Route to start with, followed by ēCī Ordinary and then Arête, Chimney and Crack to finish.

ēCī Ordinary is an easy and popular three-star route and consequently has superb clean rock throughout. Among the giant buttresses it has a great mountain feel, at times big and imposing, at other times welcoming and accessible.



Marieke on C Ordinary - Dow Crag - 21.09.21

It was the perfect route for Marieke to lead through on and regain some confidence in leading after a cancer scare and chemo during the past year.

Few climbers were on Dow on this day, and the distant walkers' chatter, screams from swimmers in the tarn and dogs barking, seemed both comforting and distant as we made our way happily up the buttress.

You can make the pitches as long or short as you like with plenty of choice for belay spots. Finding the line of least resistance gave us lovely climbing with views across Coniston Water and to the Old Man and then we arrived at a spectacular view into the dark and imposing Intermediate Gully, forcing a stop and a gasp of awe at the amazing position we'd reached. The unsympathetic rock above gave some fun and a bit of steeper climbing for a short while, before trending back right to the top and Easy Terrace. The Easy Terrace scramble needs concentration at times but gives a good descent when it's dry, and we saw others on Ordinary, and then lower down, a couple on Eliminate A.

Getting back to ground level and enjoying a break before our third climb, we were astonished to see a grey squirrel bounding around the base of the crag.

Sunny, warm and calm, out climbing in the mountains with a good friend; a pretty perfect day out.

Ordinary Route C Buttress

FRCC Guidebook to Doe Crag 1922/23

Moderate; any number of patient climbers, who may smoke before, during, and after each pitch; 40 foot rope.

A start is made near the lowest point of the buttress. The route is shown by scratches, may be varied to taste, and holds and belays are excellent. After about 80 feet a terrace is reached from which, on the right, starts the Hawk Variation, at a slightly lower level. This is more easily reached from the introductory portion of Intermediate Gully. Further climbing, of perhaps 100 feet, just to the right of the nose of the buttress, leads to a slab (THE slab) with a turfy finish. A variety of movements is possible when climbing this pitch, the most difficult on the climb. One is now on a good turfy terrace, level with the cave in Central Chimney, and almost level with the top of Branch Chimney out of Intermediate Gully. Moving to the right of the terrace, and then upwards to the left, the leader arrives at a species of cave. Mounting the boulder forming the left wall of the 'cave' and moving to the left, he finds himself level with the belay above the cave in Central Chimney. Moving to the right up a turfy ledge, and round a corner, then to the left and upwards, he arrives on Easy Terrace, near to the top of Intermediate Gully.

August 1904 G F and A J Woodhouse

Guides and Grades

FRCC Journal 1964

In *The Climbers' Club Journal* of 1963, a short article by DD Yeoman put forward a novel suggestion on the subject of guidebooks. Since, with the initiation of a new series of our own guidebooks, interest in guide-writing and guide-reading is again quickening into argument, we take this opportunity to present some notes that we hope may form a basis for discussion.

Perhaps we might attend to Mr Yeoman's idea first. He wants a new system entirely. He points out



FOOL'S PARADISE—Barrowdale

J. Harris

that owing to the proliferation of new routes the guidebooks must successively cover smaller and smaller areas; it becomes necessary to own more and more of them; they are forever going out of print and are each time more difficult to revise. But, he says, the new climbing is rarely 'grade 5 or easier'. He suggests, therefore, that a horizontal division be introduced, with an overlap of two standards (4 and 5), thus creating a series of easier climb books that would rarely need revision, and a series of harder-climb books (in fact, smaller pamphlets would do) that would be less tedious to amend.

Without rejecting the idea entirely, it occurs to us that harder climbs are usually related in the descriptions to easier natural lines, and that approach routes, cliff descriptions and diagrams would still be necessary in each guide. The two standard overlap would mean, in any case, that half the routes in the current guide must appear in each of the new ones; yet neither would adequately cover the needs of those climbers working usually near the overlap standards, if the variables of weather, companions and form are considered. Finally, since the new easy climbs are not appearing, why can't the old men just keep their old guidebooks? They are not yet subdividing like amoeba.

Style of Description

Apart from this new suggestion, the points that Mr Yeoman makes have already been the subjects of widespread discussion. He would have a difference in style for his two types of book, the upper-level one being written in Lakeland 'pitch-by-pitch', whilst the lower, to be entrusted to a climber who finds Very Difficults very severe, might be in the more general style of Edwards's *Lliwedd*. In fact, it is widely agreed now that it was better to have the collaboration of less expert climbers in the writing of guidebooks and, in addition, to have the draft descriptions

submitted to others with knowledge of the routes – this is the practice with Alpine guidebooks and has been tried with a few recent British ones. But why should someone who struggles on Very Severs need a more detailed description than someone who struggles on Very Difficults? Surely, all routes should be written up on the assumption that the reader is taxing himself.



Central Pillar, Esk Buttress (FRCC journal 1975-6) - photo by Ian Roper

There has been a tendency since Edwards's 'spotlight' polemic against Lake District guidebooks to accede to the view that the Lliwedd style is the criterion of guide-writing excellence and that all guidebooks would be written in this style if only the writers could write. Someone should, someday, examine the varieties of 'dry print'. The more carefully you examine the Lliwedd guidebook the more clearly you see that it is simply written in the most logical style for a cliff of the size and structure of Lliwedd — generous when the lines are several, brief when there is little to report, and so on. Try to write a description of a shorter Lake District route in Lliwedd style and you find that, applied intelligently, some of the distinctive elements of the style tend to disappear; imitated carefully, trying to copy the idiosyncrasy of expression, the description will seem restless, or verbose in relation to the matter under survey. (What proportion of the new generation of rock-climbers would know what to expect of a route that promises good, clean climbing that is 'rather delicate and ephemeral'?)

On most points, however, climbers will agree. A description should include:

1. The exact position of the start, relating it to obvious physical features, rather than other routes.
2. Adequate directions for following the route, including features that would allow it to be regained if it were possible to lose it, and describing objectives rather than simply spotlighting the route on indefinite rock.
3. An assessment of the difficulty (discussed below).
4. A judgement of the quality of the climb and a note on the nature of the climbing; some details about the character of the rock, the amount of vegetation

and its degree of permanence, and the extent to which the climb is affected by bad weather if this is greater or less than normal.

5. The length of the route and the length of rope needed if this exceeds the pitch lengths.
6. A mention of the belays, if they might be missed, and perhaps also important running belays.
7. A statement, for climbs on which aid is used, of the minimum number of pegs or slings required; a recommendation, if pitons are advised for protection, as to whether they should be left in place.
8. A mention of the easiest escape routes (junctions, ways off, abseil points) on long routes that are not easy to reverse.

Standards

We approach this problem with our own guidebooks in mind. For a long time, experts have been complaining that our gradings (especially the Very Severe category) are not exact enough. It has been said, for example, that a similar range of difficulty exists between Bowfell Buttress and Asterisk, Asterisk and Kipling Groove, and KG and Astra. Conversely, our Classified List is apparently too exact to be true and is to be condemned for the spurious impression of accuracy it gives. The List is intended only as a helpful opinion, but many climbers would have it discontinued; before discussing the alternatives, however, we must make suggestions about the Very Severe category. Here there appear to be only two possibilities — to downgrade climbs or create a new standard.

Downgrading

Again, there are two possibilities.

1. To move a number of climbs to a lower grade.

In rewriting a guidebook, a certain number of climbs must usually be downgraded, since a proportion of first parties write up new routes while still excited. But if a considerable number of climbs were moved down, the Severe category would be distended in relation to Very Difficult. It would be necessary to adjust the whole range, at present fixed in climbers' minds, so creating confusion and disparities with other guidebooks and areas. What happens then, if the series of guidebooks is issued slowly, through a period of years, as in the past? Inevitably, the top category becomes unwieldy again, if the later guides adopt the same standards as the first, as presumably they must.

2. To devalue every existing climb in the Lake District by one standard, dividing the top grade and combining the two lowest grades. This is a more serious proposal than it might appear. Whilst experts often talk about what is happening to the Very Severe category, they seldom pay any attention to the depopulated realms of Easy and Moderate. Where are the misty figures who debate whether an Easy or Moderate is correct, in view of the weather? Young climbers rarely start nowadays right at the bottom. The last guidebook had two Easies and two Moderates. It would be possible to unite these as a new Easy standard, to move everything down, keeping the hardest climbs as the new Very Severe. Like the new French franc, this is the sort of counter-inflationary measure that is easily handled. But similar objections to those raised to the first possibility apply here, and

there would be the chagrin of the Welsh on finding Welsh V Diff equated with Lakeland Diff.

A new standard

This has the advantage that existing grades need not be disturbed, and it makes for agreement with Wales – useful both for the large proportion of climbers who operate in both areas and those familiar with one region on their occasional visits to the other. Against it, the adjectival system draws nearer its ultimate collapse since it seems impossible to coin a term superior to Exceptionally Severe (although this need not worry our generation unduly; the ES category has been found unnecessary in the latest guide to Clogwyn du'r Arddu).

We are left; however, we deal with the spread of difficulty, with three obvious methods of grading: adjectival, numerical, and combined. To consider each in turn:

- (i) Adjectival. As already mentioned, the Classified List disturbs many climbers. Perhaps, for the 'tickers-off' it has a certain therapeutic value, but this might still be provided by a list of recommended climbs, in alphabetical order. Subgrouping is an alternative to the List, e.g. Just Severe, Severe, Hard Severe; or Just Severe, Medium Severe, Hard Severe, with 'Severe' unqualified for those routes felt to be difficult to categorise exactly. Routes are usually described this way in conversation and the supporters of this system appear to be confident of their ability to place climbs almost always within these categories. If so, the system would, in practice, provide an equally fine categorisation as the List.
- (ii) Numerical. This is said to be the rational method, but is, in fact, the adjectival system in disguise. If

it is possible to grade a climb as 5a, 5b, or 5c and plain 5 is not precise enough, why cling to our unscientific base instead of using 13, 14 or 15 as the case may be? Perhaps it is time to carry out the simple tests needed to establish the narrowest categories on which general agreement may be reached.

- (iii) Combined. This system is used in descriptions of rock climbs in the Alps and in the Irish Mountaineering Club's guidebook to Glendalough. Each pitch is given a numerical grade based on pure technical difficulty i.e., how hard the moves would be at ground level. The climb is given an overall adjectival classification relating all relevant factors: difficulty, protection, quality of rock, position, length; even reputation. It has the virtue of making possible the description of a climb as Severe, for instance, even while one of the pitches may be graded 5b – because it is a silly move above a broad ledge perhaps. Or a poorly protected climb with long run-outs may be classed as Very Severe without grading any pitches above 4c. In other words, this method shows at a glance where the technical difficulty of a climb lies without masking the fact that other elements contribute to the overall assessment.

Applied badly, the system would confuse with a 'proliferation of numerals', particularly with yet another set for artificial pitches; well, it could appear unduly mechanistic. It works best in an area of big, serious climbs, a proportion of which are also hard: in a recent CC Bulletin it has been applied quite well to Cloggy. In the Lake District the major climbing problems are frequently those of pure technical difficulty, so perhaps we can get along nicely without it. However, a few controversial examples (principal pitches only):

F Route	4c	VS
Kipling Groove	5a	HVS
Deer Field Buttress	5b, 4c, 5a	HVS
Astra	5c, 5a, 5a	XS
Overhanging Bastion	4b	VS
Thirlmere Eliminate	4a, 4a, 5a	VS
Rigor Mortis	4a, 5c, 4c	HVS
North Crag Eliminate	5a, 5a	XS
Triermain Eliminate	6a	XS
Dovedale Groove	5b, 5a, 5a	XS
Extol	5a, 5b	XS
Hiraeth	5a, 5b, 5c, 3, 5a	XS

Conclusions

The authors of these notes have few conclusions in common. They hope that those who decide on these matters will produce some convincing arguments and case-histories. Failing that, the whole problem might be handed over to *Which*.

H Drasdo and N J Soper

At this point it might be worth reminding ourselves that our arguments are largely about words and definitions. Why do we all get so excited? It would only be necessary to present a really thorough system of symbols to show what absurd lengths might be reached in struggling for a perfect system of classification.

Pitons and the list of First Ascents

There have been bitter complaints during the last decade that too many pitons are being used. New routes are being ascended with their aid which more expert parties could have climbed free. It has been suggested that the List of First Ascents encourages those who wish to see their names in print to use aid indiscriminately in order to get into history, and that we might discourage this by discontinuing the listing of first parties. But unnecessary pegs are now appearing increasingly in established climbs, particularly those in which a legitimate peg is already used, and beyond making an appropriate comment in the route description there is little the guide-writer can do. Are we justified in trying to establish a code of rules?

On Guide Drawings

FRCC Journal 1966

When Harry Kelly came along in 1934 and asked me to do some drawings for a new set of climbing guides it seemed, even then, to present quite a fascinating set of problems that might combine my two main interests at that time. Painting and climbing had remained rather separate activities, the former occupying first place and the latter generally by way of getting to interesting places to paint from, usually alone, or else purely for fun with a few friends who knew even less about it than I.

Unlike the reputation that preceded him, Harry, I found, was the least terrifying of giants, obviously full of enthusiasm yet very tentative - almost shy - about suggesting to an artist how he should draw. His creative imagination had seen a possible way of improving on photographs as illustrations for climbing guides, yet he would always hand over the lead when it came to a question of technique. The problem was to invent an idiom, or method of drawing, that would show the proportions and the structure or design of a crag sufficiently to read in a simple way and, at the same time, would select from all the complexity of features those that were relevant to each route.

From the base camp of Ella Naylor's kitchen at Middle Row Farm, Wasdale - she and Harry were always apparently at loggerheads about nothing at all - we started on the drawings of Pillar. It happened to be anticyclonic weather around Whitsun - long sun-drenched days spent wandering up and down most of the climbs below VS grade, getting to know the rather complex topography of the Rock and choosing the best viewpoints to show all the routes on the crag. The short south face, into Jordan Gap, was a bit of a teaser as quite a lot of the climbs were obscured by



Pisgah. We decided that the only thing was to remove it. I drew as much of the routes as I could see, then we climbed up and down the ones I couldn't, and I filled in the gaps by deduction and imagination.

This pleasant occupation seemed to go on all that summer and for years afterwards. The popularity of Pillar had enjoyed quite a boost. Usually, we had company. I recall one day, as we were stepping along the delightful High Level Route with Holland and Speaker for a day on the Rock, all three Olympian gods, without a word, swerved suddenly off to the right to a point below the track and stood in a semicircle looking down upon a spring that bubbled out from among the rocks and mosses and a variety of rare and lovely saxifrages. Wordlessly they returned again to the track having fulfilled their ancient and mysterious rite.

Another day on Pillar comes to mind, a Whitsun meet of the Club. Saturday night was so hot that we lay on the ground on the unpitched tent and, in the morning sun, made our way over Scarth Gap. The Rock was 'wick wi' folk' and we made a party for the second ascent of the North-North-West. About halfway up the climb a great block of rock, loosened by another

party above, landed on a small ledge just as Speaker was about to use it as a handhold. Alan Hargreaves had had enough by this time so he took me onto the Girdle Traverse while the rest of our party tagged on to the tail of another above. The echoes of that falling rock are still reverberating around the Club and the other day I discovered that I had become the villain who loosened it!

The three years following 1935 brought into being a bumper crop of guides—Scafell in 1936; Gable, Borrowdale and Buttermere in 1937; and Dow Crag, Langdale and Outlying Crag in the following year — evidence of immense efforts on the part of the authors, A T Hargreaves, Astley Cooper, Ernie Wood-Johnson, Laurence Pollitt, Sid Cross and Bill Clegg, with Harry Kelly skilfully holding the reins of such a lively team of thoroughbreds. For me this meant halcyon days — strange how you often remember the sunny ones when you're happy — walking, climbing, and camping in the best of good company and gradually thrashing out, through much trial and error, something of a technique for the job. Usually this went on at the same time as the work of climbing and recording, which was a great help for me as I was able to see action on the climbs, ask questions,



WHITE GHYLL - Lower Ghyll

discuss details and, if necessary or even just for pleasure, climb around with some of the authors. Naturally they chose the best months of the year, so I had plenty of time in hand before the publication date. Present authors please note!

In order to interpret a three dimensional object, whether it be a human figure or a mountain, with any real understanding, the artist needs to feel its volume, structure, and proportions, as it were, from the inside, not just give a general impression of the main mass with details added superficially, such as usually shows in a drawing that has been made entirely from a photograph. When he is drawing 'free' the artist unconsciously selects, emphasises, and eliminates according to what he feels about the subject. I was surprised to discover, when making these guide drawings, how much of this unconscious selection had always been inherent in my paintings and drawings of mountains and rocks, and how greatly I had to direct my outlook, for these guides, away from the realm of feeling into that of cold correct facts. Yet the practice of this kind of drawing has, over the years, given me more understanding of the structure of mountains and a desire to learn more of how they were made.

One of the problems that called for joint discussions was whether to choose a viewpoint far enough away and at a high enough level to show the whole crag and the full extent of the climbs, but not necessarily in fine detail (as in the drawing of the north-east face of Pillar), or to choose one much closer to the crag, if possible one that a climber would use naturally on his way up, showing details of the start if not the finish of the routes, with a certain element of foreshortening that distorts the proportions. An example of the latter is the drawing of Lower White Ghyll in the 1967 Langdale guide, although this is a crag where you can get a good view from across a narrow gully. While I



drew this crag Allan Austin kindly took my younger son Julian up some of the climbs, soon putting him in the lead. Allan was immensely patient, and at the same time very exacting and thorough over the drawings, and it was pleasant to see how he warmed up at the sight of Pavey Ark, his favourite climbing ground.

It is virtually impossible to distinguish details and changes of angle and structure during the winter months when trying to draw a north-facing crag that looms dark against the source of light. Occasionally, if the sun is behind a cloud yet is lighting up some clouds behind you to the north, the reflected light will reveal detail, possibly only for a few minutes, and then you have to trust to your visual memory. The northern face of Dove Crag was one of these, and Jack Soper in December 1966 patiently hammered out with me all the pros and cons of this problem, describing each route from each of the proposed viewpoints. This was the first occasion on which we took a photograph, while the crag was lit up by a reflection from a cloud. This was very helpful, in combination with the preliminary drawing, and this combined method may prove useful on future occasions in producing the final drawings.

Of course, some northerly-facing crags do receive a certain amount of light in winter during the first hour or two after sunrise, though hardly any of those in Borrowdale, especially Goat Crag's north face. Geoff Oliver seemed very happy to get up before six last January and to drive me at great speed over Wrynose and Hardknott, and even then, we only just managed to catch the light on Scafell's east face. He even carried my rucksack and drawing kit and tempered his pace to my own. With Harold Drasdo on the crags of Deepdale we were fortunate with the weather, and they are close enough to my home to make a quick visit quite possible when conditions were good. I enjoyed very much his approach to mountains and his way of expressing it, which is revealed even in the very functional authorship of his guide to the Eastern Crag.

Generally, the first visit to the crag with the author results in preliminary drawings with notes of routes. If I have not been able to do the final drawing on that occasion it means at least one more visit, and about two hours drawing, on average, if conditions are right. The drawings are all in pencil. I mount the final version on cardboard, with an overlay of tracing paper on which the routes are marked in black ink. The printer then makes one block for the pencil drawing by a halftone process and another for the routes by letterpress, using a metal block. So the illustration is the result of two printings. This is necessary to prevent the route markings and letters becoming confused with the darker passages of the drawing, which happened, unfortunately, in 1967 Langdale and Eastern Crag. This will be corrected in future editions.

Apart from the fascinating technical challenges of drawing for these guides, the richest thing for me has been the many friendships that have grown from working together on a mutually interesting job, in

spite of considerable differences of age and outlook. I have often been astonished by those authors and their helpers who have survived many months of climbing, recording, research and writing up the hundreds of climbs, often remote and not very interesting when found, and who yet have had the patience to crawl around near but not on the crags and describe in detail each route and answer innumerable questions from someone who can no longer climb. (My wife here suggests that a word of appreciation might be added for all the authors' wives who have had to forego so much of their spouses' company.)

I hope that some younger climbing member of the Club will soon emerge, with an ability to draw, and I would be glad to pass on to him anything I have learned about guide drawing. When the Club did me the entirely undeserved honour of making me an Honorary Member I really thought that such a person had emerged, and my days of guide drawing were over with a sort of golden handshake. Apparently, this is not yet so, but I hope that the guides committee will not hesitate to tell me when I am too old for the job, and had better make room for a successor.

In my own more active days, I have certainly enjoyed going around with the older generation of climbers, but in their case, they were rich in experience. Bentley Beetham's fantastic stories, and his evident relish in telling them, whiled away many a weary trudge in the cold and rain. He was very good company, but almost impossible to locate at any given moment if I wanted to meet him when conditions were just right. He seemed to expect me to possess some kind of built-in sense of orientation, like a migrating swallow, or else a system of drum telegraphy. He knew the crags of Borrowdale inch by inch, sapling by sapling, yet even when we were looking across at a crag, he often could not recognise the crag's features in my drawing. This sometimes

presented difficulties and I began to wonder how many other people might find the drawings useless.

And, always across the years and the pages, there seems to loom a sturdy figure surmounted by a fierce eye and black upturned whiskers, the delightful, often exasperating but always dependable Harry Kelly, with his sensitive nature very well hidden away, and his sure and rather whimsical sense of both the beautiful and the ludicrous aspects of life. I remember one very lovely day in Mosedale when we had been hunting down some casual solo climbs of that individualist soldier painter-climber, Fergus Graham. We wandered onto the top of Pillar mountain as the evening light was gilding the fells. I was completely carried away by the sense of space and light at that rare moment, when Harry lumbered up behind with the remark: 'Very naaice. I wish ah wur i' Blackpool.'

W. Heaton Cooper

Arête, Chimney, and Crack

Doe guide 1922

Severe; any footgear; 80 foot rope.

This very popular course begins at the lowest point of the left-hand side of the buttress. The route heads, at first, up the face to the right of the obtuse angled crest of the Arête, and no serious difficulty is encountered until the leader is within about 15 feet of the floor of a shallow "cave." This last section, up to the cave, requires care, as the holds are somewhat small and rather awkwardly placed. A trusty and trustful second will be brought to the cave and left there, safeguarded by a belay of medium quality, whilst the leader either climbs the vertical rocks immediately above or preferably, and with less difficulty, makes an exposed step round a corner to the left, and finishes up a difficult little indefinite crack. Massive bollards are reached about 20 feet higher, level with the top of the quartz slab on the Trident Route. Here the

Gordon and Craig Route is joined and followed until within 10 or 12 feet of the far end of the long upper traverse (for description of this section see G. and C. Route). At this point (belay) a steep conspicuous crack cleaves the face of the buttress. In the lower part will be found most of the difficulties. After about 25 feet a belay is reached, and about 15 feet higher it is possible, if the leader so desires, to leave the crack and climb its left wall, an exhilarating and not too difficult variant, with quite good holds, if the conditions are favourable. At 70 feet from the traverse a good ledge is reached, with a belay on the left. The crack itself is consistently interesting, despite good holds, for about the same height above the traverse, and the outward views are very striking. The leader with rather less than 80 feet of rope is able to reach good anchorage at its top, from which the party scrambles easily to the summit of the crags.

18th September 1910 T C Ormiston-Chant, T H G Parker and S H Gordon.

Variation to left of Crack; 10th June 1917, P R Masson, W G Milligan and B L Martin

Arête, Chimney and Crack

Wendy Stirrup, 2018

Family connections mean Dow Crag has always been a special place for me, and when I climb there with Dad (David Miller) I have my own talking guidebook.

In 1995 I was particularly pleased to climb Nimrod with dad. My log records it as "excellent, sustained, quite bold" In 2013 I watched Dad again climb Nimrod, (51 years after his first ascent) this time with his grand-daughter Nina.

My first record of climbing Arête, Chimney and Crack was in 1985. My logbook states "every pleasant except for the walk down" I returned in 2018 with husband Marc and Dad. It was warm enough to climb in T-shirts (a rarity). With a first ascent in 1910, Marc decided rock boots would not be needed; after all the 1922 guide does say any footgear.

I certainly enjoyed the clean arête, but the steep crack was a little tricky. The original guide refers to

'holds being somewhat small and rather awkwardly placed, followed by a difficult little indefinite crack.'

Even three-star routes can have some vegetated sections on them, but it wasn't long before we were back on the rock and hand traversing in an airy position.

I cannot remember the chimney, but the 1922 guide says it 'is climbed by bridging, facing left, until an excellent spike for the right hand can be grasped. The spike is loose if lifted upwards...it should not be tampered with, being of far more use in its present situation than it would be in the rockery of the Sun Hotel!'



Arête, Chimney and Crack - climber Marc Stirrup



Dow Crag - Arête, Chimney and Crack
- climber Emma Bain

Gordon and Craig's traverse is next, described as 'easy, but very exposed, and sensational in wet, windy weather'.

The final crack was steep to start, but it is not made easier by trying to seek security in the back of it. The original description states 'in the lower part will be found most of the difficulties'. For the remainder of the pitch 'the crack is consistently interesting, despite good holds... and the outward views are very striking'. The angle eased and all that was left was the walk down, which hadn't improved.

Last summer I climbed Murray's Route with Hazel Jonas and Mike Nuttall. It gave me time to reflect on what it must have been like for Nina climbing the route, without any prior knowledge, with a TV presenter and crew.

Guidebook Writing - 1960s style

David Miller

I was asked to update the Dow Crag guidebook in 1966. As well as Dow, the area included the Duddon valley and the numerous minor crags around the Coniston fells. I knew most of the climbs on Dow but adding to that knowledge was interesting and sometimes led to seeing possibilities for further new climbs or variations. However, the task of guide writing is generally tedious, tiring, and time consuming. Too often it involves walking to remote crags that look unattractive, with climbs that are not particularly enjoyable. It often involves climbing in poor conditions, as better weather is reserved for more attractive options.

Another problem is getting friends to join you to check routes. It is usually necessary to spread the task, by inviting a range of people to help you, and there are some risks. While climbing on the remote, recently developed, Low Wether Crag, in the Coppermines valley, a large flake was dislodged. Fortunately, it missed my second, but landed on the rope and cut it, which ended that day's climbing.

There were a lot of routes to check in the Coppermines valley, because a group of climbers from Barrow, who had a hut in the valley, concentrated on finding new routes there. Unfortunately, whilst a number were worthwhile, many more took routes up vegetated crags or slow-drying, mossy crags. I climbed many of them, and some were included in the guide, but the majority were not. There are good routes there, such as those on Little How Crag but, in general, the valley is not popular.

Checking the climbs took much of my time over two years. In the summer, I camped with my wife



Dave Miller and Terry Parker on Tarkus, Dow Crag

and young daughter in a field by Yew Tree Farm in Yewdale. Facilities were limited to a toilet and tap in the farmyard, but it was pleasant and quiet there, and convenient for the crags. But returning late on a Sunday meant a scramble to pack up and get home in reasonable time.

For most authors, writing up the guides in the 1960s was by hand. But from an editors' viewpoint, handwritten scrawls were difficult to read and led to errors, both by himself, and the printer, who had to work from them. Since then, things have changed dramatically. Writers can now input descriptions on their computers, rearrange and edit them as required. These documents can then carry on through the various stages of design and production.

Guidebooks have evolved over the years from describing in detail the route to follow, and sometimes how to climb it, to brief directions only. Also, the advent of modern protection and longer ropes has led to longer pitches to better stances and safer belays. There are also many short climbs described now on smaller crags that were not considered worthwhile as climbs in the past.

The production of guides of selected climbs has raised the question of what should be included in definitive guides. The primary purpose of guides is to provide information for the average climber who wishes to climb the best routes in an area, and this is largely provided by selected guides, at minimum cost. It is probably only the climbers who frequent a region that would consider getting a series of definitive guides. Those guides would normally include descriptions of all climbs recorded in the area, together with a historical record. However, to keep definitive guides commercially viable, it may be necessary to consider both the content, and the

historical record. For consistency, editorial decisions will be needed, and writers given guidelines on what climbs should be included, and they will have the difficult task of making the decisions. The question is, are climbers likely to want to climb a route. If climbs are vegetated, loose, not continuous, or remote, that is unlikely, but climbs on short crags are more difficult to assess. But if information on those crags is provided pictorially, it would reduce the size of the guide. In addition, as the Club is in the process of digitising the information, it could possibly lead to more selected, and compact, useable area guides.

Pillar Rock - Guidebook writers' tales

Geoff Cram

Pillar Rock was a great place to climb in the Sixties! A huge, awe-inspiring crag with a vast amount of unclimbed rock. The crag had been neglected for some time, mainly because of the long approach (living in Whitehaven helped - we cycled there with heavy sacks in early years, car approach came later). The other problem was the crag was rarely dry (from my diaries, usually in June or late September).



It was also a spectacularly nice place to climb, with its own individual summit!

A keen cohort of West Cumbrian climbers (the Pillar Mountaineering Club) soon found new climbs. For me, Scylla in June 1963 (with a jammed-knot runner, diary 'used much energy in reaching the Rock; we were pleased with this route; an excellent if hot day's climbing and we cycled wearily home') and Charybdis in September 1964 ('A rather fine new route - started near NW and climbed overhanging grooves between NW and Goth - not too hard') with Bill Young came first (mythical monsters guarding the North Face), followed by Sheol (Hades) ('up the very impressive crack just right of Walker's Gully') in 1965 with Trevor Martin.

These climbs appeared in the FRCC booklet '75 New Climbs in the Lake District 1964 - 65' by D. Miller and N. J. Soper. Correspondence followed with Jack Soper about a new guide to Pillar Rock. This led to the first FRCC guide for sixteen years in 1968 (with the colour frontispiece of the West Face and diagrams by W. Heaton Cooper). The guidebook was revised and re-issued in 1977. While preparing the guide I wrote to H M Kelly, who did earlier guides, and he replied that the original names (unallowed then) of Route 1 and Route 2 were Sodom and Gomorrah.

Puppet was done in 1966 with Scylla Direct finish in a weekend from London with Barry Whybrow and

Geoff Cram
on the first ascent
of Electron on
Pillar Rock



Geoff Cram

Electron (the first of a lot of nuclear physics names) also in 1966 with Chris Eilbeck. Then Gondor in 1967 ('hard and exposed, good route, excellent day, shattered'), with Keith Robson, involved footholds on one side of the arête after looking round to memorise the position of finger holds on the far side. Ximenes (a hard crossword puzzle setter) and Necromancer ('sensational') filled a fine day with Bill Young in 1968. Bill continued to find good routes, including Megaton with 'Barney' Barnes in 1972.

Gondor was one of my favourites, being on the sunny West Face (I also did a route called Mordor on Dove Crag [in the East!] with John Jones, which was dangerously loose and not now in the guidebook).

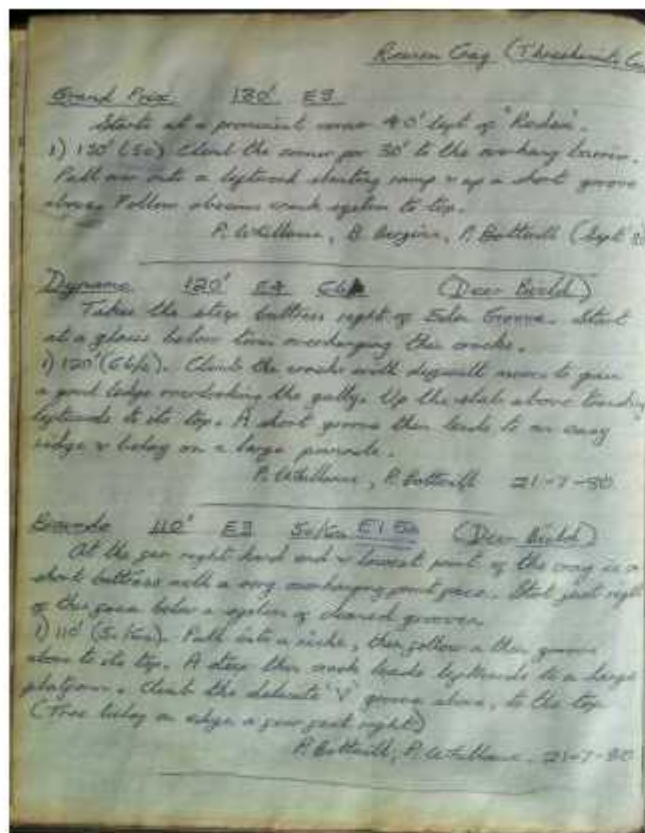
New Routes Information

Ron Kenyon

The recording of new routes has changed dramatically over the years. In the 1800's the Visitors' Books at the Wastwater Hotel and at Row Farm and then the Wasdale Climbing Book at the Hotel were the places to document activities. Then with the creation of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, their annual Club Journal recorded these activities which would have been drawn from various sources including, in due course, club hut logbooks.



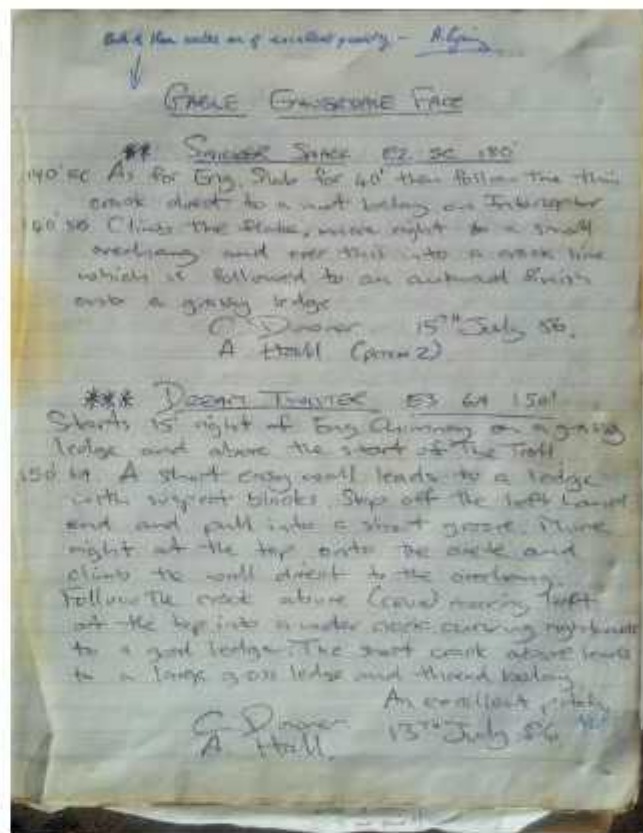
New route books have been available at various establishments over the years including The Old Dungeon Ghyll (Langdale); Lamplighter Café (Keswick); Packhorse Inn (Keswick) and Golden Rule (Ambleside). As climbing shops developed there



Grand Prix (Raven Crag); Dynamo and Bravado (Deer Bield) - Pete Whillance, Pete Botterill and Bob Berzins

were new route books at; George Fisher (Keswick); Frank Davies now Climbers Shop (Ambleside); Needlesports (Keswick); Rock and Run (Ambleside); Lake Mountain Sports (Penrith) and Lakeland Mountain Centre (Kendal). At these places there was often a hushed silence, as someone asked to see the new routes book, in anticipation of that person producing a pen or pencil to detail their latest discovery, however often it was just to see if anything new had been recorded.

The Packhorse Inn in Keswick was a regular haunt of climbers and had its new routes books - over the years Ray McHaffie collected these and after his death his son James donated them to the FRCC archives at the Armit Museum. It is fascinating to



Snicker Snack and Dream Twister (Gable Crag) - Colin Downer and Andy Hall

see, in the first ascensionist's fair hand, the record of the first ascents.

In 1964 the FRCC started its series of New Climb Supplements to document the new routes climbed between editions of the definitive guides. These continued until 2002 and then stopped, mainly due to the availability of information on the internet, particularly the FRCC website. A further supplement was produced in 2018, this updated our ninth series of guides which were produced between 2007 and 2016. It is likely that this will be the last supplement as, in addition to information being available on the internet, we are now producing downloadable pdf mini-guides for newly developed crags - time will tell!

Murray's Route - TV Star for a Day!

Nina Stirrup

In August 2017 I participated in a BBC film about the Lakes. It had been arranged through Ron Kenyon as the producer had contacted him to get some FRCC content and a recommendation for a female climber to guide the presenter, Paul Rose, up a route.

In the previous series he had climbed with Steve McClure at Malham and this time they wanted a female climber to take part.



Murrays Route in modern times

I'd only been up to Dow once before so when I arrived the afternoon before in the sunshine, I decided to head up to the boulders beneath the crag to remind myself of the walk in. I don't think I climbed any of the boulders mentioned in the first Doe guide though! Previously I'd climbed Murray's Direct and Nimrod, so Murray's Route was a new one for me.



Nina on camera

We met in the car park the next day and headed up to the crag. We didn't need to film the walk in as they'd done that separately. There was quite a large team of I think 2 cameramen, a couple of people to fix the ropes, grandad, Ron, Paul and the producer.

When we got to the crag we got fitted with mics and started with the chat between me, grandad, and Paul. The main focus was to compare the gear we were using that day to when grandad was younger. I don't recall being very prepared for the questions but by the 20th time of being asked the same question I think I'd established a pretty good answer. The purpose of going through the same questions over and over was so that they could get shots from every possible camera angle, but it got a bit tedious after a while.

Whilst we'd been chatting the ropes had been set up for the cameraman that was going to be filming from above as we climbed so we geared up and got going. I didn't find route finding too difficult, but it did help having a cameraman ahead of me the whole time. The most challenging part was having to chat whilst I climbed and describe what I was doing. I think the crux is supposed to be in the first pitch, but I found the corner-crack near the top to be more memorable.

Once we got to the top the camera team descended so that they were able to get some drone footage where Paul repeated the last pitch and then we sat admiring the view for a while.

It came out on TV a year or so later. I didn't watch much the first time it aired as I found it far too cringey to hear myself talking. I got lots of good comments from people though, and I think a lot of people got a surprise when they saw me on the telly. It was interesting to find out what they'd included, I thought I'd just been having a nice chat with the cameraman halfway up the crag rather than being filmed but perhaps that's why I came across so well (other people's words).

The next time it aired I managed to force myself to sit through it and ended up enjoying it. It was a shame they cut so much of it out though, far more interesting in my opinion than some of the other stuff in the episode! But it must've been a big job editing an entire day's footage from 2 cameras and a drone into a few minutes.

Overall, it was a very interesting experience and it's amusing that every time it airs a new person gets a shock seeing me on their screen (most recently my new neighbour who now always asks if I'm going climbing anytime I leave the house).

Murray's Route

FRCC Guidebook to Doe Crag 1922/23

Severe; a unique traverse; 70 foot rope.

Starting at the first opening (about 20 feet) on the left of the lowest point of the buttress, a 20 foot crack is climbed to a corner on the right of a slab. A trustful second may join his leader here, who thereupon traverses to the left across the slab. A crack high up provides excellent hand holds for the start, but these

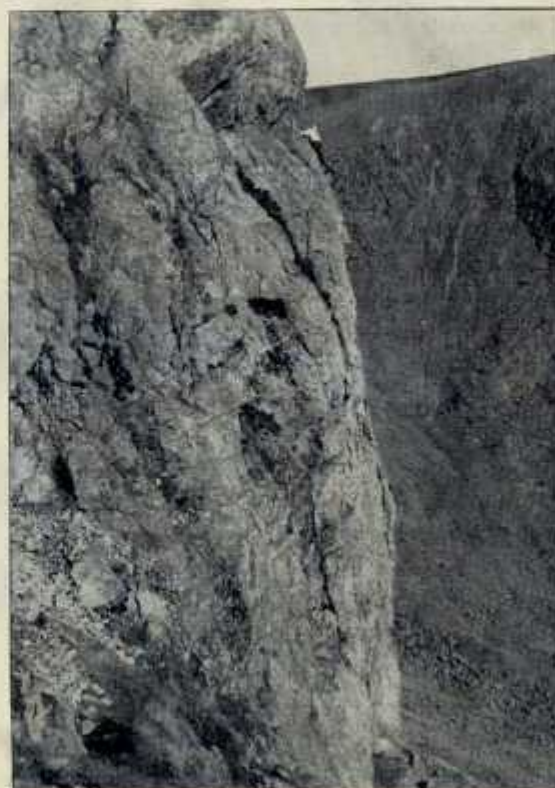


Photo by

DOE CRAG.

H. S. Goss.

RECORDING THE CORNER FROM GIANT'S CORNER TO MURRAY'S CLIMB.

must be reluctantly relinquished before a fine knob, forming a belay, can be grasped.

(This belay can also be reached by an obvious route on the left, starting from an imbedded flake and working to the right, a variation which is to be recommended under adverse conditions.)

Leaving his companion at the belay, the leader climbs upwards and to the left, round a very awkward bulge, where the holds are poor, considering that the footholds are too much underneath the bulge.

After surmounting some grassy ledges, and running out 55 feet of rope, a belay is reached, consisting of a flake on the right. Waltzing round this and moving upwards, with an amusing stride across an incipient gully, the leader (in 35 feet) reaches the Cave on Abraham's Route, a commodious meeting house, in which future ornithological visitors may expect to discover pelican feathers.

Climbing a short crack rising from the left hand lower end of the Cave, an exhilarating traverse, with perfect hand holds is made to a corner (belays) 30 feet away, and immediately below the Direct Finish. Passing discreetly to the left, an easy 15 foot chimney is climbed, and the pleasant traverse continues without difficulty to the foot of the final crack, 40 feet from the "Direct Finish Corner." Fine belays will be found. The crack is unpleasantly earthy, and requires care, but some rock holds may be obtained on the left wall. Moving to the left from its top, a belay is found after running out 50 feet of rope. A few feet higher is Easy Terrace.

25th April 1918

D.G.Murray, W.J.Borrowman and B.L.Martin

Crag Diagrams: A Personal Sketch

Alan Phizacklea

The following is a slightly revised version of Al's article in the CC Guidebook Centenary Journal in 2009

My first introduction to crag and fell diagrams came through the works of Alfred Wainwright, when I was a young teenager. I was a member of the school fellwalking club and I quickly acquired the full set of Wainwrights, which were read, and memorised, with avidity. I loved his method of illustrating the hills in a three-dimensional style and didn't care that some people ridiculed these works for removing the mystery and judgement from fellwalking. He was a great influence during my formative years.

When I started rock-climbing, I purchased all the FRCC guidebooks to the Lakes, and also those to other areas as and when I visited them, such as Yorkshire, the Peak District and Wales. It was evident that the old William Heaton Cooper (WHC) sketches that adorned the FRCC guides were becoming increasingly inadequate for the guidebooks. In their day, the original Heaton Cooper diagrams were beautiful artistic renderings of the crags, brilliant studies of light and shade but with limited regard for architectural details. In an old article for the FRCC, Heaton Cooper recalled how he used to sit below the crags, sketching away, as his companions climbed across the face.

All his sketches were drawn on site, which required considerable artistic skill in capturing the details of the rock faces and reproducing these on to paper. It can be seen, however, that whilst some major features were drawn with care and detail, other lesser parts on the periphery of the crag were glossed over with a few swift strokes of the



Al at work on diagrams

pencil. One advantage of this artistic approach to sketching was that the important features could, and frequently were, exaggerated in scale in relation to the rest of the crag as the eye focused on those particular details. I was pleased when a photograph of WHC was unearthed showing him sketching away at Dow Crag, and this picture was reproduced in the book *Nowt but a Fleein' Thing*.

What amazed me about the guidebooks from the Peak were the diagrams from Phil Gibson. Trained as a fine arts pottery painter, Gibson's diagrams were finely detailed, intricate, and accurate. Why couldn't all guidebook diagrams be like these? However, I couldn't help feeling they lacked a little something; some of them seemed to be disconnected from their surroundings, as though they'd floated up from the ground. Maybe it was just me, or my perception of them?

Let me state that I'm no artist. Although I was always keen on producing cartoons and sketches, my training was in the rigid field of

draughtsmanship, producing accurate and geometrically perfect drawings that had to convey the detail to the factory floor in a way that could not be misinterpreted. In my case, I specialised in the structure of submarines and warships.

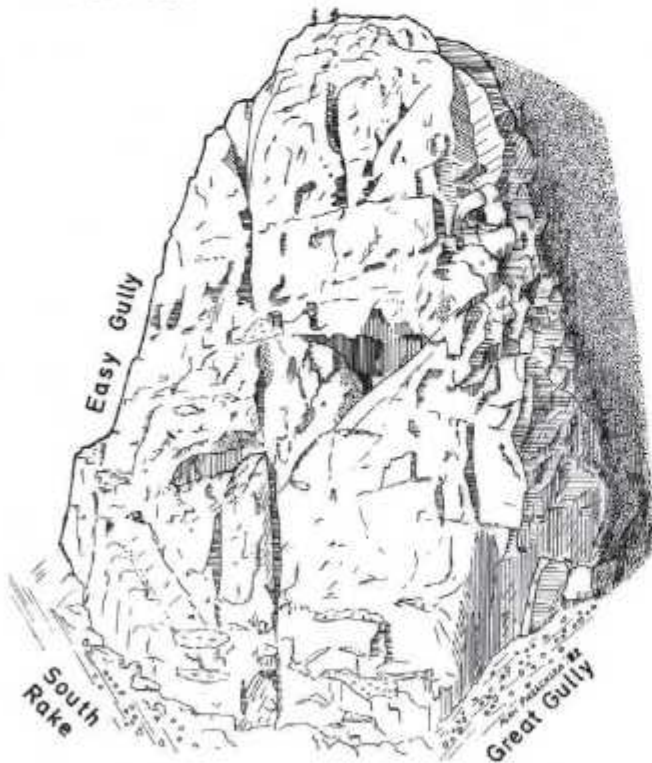
I first became involved with illustrating the guidebooks for the FRCC in 1982. A couple of local friends, Rob Matheson, and Ed Cleasby were writing parts of a new guide that combined Scafell, Dow Crag and Eskdale. One day, a conversation about the guidebook soon came down to the possibility of using photographs instead of the diagrams. However, this was not favoured by the FRCC guidebook team of the day, because of the extra publishing costs. I nonchalantly commented that I could probably draw a better style of diagram, and this rather rash offer was gratefully accepted by Rob. I completed a couple of trial sketches and was asked by Rob and Ed to accompany them to a FRCC guidebook meet at Rawhead. I wasn't a member and felt a bit of a fraud as I sat amongst the great and the good, with Dave Miller presiding as the Editor. It was a little intimidating, but I felt better when I was immediately asked to join the club. Oh, and by the way, would I mind producing a full set of diagrams for the guide? How could I refuse?

My methods of drawing the crags had no artistic merit whatsoever. I had some photographs of the buttresses on Dow Crag, printed at 5" x 8", which I used to trace out the crag. I was fortunate that all the materials I required were readily available at work. At this time the original draughting work in the shipyard normally involved the use of pencils, and this used to be transformed into permanent finished drawings by a department of young female tracers, who utilised ink pens.

If you will forgive a slight digression here, this

reminds me of one of my most abiding adolescent memories. It was always regarded as an initiation to send the new drawing office apprentices up to the tracing department where they would be met by an incredible sight of dozens of nubile young women in mini-skirts bending over their tracing boards – this was the mid-70s! During the summer months the heat in this office, combined with a heady pheromonal mixture of cheap perfume, aroused an unfamiliar primeval stirring of the male hormones. The girls loved to tease the young lads as they walked in, and who usually came out with an uncomfortable but agreeable tightness in certain

DOW CRAG 'A' BUTTRESS



Sketch of A Buttress, Dow Crag

parts of the trouser department. Unfortunately, the tracers' department was rendered obsolete by the adoption of computer aided drawing systems and laser plotters; and they call this progress! Oh, happy days!

I used these ink pens for my diagrams as they gave excellent results. I drew lines of 0.3mm width for the main features of the crag and 0.1mm for filling in the finer details. I also made use of the drawing office formats of semi-translucent plastic for the drawing medium. This stuff was a tough tear-proof material that could be rolled up countless times without wrinkling, distorting or the ink flaking off. It was the ideal material for drawing crag diagrams, and I used to cut up lots of A0-sized formats for this purpose. Tracing the crag from a photograph guaranteed that the diagram was accurate, but the result was disappointingly small. The sketch of 'A' Buttress was the first one I ever drew. I originally attempted to bring an engineering style to the sketches by indicating overhangs and steep walls with parallel vertical lines, and corners were delineated by horizontal lines. This resulted in a rather artificial look that, to be honest, was crap, and I never used this shading method again.

I managed to complete the diagrams for the Scafell, Dow and Eskdale, Borrowdale and the Langdale guidebooks by tracing from photographs. However, this was an awkward method of producing diagrams, because the small size of the photograph made it difficult to add any detail apart from the major features of the crags. I realised that to incorporate more detail, I had to increase the size of my original sketch from A5 to A4. At this time, it would have meant sending away dozens of slides for printing off at 8" by 11", which would increase the expenditure. It was a meeting with Ed Grindley at an FRCC dinner one year that

changed my method of drawing the crags. He told me that he projected his slides onto a wall upon which he had stuck a piece of A3 paper, and then simply moved the projector in or out until the crag image exactly matched the size of the paper. It was an ingenious solution to the problem, and I immediately took up this method. However, there were several drawbacks to this system; one was that your own body and hand blocked the projector's light, necessitating a bastard style of holding a pencil which was similar to that often used by left-handed people writing in ink. This led to the second problem, because the position one took to trace the image onto the paper led to an aching back and straightening up to relieve the strain inevitably led to me disturbing the projector on its stand. (It usually had to be set up within two feet to get the image the same size as the paper.) Try as one might, it never seemed possible to re-focus the image to match up exactly with the lines already sketched onto the paper. However, it did result in a detailed pencil sketch at A3 which I shrank down to A4 on the photocopier, from where I traced out the final sketch onto the plastic paper.

The birth of my children put an end to this style of sketching. It involved long periods of sitting in a semi-darkened room with a delicate projector set-up, which was contrary to the demands of fatherhood, and I needed to find a way of sketching out the crags at work. (I needn't add that this was only done during the dinner hour, honestly – oooh, there goes my nose again!) I had by then moved into a side office which only had two other lads working there, an ideal situation for quietly drawing crags. In the corner was a Microfilm viewer, which looked rather like a huge TV screen, but into which slides could be inserted for viewing. Needless to say, this was soon brought into service by the simple expedient of laying a piece of tracing paper over

the screen and inserting a slide – I could leave it in position for as long as I liked, as long as nobody else wished to consult an old, microfilmed drawing. These tracings were rather huge, so I reduced them in sections on the photocopier and stuck them together to allow me to trace the final sketch onto the plastic paper.

Very often the diagrams needed modifying. Not all my crag photos had been taken in good lighting conditions, and it usually required a visit to each crag with a copy of the preliminary sketch to check whether all the details had been captured. This was also true where areas of the crag were obscured by trees. I had to go and fill in the missing bits in situ, whilst attempting to match up the new corrections to the existing features on the crag. This method didn't always work out, and the guidebook editor usually got one or two letters saying that the diagrams were confusing. (Actually, most of the Borrowdale sketches fell into this category!) One fine aspect of utilising plastic paper was that it was easy to modify any areas that needed enhancing or changing. Using ink, a traditional rubber easily removed the area of the diagram needing alterations, but it tended to smear a wash of ink across the surrounding areas. The beauty of the plastic was that any small area could be scraped off with a very sharp scalpel blade and re-drawn. This led to an almost surgical capacity to modify or enhance certain areas of the sketch.

Another aspect of the change in drawing styles was to do with vegetation; I had deliberately left these as inconspicuous as possible in my early sketches, as I didn't want visitors to think that our great Lakes crags were full of grass! I simply delineated these patches of vegetation with a couple of symbols of three ink strokes to define an area of grass. However, on the bigger rambling crags, it became

impossible to distinguish these from the rock. Following inspiration from other crag artists such as Gibson and Malc Baxter, I decided to fill in the areas of grass with areas of stippling which made them stand out, and this transformed the diagrams! I first used this technique in the Gable and Pillar guidebook.

My second attempt at drawing Dow Crag exemplifies my final style of producing sketches. The crag is intricately detailed, not only because I knew its features intimately (as I also wrote the guide), but also for a very egocentric reason. I had by this time climbed many new routes on the crag, and I wanted to ensure that they were all indicated on the diagrams! Yeah, big-headed ideals, I know; but this was also a two-edged sword: as the diagrams were so detailed, I could see at a glance which parts of the crag were still unclimbed. This guaranteed that the next fine weekend I could be found closely inspecting these areas of the crag! This attention to detail was improved with the Scafell diagrams, where I broke down some of the drawings into multiple detailed sketches; for instance, the diagram of Esk Buttress was changed from a single picture into five very detailed sketches. The single exception to this rule was the sketch of Upper Deep Gill Buttress, which I admit I drew completely from memory, sitting at home with pencil and paper, without either photograph or a crag visit to confirm any semblance to reality!

Unfortunately, the challenges of work in the late '90s meant that I had very little time to devote to further diagrams. The Langdale guide was due out, so I gave my collection of original 1989 Langdale sketches to Max Biden, as I couldn't modify them. I was intensely disappointed to see the finished result in the 1999 guidebook, as these small diagrams (which were okay at a small scale) had

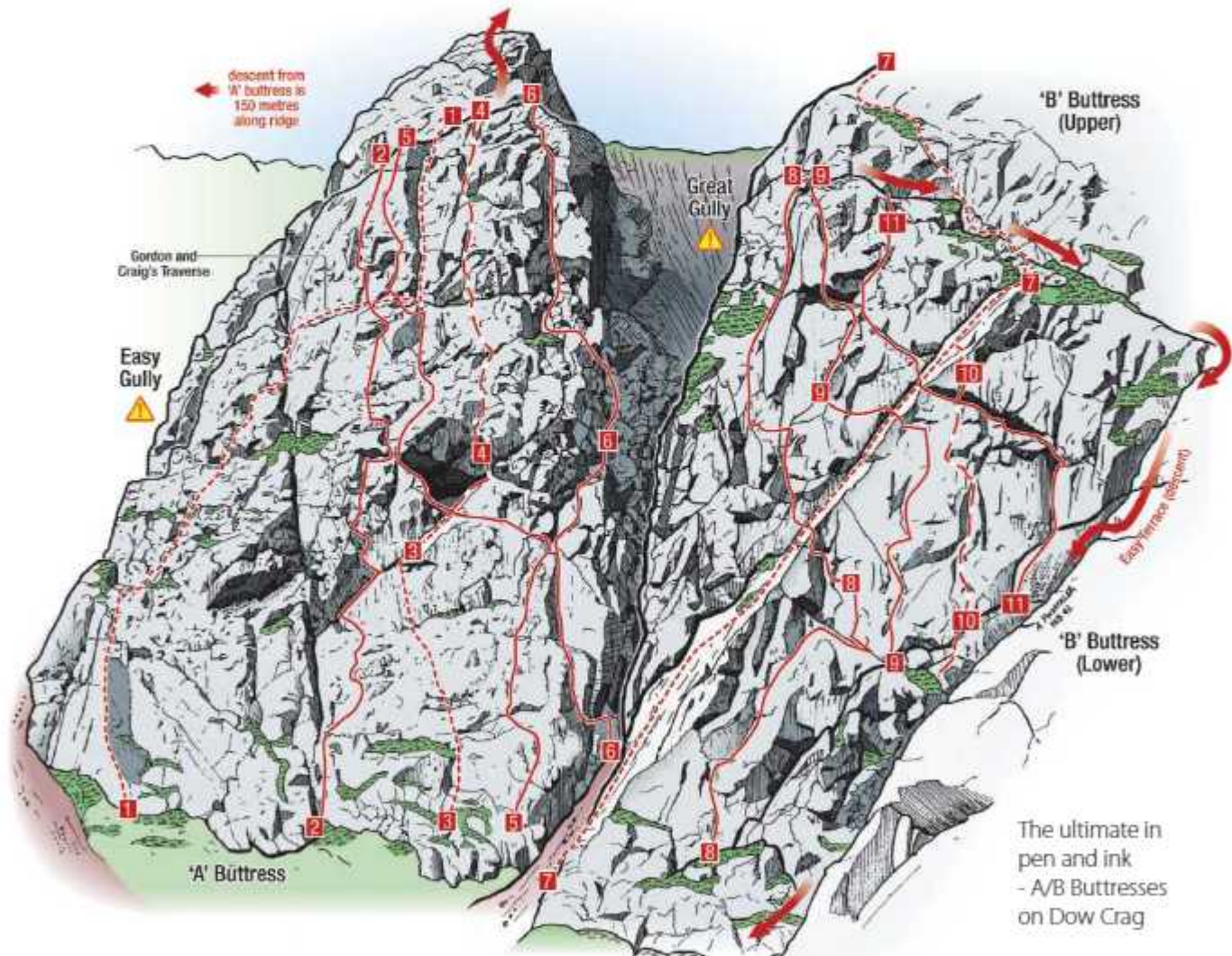
been copied at a large scale and then cropped in order to indicate where all the routes went. This meant that the ink lines had also expanded, giving the sketches a thick, cumbersome effect, and exaggerating any slight error in the sketch; the overall effect was a confusing mess of lines in some of these final prints. It wasn't Max's fault; he could only work with the poor material that he had been given. Oh, what a relief to get onto photographs to illustrate the guidebooks!

The final improvement to my sketches was illustrated in the 2003 Lake District Rock selected guidebook, in which we saw the original diagrams transformed by colour. This was done by contracting Vertebrate Graphics from Sheffield to scan and colour the sketches, but each one required intense scrutiny to ensure that the shading was correct, as a bad piece of shading could transform a corner into an arête or vice versa. You, our customer, wouldn't forgive me for that! I suppose this represents the ultimate that can be produced by pen and ink, the end of an era.

Tracing from photographs or slides is a long way from the tradition of the Heaton Cooper style diagrams. I couldn't hope to capture the mood of the area that he could, as some of his diagrams seem to exude the spiritual heart of the hills. It takes an artist to be able to do that. I have often been asked whether the change in the recent guidebooks to full photographic diagrams has upset me – on the contrary! To be honest, the prospect of having to redraw all of my diagrams for the entire Lake District to a standard similar to that used in the Scafell guide filled me with dread. I simply hadn't the time nor, if I be true, the inclination to do this. It involved a lot of hard work and dedication, and even greater hassle if colour was to be used.

Modern desktop publishing packages and high speed single-pass printing methods have transformed the publishing industry. Photographs can now be incorporated within the text at no extra cost at the printers. This means it is simpler to use photographs than drawings in the guidebooks, thankfully relieving me from the burden of drawing. The need to re-photograph every inch

of climbable rock in the Lakes in digital format has given me a new challenge; I can even take the dogs for a walk and still obtain a fine set of crag shots. The transformation with these latest guides is astonishing, and until hand-held electronic guidebooks finally emerge, they will prove to be the ultimate in climbing guides.



The ultimate in pen and ink
- A/B Buttresses
on Dow Crag

Star Wars - Langdale's role in an intergalactic dialogue

Max Biden

Ever since the first guidebook for Langdale was published in 1924, the valley has been a popular venue for climbers. This is not surprising, given its increasingly easy access from the industrial heartlands to the south and east, good accommodation, and an extensive range of lower-level crags for when the weather did not suit a visit to the equally good selection of mountain crags. No wonder then that H.M Kelly commented in his editorial note to the 1950 Langdale guidebook with its 145 routes that it was possibly the largest guide in the current FRCC series.

That route tally had grown to some 620 by the time that Dave Armstrong and team produced their comprehensive 1989 Langdale edition and it continued to increase as work started on a successor. When eventually published in 1999, the final total had risen to over 740. Whilst this gave climbers a much wider choice of climbs, the actual process of selecting one from so many could be quite laborious. Naturally, one would first choose to attempt the climbs of the best quality - those with a strong line, technical interest and sound rock. It should be simple - just read the descriptions.

In early guidebooks, if they expressed any view at all on quality, such descriptions favoured phrases along the lines of "...a route of considerable character", "...a pleasant climb", "...disappointing but finishes well." In the 1960s, one started to see the use of the superlatives; "classic", "very fine", "magnificent" and, as there were typically still only a couple of hundred routes in a volume, it was straightforward to pick what should be a good one. But in case help was needed, the FRCC guides of the time included a short list, three or four climbs in

each grade (which ended at VS), prefaced quaintly by the note, "Visitors new to the district may find a list of recommended routes useful."

The rot (as some would call it) started in the 1970s. As the number of climbs increased further, an opportunity was spotted by publisher Constable to produce a series of guidebooks covering wider geographical areas but containing only a selection of the better climbs. The first was Ron James' classic selected guide to North Wales in 1970, followed over the next decade by similar guides to Scotland, the Peak District, the Lake District and the Southwest. Even though the routes in these guides had already been chosen by perceived quality, it was felt necessary to introduce a starring system to make the job of choosing your climb even easier. Much cheaper than buying a whole series of definitive guides, they quickly became popular.

This use of stars was recognised as a good marketing ploy and the practice was soon picked up by the wider guide-writing establishment. Rating climbs with stars based on perceived quality was very useful, particularly for those new to or not familiar with an area, or perhaps didn't get out that often and didn't want to waste time doing poorer climbs. Stars helped the reader sort out the good from the mediocre or worse without having to wade through all the text. This was particularly so if you arrived at a crag to find that the popularity of your chosen route meant either a long wait or picking an alternative. The star system gave four levels of quality from 3-stars for the magnificent to no-stars for the not magnificent. The concept was subsequently taken to the extreme by awarding black spots for routes to be avoided (even though

fully described!) Perversely, this could result in the ascent of a 3-black spot route gaining a certain cachet because it was simply so bad.

As well as being of practical use, the assessment of star ratings became a wonderful subject for discussion, providing hours of animated (interesting/boring/frustrating?) conversation. Sadly, the benefits of their functionality were soon buried in this mire of dialogue as to whether individual star ratings were correct - a largely impossible task when doing so was such a matter of opinion. There were certainly lots of inconsistencies, added to which vegetation growth could change route quality from year to year. Another problem is that it is very difficult for someone climbing regularly in the upper E grades to be able to assess what, for instance, a V Diff climber would rate as a 3-star route. As guidebooks were generally written by those operating at these higher grades, this understandable bias led to most well-starred routes being in the upper grades. This point was brought home to me when I started work on what became the 1999 Langdale guide. I found several routes in the lower grades that had been described historically as "magnificent" whilst then being only awarded one star. Something here was wrong...

Conversely, while I was pondering all this, there was an increasing feeling in some circles that stars were completely unnecessary, even an affront to the literary skills of authors who put great effort into creating descriptions that allowed the reader to make a proper value judgement. That wider discussion resulted in the Climbers' Club bringing out their 1998 Lliwedd guide as star-free. It was a great read, but I have to admit that, as I perused it, I put an asterisk next to each route that contained words such as "magnificent", "excellent", "classic", etc., so that when I eventually visited the crag, I had

a quick and ready marker for the better choices!

Whether it was stars or just words, the number of routes with a degree of recommendation still tended to be limited and biased towards the preferences of the author. A possible way of avoiding this trap was to focus on using stars more as a literary device, a simple means of indicating to readers which routes warranted a closer look at their description, those you might consider trying first - more of a broad-brush approach to "quality". This meant creating straightforward parameters for determining what constituted degrees of quality, rather than relying on comparing one route with another. And it also meant putting out of mind any arbitrary limits on the number of climbs eventually awarded stars. Three logical criteria were - strength of line, technicality (interest/consistency/nature of the moves), and quality of rock. If a route had all three, it deserved three stars - end of discussion. If it had any two of them it got two stars, etc. A no-star route was not necessarily all bad but would probably only appeal to those locals who had done everything else they could. Whilst it was easy to rate single pitch routes this way, it became harder with multi-pitch climbs and a certain degree of pragmatism was useful. And nature could still make nonsense of any rating within a couple of years, a risk that should always be understood and tolerated.

The result in the Langdale 1999 edition was a plethora of newly starred routes, with almost 80% of climbs getting one or more, compared with some 33% previously. More importantly, the number of 3-starred routes had increased from 20 to 73, of which 17 were under VS compared with just 3 before. A justification for this reassessment of the starring system came a couple of years later when an article appeared in a climbing magazine by

someone who had gone to explore the wealth of easier 3-star routes that had suddenly appeared on Gimmer and had come away almost surprised by what a good day they had had!

However, the Star Wars had not finished (will it ever?) In 2000, the no-stars view prevailed again when the Climbers Club published their new Tremadog guide, prompting reviewer comments wondering if this was because all its stars had been pinched by the FRCC for Langdale. Yet elsewhere, some climbs were being upgraded to 4 or even 5-stars and hollow stars were being introduced to indicate what first ascensionists thought of their new route. Let's be clear, most of the views held, both for and against, are genuine and should be respected. Nevertheless, at the end of the day, highlighting only the very best routes tends to encourage a "honeypot" culture, with fewer routes being climbed by more and more people, resulting in overcrowding and detrimental wear and tear to the rock. The risk of this is not helped by the current fashion for including lists such as the "Top 50 best climbs" in modern guidebooks. Spreading the popularity by more liberal use of stars has the potential to keep climbs in better condition by encouraging wider traffic to the benefit of all. But, wherever your own views stand in this intergalactic deliberation - may the Force be with you.

Great Central Route and Black Wall

John Holden

Both routes are situated in Easter Gully or The Amphitheatre as it is otherwise known. Getting to the routes involves soloing a Difficult pitch left of a large chockstone to land in the bed of the gully. Someone who was unkind might say that if you can't solo the pitch, there's nothing you're capable of climbing in the gully. However, the author, who in the 1970s used to happily climb up and down without the security of a rope, now finds, 50 years on, that it is not so easy. It is an impressive place, but not oppressive if a sunny day is chosen. The north wall keeps the sun longer than many parts of the crag.

Basterfield said of it: This magnificent gully may almost be considered the centre of gravity of the climbing on Doe Crag, containing as it does at least nine courses, ranging from 'easy difficult' to 'unutterably severe'. The two routes we are discussing here both belong to the latter category

There are steep walls in front and to the left and right. The obvious features are the crack lines in the left and right corners taken by Broadrick's and Hopkinson's Cracks respectively. In between the two is the wall taken by Great Central Route (GCR). It looks formidable and is. There are three very different pitches that can be characterised as 1, very strenuous, 2, very delicate and 3, very exposed.

This was the first of a string of hard routes that would propel Dow Crag into the climbing premiership. The first ascent was in September 1919 by Roper, Bower, Jackson and Wilson; both Roper and Bower were very experienced climbers, but of Jackson and Wilson we know nothing. However, Roper and Bower knew that they might well need

combined tactics and found two extra bodies to go along, because Joe Roper had sprained his ankle falling off it on a previous attempt.

The climb starts easily enough - a nose, followed by easy slabs leads to South America Crack. One look at the next feature is enough to see the shape is rather like the shape of the east side of South America. There is nothing delicate about it. Determined layback or jamming and a good power/weight ratio will ensure success. Dither and the double gravity switch will be activated. (Colin Kirkus fell off this pitch, breaking a toe.)

If only pitch 2 would succumb to such an unsophisticated technique. The only good news is that eying up the pitch is a comfortable experience. Holds can be fingered and footholds, such as they are, can be tested, before asking for help (or launching bravely on upwards). The first four metres are the most difficult.

The last pitch, although not as technically difficult as the previous pitch, features a fabulously exposed move after a traverse across the buttress. This finishes off the route that is easily as difficult as Central Buttress on Scafell.

Moving around to the sunny side of the street we can find another hard, classic route, led by Roper. It was done in 1920, this time with George Basterfield, another well-known climber from Barrow-in-Furness. George Bower already had an interest in the route, having top-roped it, but when he heard that Roper fancied a go at it, stood aside for him.

It is a single pitch and would have been a very

serious lead, but Basterfeld tried to mitigate the risk by belaying halfway up the adjoining route, Black Chimney; the hope being that a fall by the leader would result in a pendulum rather than a crash landing. The route starts with small holds, but the rock leans back slightly so the climbing isn't strenuous. The initial lack of protection is thought provoking, but eventually it arrives and the crux looms above. It's an overhang; not enormous, but a definite impasse. Fortunately there is a very good piece of protection and a very good hold to ease the nerves. Above, the angle eases slightly, but the climbing still requires steadiness.

When Bower made the second ascent he had a torrid time of it. Some years later another very able climber, Ernest Wood-Johnson was asked if he had climbed Black Wall and he replied: [No, I climb only for pleasure] Nowadays, a grade of HVS is not considered to be anything special, but it's not the grade that makes a great route, it's the climbing.

Great Central Route

FRCC Guidebook to Doe Crag 1922



John Holden on Black Wall

Exceedingly severe; rubbers or suckers essential, together with perfect conditions; best number, three or four experts; 70 foot rope. From the scree strewn floor of the arena, 40 feet of pleasant slabs between Hopkinson's and Broadrick's Cracks lead, after a short traverse to the right, to the foot of a very steep crack, deeply incut, and facing slightly towards Hopkinson's Crack. The second man's rope may, and should be, threaded on the left. Approaching the foot of the crack either directly or by an inclined traverse from the right, the confident leader climbs for a few feet Amen Corner fashion, using the flake for the hands and the right wall for the feet until the latter can be placed on a small ledge. In aid of this movement small holds can be found on the face on each side of the crack. Care must be taken to avoid disturbing the repose of some doubtfully wedged blocks, although the once famous "pump handle" has been removed. It is now possible to wedge the left arm, and obtain a short rest, after which the climber soon can grasp the rounded top of the block on the right, and, with his left leg in the crack, struggle to the top. This pitch is very severe and requires 40

feet of rope. The panting climber thus arrives on the Band Stand, but the time for a paean of praise from the instruments of brass is not yet. About 20 feet above the centre of the Band Stand will be descried a small grass patch, on the attainment of which all the leader's hopes will now be centred. The way is desperately severe and starts to the left of the slight nose formed by the buttress. Belayed by the third man, the second steadies the leader's foot, rattles the



Bill Smith, climbing in Wollworth's black pumps, on the South America Crack.
Inset photo of 1st ascensionist Joe Roper in his 95th year



Great Central Climb, Doe Crag
(1922-23 Guide)

bag of acid drops, or performs any other service required of him. The leader moves upwards and to the right, to the crest of the nose, and if fortunate, will attain a small, pointed hold, and will later be able to draw himself up on to the grass patch. A 15 foot crack follows, up which the climber "Amen Corners," reaching a belay at the top.

AFTER bringing his second to the grass patch he makes a very difficult 25 foot upward traverse to the left and arrives at the recess above the steep pitch in Broadrick's Crack, making use of a small notch in the right wall above to bring up his companion. Using Broadrick's Crack for an instant, the climber breaks out on the right on to a small turf patch and, after perhaps 15 feet (from the recess) of very difficult climbing, lands on a splendid ledge of brown, rough rock, on which repose two stones. Traversing across this to the right, and rounding a corner, feeling grateful for generous holds, the leader, after an escalade of such marked severity, experiences the supreme joys of the sport. The face around the corner is ascended without difficulty.

September 1919
J.I.Roper, G.S.Bower, G.Jackson, A.P.Wilson

An example data entry form

Climbing guidebooks have changed a lot in the last hundred years. Now every page is full colour, almost all diagrams are photo-diagrams, they are beautiful books in their own right, and they serve as much as a source of inspiration as information.

The technology behind their production has changed beyond recognition too. Long gone are the mechanical printing presses where each metal letter was methodically and physically set in place to build sentences and paragraphs piece by piece. These techniques have given way to all digital, four-colour, automated printing driven by sophisticated publishing computer software.

The FRCC guidebook operation is led by a fearless, ambitious, and progressive team that has enabled a guidebook digital transformation.

Background

Back in 2007 shortly after I was recruited to lead the Climbers' Club's publications team, I started work

on a new guidebook to Tremadog in North Wales. That book was published in 2010. Three years in the making may seem like quite a long time, but anyone familiar with the process of guidebook production will know that it's actually quite quick, and back then was considered by many to be fast! One of my goals then was to use my background in IT to transform some of the weaknesses I perceived in the process.

For example:

- Getting hold of the most recent script and route descriptions could be tricky. Even if one located the Word document (or whatever word-processing tool it was drafted in) you never really knew for certain if you truly had the most up-to-date version. Plus, when whoever had worked on the most recent version was gone the original script was often also lost.
- Collaborating with a team of workers on large guidebook projects is tough. Often the

succession of emailing a draft for review could take days, sometimes weeks.

- Taking years to produce guidebooks was normal. Sometimes it could take decades! Sure, a lot of the time used is down to reliance on volunteers squeezing the work into their spare time. But the technology wasn't enabling faster working or inspiring people to stay engaged. In my experience a guidebook team is rarely motivated more than by seeing their work published. So, speeding up the process could only be a win-win for consumers and producers.
- Providing a mechanism to record a definitive record of climbs in a given region was haphazard at best. I considered this definitive record keeping as being extremely important as many of the senior guidebook publishing clubs have taken this task upon themselves as the de-facto guardians of the climbing history in their areas.
- With no definitive resource being available, guidebook publishers arbitrarily deciding to leave out poor or otherwise lower valued routes from books were taking an unnecessary risk with historical information being forever lost. In most cases this being little more than a somewhat fraught and random editorial decision.
- Plus, a whole host of other shortcomings ... but I'm sure you're getting the gist of my frustration with what I saw as the outdated technology and processes used to produce climbing guidebooks in what was now the 21st century.

So, I took it upon myself – as a 'hobby project' – to see what I could do...

I had dreams for a brave new world of fully digital publishing. Although smart phones like the iPhone and Android devices that we have today, didn't quite exist as we know them back then. (The iPhone launched in 2007 and Android devices that offered anything near the same features were several years later.)

My dreams were delivered in 2013 with a collaborative effort from the CC, and later the FRCC, to publish the UK's first ever mobile device guidebook. However, in this piece it isn't the story of digital publishing that I want to explore. This exploration is in fact about a key piece of the technology behind the process that addressed the weaknesses in producing guidebooks in whatever form – digital, paper, etc. – which I touch on above. This piece is about the database of routes that is extensively used by the FRCC today.

A Definitive Repository

It seemed to me that turning all that "unstructured data" held in various Word documents, emails, notes, publishing files, etc. into a rigorous "structured" format stored in an extensible, relational database (RDBMS) was the way forward. It would immediately solve the problem of tracking down the most up-to date information when starting a new project. Plus, with all that data reliably stored and made accessible the growing



Structured data
heirarchy
- an abstract idea that
overlays the RDBMS

problem of recording the definitive record, including the history, of climbs would be solved in one move. Not to mention that creating selective guidebooks, or even definitive guidebooks that leave out some of the really awful, fallen down, or inaccessible climbs would become a breeze by comparison.

Collaborative Working & Accelerated Publication

Making it possible for the whole team to access a repository online and in real-time would also drastically reduce the time required to collaborate, review, and finalise information for guidebooks.

Recent Publications

Without digressing into the story of digital publishing, if we consider how the database has accelerated publication, no more revealing an example can be made than that of Bramcrag Quarry. The development of this once obscure and unpleasant quarry into perhaps one of the Lake's most popular sport climbing venues has been truly transformational. While the kudos for that transformation sits firmly with the likes of Colin Downer and Bill Young, the efforts of Al Davis in publishing no less than seven definitive versions of the digital guidebook in only two years must have helped enormously to make it the go-to place for so many weekday-warriors. Al's work equals more than three definitive publications per year! A feat that might have taken 30 years in the currency of the old-style publication technologies!

Bramcrag Quarry also features in the March 2020 Lakes Sport & Slate guidebook. That book was entirely published with the help of the database. A first for UK guidebooks. The entire book can be

pulled into desktop publishing software at the click of a few buttons.

Building on the successes of publishing books directly from the database established by Lakes Sport & Slate, championed by Steve Scott as the Editor (and project manager) the FRCC has now wholeheartedly adopted the database as the key tool in bringing gorgeous books to market. The most recent guide in 2021, Duddon & Wrynose, was again published entirely from material held in the database.

To give a flavour of the kinds of savings being made using this technology, as an estimate, I would suggest that typical book layout effort has reduced by a factor of five. That is, what used to take five days to layout now takes just one!

There are no shortcuts to things like editing and checking spelling and grammar; the data is only ever as good as what is entered. But collaborative real-time editing has enhanced accuracy and consistency. Equally, there is no substitute for the creative process of book layout to make it functional, beautiful, and – ultimately – highly marketable.

But perhaps the biggest benefit is a motivational one, working faster keeps the whole team engaged and excited. I hope you agree with me – because I am clearly biased – isn't the Duddon & Wrynose guidebook absolutely fantastically beautiful?!

The Database

It must be hard work entering all that data in this "structured" way, mustn't it? Well, no ... but it is a whole new way of working!

There are well over thirty thousand routes recorded in the database as of January 2022. Nearly ten


thousand of those are in the Lake District. This represents nearly all of the FRCC's definitive library already preserved and ready to leverage for new projects.

Longridge Peak Lat/Lng: N71.23,031, W21.58,073

Introduction
Dramatic peak on the north side of the North Neild Bugt Glacier with the prominent rocky ridge of The Long Ridge.

Descent
Descend the route Cryogenic.

Longridge Peak (960m)



1 Original Route PD
2012 Sebby/Woldendorp

2 The Long Ridge 450m D 450m
The prominent south ridge, well seen in profile from the west end of the Neild Bugt Glacier. An excellent mountaineering route, similar in length and difficulty to Tower Ridge on Ben Nevis. Gain the Ridge via a snow ramp, on the west side, and follow this to a broad snow crest. Climb this easily to where the Ridge narrows and follow it over a series of rock steps, in an excellent position, to where the Ridge merges with the final snow slope. Follow this to the short summit ridge that leads to the top in 50m.
24/04/2018 Mark Robson, Simon Richardson

3 Cryogenic PD+
Climb the rocky ridge to the col on the east of the mountain and the slope to the top.
J Gregson, S Gregson, I Baker

This mighty task has been completed in what is really a very short time. As a brief insight of the database technology, here's a simple example of a data entry form for a route at Bramcrag Quarry. There's no rocket science, just a logical layout of attributes of a climb...

However, even having had a vision – some thought years ahead of its time – of publishing directly from the database, there is no instruction manual in the world that describes how to integrate a custom database with Adobe publishing software to produce a climbing guidebook. The only way to make that work is to invent the data structures, create from scratch a method (XML) of getting the information across to the publishing software and to iteratively refine it all through multiple attempts at “getting it right” using the end-to-end system in anger.

An example electronic (pdf) guidebook publication
(just a few clicks in the database application)

I hope you agree that products like the Duddon & Wrynose guide, which I believe were faster to produce and contain fewer errors, have been worth the effort.

Other Examples

Once all that data is entered and the technology is proven publication almost becomes a doddle. A couple of examples:

- The FRCC has produced over thirty PDFs of newly developed crags. These are now available on the FRCC website. Previously this information might have been scattered in varying formats waiting (for an unknown period) for the next guidebook to be published.
- After a trip to Liverpool Land in Greenland Ron Kenyon pulled together information from that and other expeditions. This is now all stored in the database and offers a detailed resource documenting the area for further expeditions going there. It also gives an example of what could be done for other remote areas in the world.

Electronic publication in PDFs, like the example extract for Greenland on the previous page, are now just a matter of a few clicks.

The Future

Second-guessing the future is futile, especially in the realms of the fast-moving technology domain. However, in safe-hands, FRCC guidebooks will continue to offer the very best books, which can only be a good thing for customers, guidebook workers, and the Club.

It is easy to copy these technological steps – none of it is rocket science. However, to invent it from scratch does take a certain skill, insight, vision, and energy to make it happen. It is my hope that more people might join-the-fray and collaborate to make these foundations even more fruitful and powerful in the future.

Lake District Winter Climbs - a History of the Guides

Brian Davison



Historically winter climbs across the Lake District were not recorded and the FRCC, while publishing a range of rock-climbing guides covering the valleys, did not bother with a guide to winter climbs. Subsequently there was no guidebook for winter routes until 1980 when Bob Bennett, Bill Birkett and Andy Hyslop put their combined winter knowledge together and came up with the first guide published by Cicerone Press. This volume helped pull together climbs the authors and other local activists knew about and were often climbed - these being mainly gullies and icefalls.

The 1980s was to see an increase in popularity of what was to become known as mixed climbing. Ascents of snowed and iced up rock routes. Ascents of such ridges in winter had always taken place

but by the late 1970s and early 80s the more adventurous climbers were moving out onto the open buttresses. This form of winter climbing was becoming increasingly popular north of the border and heralded an increase in technical standards. In the Lake District this was being tried by local climbers such as Al Phizacklea and Ed Cleasby and Cambridge-based Brian Davison.

By the time of the second edition of the Cicerone guide in 1986, but without Andy, some new routes had been added to the Lake District's route tally. An increase in the number of climbing magazines and their reporting of first ascents both in summer and winter meant that some written record was now available of ascents.

It was to be over 10 years before another guide surfaced in 1997. Once again written for Cicerone Press by Bob Bennett and Bill Birkett but this time with the assistance of Brian Davison. During the previous decade Brian had moved north and been involved in many first ascents across the Lake District. This edition of the guide, for the first time, included a first ascents list, or at least first claims list, at the back of the guide along with the odd historical snippet. Information on the ascents of the previous few decades were easy to find with information available in magazines and interviews with those involved, some of these going back to the 1940s and 50s. The details of the older ascents were more difficult to piece together. They were the result of many nights for Davison, sitting in the FRCC library reading through copies of every FRCC, CC and Alpine Club journal for references to winter sounding ascents of climbs in the area. To verify this further the dates were then checked against

historical meteorological records to clarify the chances of winter conditions.

The publication of the 2006 Lake District Winter Climbs guide saw a significant change in format. Stephen Reid, the editor for FRCC guidebooks, thought the club should take on the winter guide as well as their rock-climbing guides. With some reluctance, this was agreed by the rock-climbers of the FRCC publication committee. So started a joint venture between the FRCC and Cicerone. Brian Davison was the author and set about a complete rewrite. The previous format of dividing the area into north, south, east and west was changed for a valley-based system more in keeping with the club's other guides and allowing their valley colour coding to be used for easy identification of the various sections. More literary digging had unearthed further historical ascents and earlier claims for some routes, as well as providing more pub reading, for the back of the guide.

Photographs are always considered an important aspect of any guide. For rock-climbing guides photographers now often abseil to be alongside the climber for a side-on shot, so avoiding the obligatory head or bum shots of early guides. The luxury of a dedicated photographer is less likely in winter with more dangerous descents down snowed ledges or icy ropes and an understandable reluctance of anyone wanting to give up their day for the frankly hazardous pursuit of freezing their fingers trying to take a picture.

The same is true of the often overlooked crag shot. Getting a good photograph of a crag in winter condition is always challenging. Clouds can obscure crags, light levels are often low leading to poor flat looking pictures and the weather can often be atrocious. As well as the fact the conditions suitable

for a good winter shot probably don't last long and you can't get around all the of the district in that one day of good conditions. To try and solve this problem for the 2006 edition of the guide the FRCC organised a helicopter so crag shots could all be taken on the same day. Nick Wharton and David Willis shared the rather cold pleasure of hanging out of the small helicopter's door as they dashed across the district to get the pictures. The route Friends Above on Rampsgill Head was named in their honour as it was being climbed as the photograph was taken. The guide proved a success and was the FRCC's fastest selling guide.

An exceptionally long winter in 2009-2010 and the success of the previous edition of the guide meant a new one was soon needed and arrived in 2012. With over 200 new winter routes added since the last edition. As before, this was written for Cicerone/FRCC by Brian Davison. With the guide writing nearly completed Davison tried to address the complaints of winter climbers dry tooling up established rock routes. A tour of the disused quarries of the district helped find a couple of steep venues that contained no existing climbing and which were too steep and smooth for rock-climbing. An Easter weekend was spent with the assistance of Paddy Cave to manufacture the first of the dry tooling routes. Given the process was more akin to a day's work in a quarry than anything involving climbing the name The Works was chosen for the venue. These first few routes just made it into the guide and The Works proved a very popular location for winter climbers while they waited for the white stuff and as a training ground for those rock-climbers wanting stronger arms.

Eliminate A and other rope manoeuvres

Jim Sutcliffe



In September 1960, I and my friend and climbing partner at the time, were high on Eliminate A on Dow Crag. I had just led the crucial pitch, traversing round the belt of overhangs above the Cave and had taken in the slack rope in order to bring up Andrew from his copious ledge, where he had been joined by a party of three. I called for him to 'Climb when ready' and had felt him move onto the

diagonal traverse under the overhangs. I guessed that he had reached the large blunt pinnacle, to which I had fixed a large sling which I had clipped into to form a running belay or 'runner'. The sling in question was quite substantial, being of what was then known as 'half-weight' a cable-laid rope, as all our ropes were at that time in this country. I was used to carrying it doubled around my shoulders. I

had been particularly pleased to find this rounded pinnacle as the runner would protect me whilst I swung across the traverse line under the belt of overhangs. Having achieved this, I found the ledge and belay above, mentioned in the FRCC climbing guide book to Dow Crag and safely attaching myself to the belay, I began to take in the slack rope between Andrew and me. I felt him move, then all movement stopped as he reached for the pinnacle. Suddenly I felt a massive pull on the rope. I presumed that he had fallen off. 'Wow! I thought. He's put on some weight!' Equally suddenly the rope went slack. There was a muffled crack and alarmed shouts. I strained to peer over the overhangs and was shocked to see a large boulder falling towards where Pat, my wife at that time, and her dog, were sitting on the scree watching proceedings. For a second my heart felt to miss a beat, then pick up again as, to my relief the boulder ploughed harmlessly into scree to one side.

Agitated voices clamoured from the direction of the sloping ledge below the traverse, where the three members of the following team were gathered with random coils of their slack rope strewn around. My anxious calls to Andrew for explanations as to the events which I could not see, elicited some quite disturbing facts. Andrew had no sooner laid a hand on the blunt pinnacle than it had simply 'unhinged' itself from the main rock and fallen onto the sloping ledge below, narrowly missing the patiently waiting men, but chopping their ropes into innumerable small lengths. We had a problem!

The day had begun in a quite straight-forward way. Tiring of incessant domestic jobs, (Pat and I had married earlier in the year) I had decided that the time had come to return to the crags. I had scoured Fell and Rock guidebooks for a climb which would make a definite statement of intent. The appearance

of Eliminate A's straight line up A buttress on Dow Crag suggested itself as a suitable climb. Accordingly, we had set off in my old Ford Prefect with its 3 forward gears (no synchromesh) and side-valve engine (very sluggish) and had driven across from our home in Burnley to collect Andrew from his home in Halifax, then driven through the slow roads of the West Riding (as it then was) and North Yorkshire to Ambleside then Coniston, to park the car as far up the Walna Scar Road as possible. Andrew and I carried our climbing equipment and clothing up past Goats Water to the foot of A Buttress, the prominent buttress on the left of this impressive crag. Pat and her dog accompanied us on the walk up.

I had led the first pitch then we alternated the leads. Everything went smoothly up this first section which kept to the right side of A Buttress, in a superb position generally overlooking Great Gully. A brief traverse left across the so-called Rochers Perché pitch which Andrew led, brought us to the cave-like depression below the slanting belt of overhangs. I was pleased to find Andrew belayed on a spacious, sloping ledge with plenty of room. I surveyed the next pitch. The guidebook speaks of a deep cleft lying underneath the great overhangs. This was how I was to hand-traverse diagonally left, clinging on to the edge of this cleft, to move round the overhangs which formed such a marked barrier to the upper reaches of the buttress. It was the first part of this cleft which was formed into the big, rounded pinnacle which eventually was to depart from the main rock and cause such damage to the ropes of the following party. They were already making their presence felt as I started on this crucial pitch. Quickly reaching this doomed structure, I was pleased to find that it would make a substantial running belay. I swung across onto it, finding a few small footholds to help support me as I took

off the strong sling which I was carrying doubled around my shoulders, and opened it out to form a large sling which easily fitted round the top of the rounded pinnacle. Clipping one of my doubled ropes through the karabiner attached to it, greatly increased my self-confidence for the diagonal traverse around the overhangs. It was, perhaps, a good thing that I had no idea of its insecurity. I never felt the slightest movement from the great lump. Thus, with increased confidence I swung across the traverse and round the belt of overhangs, where I found an easy chimney which took me to the convenient belay ledge above. I noticed that the following party had arrived to share Andrew's stance. Quickly arranging a belay, I took in the slack rope.

Andrew later recounted how, on leaning across to hold the top of the lumpy pinnacle, he felt it move and just had time to swing back onto some good holds, when he saw it, as he said, 'unhinge' itself from the main rock. It was a very fortunate thing that the holds he moved back onto were so very good, because it firstly pulled the runner which I had so meticulously placed, nearly dragging him off the rock with it. It was this pull which I felt and which I wrongly assumed to be Andrew falling off. The rock quickly freed itself through gravity, fortunately missing the heads of the waiting men before smashing onto the coils of slack rope, cutting it into small lengths then plunging towards the scree slope some 200 hundred feet below. Andrew managed to apprise me of these facts before moving up to join me. It was this rope damage which started to trigger my memories of improvisation with ropes, and which led to our, not only rescuing our fellow climbers, but also completing the route.

I was taken back 4 years to when my friend John

Hartley and I were climbing in North Wales. We were high up on the north face of Glyder Fach. The route was "the Chasm", a gulley system which splits these granite cliffs. John and I were both 16 years of age and were being led by a man called Fred, well into his middle years, and who, along with his wife, ran a guest house in Capel Curig. He also practiced as a climbing guide, taking mainly beginners on relatively easy routes. "The Chasm" was graded V. Diff in the then-current rock climbing guidebook published by "the Climbers Club". Both John and I were already experienced in climbing at our local gritstone crag (Widdop). Our very wary parents had sanctioned our Easter climbing holiday at this Guest House, as we would be under the care of this older, very experienced adult. Our attention had been drawn to "The Chasm" due to a black and white photograph which hung in a frame on the dining room wall, depicting a climber grappling with a long, sinuous, and narrow chimney splitting the otherwise vertical rock. It looked very spectacular. On enquiring as to what climb this was, Fred told us that it was known as "The Vertical Vice".

"If all goes well, I might take you up it on Wednesday." We gathered that Fred considered Wednesdays as being his day to be released from guest house duties in order to go climbing. Meanwhile John and I continued climbing on the Milestone Buttress and Idwal Slabs.

The day dawned ominously. Heavy clouds were marching in from the direction of the sea. We clambered into Fred's old shooting brake with its rag top. Fred pulled into a parking spot below the Milestone Buttress. We crossed the wall and followed the path to where it ran below Cneifion Arête and up into the cwm below the impending crags of Glyder Fach. The rain started, at first gently, then with increasing intensity as we approached

the bottom of The Chasm. I dragged on a pair of canvas over trousers, not fully waterproof, but helpful in maintaining warmth. On the second pitch, we entered a "through route", squirming behind a chock stone. John received the call to climb and disappeared from sight. Now, John had regaled me previously, with tales of caving with all the delights of wet and mud. John advanced enthusiastically. When I received his call to follow, I found myself wriggling up inside a narrow passage down which water was pouring. Whenever I reached up for a handhold, the cold water poured into my sleeves, ran down the inside of my clothes before exiting from my trouser bottoms. This was not the sort of climbing that appealed to me! We were like three drowned rats as we surveyed the appalling sight above - the "Vertical Vice".

Now, at this point one of our memories varies from the other. John maintains that we climbed it, but my memory suggests that Fred knew that we could avoid it. An enormous chockstone lay wedged right across the Chasm from the left to the right, tilted at a fairly easy angle. According to my memory, we scrambled one at a time across this convenient bridge. The sight of the "Vertical Vice" running with water thoroughly justified (in my opinion) our divergence from the main route. We were wet through, and it was very cold. It was still early in the year.

We had arrived at the final pitch. We gazed at the steep wall, running with water, in stunned silence. I could only make out vestigial wrinkles for use as holds. Fred turned to us and announced in a hollow tone:

"I'm sorry, lads. I can't lead that!"

To say that we were stunned would be an

understatement. Both John and I were only 16 years of age and still had to develop our mature strengths. There was no way that we would be able to lead that steep wall in the conditions. It was then that I remembered some of my extensive reading of climbs carried out in previous years where the protagonists sometimes had adopted "combined tactics", one climber managing to clamber up another whilst supporting the two of them against the rock wall. I suggested this to the others. With John belaying both of us, Fred would clamber onto my back, when he might be able to grasp a good hold and progress to the top. Fred was a man of medium height and build, but I had no idea how heavy he would feel as he scrabbled onto my leaning back. It was obvious that he still wasn't high enough, so he tentatively placed a large boot on my right shoulder. The pain of him starting to stand on that foot was excruciating! Soon, he had the other foot on my left shoulder. He stretched up.

"It's no good, Jim. I still can't reach it." I stretched both my hands upwards, linking them together.

"Try standing on that," I gasped

Sure, enough a large Vibram-soled boot landed on my hands. I summoned all my strength as I took the weight.

"No! Still no good!"

Finding an unexpected strength, born of desperation, I gave him an upward push.

"Got it!" His cry was exultant. He quickly despatched the rest of the pitch.

"I won't be able to pull you up," he called.

John and I looked at each other with dismay. We both knew that we couldn't follow the pitch, in our present, soaked, and frozen condition. It was then that another inventive idea came to my mind. I explained my plan to my companion. We would take in some of the slack rope now in Fred's possession, and tie loops in it which we would use as hand and foot holds to get high enough up for Fred to help us with a pull.

Watching John as he struggled to get up the first part, brought to light the problems with this idea. The loops simply stretched out, making the insertion of hand and foot extremely difficult. Nevertheless, in his struggles, John was making headway. Eventually he was able to reach good holds to swarm over the top of the wall. I lost no time in emulating him and arrived at the top. To welcome us, the rain started to turn into snow. We had prevailed none too soon.

My mind quickly returned to Eliminate A and the present. We had a problem to solve. Three men were, in effect, marooned on a ledge about half-way up A buttress on Dow Crag with their ropes in tatters, after the rock fall. My climbing partner, Andrew, was at the start of the rising traverse leading above the overhang to the ledge where I was safely belayed. Images of short rope lengths were prominent in my mind. I imagined them linked together. I decided to try my idea.

"Andrew," I called. "Ask them whether or not they could tie the longest of them together using fisherman's bend knots and somehow attach themselves to it at useful intervals."

"Ok," came the querulous reply.

"And you take one end and bring it up with you, so

we could bring them up here."

There followed sounds of discussion and I imagined them trying my suggestion out.

After some considerable time, I heard Andrew's voice calling to me to take in, as he climbed. Eventually his familiar features emerged from the depths of the overhang. Trailing behind him was a length of the improvised rope. We considered it best for me to lead the next pitch, freeing up some more room on the belay ledge. In this manner we progressed slowly up the rest of the climb. I cannot remember the details of the pitches, but clearly, I had no real difficulty in leading them. From the next belay ledge, I watched as Andrew brought up, first one climber, then the second, before calling out to me to take in the slack between him and me and advancing up the intervening rock. The improvised rope appeared trailing behind Andrew, displaying various carefully tied knots. As long as we were careful not to clip this knotted rope through any running belays, we could manage to make progress.

It was, nevertheless, a very slow job and the afternoon was rapidly progressing. The year was well on. It was September and the light was starting to fade. We exited the top of the buttress as the last glimmer of sunlight ebbed away. After greeting each other and accepting their thanks, we quickly packed up the climbing gear and descended the nearby easy gulley. My wife (and the dog) greeted us, not as returning heroes, but as recalcitrant laggards, in spite of our attempts at explanations.

All that remained was to walk down to the car and face the long drive back. It had been a successful return to the world of climbing and adventure, although rather more full of events than we had anticipated.

Eliminate Route, 'A' Buttress, Doe Crag

FRCC Guidebook to Doe Crag 1923

Starting up the corner of the buttress from the bed of Great Gully, at the lowest point of 'A' Buttress. A short easy pitch brings one to the start of the real climbing. The route lies upwards and to the right, overhanging the gully. Small but good grips are available until one swings round into a scoop or crack. A spiky hold in the scoop vibrates, and although well tested, should be used carefully. A landing is made on a sloping slab bedecked with treacherous grass ledges - now considerably gardened. A traverse of 12 feet to the left discloses a small, good belay. The leader then returns to the right and attacks the steep wall (NOT the bilberry grown crack) at a point where one or two small grass tufts are enriched. Good holds are to be found, and the route goes straight ahead for 15 feet. It is then necessary to make a difficult step to the right; small, good, but not obvious holds enable one to rise on to a ledge, and a good, pointed grip is available. A turf ledge must now be attained at shoulder height. Search reveals a hold for the left hand in a vertical crack above the ledge, and this and a press up on the right achieve the desired ledge, and it is then a more simple matter to reach a good grass platform (this is the platform from which one abseils on the Girdle Traverse). There is no belay here, but the second man has a good large stance. The leader attacks the steep scoop which runs up to the Raven's Nest Belay, immediately above the previous pitch. This scoop left us with an impression of great severity as regards the upper portion. It is best climbed facing in, and may be easier now, as it was considerably gardened by the second man. The exit is made to the left. From the Raven's belay the route lies round a most exposed corner to the right, and a large, shattered platform is reached a few feet higher. Poised blocks require care. A small but apparently good belay will be found here on a grass ledge to the right. The crag overhangs to

a tremendous extent, and it was decided to work out to the left. The immediate objective is a small ledge at a height of 8 feet, and some 10 feet to the left of the platform. This pitch is extremely exposed and is a very exacting lead. A start is made on poor sloping footholds, and trust must be placed in some detached blocks which appear to be firm, however. Delicate balance eventually lands one on the ledge, and a further stride to the left gives access to a good ledge leading to a big recess roofed by a great overhang. The leader can thread here, and by climbing a slab to the right, he attains a position immediately above the 'bad bit', and this heartens his second man. From the recess an exit is made to the left, following a fissure under the overhang, on good holds. A short little chimney gives on to a good ledge provided with an enormous block belay. Stepping off from the block to the left, very difficult balancing ensues until a quartz marked ledge is attained, formed by the detachment of a small block. The way lies straight up to the overhang on to a good stance and belay, and then out to the right and up on to the 'Gordon and Craig' traverse immediately to the left of the crack. The steep wall is then climbed, a yard to the left. 20 feet bring the leader to an overhang, which caused a divergence to the right - the crack having to be followed for 7 feet. The route then returned above the overhang and finished straight ahead, carefully dodging the variation finish of the crack. Sound rough rock led to a finish over a 'nose' on to a good ledge. A long climb, of great interest.

NOTE: The climb was done in perfect conditions. It is probably QUITE as severe as 'B' Eliminate, and is consistently of great exposure. Rubbers are essential; 100 feet of rope. H.S.G.

June 17th, 1923, H.S.Gross and G.Basterfield

From the Editor's Seat

Steve Scott

As I write (March 1st, 2022) the country appears to be emerging from a prolonged period of hibernation, with pandemic related restrictions on freedom of movement and social interaction lifted. Life has been a bit weird, dominated by virtual meetings, phone conversations and not being able to get out and do stuff. This has been hugely frustrating especially when the weather is warm, dry, and sunny. Despite this, over that difficult and strange two-year period, the FRCC guidebook team have somehow managed to finalise and publish two guides – *Lakes Sport & Slate (2020)* compiled by Peter Sterling; this is a joint publication with WIRED GUIDES, the second that the FRCC have done, revisiting, and updating much of the ground covered by *Fax 04*, published by Vertical Brain in 1994. The second guide was published in the summer of 2021 - *Duddon & Wrynose*. This area had an enormously long gestation period. It consumed the Wrynose area, previously included in *Langdale*, and continued to surprise, with over a hundred 'new' routes appearing during the final months of preparation. This guide is dedicated to one of the authors, Jim Loxham, who died in 2013 and had spent many years compiling information about the lesser-known crags in the valley.

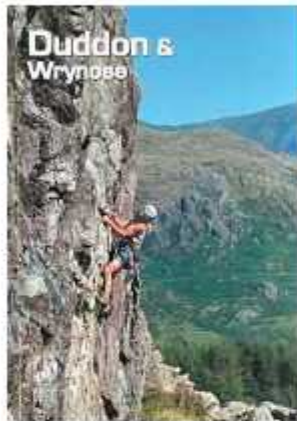
Compiling and producing guides in the modern style is a huge job; there is so much material to bring together with added pressure to meet the user expectation of consistently high quality. Since the last change of Editor, the guidebook team, a team of volunteers, has been amazingly productive with 7 full guides and one supplement published and, right now, two more guides in the final stages of preparation.



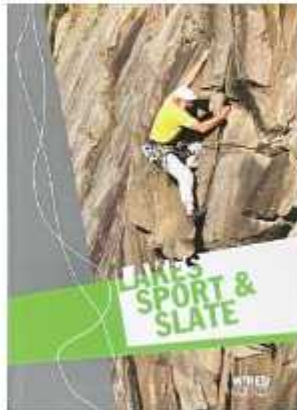
Steve Scott on Slim Slow Slider (VS), Gaitscale Buttress

“So, what is it that you do, actually?” Sometimes, engaged in idle conversation and searching for a common thread, this question often comes up. It's normally thrown in by those who know you, because your name appears in the Handbook, but don't really know you at all. That same question was one of the first that I asked the outgoing editor, Stephen Reid, when I took the job on 10 years ago now. What indeed?

Books need to be brought together, a recipe of many disparate ingredients: text, photos, diagrams, illustrations, maps, and action shots, all require sifting, correcting, and combining into a format that can be printed. In a nutshell that's the role of the Guidebook Editor for the FRCC.



When a guide is published it can seem like "job done", the whole team is relieved and pleased to have reached the end and they all wait in anticipation of the printed and bound book dropping onto their doormat. Especially so if it's the last of a series... as Geoff Milburn stated, "Thank God we've finished the job at last."



The starting point for authors is always text; often this will be from the previous guide. For many this would be a Word document. We used to do it this way too - writing, checking, editing, checking, and finalising Word

documents, did I mention checking them... This all changed in 2020 when we loaded and used a database to publish Lakes, Sport & Slate.

One of the difficulties experienced by editors is managing text and inserting new climbs as they are reported. The major job for any publisher is getting all that material into shape. Ron Kenyon mobilised

a team, which, over a six-month period, loaded almost all of our route descriptions from Word documents into a database. The focus was on sport, slate and the Duddon & Wrynose areas although it was abundantly clear that transferring all of the text would provide huge benefits and savings in archiving, retrieval, security, and publishing.

With the man responsible for the development of this database at the helm it made sense to publish Lakes, Sport and Slate using this facility; Duddon & Wrynose followed. Almost all of the text from the current library is now archived and this is being used for New Route listings for the FRCC Journal; historical material supporting the compilation and writing of the forthcoming book recording the history of climbing on Pillar Rock; 'app' content and the creation of complete downloadable pdf 'Mini guides' for newly developed crags which are published on the FRCC website.

Another key element of any guide is the diagrams. Al Phiz had done an amazing job converting photographic images into high-quality black-and-white sketches. A hallmark of our guides during the 1980s and 1990s, finally appearing in colour in the first edition of Lake District Rock (2003). Phil Rigby and Max Biden created these diagrams; Al Phizacklea, Phil and Max all supplied base images. The time sensitive nature of the 2014 Scafell & Wasdale guide required this work to be subcontracted. Then in 2015 Al Davis took on the role. Reconstructing the design style with input from Don Sargeant, Al now uses sophisticated publishing software to prepare the detailed photo-diagrams that you now see in our publications.

The mapping is another critical feature. Sue Harvey of Harvey Maps was accommodating and provided the base maps used in both the Langdale and

Scafell & Wasdale guides. We then involved Don Sargeant. Don traces the maps from OS sources and his work has graced our guides since 2015.

The final element to be brought together is the illustrations. These tend to be the most memorable feature of any guide; their impact and inspirational value is crucial - first impressions count. Several Photo Editors have been involved with David Simmonite's skilful work always useful. David is now firmly ensconced on the guidebook team as Photographs Editor, selecting and editing the images that illustrate our guides.

All these elements are brought together in a creative way to provide a file for printing. Vertebrate Graphics did the work on the Langdale and Scafell & Wasdale guides. Although, working at arm's length with a creative designer sitting in Sheffield did present challenges. Since 2015 local designer, Peter Sterling, has made an impact with his creative skills and climbing experience, manifested in the cover and page designs. This seamlessly sucks selected data from the database dropping it into an Adobe package, and, with some tweaking; we can have a book ready for printing in a matter of weeks.



Relationship management is probably one of the trickiest aspects of the role. Authors, sometimes working in a team, photographers, route checkers, proof-readers, and other members of the editorial team; they all need to be recruited and kept onside if a book is going to be the outcome at the far end.

Well, that's a potted tour of the role of the Guidebook Editor. It's a really rewarding role and something that's kept me occupied since Nick Wharton suggested that I might be the right candidate back in 2011. This ten-year period has also been rewarding for another reason. In 2015, Lake District Rock, the first in the series of WIRED GUIDES was submitted to the panel of the Banff Mountain Book Festival in the mountain guidebook category. That September I received an email informing me that the book had been shortlisted and a month later we were told we were the category winner. In November I travelled to Banff to collect the beautiful hand-made glass award. We entered again in 2021, with Lakes Sport & Slate shortlisted in the same guidebook category.

FRCC Guides receive consistently good reviews although there are always ideas about ways that our guides can be developed and improved. We are currently working on four guides - the third edition of Lake District Rock, Langdale and Borrowdale are having updates and, fittingly, Dow & Eskdale will be published in 2022/23 to commemorate the Centenary of guidebook publication by the FRCC.

The Banff Mountain Guidebook Award

Murray's Direct

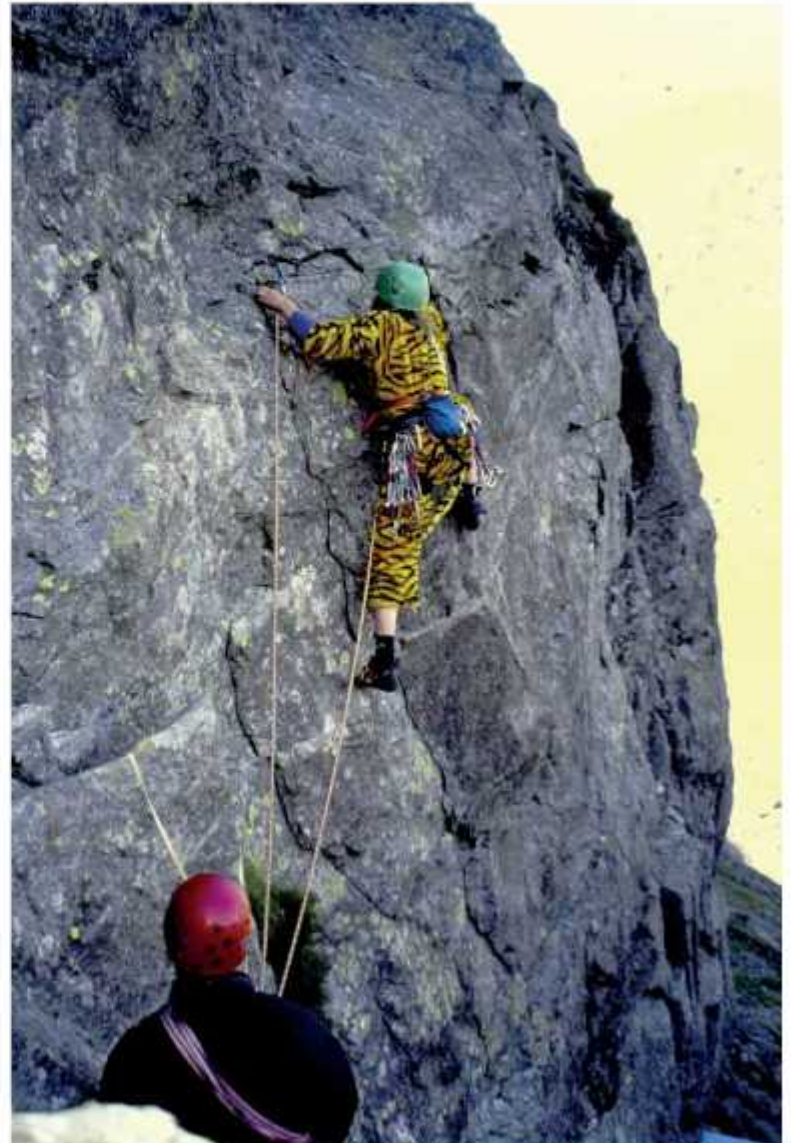
Ron Kenyon



At the 2002 BMC Youth Meet, based at Raw Head, a 12-year old lad called Simon Platt appeared champing with enthusiasm and youth. We were teamed up together and I tentatively suggested going to Dow Crag, with warnings of the size of the place and length of approach, however, he was taken by the idea and off we set, with John Temple, and eventually arrived at the crag. I was not sure how much this young lad would be able to take, so we started off with Murray's Route, which he enjoyed and then he actually led Giant's Corner - his first lead. He was still champing at the bit so we decided to climb Murray's Direct - another classic of the crag - again he thoroughly enjoyed its three varied pitches aided by comments from John and myself.

Murray's Direct and, in particular, the Tiger Traverse had left an impression on Simon and in 2003 he returned again, with his friends from Kendal, but had brought with him a tiger suit and obviously had

his eyes on going back to Dow Crag. A group of us, therefore, were Dow bound looking for the 'Tiger' and needless to say Simon climbed the 'Traverse' suitably attired.



Murray's Direct

FRCC Guide Dow Crag 1968

155 feet Very Severe

Three variations linked together to give an excellent direct route, the best on 'B' Buttress. Starts at a vertical embedded flake, about 40 feet left of the start of Murray's Route, below a slab running up to the right.

1. 40 feet. Tiger Traverse. From the flat top of the flake, make a difficult step right on to poor holds on the wall. The slab is then attained and traversed diagonally to the right (delicate) to ledges on Murray's Route. Move to the higher ledges with a large flake belay on the right.

2. 35 feet. The Link Pitch. Climb the wall above the large flake moving left to a ledge in a corner at the foot of a vertical crack (Top of pitch 5, Murray's Route).

3. 80 feet. Murray's Route, Direct Finish. Move up into the corner and climb the crack, by layback, for about 15 feet, to good footholds. Continue on good holds to below a large overhang and traverse right, to ledge below a crack. The crack above may be climbed or, more easily, another crack further right, leading to a grass ledge. Scrambling follows to Easy Terrace.

15 Oct 1922

Direct finish - E.H.Pryor and J.B.Meldrum

20 Sept 1931

Tiger Traverse - G.H.Mackereth, B.Tyson & A.H.Griffin

12 Aug 1945

The Link Pitch - J.A.Mullan

Direct Finish

(from particulars supplied by E. H. Pryor).

From the traverse the leader ascends for some 15 feet by easy ledges, to the foot of a vertical crack. Adopting the posture known to some of us as the 'lay-back', he grips the left-hand edge of the crack and utilises such meagre footholds as is to be found on the right wall to aid his arduous ascent. From the top of this first section a route up the slabs on the right would be possible after some de-gardening operations. The original leader, however, preferred to climb a steep crack in the left wall. A flake, jammed in the crack, gives a good hand hold. Then, traversing to the right under a welcoming overhang, easier slabs lead to the finish, near the top of the second pitch of Woodhouse's Route.

The climb is considered equal in severity to the Flake Crack of Scafell.

On the Writing of Guidebooks

John L Holden

Can you remember the first guidebook you bought? Mine was the Scafell guide (the purple one) published in 1969. I bought it in 1973 for £1.05. The first route I did on Scafell was Great Eastern in September 1986. In those intervening 13 years I became practically word perfect in the text. That is the effect that a guidebook can have on a climber. Only last week I was chatting at my son's climbing wall with a customer who said of the latest Duddon guide 'I can read it like a novel, starting at page one and working my way through it'. Music to a guidebook writer's ears.

I got involved with guidebook writing in 1989 when Al Phizacklea and I started climbing together. As Al was already working on Dow, Duddon & Slate (1994) it was inevitable that I would be helping out.

It needs saying right at the outset that there has been a degree of self-interest in offering to write guidebooks. Yes, there are countless hours involved getting to crags, photographing, taking notes, organising action photos and don't even mention the time spent at a computer, but the trade-off is spotting new route potential. Often the gaps are obvious, particularly on small crags, but once the lines are drawn everything becomes clear. Some ten or twelve years ago I was producing a topo of the lower section of "B" Buttress on Dow Crag and, having marked in the routes, noticed a gap. I drew a line to show where a route might go and emailed it to Al. A few weeks later we went to Dow and did the route, The Good Friday Agreement, following the line on the topo exactly.

In the first guide to Doe Crag (1923) there were 40 routes. By 1957 there were 46 routes and by 1968

there were still only 62. Outlying crags were few in number. A guidebook writer was just that - a writer and a friend or two with whom to climb, taking the measured rope to climb all the routes (yes, the FRCC had a rope with markings so pitch lengths could be accurately recorded). There are 133 routes today on Dow. Now you might say that isn't such a huge number and you would be right. However, there are other factors, the spread of grades and the explosion in the number of routes not on the major crags. Grades start at Moderate and now are approaching double figures in the E grades. Anyone able to climb E6 has no idea if an easier route is a Diff or a VS. And the extraordinary number of routes (e.g., 1300 in the Duddon) means that a team approach has had to be adopted with friends and a wider circle of acquaintances contacted for help with checking and descriptions.

The move to photo topos has created a great deal of work for guidebook writers. There are the obvious problems with the quality of the light; overcast days give flat light, whereas strong sunlight gives too much contrast. Yes, we need sunshine, but a slight haze is required to get it just right. Crag features, such as cracks, need lighting from the side in order for them to show up and there is also the issue of the sun's elevation; the lower the sun, the more yellow the light is. So, if we take those three factors of light quality, light direction and sun elevation and ask the question 'what window of opportunity is there for getting the perfect crag shot?', the answer is that there is only a very small window. It rains on average 200 days a year in the Lakes and if it's not raining it can still be very cloudy. Some crags weep water for many days after rain, making dark streaks on the rock.

There are seventy-one crags over the twelve miles of the Duddon Valley. Crags on the left generally face west and those on the right generally face east. Those in those categories are the easiest to photograph. No early start required, just saunter up in the middle day and click away. It's the south and north facing crags that are most difficult; early starts or staying late at the crag are needed, particularly for north facing ones. On one memorable day Al and I were at Boat How Crag on Kirkfell to see the sun on the crag in the early morning (circa 6.30 a.m.) and fifteen hours later when it had swung all the way around to the west at 9.00 p.m.

Many crags, too numerous to mention, have needed multiple visits to get a reasonable crag shot. I have on numerous occasions woken in Ulverston to a bright day and driven twenty minutes to the Duddon, only to find leaden skies. To misquote Wordsworth 'many a day he thither went and never lifted up a single camera'.

The trials and tribulations of a guidebook writer don't end there. Once the crags are photographed and numerous routes checked there comes the task of agreeing grades and allotting stars. One person's Severe is another person's VS. A strong climber may be happier on steeper routes with good holds. Slabs with few holds may hold little difficulty for the technical climber. There has been within the guidebook team some pretty intense debates about grading; and as for stars, therein lies an article on its own.

Perhaps for the bicentenary someone can write the article; after all, they will have had two hundred years to get a consensus on the relative merits of the routes.

Super Grades – Crag 5 Editorial

Geoff Birtles 1976

The following is an article by Geoff Birtles published in 1976 in the magazine Crag - thank you to Geoff for allowing us to republish this article in the 2022 FRCC Journal. The editorial highlighted the problem in accommodating significantly harder new routes than had previously been climbed in the Extremely Severe (XS) category. Lake District climber Pete Botterill had a significant role in establishing a 'new normal' and the E grading system that everyone now recognises.

Crag 5 Editorial

Climbers in Britain must want a new grading system like a hole in the head. The whole idea of new systems has become a somewhat hefty joke in the last 15 years, reaching belly-laugh proportions with Drummond's multi-alpha-numerical system.

Like gambling systems, the Drummond system sounded great in theory but didn't work. The idea was to indicate the technical difficulty and (A) the number of hard moves, (B) protection, (C) quality of rock, (D) type of climbing - in that order. The technical difficulties were covered by the now-familiar formula: 4c, 5a, etc. Hard moves, protection, quality of rock, type of climbing was then covered by numbers from 0 to 3; 0 being good and 3 bad.

The new guidebook *Extremely Severe in the Avon Gorge*, by Ed Drummond, introduced this system in 1967. Malbogies was described therein as 5b; 3000 - or to you and me, HVS. Nobody could be bothered with this idea, and it died a natural death.

Drummond had 10 very singed fingers, and it is no surprise that new grading systems have been noticeably absent over the last nine years. Instead, the 'numerical' technical grades, promoted by Pete Crew some time before the Drummond system, have grown in popularity and, unfortunately, become widely misinterpreted. The original idea

was to complement our traditional adjectival system, from Easy to Extremely Severe, by expressing dispassionately the pure technical difficulty of a pitch or move - regardless of seriousness, number of crucial moves or the psychological fears of a leader.

Thus, we were able to have an HVS route with a technical grade normally associated with Extremes - because it was protected by a big fat runner placed above the hard move. However, the award of numerical grades is being influenced more and more nowadays by irrelevant factors such as poor protection, loose rock, and strenuousness, which defeats the object. Weighing those factors is the job of the overall adjectival grade.

What has changed in the last couple of years is the difficulty of many new climbs. Boulder-problem difficulties on steep rock are being explored over ever increasing stretches, sometimes with no better protection than was available 20 years ago. Furthermore, climbs in recent years have often been done



Pete Botterill

on terribly poor rock as the availability of new lines diminished. The climbs on Cilan Head, Abersoch, were examples of very long run-outs with no protection on crumbling rock, and more recent explorations at Blackchurch in Devon carry a similar reputation.

And so, we turn full circle and look back to the ancient, all-embracing adjectival system that accounts for all the conditions a leader might find on first acquaintance. This is not a precise system, and it allows a greater range of difficulties to fall within each grade. But it happens to be a simple system that we all understand. Up to Extremely Severe there is no problem, and if some want to indicate that a particular VS is also 4c, they can.

But when the hardest climbs get much harder than the XSs we have had established for 20 years, we reach a state of overflow. That is what has now happened at the top. The new climbs are stretching the XS grade much wider than it traditionally was, and wider than any of the lower grades.

So where do we go from here? There has always been a strong body of traditionalists in climbing circles. Once it was The Alpine Club, usually it is the older end of the fraternity. It could be said that these people simply don't want the set changing on the stage of their glorious premieres.

Looking back, Peter Harding in the 40s and the Rock and Ice in the 50s both said: "Look pal - these routes are harder than other Extremes, and so we are calling them Exceptionally Severe." For whatever reasons, this title went out of fashion.

So, what do we do about the traffic jam at the front of the grid? Relax, you don't have to burn your fingers, because a man in asbestos gloves

has already come up with the answer. No; we are not going to have Super-Severe, Supremely Severe, Supersonic Severe or any other space age descriptive. The simple proposal is to have Extreme 1, Extreme 2, Extreme 3, and so on.

According to Martin Berzins, the new system comes from Lake District climber, Pete Botterill. All that this system does is to leave well alone up to XS, and then simply add numbers as routes get harder. It sounds a good idea, and one that is easy to understand and to assimilate into the present system. The intention is still that of the adjectival gradings - an impression grading. Technical pitch grades could still be added without any problems. The idea is worth considering - and one that the BMC might discuss and, if they like it, recommend for general use. What we don't want is what we have got in the new Stanage and Chew Valley guides - where the grades get '+or-' added in places, confusing the accepted system rather than improving it.

Anyway, examples of Botterill's numbers system are displayed below, collected from several contributors who have related these to various areas and other grading references. No doubt differing opinions will emerge as always - sometimes depending on how tall you are. Green Death at Millstone has always been the subject of argument on this count. If you are 6ft or over the grade is 5b; 5ft 10in, 5c; 5ft 6in, 6a; less than that and it is impossible (no letters please).

The biggest current problem with purely technical gradings in Britain is the variation between areas. What is generally accepted as 6a on Cloggy is often a nice afternoon out for a Derbyshire/Yorkshire climber who might barely touch 5c on the outcrops. The commonest reaction from the Pennine boys has

been to scoff at Welsh standards and declare them exaggerated. What is more likely is that the old Welsh standards are correct, and the outcrops have had too much new development crammed into the 5b and 5c grades. Maybe it is time we all accepted one crag as the norm and worked out from there. That way, everybody would understand what a grade means.

Where is the crag we accept as the norm? It should obviously be a popular crag, and key routes by which others should be judged should be well-known classics. Should they be short, sharp exercises in one particular technique – the sort of routes Stanage excels at providing – or longer, more varied volcanic climbs?

It is arguable that gritstone climbing is too specialised for direct grading comparisons with bigger crags – in rather the way that somebody may be a great expert on Harrison's, and useless anywhere else.

Passing over limestone, which hasn't a long enough tradition to be a sound guide, it seems obvious that some volcanic crag should be the norm.

Cloggy? Why not? Every serious craggle climbs there sooner or later. It is lousy with classic climbs. It offers all types of climbing styles – in the higher grades, at any rate. And those are the grades that are in dispute.

It also has a first class, up-to-date guidebook with technical gradings. If Cloggy were accepted as the yardstick, there would be little doubt that many of the 6as on the outcrops are really 6b and even 6c.

Our fingers are feeling a little burned already. But we have convinced ourselves, even if we haven't

convinced you. As for the XS 'numbers' system, Craggs will phase in its use in the News section – unless you can give us a good reason why not.

Editor's Note

The following chart has been prepared by Ron Fawcett and the grades are only his personal opinion. We also have two more charts from Ed Cleasby and Martin Berzins which we hope to publish in the next issue as they vary in some respects from the list below. Unfortunately, there was no room for all the lists in this issue.

Lake District

- E5 - Footless Crow, Gates of Delirium
- E4 - Cumbrian, Eclipse
- E3 - Eastern Hammer, Dry Gasp, Nagasaki Grooves
- E2 - Ichabod, Eliminat, Triermain Eliminate
- E1 - Astra, North Crag Eliminate.

Yorkshire and Derbyshire Limestone

- E5 - Claws, Castellan, Bastille
- E4 - Acid Test, Jenny Wren, Deliverance, Mortlocks Arête, Flakey Wall.
- E3 - Adjudicator Wall, Face Route
- E2 - Scoop Wall, Darius, Macabre
- E1 - Wombat, Great Central, Delicatessen.

Yorkshire and Derbyshire Gritstone

- E5 - Hairless Heart, Prophet of Doom, Slip-n-Slide, Goblin's Roof
- E4 - Noonday Ridge, Early Riser
- E3 - Western Front, Archangel, Fernhill
- E2 - Hovis, Finale Slab
- E1 - Suicide Wall, Deadbay Groove, Earl Buttress.

Wales

- E5 - Right Wall
- E4 - Fingerlicker, Resurrection, Quickstep
- E3 - Positron, Zukator, Void, Great Wall (Cloggy and Forwyn)
- E2 - Curving Arête, Rat Race
- E1 - Surplomb, Black Spring, The Grooves.

South-West

- E5 - none known
- E4 - Liberator, Darkinbad the Brightdayler
- E3 - Phantom, Thick Wall Special
- E2 - Ghost, Spire, Dream
- E1 - Bow Wall.

Doing My Bit for the Guidebooks

Ron Kenyon

I am more into numbers than words but was drawn into the world of climbing guides many years ago as part of this world of rock-climbing.

Shepherds Crag was my main destination in the mid-60s and initially being guided by the words of Bentley Beetham then suddenly Paul Ross produced his Borrowdale guide, and this became 'My Bible'. At that time John Wilkinson (Wilkie) was doing an amazing job, together with his team of Lakeland climbing legends, in the editing and producing of 9 volumes, between 1967 and 1970, of the spanking new Series 4 FRCC guides.

In the 1970s a number of crags in the Eden Valley were developed, starting with Lazonby and Armathwaite. In 1974 Stew Wilson and myself produced a guide to these two crags - this was very much a homemade affair with the pages being churned out on the roneo printer in our office (this was well before photocopiers) and stapled together. This brought together the routes which had been climbed and helped with further developments at that time. We even had articles in the local paper and were also filmed for Border TV. There was an active climbing scene which developed new crags, throughout the valley, with the likes of Kings Meaburn, Murton, Hoff and Scratchmere Scar as well as pushing grades with, in particular, a bunch of extremely able and dedicated climbers and devotees of Armathwaite.

Stew came from Hartlepool, and he had cut his climbing teeth on the crags on the other side of the Pennines for which there was no guidebook. Stew and I set to again to produce the rather grandly entitled North of England guide. This came out

in 1980 and covered not just the Eden Valley but also Durham and North Yorkshire and brought into bound print, for the first time, such crags as Slipstones, Goldsborough Carr and Crag Willas.

I had got the guidebook bug and also had joined the FRCC. Somewhere along the way Dave Armstrong collared me to help with the 1986 Borrowdale guide and into the big league with Dave Miller as editor. I was off to various forgotten corners of the valley to check out the routes and crags and also find the odd new routes. Eventually the guide appeared, and I was delighted in seeing it printed and out on the crags. A further edition soon followed in 1990.

Up to then the Guidebook Editor had managed everything about the guides, and it was decided to spread the load and have a Guidebook Business Manager - yours truly acquired the job and then helped with the admin side of things, being more closely involved with the publication side. At that time Les and Jean Ainsworth were involved with the typesetting of the guidebooks and Peter Hodgkiss (Ernest Press) became closely involved with arranging the printing. There were the ongoing regular meetings of the guidebook team at the Golden Rule, in Ambleside, with the mandatory slide show to pick out the best of the bunch of photographs (big bunch - not a lot picked).

The FRCC guidebooks had evolved into what seemed like a parallel universe to the rest of the Club and happily carried on, doing a good job, till at one of the meetings, the FRCC President (Dave Rhodes) and officers of the Club appeared, and Dave chaired the meeting. We had not appreciated

that the lack of officers of the Club had been noted, with concern, and so we were reined back more into the belly of the Club.

Al Phizacklea then Stephen Reid and now Steve Scott have been the Editors and my job title morphed into Guidebook Secretary and I was pleased to be involved in producing these little gems of information and seeing how the production developed over time with :

- The development of computers.
- Crag diagrams with red route lines, then full-colour diagrams, then colour photo diagrams and colour throughout the guide.
- Changes in size and shape of guides and changes in covers.
- Where the first ascents information was shown.
- The production of the New Climbs Supplements and then use of the FRCC website to display New Route information and the recent production of pdfs of newly developed crags.
- The effect Rockfax has had on pushing developments and changing the style of guidebooks.
- The changes in the various styles of climbing with the development of sports crags, climbing walls and bouldering.
- The focus on Selective guides and changes in demand for the Definitive guides.
- Creation of Wired Guides brand.
- The development of apps and pdfs.
- The development of the routes database which has brought all route information together under one ongoing system.

Apart from a couple of years when I acquired another position in the Club, I felt I had been in the job long enough so stepped down in 2021 and Trevor Langhorne has now taken over - thanks Trevor.

I will no doubt be poking my nose in here and there, but it is interesting to speculate where guides will be in the future. Anyone under 30 seems to have their phones manacled to their person and printed matter seems to be bypassed. Times have very much changed but (a) climbers still need the information and (b) modern technology is there to help. A book is still a great thing to sit down with and look at, but the likes of apps and pdfs can now be produced and easily viewed or downloaded and are fitting into the information equation. I am not going to speculate how climbers will get their information in 20 year times or beyond. There will no doubt be new technology developed - or will we be absorbed in the Meta-world and climb virtually - I sincerely hope not.

It is so important to experience the crags and have the feeling of finding your way up a Lakeland crag helped along the way by an FRCC guidebook.

Leopard's Crawl

Bill Birkett

In my mind's eye I always picture Dow Crag as some great Gothic cathedral - grand and imposing in the extreme. Though I had to chuckle when, refreshing my memory of layout and routes, reading in the selected FRCC Wired Guide it said, 'Dow Crag - first class climbing throughout the year...'. Crikey I've had some bitterly cold summer days there, never mind 'throughout the year'. However, I wouldn't argue that the climbing is first class and there are many outstanding routes. In fact, I would go even further - there are routes that aren't bettered, anywhere. I suppose the name Leopard's Crawl is inspired by that wonderful and testing section of slab climbing which starts the nearby Murray's Direct - The Tiger Traverse. The work of the Coniston Tigers ('Dick' Mackerath, Brian Tyson and a fledgling Harry Griffin) climbed on the 20th September 1931.

When I first climbed Leopard's Crawl in the summer of 1973, along with the two great routes, both graded Extremely Severe, Nimrod and Side Walk, it was the lesser graded HVS, Leopard's Crawl that I felt most apprehensive about. There's something about this section of rock that's very unnerving. The rock is compact and rather featureless and the climbing starts from a steep rake, which climbs rapidly from right-to-left. That means when you move right along the flake block start and step up onto the wall you are immediately in very exposed territory. The ground below, which should be nearby, has disappeared. It feels very committing and the guidebook of that time said that the hardest moves were actually near the top of the first pitch. Crikey.

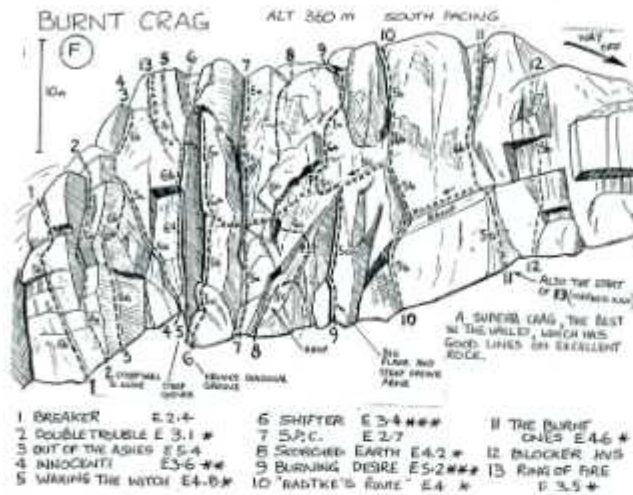
As I remember it, there was no protection on this lower section even in 1973 but thankfully once

underway the climbing didn't seem too bad. Dad (Jim Birkett) climbed Leopard's Crawl on 9th September 1947 with his trusty companions, Len Muscroft and Tom Hill. Very much the 'A' team of their day. When I talked to Dad about the route, researching my book Lakeland's Greatest Pioneers, he was pretty dismissive, simply saying they recorded it as being Severe. Nothing of note, nothing very difficult. You have to laugh - don't you.



Decimal grading – what was all that about?

Al Phizacklea



I added the subsequent new routes that had appeared in the previous four years. But some of the new additions were significant from a historical perspective, such as *Borderline* on Scafell, and *Limited Edition* at Hodge Close. *Limited Edition* was significant, as it was the first route at the Quarry to use bolts for protection (more gasps of horror from the Old Guard – or by this time they might have lost interest in what the Youth were up to).

There were only a handful of new routes in the Duddon to add to the 1988 guide. But in the next two years myself and John Daly, Keith Phizacklea and Dave Geere were to transform the valley with a flurry of new routes, some being rather more difficult than anything climbed there beforehand.

The use of decimal grading, or the subdivision of the E grades into fractions first appeared in my 1990 hand-drawn guide to the Duddon Valley, and I haven't been aware of its use elsewhere. I drew this guide over a few weeks in the summer of 1990 mainly to highlight the recent activity in the valley, because at the time there had been a considerable increase in new routes, and it was printed only four or five days after the last route was added.

So, therefore, I set out to record the new activity in the form of a hand-drawn guide to the Duddon; it seemed easier and simpler to illustrate the routes as a topo style sketch, rather than describing every route in full again. There was little pretence that these diagrams were either accurate or lifelike, they were merely the minimum required to show what had been climbed. It has been pointed out to me several times that the shady character on the cover has two left hands. To be honest, I hadn't noticed that error myself. If you ever wanted proof that I'm not an artist, I suggest you look no further.

The previous guide to detail the routes in the Duddon appeared in 1988, and it was a reprint of the previous 1984 Scafell, Dow, & Eskdale Guide. The reason why the 1984 guide sold out so quickly was that this was the first guide to incorporate the 'New Classic' routes on Dow and Scafell, such as *Samba Pa Ti*, *Tumble*, *Saxon*, *Shadowfax*, *Lost Horizon* and *Shere Khan*, and all the initial routes at Hodge Close. It sold out surprisingly quickly, so the 1988 guide was effectively an updated reprint.

There was a large influence from the then-popular *Viz* comic, which inspired the observation that the Duddon Climbing Guide was 'Britain's crappiest guidebook'. It certainly wasn't produced with any serious pretensions, it was simply a stop-gap until the following 1994 Dow, Duddon and Slate guide appeared.

The 1988 version changed the route lengths to metres (gasps of horror from the Old Guard), and

So, what about the decimal grading? Well, it was an extremely lazy way of determining which route was harder than its neighbours. I couldn't be bothered with a graded list – I feel these are so inaccurate that they are meaningless. Yes, I know we used to love the graded lists so we could 'out-brag' our mates in the pub – you know, "the route I did was higher on the list than the one you did," that sort of thing. But it was impossible to set out all the routes in order of difficulty because it was just a matter of how well you were going on the day, which usually reflected how many pints were consumed the night before. This 'alcohol adjustment' factor when it comes to the accurate grading of routes has never been fully investigated nor studied, but who is willing to refrain from the amber nectar to assist in the pointless study of beer induced misgrading? Come off it, we've all got to accept that the accurate grading of routes can only come from the consensus of dozens of ascents.

So, I merely split the E grades into decimal places, with E1.1 being the easiest E1s, and E1.9 being the hardest E1s, which meant they could easily be regarded as E2s after six pints the night before. There was very little difference between an E1.9 and an E2.1 – again they also defined what I considered to be a soft touch E2. It was also a way of not upsetting my mates by downgrading their E2 to an E1 grade. I also used it as a way of 'keeping the opposition down', for instance I thought that Bob Wightman's route Machiavellian Paragon was nails, but I didn't want to admit that I found it hard to second. So, I gave it E4.9, instead of admitting that it was E5, which would have polished Bob's ego no end, there was that sort of friendly 'putting down' prevalent at the time.

So, I split all the E graded routes into decimal places. The harder routes of E2 got E2.8 or E2.9, and the easier routes got the E2.1 or E2.2 grade. The mid-grade routes were given their grades simply because

I found route X slightly easier than route Y. There was no science behind the split; it was my personal opinion of each route. Just a word of warning, though. Those routes I hadn't repeated were given a grade between E2.3 and E2.7, completely at random. What do you expect – perfection?

At the time, the use of decimal grading never seemed to create any comment or discussion over its suitability for a guidebook, and it was never repeated in any subsequent guide. Maybe that was because I only ever produced about 60 printed copies of the Duddon climbing guide. The majority of climbers had never heard of the concept. I certainly didn't intend to create a new concept in grading, nor did I ever expect this idea to be taken seriously. As I said earlier, it was simply a way of avoiding a graded list.

It was in the Wired Selected guide Lake District Rock from 2015 that Steve Scott resurrected the idea of decimal grades, and he included those for the appropriate 'E' graded routes in the Duddon. I don't know whether Steve was simply resurrecting this as a silly idea, to illustrate how useless the concept was, or whether he considered this as a concept for the future?

Just to illustrate how useless the decimal grading system was, I noticed that several of what I considered reasonable routes were significantly upgraded in the 2021 Duddon and Wrynose guide. Routes such as The Challenger changed from E3.3 in my original sketch to E2.8 in Lake District Rock, then up to E4 in the Duddon Wrynose guide, and Squeal like a Hog rose from E1.3 to E3. All that confirms is that no grading system is infallible, and it leaves one wondering exactly how many pints did Steve Scott consume the night before he went climbing in the Duddon?

Nimrod

David Miller

Living in Barrow, Dow was our local crag, where we had climbed regularly as teenagers, staying for many weekends in Cove Hut, close to the crag. I had steadily worked my way up the graded list of climbs, until they were all ticked, and then looked for new ways.

In 1962, the steep rock walls of the upper section



2nd Ascent of Nimrod Nimrod by Allan Austin

of 'B' Buttress had not been climbed. They were crossed by the Giant's Crawl gangway at half height, forming two distinct sections, neither of which offered any easy means of ascent, but they offered the most attractive challenge at the time and in March I tried to climb the upper section. I started up a break in the centre of the wall, with awkward moves on deceptively steep rock, to arrive at a steep crack, which would give access to a groove, leading up to the right. The attempt ended there, as I was unable to climb the blank area of rock above the crack. (Climbed in 1972 and incorporated in Four Sticks.) A few weeks later I tried again but was still frustrated by this short impasse. The steep wall on the left of the crack had a narrow foot ledge, but the lack of any handholds above prevented access to it. However hard I tried, I couldn't leave the holds in the crack without swinging out of balance. There was a tiny spike in the crack above, on which to hang a line runner, the only protection on this pitch, and eventually I took rope tension from this whilst moving carefully left, until some holds could be reached. Now, out on the arête, in a very airy position, the holds fortunately improved, and steep but steadier climbing led to the top.

Towards the end of April I was back on Dow again, this time looking for a route up the lower tier. At the lowest point of this sector, a groove could be reached, which led up to a steep section where some hollow-sounding flakes took sling runners that gave some reassurance. The wall above was steep, and lacking decent holds, and after a few attempts to climb it, I was attracted to move right and continue diagonally upwards, beneath the steep upper wall, until a glacié was reached. This provided a poor stance and belay beneath a bulging wall. A thin crack

in the wall gave access to an easing in angle in the middle of the face. Above the angle steepened again, but more importantly, the holds leading to a hanging groove soon ran out and forced another retreat. (Climbed in 1971 as Holocaust.)

At the next opportunity, early in May, I was back on the wall, but this time decided to try an unattractive, green-looking groove on the left of my previous high point. To reach it involved a delicate rising traverse on very poor handholds and without any protection. Each move required concentration to get it right, and the confidence to keep going, as retreat would have been very difficult. Once in the groove, a flat-topped spike gave a good hold and a welcome respite, but the groove above steepened, and the holds were poor. Each time I tried to stand on the



Michael Kenyon on Nimrod in modern times

spike, the sling that I placed on it tended to lift off, and this was the only protection. I kept trying and eventually committed myself to go for the last few technical moves to reach Giant's Crawl. This had been the crux of the whole route: difficult, committing moves and serious. It was sometime later that a large hold was gardened out to the left of the groove, which provided an easier finish now used.



Dave Miller at Dow Crag

Except for the first pitch, the various seconds that had been prepared to hold my rope had not wished to follow them. Also, as the pitches had been climbed at different times, it seemed fitting to link them all in one ascent, and consequently, on 2nd June 1962 I climbed Nimrod in its entirety with Dave Kirby.

It had been a fulfilling climb, sustained, bold in parts and leading to a climax on the top pitch. The ascent was made without prior inspection or gardening. At that time, protection depended solely on rope and line slings, but there were very limited opportunities to use them on such climbs. Rock boots (PAs) were a great improvement over gym shoes that they had just replaced, but harnesses were not available, and it was still normal to tie the rope round the waist. Under those circumstances, the safe on-sight lead of harder climbs, particularly first ascents, demanded a very steady mental approach, aided by a level of technical ability that gave a good margin for retreat.

What's in a Route Name?

Ron Kenyon

Routes have had names ever since climbers first ventured onto the crags, initially with interest directed at gullies as these would be features probably well-known and possibly named such as Walla Crag Gully. Particular features could be used for naming with the likes of Great Gully and Little Gully on through to Y-Gully or positional such as Central Gully and Southeast Gully on Great End.

Things have moved on greatly since those days and this article will have a look at the naming of routes and some of the stories and background to those names. With the move onto the faces and buttresses the need for names became important to identify particular lines.

Once a new route has been climbed it needs to be recorded to get out the information. When the Wasdale Head Hotel was the centre of the climbing world there was the 'Visitors' Book' and 'Wasdale Book' into which records were kept of the routes climbed and repeated. A route was not always named or was named after the first ascensionists with details given of the ascent and some routes are known as Abraham's Route or Jones' Route or Botterill's Slab to not just name the route but highlight the activities of these early explorers.

Features again came to the fore when naming a route and on the Napes area of Great Gable there are many features with the most famous being Napes Needle as well as The Arrowhead and Sphinx. Further to the right one of the impressive cracks gave 'Kern Knotts Crack'.

Dow Crag has its series of buttresses, and this led to initially naming these as A Buttress, B Buttress

etc. and from that route names followed with the fine series of routes 'A Eliminate', 'B Eliminate' and 'C Eliminate' as well as 'C Ordinary' and 'D Ordinary' - fittingly there has recently been added the somewhat harder 'A Ordinary route'.

D Murray made his mark on Dow Crag, with the classic 'Murray's Route' which was followed by 'Murray's Direct'. The 'Tiger's Traverse' may have inspired the need to be 'catlike' to climb on B Buttress with Jim Birkett first climbing 'Leopard's Crawl' and another feline companion followed with 'Pink Panther'. A more direct version of 'Murray's Route' was climbed with 'Murray's Superdirect' and shortly after was climbed by another and claimed as 'Lynx' - this, I believe, is a much better name linking the pitches up this section of crag.

Gimmer Crag is another of our great crags and the plethora of routes on the Main Wall started through the alphabet with 'A Route' and over time this extended to 'F Route' and since then variations on this theme have been used with the likes of 'Hyphen', 'Diphthong' and 'Ee-by-gum'.

One of the best names in the Lakes is on Gimmer Crag - Arthur Dolphin saw the line and climbed it, up the central area of the crag, which he thought was 'RuddyArd', so 'Kipling Groove' became the route to do in the area.

Politics pops up in route names in various ways - 'Communist Convert' was a stunning route ascending an impressive area of Raven Crag, Thirlmere from (you guessed it) left-to-right.

At another Raven Crag at Walthwaite there are

political changes in all directions with 'Swing to the Left', 'Swing to the Right' and 'Proportional Representation'.

Moments in political history pop up - on Bram Crag Quarry in the election year 1997 there is 'Goodbye Mr Major' and 'Good Luck Mr Blair' - we can now look back at this time.

Political groups appear with - Remainder Buttress at Scout Scar with a mixture of opinions, at that momentous time for the UK (December 2019) - 'Corbyn', 'Swinson', 'Johnson' and 'Farage'.

In 1940 Jim Haggas unraveled the defenses of the central part of White Ghyll and gave his line the appropriate name of 'The Gordian Knot'. This unlocked a stream of 'nots' initially by Jim Birkett with 'Slip Knot', 'Haste Not', 'Granny Knot', 'Why Not' and 'Perhaps Not' - what a collection of 'nots'. Joe Brown then appeared with 'Laugh Not' and then 'Eliminot' (great name combination). 'What Not', 'Forget-Me-Not', 'Waste Not', 'Want Not', 'Not Much', 'Not Again' (getting silly), 'Rope Not', 'Titter Ye Not' and 'Slack Knot' were climbed, however, to stop most climbers, but not him, Craig Matheson came along in 2012 with 'Stopper Knot'.

It is interesting how themes take off at certain places - out in the 'far west' St Bees Head was developed in the late 1960s/70s and was thought to be the Lakes' answer to Gogarth - sadly this was not the case. However, bolts were brought to the rescue and the area below the lighthouse was developed as a popular sport and also bouldering venue. Bees buzzed into the Apiary Wall with 'The Apiarist' along with 'Drone', 'Royal Jelly', 'Honey Pot', 'Beeswax', 'Bee Line', 'Bee Hive' and 'Bee Sting'.

Les Brown always seems to have an eye for 'the line'



Peter Metcalfe on Tottering Tortoise, Steel Knotts

and often his name is next to the main line of a crag - such as with 'Centaur', 'Nazgul', 'Gormenghast' and 'Isengard'. In the mid 1960s he was investigating the potential of Far East Buzzard Crag - a new, 'hidden', mythical crag in the Lakes with loads of unclimbed rock - the route he produced was 'Praying Mantis' which weaved its way up Goat Crag in Borrowdale - this was his only route there (other than a direct variation) but opened up a floodgate of new routes at that time. The route name also opened up some interesting variations on a theme with 'The Cursing Caterpillar' and 'The Blaspheming Butterfly' as well as 'Tottering Tortoise' and 'Lurching Leech' (climbed by K Leech) on the nearby Steel Knotts. Some years

later Pete Livesey raised standards in the Lakes with 'Footless Crow' which led to route names there of 'Thieving Magpie', 'Legless Lizard' and 'The Ruptured Duck'. On the easier side 'Ambling Ant' and 'Meandering Maggot' appeared on Steel Knotts. All-in-all, an interesting collection of creatures.

At Goat Crag, 'Tumbleweed Connection' took lots of cleaning and also connected sections of the buttress at a pretty consistent standard.

I bet that when JRR Tolkien was writing his books and creating the high fantasy tales of all the many characters he would not have thought of so many rock climbs using the names from his books. The Hobbit was written in 1937 with Lord of the Rings appearing in the three books from 1954. There are so many routes from the 1960s and 70s taking one into this 'Middle Earth'. 'The Hobbit' itself appeared on Pavey Ark and across the valley, on Neckband Crag are 'Gandalf's Groove', 'Aragorn', 'Mithrandir' (an alternative name for Gandalf) and 'Glorfindel'. There are many Middle Earth names and one of the best days out in the Lakes must be 'Lord of the Rings' on East Buttress.

Geoff Cram commented on some of his names being doom-laden names following on from routes such as 'Rigor Mortis' by Paul Ross on Castle Rock – hence 'The Ghost' which was named because his second, Barney, looked white after Geoff dislodged rocks on his head.

As for 'Rigor Mortis', Paul Ross thought this route was a "rather stiff problem."

Geoff has so many routes on Pillar to his name – 'Scylla' and 'Charybdis' were mythical monsters sited on opposite sides of the Strait of Messina (a more recent route in between these two) and 'Sheol' is

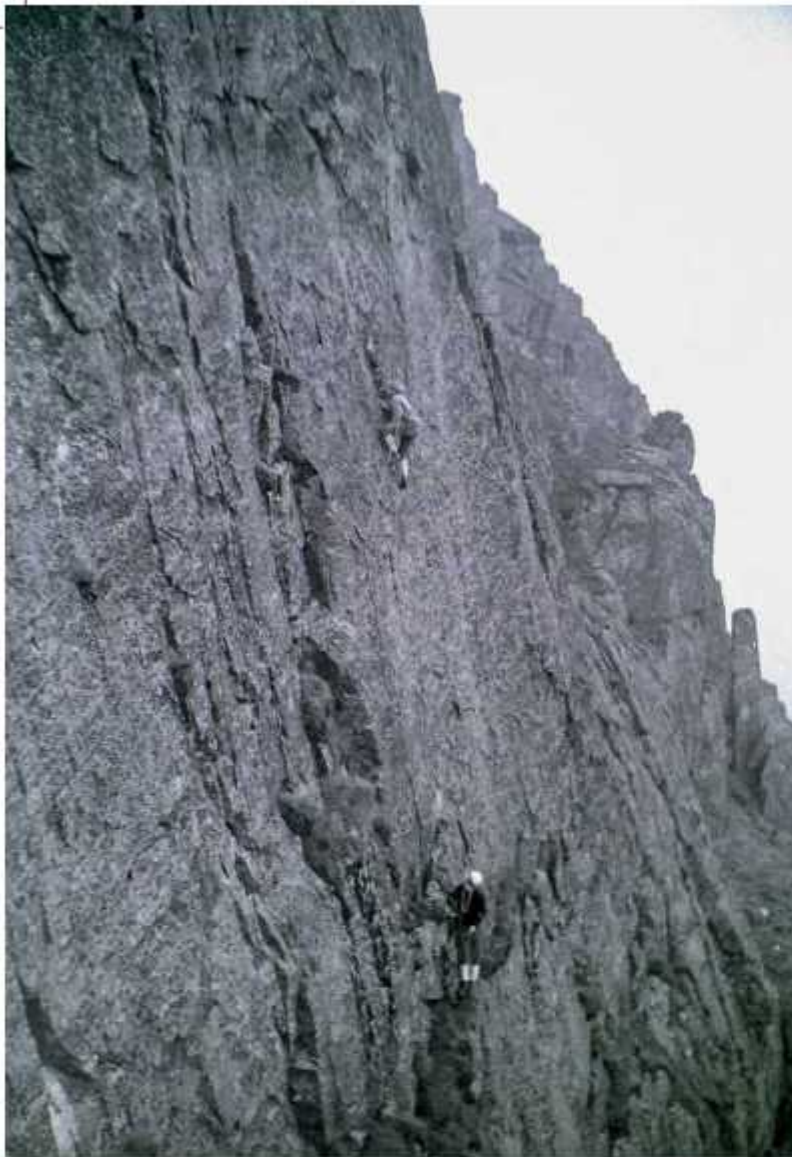


Geoff Cram on the first ascent of The Ghost, Castle Rock

Hebrew for a place of darkness but also translates as Netherworld or Hades - the abode of the dead.

'Puppet', so named as it used a tension traverse on the first ascent.

'Necromancer' is an evil, menacing person in The



Geoff Cram on the first ascent of The Tomb, Gable Crag

Hobbit and 'Gondor' and 'Mordor' are the Good and Bad countries in The Lord of the Rings.

On Gable Crag - 'The Tomb' takes a line up the north-facing crag shaped like a tombstone. Needless to say, routes climbed here later were 'Sarcophagus' and 'The Tombstone' with 'The Angel of Mercy' nearby.

On East Buttress the name 'Gold Rush' was suggested by Ken Wilson, who was on Mickledore on that very busy new route weekend. Also, on the same day 'Chimera' was climbed – another of those mythical monsters.

Whilst on East Buttress – 'Midnight Express' was named after the first ascensionist had recently seen the scary film of the same name and 'SOS' cuts through 'May Day'.

Death seems to be a recurrent feature of route names and Reecastle has a collection of names which can lead to death or unpleasant situations. The first route there was 'The Gibbet', but the first ascensionist can't remember why they gave it this name. It did, however, lead on to other gruesome names with 'The Noose' and 'The Rack' by Ray McHaffie - Mac often recalled this second route saying he was "S-o-o-o stretched" he called it 'The Rack'. Other unpleasantries followed with 'The Guillotine' and 'Thumbscrew', but perhaps the worst was described by Jeff Lamb of his second, Ray McHaffie, when he climbed 'White Noise', due to Mac's incessant talking. The level of difficulties rose, in some cases, matching the name: 'The Executioner', 'Penal Servitude', 'The Torture Board', 'Burnt at the Stake', 'Water Torture', 'The Whipping Post'.

Rather an odd theme is that a number of the routes on Deer Bield Crag end in 'o' – 'Stiletto', 'Bravado', 'Limbo', 'Desperado' (now gone), 'Dynamo' and 'Last Tango'.

In Borrowdale Paul Ross has a mass of first ascents and some interesting background to the names.

On Lower Falcon Crag he was prospecting a new line and took so long going up and down, cleaning and trying the route that they called it 'Funeral Way'. 'Joke'

is a strange name but is actually a woman's name. To the right of the crag Pete Lockey was leading the way finding another line. Paul was belaying and getting bored. Pete was looking to move round a rib but could not see what was there and asked Paul if he could see anything. Paul replied there was a ledge, so Pete set off but was rather shocked to find there was not a ledge and when he enquired about the ledge Paul replied it was an 'illusion'.

'The Bludgeon', at Shepherd's, is a well-known and well-photographed route, with a prominent large spike, below the final headwall. On the right of the spike there is a crack, down its side. This was 1957 and before the time of nut runners so Paul placed a peg, well down the crack, to safeguard that part of the ascent. His main means of protection, in those days, was with slings and the obvious thing to do was to put a sling round the spike, to protect the finish up the headwall. Paul, however, was concerned about the stability of the spike and worried that if he put a sling on the spike and he fell off the spike would fall away, as well, and bludgeon his second - I am not quite sure what he thought would happen to him. Therefore, he did not put a sling on the spike and set off and successfully climbed the headwall, with in effect, his last runner being the peg, near the base of the spike.

In 1956, Don Whillans paid a visit to Eagle Crag, Borrowdale, to attempt the off-width crack there - for a climber brought up on grit and similar routes this should have been no problem - but he was defeated. Paul Ross and Pete Lockey went up a week or so later to make a 'Post Mortem' of Don's attempt and ended up climbing this now infamous crack. Later routes continued this theme with 'Autopsy', 'Verdict' and 'Coroner's Crack'.

Important events of a lifetime are recorded in various

ways - at Bram Crag Quarry there is 'Tyke's Teeter' which can lead to 'Nappyrash' and a first ceremony in life with 'Baptismal Vow' (with the Godparents).

In due time there can be 'Teenage Kicks' (Perched Block Buttress and Kings Meaburn) and 'Scallywag Slab' (High Blue Quarry) and 'Scallywag' (Hutaple).

'The Question' (Upper Heron Crag) can lead to a change in life and the cycle can start again. To mark such an occasion a 'Royal' received 'Princess Anne's New Ring' (Armathwaite).

On Eagle Crag, Buttermere Sid Cross and Alice (Jammy) Nelson climbed 'Half Nelson Climb' and 'Double Cross Route' shortly before Jammy became Mrs Sid Cross.

Many moments of life are reflected with the likes of 'Dancing in the Danger Zone', 'Forever Young', 'I Got Horribly Drunk' and 'Idle Times'. One never quite knows where life will take one - some stay in the same place, others keep moving on but often some go back to their roots (or is that routes!) as with the 'Prodigal Sons' (Glaciated Slabs).

For some it is 'A Life Well Wasted' (Birks Bridge Crag) and 'Life in the Fast Lane' (Hodge Close). When one is 20 someone who is 30 looks old but for others 'Life Begins at 40' and some years later 'Life Carries on at 70'!

Sadly, for some life is cut short, far too early - 'Remembrance' (Gimmer Crag) was climbed in memory of Euan Reid (1985-89). His father, Stephen, returns each year to make an ascent.

Climbing can be a family activity as at Heirloom Crag for Paul and Andy Ross with 'Family Affair', 'Like Father, Like Son', 'Genetic Edge' and 'Relative Ease'.

Musical tastes can be shown by routes - on Dow Crag the Santana album 'Abraxas' appears and one of the album tracks nearby with 'Samba Pa Ti' - though this is also named after the coalman in Torver, who was called Sam Bar. 'Tarkus' was the second album of Emerson, Lake & Palmer.

The Eagles have produced great music to travel along with, especially for the climbers from Carlisle, including 'Life in the Fast Lane' (Hodge) and 'Take it to the Limit' and 'Desperado' (Deer Bield - sadly both fallen down) which fully epitomise the routes and the first ascensionists.

David Miller was not sure if the name 'Nimrod' (Dow Crag) came from the Enigma Variations by Elgar or the biblical link being a descendant of Ham represented in Genesis as a mighty hunter and a king Shinar. Mention of 'Genesis' (Raven Crag, Thirlmere) and not the group, this route is next to the somewhat harder 'Creation'.

Whilst on Raven Crag, 'Relayer' was an album by the progressive rock group Yes and one of the tracks on this album was 'The Gates of Delirium'.

There are so many varieties of music to climb to - 'American Pie' and 'Super Tramp' (Lower Swirl Crag), 'Blowing in the Wind' (Bull Crag, Thirlmere), 'Maggie's Farm' (Pavey), 'The Walk on the Wild Side' (Upper Falcon Crag), 'Strawberry Fields' and 'Paint it Black' (Steel Knotts), nearby 'Strange Brew' (Mac's Wall) or 'African Skies' (Perched Block Buttress) or down the valley with 'Pinball Wizard' (Castle Head) and loads more around the crags.

Needless to say, I could go on and on about route names, but I must call a stop to this article - there is definitely another article with more explanations and tales of route names. I would like to thank all

the climbers who have let me know the stories behind some of their route names - it has been most interesting to myself, and I hope the readers. If you have any such stories, please let me know them and I will look towards another article (I have more tales myself) and look to record the tales etc.

A route without a name is not complete and the story behind the route name adds to the route.

The Best Extreme Routes in the Lakes

Nick Wharton

I feel that I ought to start an article like this with a Public Information Warning. Please advise anyone around you: partners, children, pets that you may be likely to strike out in anger and/or frustration at any moment. For my own safety I have bolted the doors and shuttered the windows. My aim here is to consider the vast array of fabulous climbing, in the Extreme grades, that we have available to us in the Lakes and to condense that down to a select list of, in my opinion, the absolute best. Along the way I will consider the subjective nature of star-rating for routes, the differences in personal preference and the challenges faced whilst creating a new version of Lake District Rock, our selected climbs guide to the whole area.

At the end of 2018 I was doing very little climbing, I had been focusing nearly all my energies on cycling for the past few years. This was a time when I was giving up full-time work with the intention of being able to continue competing in cycling time-trials and get back into more regular climbing. As it turned out, the climbing took over completely, the bikes have been consigned to the spare room and indeed the time trial bike has been sold. At just this time I, along with others, received a timely email from His Eminence Al Phizacklea with an attached list of all the three-star Extremes in the current edition of Lake District Rock (LDR). There are 250 of them. This was perfect timing. Not only was I immediately drawn into a ticking exercise to see how many I had already done but then had a ready-made tick-list to work on over the coming months and years. What this means is that I have sought out and climbed many 'three-star routes' all around the Lakes over the past few years and that has given me a good impression of the relative merits, or not, of these routes. Some were

great, some were okay and yet some were pretty poor.

Star ratings for routes are important. They give the visitor to an area a good indication of which routes to choose from if they want to make the most of their time, particularly if that is limited. This information is no different to the other facts that we present climbers with. We wouldn't tell them that Gable Crag faces south, Pillar is a 20-minute walk, or that Shepherd's Crag is 100m high. It would be wrong and misleading. It is also why we try to get grades right. It is not clever to sandbag visitors with an inaccurate grade – it could be downright dangerous. The same goes for stars. It is important we are clear about how good an experience the visiting climber can expect. When we write guidebooks, we are not writing them for ourselves or for locals. Our primary audience is the visitor and they want to know what they can expect. Just because the first ascent was by a well-known historical figure, or that the route was an incredible achievement for the time does not make the climbing experience any better. We also have to consider the current state of the route. If it is overgrown and dirty, it might not be as good as it used to be. There is an argument for giving more stars to encourage traffic, but that is disingenuous and will only lead to disappointment and a mistrust of the guide. Eagle Crag in Borrowdale is a good example of this. Sadly, the once excellent routes on this imposing crag have become particularly dirty and so the quality of climbing has to be downgraded.

A challenge faced with creating a district-wide selected guidebook is the context. Whilst a route in, say, the Duddon, might be worthy of three stars compared to other routes in that valley/guidebook,

when compared to routes across the whole district it is being compared to the likes of Scafell, Dow, Gimmer etc. The danger with this is that there would be no three-star routes in the Duddon or outlying crags, which seems a little unfair – it all just needs adding into the mix. With this in mind let me return to my recent, frenetic pursuit of all those stars in the current LDR. There are a number in the selection that, in my opinion, do not deserve to be on the list. The routes on Yew Crag Knotts probably don't deserve three stars in the Buttermere guide, let alone LDR. The routes on Upper Heron Crag provide great fun at a lovely location but they cannot compare with even the second-rate routes on some of the other, more significant crags thereabouts. The routes at Bramcrag Quarry, might be enjoyable and accessible but they will never equate to the great routes that the Lake District tradition has been built upon.

One phenomenon I have noticed is that first ascensionists of hard routes nearly always give their new creations three stars. Maybe they are great routes but often I think they are rating their experience, which is greatly heightened by the effort required to succeed.

Having now climbed over 200 of the 250 three-star Extremes, I have whittled that list down to the best 100. In a few cases I have had to rely on the views of others as there are a handful of routes that I have not got round to climbing yet – something I hope to put right this coming year.

The List:

The last seven routes in the list either weren't in the Lake District Rock selection or were not awarded three-star status. The two hugely significant publications by Ken Wilson: Extreme Rock and Hard Rock - recently updated by Ian Parnell, contain

Route	Crag	Grade
Paladin	White Ghyll	E3 5c
Cruel Sister*	Pavey Ark	E3 5c
Sixpence	Pavey Ark	E6 6b
Astra	Pavey Ark	E2 5c
Fallen Angel*	Pavey Ark	E4 6a
Whit's End Direct	Gimmer Crag	E1 5c
Equus*	Gimmer Crag	E2 5c
Gimmer String	Gimmer Crag	E1 5b
Riboletto	Bowfell	E4 6a
Abraxas	Dow Crag	E3 5c
Isengard/Samba Pa Ti	Dow Crag	E2 5b
Side Walk*	Dow Crag	E2 5b
Nimrod**	Dow Crag	E1 5c
Tumble	Dow Crag	E4 5c
Woodhouse's Arête	Dow Crag	E6 6b
The Shining Path	Dow Crag	E5 6b
Stage Fright	Hodge Close	E6 6b
Ten Years After	Hodge Close	E5 6a
Wicked Willie	Hodge Close	E5 6b
Malice in Wonderland	Hodge Close	E3 5c
Gormenghast**	Heron Crag	E1 5b
The Red Edge	Esk Buttress	E1 5a
Humdrum	Esk Buttress	E3 5c
The Central Pillar**	Esk Buttress	E2 5b
The Cumbrian*	Esk Buttress	E5 6a
Shifter	Burnt Crag	E3 6a
Burning Desire	Burnt Crag	E5 6b
Central Buttress	Scafell Crag	E1 5b
The White Wizard	Scafell Crag	E3 5c
Ringwraith	Scafell Crag	E6 6b
The Nazgul*	Scafell Crag	E3 5c
Saxon*	Scafell Crag	E2 5c
Edge of Eriador	East Buttress	E4 6a
Shere Khan*	East Buttress	E5 6a

Route	Crag	Grade
Lost Horizons*	East Buttress	E4 6b
Borderline	East Buttress	E7 6c
Ichabod**	East Buttress	E2 5c
Lord of the Rings*	East Buttress	E2 5b
Innominate/ Sepulchre	Kern Knotts	E1 5b
Incantations	The Napes	E6 6b
Supernatural	The Napes	E5 6a
The Tomb	Gable Crag	E2 5c
Sarcophagus	Gable Crag	E3 5c
Fanghorn	Boat How Crag	E3 5c
Tapestry	Pillar Rock	E4 6a
The Philistine	High Crag	E1 5b
Dreaming of Red Rocks	St Bees	7a
Kidnapped	Lower Falcon	E2 5b
The Niche	Lower Falcon	E2 5c
White Noise	Reecastle Crag	E3 5c
The Rack, Finger Flake Finish	Reecastle Crag	E2 5c
The Bludgeon	Shepherds Crag	E1 5b
Grand Alliance *	Black Crag	E4 6a
Prana	Black Crag	E3 5c
Raindrop	Black Crag	E1 5b
Hell's Wall	Hell's Wall	E6 6c
Wheels of Fire	Hell's Wall	E4 6a
Aphasia	Sergeant Crag Slabs	E2 5b
The Voyage	Goat Crag	E3 5c
Tumbleweed Connection	Goat Crag	E2 5c
Praying Mantis	Goat Crag	E1 5b
Footless Crow*	Goat Crag	E6 6b
Mirage	Goat Crag	E5 6b
Bitter Oasis*	Goat Crag	E4 5c
Rigor Mortis	Castle Rock	E2 5c
Triermain Eliminate	Castle Rock	E2 5b
The Medlar	Raven, Thirlmere	E4 6a
Close to the Edge	Raven, Thirlmere	E4 5c

Route	Crag	Grade
Gates of Delirium*	Raven, Thirlmere	E4 6a
Das Kapital	Raven, Thirlmere	E5 6b
Blitzkrieg	Raven, Thirlmere	E4 6a
Totalitarian**	Raven, Thirlmere	E1 5b
Empire	Raven, Thirlmere	E3 6a
Marble Staircase	Iron Crag Upper	E4 6a
Hiddenite	Iron Crag Upper	E2 5c
Western Union	Iron Crag Lower	E6 6b
Phoenix in Obsidian	Iron Crag Lower	E7 6b
Vlad the Impaler	Dove Crag	E7 6b
Fear and Fascination	Dove Crag	E5 6a
Bucket City	Dove Crag	E6 6b
Fast and Furious/FFF	Dove Crag	E5 6b
Internal Combustion	Raven Crag, Thresh	E6 6b
Top Gear	Raven Crag, Thresh	E4 6a
GTX	Raven Crag, Thresh	E3 5c
Running on Empty	Raven Crag, Thresh	E4 6a
Bloodhound	Gouther Crag	E2 5b
One Step Beyond	Gouther Crag	E3 6a
The Exorcist	Armathwaite	E4 6a
Phantom Zone/Cem Head	Chapel Head Scar	7b+
Mid-Air Collision	Chapel Head Scar	7b
Wargames	Chapel Head Scar	7b
Super Duper Dupont	Chapel Head Scar	7c
Unrighteous Doctors	Chapel Head Scar	7c+
Trilogy*	Raven, Langdale	E5 6a
R'n'S Special*	Raven, Langdale	E5 6a
Valhalla	Great Blake Rigg	E1 5b
Younger Than Y'day	Great Blake Rigg	E4 6a
Nagasaki Grooves	Great End	E4 6b
Life in the Fast Lane	Hodge Close	E5 6b
Phoenix	East Buttress	E2 5c

* Extreme Rock selection. ** Hard Rock selection

a selection of routes across the Extreme grade. Most of those are included in this list, with a few exceptions. From Extreme Rock I have omitted Fine Time, Holocaust and Eastern Hammer – all fabulous routes but they didn't make the cut. From Hard Rock I have left out North Crag Eliminate and Deer Bield Buttress as both of these have fallen down. Both of their replacements in the recent new edition of Hard Rock are included – Nimrod and Totalitarian. Also missing is Extol simply because it is vastly overrated and doesn't deserve to be in the list.

What about the next step? Which are Best in Class? This is even more subjective. The selection is very much more personal. They are based on my own experiences on the days I did the routes. Everyone will have their own favourites.

“What about The Lord of the Rings?” I can hear echoing up and down the fells and dales of the

county. Firstly, I haven't got round to doing it yet but more importantly, whilst I am sure it is a magnificent day out, I wanted everything on this particular list to be more readily accessible for everyone who is climbing at that grade. This is clearly not a static list, even for myself as I hope to be tackling some absolute belters in the future that may well prove to dislodge the current contenders from their lofty positions.

So, there you have it. Take it or leave it. If this list provokes some discussion in the huts or pubs of the Lakes I will be delighted. Maybe see it as an ultimate Lakes tick-list. At the time of writing, I still have 10 routes on the list to climb but hope to whittle that down over the coming year. Somebody may have already done them all. Others may come up with their own list and share their thoughts with the rest of us. I hope you take this in the spirit intended and enjoy the debate.

	Best In Class		Runners-up	
Grade	Route	Crag	Route	Crag
E1	Gormenghast	Heron Crag	Nimrod	Dow
E2	Central Pillar	Esk Buttress	Saxon	Scafell
E3	The Voyage	Goat Crag	The Nazgul	Scafell
E4	Top Gear	Raven, Thresh	Tumble	Dow
E5	R'n'S Special	Raven, Langdale	Fast & Furious	Dove Crag
E6	Woodhouse's Arête	Dow	Stagefright	Hodge Close

Holocaust

FRCC Dow Crag Guidebook 1976

240 feet Extremely Severe

An audacious line taking the vague depression in the wall just right of Nimrod. Start on the grassy shoulder above Easy Terrace at an embedded flake, a few feet right of the base of the crucial groove of Nimrod.

- 1 120 feet. Climb a shallow groove and traverse to the right until below a smooth overhanging wall blocking access to the depression. Using a piton and a jammed nut (in place), pull up on good side holds. Move diagonally right to where the wall steepens; then up and leftwards to gain, with difficulty, a narrow ledge which leads to Giant's Crawl. Belay. (The good side holds can be reached via a small rib on the left of the aid moves: this avoids using the piton and sling for either aid or protection).
- 2 70 feet. Above is a smooth overhanging wall. Step up into the grooves just to the right of this and using a hidden hold, swing on to the left arête and pull up. Move left round the corner and follow the quartz-ridden slab to a good ledge. The large grass ledge above is gained by moving rightwards on good holds. Piton belays.
- 3 50 feet. Traverse the ledge leftwards to the base of a steep crack. Surmount the bulge and follow the steep crack to the top.

First ascent: 20 June 1971, R.B. Matheson, G. Fleming, J. Poole

Pitches 2 & 3 (above) were originally Catacomb

The First Ascents of Holocaust - 20/07/71 and 28/08/75

Rob Matheson

Back in 1971 I was able to climb technical 5c at a push and perhaps 6a at an absolute limit. Training did not exist for us, but on new lines I did abseil, clean holds, and inspect runner placements. This I duly did on the ambitious line of Holocaust but most of the work went into the dirtier upper pitches as the impressive lower wall was on superb clean rock.

The main feature was a shallow depression but guarding access to it was a totally blank overhanging wall. The only peg placement was low down on this overhanging section and no matter what aid technique I used I couldn't reach the large side hold which was the key to entering the depression. Just above the peg was a small vertical slot which took my smallest aluminium nut, and this gave me that extra height to just touch the hold at full stretch. Pivoting up in a dyno was the desperate solution and even though the side holds were good it was steep and felt really committing.

I remember the relief after pulling into balance and the joy of intricate wall climbing, rightwards up



Rob on the first ascent of
Holocaust, Dow Crag



Rob's original line and the free variant

the depression, to the next steepening. A finishing ledge lay above and to the left, and this was the natural line, but getting to it was a distinct sting in the tail. Balancing and committing with a hard finger pull to grasp the finishing jugs. My old school buddies John Poole and Graham Fleming were

suitably impressed, and the jammed nut remained jammed for all those climbers who wished to follow in our footsteps. The top two pitches were really enjoyable as well and not too easily won. Unfortunately, many climbers of today satisfy themselves with the crux pitch only, part of the modern way perhaps, of getting the most from the minimum of effort — the Instant Gratification Era. Abseil off and get Tumble ticked as well!

Talking of Tumble, Pete Livesey, that trained athlete, was shattering the boundaries in 1974, and I heard through a friend, that he was coming up from Yorkshire to free climb Holocaust. There were no holds on that overhanging wall, so I was particularly intrigued and lay in wait for him at the crag!

Hidden from view on the upper reaches of Easy Terrace I covertly observed his efforts. The eureka moment arrived as he swung perplexed from the aid points exclaiming loudly that it wasn't on. I duly appeared and introduced myself and had a genial conversation as Pete completed the pitch using the two points of aid. I was of course made up, but shortly after this event Pete Botterill mentioned to me that he thought Holocaust would go free by avoiding the overhanging wall on the left! I sat up and took notice because Pete himself with Jeff Lamb had freed my route Cruel Sister on Pavey Ark, by taking a different line on the left. That was not going to happen again!

This time, armed with John Martindale, I stood once more below the crux wall of Holocaust, but a few feet left of the peg. I arranged a few good 'Moacs' below an overlap, satisfying myself they were 'stoppers' in the event of a fall. But there was nothing else until the depression! Some steep technical moves landed me at a horrible sloping finger hold on the right, but the magic side hold

50th anniversary
ascent



was well out of reach further up and right. I got immediately pumped and frightened, so looked down to the runners below my feet and got more frightened. So, I looked at John, who told me to jump off as this was the modern energy saving way! So, I did! And although I got bashed a bit, it was ok. So, jumping off is fine! Immediately I went back up and got frightened again. Needed a longer rest but I'll push through and see how far I can stretch to the side hold? Six inches is a long way short - I'll have to dive for it! Not this go, need a longer rest. Jump off. Bloody hell I got smashed this time - arm, back, hip — just hit at the wrong angle! You just sit there staring up at it, searching for logical and reasonable reasons not to go back up. But the consequences of failure are worse. An hour later I'm back on the sloper with a total focus on that area of rock and the

job in hand. Jumping upwards wasn't really part of my traditional upbringing but back at the belay we had discussed getting in the right position for the launch with a solid left foot. And so it was, as I just caught the side hold and catapulted rightwards away from all safety. Fortunately, my airborne feet landed and there I was, above the crux and into the sanctuary of those wonderful side holds and even better runners. Job done! Today it is better protected as a crack has been dug out within reach of the dyno move. No idea how I missed this back in the day!!? On the 20th of July 2021 I climbed Holocaust again, as part of my '50 years after' challenges, and it proved to be particularly testing on what was one of the hottest days of the year! As time moves on these challenges will no doubt become tougher!

The on-sight, ground up - our Borrowdale ethics

Paul Ross

My first new route in Borrowdale was 'The Super Direct' on Black Crag in 1954. I was 17 and an older Keswick climber, Des Oliver, asked me if I would try and climb a new route that they had been turned back on. I was really still a beginner but somehow had acquired a natural ability on the rock. I led the crux pitch with ease and from then on was hooked on first ascents. The same year I met Pete Greenwood, one of the top climbers of that time, and we got on really well, both on and off the rock. We started doing first ascents and always on-sight, ground up, cleaning on the lead. It just never occurred to me to come in from above to clean and inspect, which is the norm these days and became popular and standard in the mid-1960s and continues today. However, top-roping a climb, before the first ascent, had been practised well in the past on climbs such as 'Central Buttress' on Scafell in 1914 and the equally famous 'Kipling Groove' on Gimmer Crag in 1948, but was considered not quite cricket but still these were impressive ascents. I think in our case it might have been the difficulty with the abseiling technique of the



Thirlmere Eliminate, Castle Rock Eliminate

time, so we continued with all our first ascents on-sight, ground up. The gear we were using from 1954 right up into the early 1960s was about five doubled quarter-inch slings, ex-army biners and two sizes of pitons - the Simond channel about half-inch wide and blades, usually ex-Army, so one had to hope for a crack to fit these two sizes ... not easy.

At this time, we opened up Upper and Lower Falcon Crag... lots of on-lead trundling and long run-outs and climbs on Castle Rock, Thirlmere (See article about 'Castle Rock of Triermain' by Paul Ross in FRCC Journal 1961) - all ground up, cleaning on-lead such as Thirlmere 'Eliminate' and 'Rigor Mortis'. Martin Boysen, a few years later, free climbed 'Rigor Mortis', a good effort but we always left any pitons we used in place, which would have been impossible



to do without previously being aided. This brings me to mention our ethics, drilled into me by my mentor Pete Greenwood. On the first ascent, you mention everything that was used. If you repeated the route, it would be obvious if any

The Lamplighters on Little Chamoni

of the pitons were needed for aid as this would be clear in the description of the first ascent. I suppose it could be called an Alpine technique - you climbed the route as best you could on that day and left it like that and wrote it up with what we had used. Most of our Borrowdale climbs, however, were without aid. The small sections on which we had used some aid were not freed until about seven years later with the gear that made a big change, namely nuts and, more so, wired Stoppers, easily placed one-handed and quickly where once pitons were being used single-handedly was often difficult. If current modern climbers would like to see what it felt like in those days, take three pitons, a few quarter-inch nylon slings and biners for protection and have a go at any of these early climbs from HVS and upward. I am sure you will enjoy the thrill of long run-outs as we did in the era of the 'leader never falls'... If he does, he most likely was in for some serious trouble.

In the Lake District using this limited gear we climbed about 75 first ascents ... all on-sight, ground-up. In 1971 I was in America and ended up in the New Hampshire area with modern gear and over the next 14 years climbed about 80 first ascents, most of them on the crags of Cathedral Ledge, Whitehorse Ledge and Cannon Cliff all on-sight, ground-up. Later, in 1999, I moved to Colorado and until 2012 in that area and the nearby State of Utah climbed on-sight, ground-up, over 200 first ascents. Many of these, of course, were sandstone towers and you cannot top rope unclimbed towers - I consider climbing first ascents on-sight is the purest way to climb, it does show one your true grade ability. I have inspected on a top rope before a first ascent and found it lowers it by at least two grades and really the top rope ascent was the first.

We got a lot of stick in the early days for using pitons for protection and very short sections of aid but



Paul Ross on a 60th Anniversary ascent of Adam, Shepherds Crag

looking back I guess it was our personal ethics that were the cause. I know there were well-known climbers in other parts of the Lake District during the 1950s that were perhaps a bit ahead of us in modern ways and were top-roping or returning to free their aided bits before they wrote up the description,

but whatever we wrote up, is what we got up to on the 'first ascent'. Later on, in the mid-1960s, with the slightly more modern gear we still carried on doing first ascents on-sight, ground-up - for example Paul Nunn and I on Eagle Crag with five new routes. There is so much unclimbed rock in America and other areas such as Morocco where trad on-sight is still a great adventure and hopefully this tradition will continue. There is a big difference between 'making' new rock-climbs and climbing 'first ascents'.

PS I have never climbed on an indoor climbing wall - saving that experience for when I get old.

Editor's note: Paul ran the Lamplighter Folk Club in Lake Road and this was very much the central point of the Keswick and Borrowdale climbing scene in the early 1960s.

Recent Developments On Scafell

FRCC Journal 1962

Few mountains in Britain can boast so long a climbing history as Scafell, yet new routes are still to be found there. This is due to the variety of the crags to the west and east of Mickledore which provide scope for the gully scrambler as well as the devotee of the 'super-severe'. As Holland pointed out in his preface to the *Guide*, Scafell's development as a climbing ground has taken place in waves with each new generation and the improvement in technique.

In spite of their remote position, or probably because of it, these crags lured the pioneers as long ago as 1869. By the turn of the century the major gullies had been climbed and O G Jones had shocked his contemporaries by discarding boots to make his audacious lead on the Pinnacle Face. The new century was barely under way when Fred Botterill ascended the slab which bears his name. Then followed a lull which was brought to an abrupt halt by Herford and Sansom taking the crag by force, their efforts culminating in 1914 with the ascent of *Central Buttress*, a route which was not to be surpassed in difficulty for 20 years.

Following the 1914-1918 war came a host of new names and faces, and by the end of the 20s Kelly and his associates had pioneered a number of climbs, *Moss Ghyll Grooves* and *Moss Ledge Direct* being among the finest. Then another wave arrived, eager to test their powers on new courses. The possibilities west of Mickledore appeared to be exhausted, so the bulging walls of the East Buttress began to attract attention. First to break the ice was Kirkus

with his now very popular *Mickledore Grooves*¹. In 1932, just over a year later, his friend Linnell really shattered the East Buttress myth by climbing *Great Eastern* (see Footnote) and then, in 1933 with A T Hargreaves, *Overhanging Wall*, at a point where the angle is fiercest. In 1938 Jim Birkett appeared on the scene with *May Day* and the *Girdle*, and at the outbreak of the second world war the East Buttress was firmly established as the most serious climbing ground in the country. After the war Birkett was again at work on Scafell, leading *Gremlin's Groove* and *South Chimney*, and in 1948 he added to his list of first ascents *Slab and Groove* which has a long and exposed pitch to the left of Moss



John Hartley on May Day Climb, East Buttress of Scafell

Ghyll. Another lull followed and the next climbers to make advances on Scafell could be said to belong to the 'modern school'.

The first of these was Arthur Dolphin, a tall, rangy Yorkshireman, who came to Lakeland after an apprenticeship served on gritstone edges. He left his mark in several places with magnificent routes, notably *Kipling Groove* on Gimmer and *Deer*

1. This route was recorded in 1932 Climbs Old and New (FRCC Journal, Vol. ix, No. 2, p. 215) as East Buttress climbed by M. Linnell and S. Cross. In 1933 (Vol. ix, No. 3, p. 303) the name was corrected to *Great Eastern*, and *Mickledore Grooves* described as well as the 1933 climbs on the East Buttress. EDITOR.

Bield Buttress. In his search for unclimbed rock, he inevitably arrived at Scafell East Buttress. In 1952 he and Peter Greenwood examined the hitherto untouched walls and grooves to the left of *Morning Wall*. This examination led to the ascent of *Pegasus*, an exposed route taking a slanting line below *Morning Wall* and joining it at its last pitch. A week later they returned to make a climb which was a



A Retreat from Hells Groove

standard higher than anything on the crag. It followed a groove breaking through the overhanging rock around it and joined *Pegasus* in its upper section. By comparison with its surroundings the groove appeared to be a line of weakness, but this was an optical illusion and the overhanging wall which guarded it proved a tough nut to crack. Dolphin's great height was a disadvantage on this pitch, but Greenwood, a fellow of wiry build, led it without difficulty and climbed onto a sloping stance below a vertical groove. The next pitch consisted of a series of extremely difficult moves, and as it was 80 feet in length, the protection piton which Dolphin inserted seems quite justified. They named the climb appropriately *Hell's Groove*, and there is little doubt that the partnership would have pioneered further routes but for Dolphin's fatal accident on the Dent du Geant the following year.

1953 passed without any addition to Scafell's rock-climbs, but in the early part of 1954's wet summer

Harold Drasdo climbed a crack 140 feet in length on the left wall of *Mickledore Chimney*. It was shorter than most of the existing East Buttress climbs, but not without difficulty. He named it *Tia Maria*. One year later to the day the East Buttress saw another route in the making. The climber was Don Whillans and the line of his choice was a groove to the left of *Hell's Groove*. As with many of his routes elsewhere, overhangs figure largely in the description of *Trinity*, and those who have since climbed it say it is of the same standard as *Hell's Groove*. At about this time another Manchester climber, Ron Moseley, ascended the easy gangway of *Morning Wall*, then took a more direct line up the cliff above, a piton being used to scale the initial overhang. This route was named *Phoenix*.

For three years exploration on Scafell ceased, at least no new developments were recorded, and people again thought that its crags were worked out. Then in 1958 the regular Lakeland climbers found their complacency shattered when Robin Smith, a student from Edinburgh, in one day put up two new climbs on the East Buttress, *Chartreuse* and *Leverage*. These follow cracks in the steep buttress between *May Day* and *Mickledore Grooves* which had been passed by many prospective explorers on their way to more remote corners of the crag. As there is always an element of competition between climbers from opposite sides of the border, Smith's routes acted as a tonic and the following year there was renewed activity on Scafell.

For some time, I had been studying the East Buttress and, thanks to a dry spell, it was in prime condition by May. The rib on the left of *Tia Maria* yielded us a pleasant route which, to keep in line with its neighbours, we called *Pernod*. Encouraged by this success, we climbed the big corner above *May Day*, a problem which was dry for the first time for several

years, and in this state, it gave an excellent direct finish. Meanwhile, Les Brown had been visiting the crag from Eskdale and on the left of *Overhanging Wall* he made a route up to the White Slab which was very steep and direct. He named it *Moon Day*.

The fine summer of 1959 saw further routes opened up on the other side of *Mickledore* also. *Xerxes* on Deep Ghyll Buttress led by Les Brown, *Narrow Slab* on Central Buttress and *Bosun's Buttress* on Pisgah Buttress - the two latter led by Banner - are all fairly long climbs. In addition, a new variation to *Moss Ledge* was found by Dennis English.

Early in April 1960 Brown was back on the East Buttress, once again assaulting the overhanging wall in the centre of the crag. He called his route, which branches left from *Moon Day* in a series of short, steep pitches, *Armageddon* - a name which speaks for itself. Good conditions continued into May, so I took advantage of them to climb what is probably the last big natural line on the cliff - a corner which goes straight from *Morning Wall* to the top. We named the route *Ichabod*. One month later the indefatigable Brown put up *Centaur* to the right of *Great Eastern*, a line which others had tried without success in the past. It may be that route finding was the problem, for Brown states that it is in no place extremely severe.

Yet another variation on the Pinnacle Face, this time by Jeff Allison in 1961, completes Scafell's development as a climbing ground up to the time of writing. However, as this account has so far been little more than a list of routes and climbers, I should like to end with a description of the first ascent of one of these climbs, *Ichabod*, which is, I think, typical of modern climbing on Scafell.

The walk from Borrowdale to Scafell in hot weather is sticky and long, and the arrival at *Mickledore* is the

automatic signal for a rest in the sunshine. On just such a summer day Len Willis, Geoff Arkless and I sat there, gazing across at the stern lines of the East Buttress and delaying the moment when we'd put on PAs for the day's climb. Our intention was to attempt the unclimbed corner above *Morning Wall* and to this end we eventually took up rope and slings and scrambled across the grass ledges below the crags.

At the foot of *Morning Wall*, we tied onto a double rope and all too soon I was on my way. The first 50 feet consisted of pleasant scrambling up a gangway, but this was not to last. A short overhanging corner crack followed, and this led to a large niche below a roof. Ten feet to the right was the corner I hoped to attain, and this was the immediate problem. On a rickety flake in the corner of the niche I arranged a line runner and tensioned to the right to reach a handhold at shoulder height. The hold was not big and the angle bulged slightly, but it seemed as though it might be just possible to mantelshelf on it. One hour and 10 attempts later I realised it was not feasible, so I called in science in the form of a thin-bladed piton. At the side of the crucial hold was a crack, and a few gentle taps of the hammer pushed home the peg, jeopardising the existence of the hold by widening the crack. With a sling on this flimsy support, I straightened up to reach a good hold for the step across to the corner, and the first obstacle was overcome. The going was easier for 10 feet, then the angle steepened, and I had to leave the corner for a diversion onto the right wall. Not knowing what lay ahead, I knocked home a good solid piton without feeling any pang of conscience.

My route from here was dictated more by the position of the holds than by my own wishes and I progressed diagonally right by a succession of delicate mantelshelves. My objective was the foot of a V-chimney above and 20 feet to my left, but the

few holds available still led to the right. However, the prospect of reversing the moves I'd just made was appalling, so the only possible course was to push on. Eventually I came to a crack with reasonable handholds and here I rested after a fashion. The rope snaked down for 70 feet and dragged abominably through the pitons, but I was cheered by the sight of the V-chimney with which I was now level. The approach to it was via a narrow, sloping ledge with no handholds at all in evidence. I dearly wanted a piton in the shallow crack which I was about to leave, but the best I could arrange was a combination of two pegs jammed side by side. The rope running through these helped to hold me in balance as I inched across the traverse. On reaching the chimney I found an ideal thread belay and the gravity of the situation disappeared completely. I was not at all surprised to learn that the ascent of this 110-foot pitch had taken three hours.

By the time Geoff joined me I was eager to get to grips with the chimney, for the issue would be in doubt until we were up it. The chimney itself was reasonable, but the exit from it onto a sloping, lichenous shelf provided an anxious moment. Above this I began to enjoy the climbing again. Steep rock with big holds led to a stance below a final crack and, after that, the top of the crag where I could lie in the sun and feel utterly contented while my companions still grappled with the problems below.

We were all very impressed with this route, so called it *Ichabod*, the significance of which can be appreciated by reading Holland's introduction to the *Scafell Guide*. Climbers in the past have often thought that the high-water mark of achievement had been reached, only to be later proved wrong. Whatever the future may now hold, it can at least be safely affirmed that the field of activities open to those seeking to make new advances on Scafell

will be greatly limited by the dwindling amount of unclimbed rock remaining there.

G. Oliver



Geoff Oliver on Devils Wedge, Shepherds Crag

Climbing in the 1960s

David Miller

There was a tremendous leap forward in Lake District rock climbing standards during the 1960s. Many of the new routes were on major crags and several FRCC members were involved in making first ascents. Climbs such as 'Astra' on Pavey Ark and 'Ichabod' on Scafell, first ascended by Allan Austin and Geoff Oliver respectively, and the impressive 'Extol' on Dove Crag by Don Whillans were probably harder than anything previously climbed. They all took bold lines up hitherto uncharted rock and became test pieces for the best climbers of the day.

In 1962 Austin and Jack Soper went to attempt the Central Pillar on Esk Buttress but were beaten to the route by Peter Crew and Mike Owen, following a tip off to Crew from an overheard conversation in the Old Dungeon Ghyll, between Soper and Sid Cross. 'Red Edge' and 'Black Sunday', climbed on the same day were ample compensation. In the same year, David Miller climbed the elegant 'Nimrod' on



Below Falcon Crag in May 1960 - George Lee, Geoff Oliver, Frank Carroll, Geoff Arkless, ANO, and Len Willis

Dow Crag. Paul Ross had already climbed some hard routes on Castle Rock, such as 'Thirlmere Eliminate', and he continued with many more in Borrowdale in the 1960's

Chris Bonington made his first major contributions in 1964, with two major climbs on the forbidding Raven Crag above Thirlmere. Within a few weeks he climbed first The Medlar with Martin Boysen, and then 'Totalitarian'. Les Brown climbed the striking line of 'Nazgul', on Scafell, in 1966, following his other fine routes, including 'The Centaur', on the East Buttress. At the same time, Geoff Cram and Bill Young were opening hard routes such as 'Gondor' on Pillar and 'The Tomb' on Gable Crag. Finally in 1969, John Adams and Colin Read created the epic traverse of the East Buttress, with 'Lord of the Rings'.

During most of this period, harnesses, and leader protection, such as 'Rocks' and 'Friends' were not available or undreamed of, and climbers tied on to the rope round the waist. Protection was limited to nylon rope and line slings, looped over spikes and flakes, or threaded round chockstones. PA rock boots, made in France, were available and these were a big improvement over plimsolls, that had been used on hard routes previously.

In the 1960s, increased income and access to vehicles led to many more climbers coming to the Lake District mountains. In turn, these climbers were doing harder routes and looking for new ways. But they did not have the benefits of year-round climbing on climbing walls to maintain and improve performance. Nor could they afford the high cost, in those days, of flying to winter sun destinations to extend the climbing season. Climbing on high

mountain crags was popular in good weather and valley crags were reserved for poor conditions and dry winter days. Otherwise, using socks over rock boots on wet and greasy rock was the norm.

It was a carefree time for many in the 'Swinging Sixties' with groups of climbers, travelling in vans, such as the Morris Minor, and later the Minivan, with passengers sitting in the back with the climbing gear. This was before seat belts were obligatory. High

speed driving, drinking, and mixing in the pubs, led to a social scene, with information on climbs and climbing teams being circulated.

The optimism and confidence that emerged from the post-war period, together with the increasing competition between climbers from different areas, drove exploration of the harder and more serious climbs.



Laugh Not, White Ghyll - 1964 Journal



Central Pillar, Esk Buttress - 1969 Journal

Samba Pa Ti

Scafell, Dow & Eskdale Guide 1984

190 feet, E2

A very steep and strenuous route starting from the cave at the top of pitch 2 of Isengard.

1 100 feet (5b). Climb the right edge of the slab to the overhangs and boldly pull over the first bulge on excellent holds. Move up the groove a few feet and pull out rightwards onto the steep wall above. Climb directly to the bulge and skirt it on the right, moving left to easier ground and belay off Gordon and Craig's Traverse, below the obvious crack.

2 90 feet (4b). Climb the fault line, ten feet right of the main crack.

20 August 1977.

A Hyslop, R Graham



Andy Hislop on the first ascent of Samba Pa Ti

Samba Pa Ti

Andy Hislop

The halcyon days of the late 70s. Torver seemed like the centre of the universe and was buzzing with climbers, rockers, bikers, and a host of attractive extras. Brocklebank Ground was full of dossing climbers every weekend. The sitting room stank of dirty sleeping bags, the kitchen table was surrounded while my mother produced mountains of scones in the background.

Suddenly, out of nowhere Dow Crag seemed to have huge swathes of perfect, unclimbed rock. Life became a whirlwind of climbing, beer, darts, dancing, testosterone, pool, and new routes, not forgetting the legendary parties next door. It was all flared jeans, baseball boots, long hair, and bum fluff moustaches.

Santana's 'Abraxas' album and the Torver coal man; Sam Bar? Did Rob Matheson name his route on A buttress after the very same album? What's your favourite track on Abraxas? 'Samba Pa Ti' of course. I didn't know what it meant but maybe it is Mexican for coal man.

Rick Graham and I became confident and very familiar with the rock, knowing what would go just by looking at it from the ground. We soloed up 'Eliminate A' to the cave and belayed below the unclimbed headwall. Totally on-sight, I placed a Stopper 7 at the start and swung round the first overhang. This is amazing. Perfect rock, incredible position, and the confidence that it would be climbable. The rest was just floating up on big holds with the chords Samba Pa Ti playing on repeat in my head.

Listen to the track then do the route or both at the same time.

Lakeland Climbing in the 'Seventies

Reprinted from Mountain 54 April 1977

Rob Matheson

Since the late 1960s, the Lake District has been the scene of a climbing controversy centred on the question of what constitutes fair play in first ascent practice. The result has been a lively interchange of opinions.

The conflict derives from the fact that many climbers have begun to adopt a highly 'professional' approach towards the making of first ascents, inspecting new lines in detail by abseil before attempting to climb them. The on-sight principle was discarded by these climbers, in the belief that a good job could not otherwise be made. Controversial methods and techniques - such as the use of pre-placed slings and protection - have been employed in order to overcome ferocious lines, all in an effort to minimise the amount of aid required. The traditional school of thought, championed by the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, made its opinions clear in 1973, when routes ascended in the 'modern' manner were omitted from the new Langdale guide. Allan Austin, the guide-writer, summed up the situation in a letter published in Mountain 29, saying, 'I do not see crags as impressive backcloths where ruthless men can construct their climbs'. It is interesting to note that since that time the majority of important first ascents have continued to be the products of the 'ruthless', professional approach, with traditional ideas on pioneering largely discarded. Techniques employed on early repeat ascents have also become more important, and issues such as chalk-use and 'what actually constitutes aid?' have become the subject of much discussion. During this effervescent period, I have been involved in various capacities in the development of Lakeland climbing, and in this article, I hope to evaluate the early controversies, and

to report honestly on the affairs and practices of the most recent contributors. For years, people had been saying that new lines were drying up, and to a large extent this was true.

Having done most of the established routes, climbers began to search for new rock, but very few natural and apparently climbable lines remained. Some pioneers turned to isolated and obscure crags, others to the vegetated perimeters of popular crags; most significant, however, were the activities of those who attempted to fill the ferocious and blank-looking spaces between existing climbs on the well-established buttresses. I say, 'most significant', because these lines had previously been thought to be impossible, or only possible as piton routes (a very unfashionable trend in the 60s) and it was these lines which were to become the most popular climbs in later years. I, for one, thought it unreasonable to attempt this type of line on-sight. It is my belief, in contrast to the official Fell and Rock view, that new routes have now to be 'created'. Two of Britain's

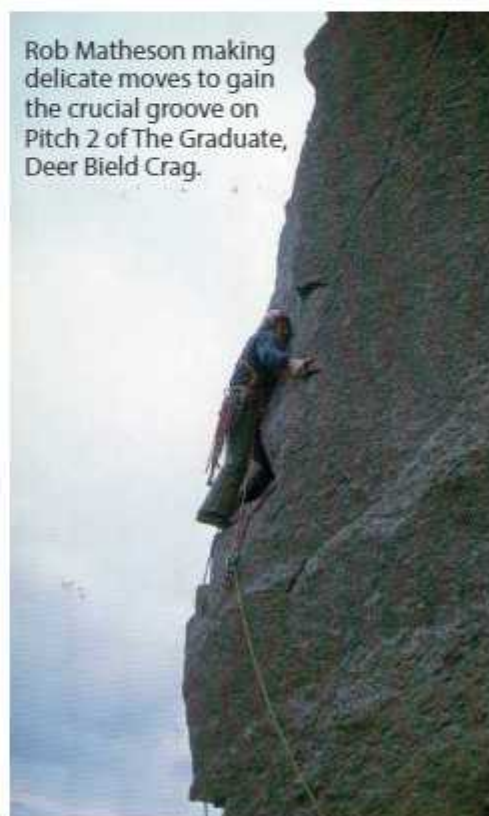


leading climbers, Pete Livesey (pictured left) and Pat Littlejohn, appear to share this opinion. Whether this seems ethically right or wrong, it is a fact that most climbers want to make

a good job of things during a first ascent, and one way of ensuring this is to have a prior acquaintance with the holds. A suitable example is 'Paladin' on White Ghyll, a route at first partially aided and later freed. All I wanted when I did this route was a good end product, and it took me an inspection and two ascents to attain this. As in the case of all routes ascended in this manner, the critic will say: 'Why didn't you leave it to someone else?' The only answer is that we are all human, and few of us are strong-willed enough, or care enough, to throw the limited numbers of lines on to the open market. So, the end product of 'Paladin' was a hard, free route, which was reported honestly for anyone who wished to follow. It started out as a partially aided route and was converted into a free route. The Fell and Rock guide writers thought it unethical for a first ascensionist to free climb his own route. They therefore reduced what had become a very fine and ferocious free line to its original aided status, *pari passu* their own ascent. Another example arose in 1971, when Pete Livesey climbed 'Fine Time' on Raven Crag, Langdale, using a long sling for aid on the large initial overhang. Many climbers know how hard it is to move off an aid point and commit oneself to exacting free climbing - and this route involves such a procedure with very hard free moves. At the time, there was an outcry against Livesey's tactic in placing the aid sling by abseil, and even practising the moves. All I can say is that Livesey produced a highly futuristic problem, which was not repeated until 1975 and has been 'enjoyed' by very few climbers since that time.

During the same period, controversy also raged over several other routes such as 'Cruel Sister' on Pavay Ark, and 'Peccadillo' and 'The Graduate' on Deer Bield Crag. Again, these routes were 'created', being the outcome of 'professional' tactics. As far as 'Cruel Sister' is concerned, the criticisms levelled against my use of

a skyhook and a pre-placed sling had a sound basis. The long sling, placed prior to the ascent on all three routes, was not popular; climbers soon got brassed off trying to reach them on windy days and as is well known, the wind often blows hard in the Lake District. The sky hook was a crime on two counts: firstly, I did not attempt to do the move free before resorting to the hook; secondly, people should not have to carry such specialised tools in order to climb in the Lakes. Jeff Lamb eliminated all the aid shortly afterwards, which would suggest to some people that I had no right to foul up the line with such incompetence in the first place. This may well be true, but the most important thing of all was that my first ascent was reported honestly, no secrets being kept whereby fellow climbers could be harmed. Moreover, such a first ascent malady leaves some meat for others to 'have a go at'. 'The Day of the Jackal' was thus born; it being realised that fame and satisfaction could just as easily be found by making free second ascents. Today, 'Cruel Sister' is one of the best wall climbs in the Lake District, the original aid section being avoided by a short traverse from the left. Don't be deceived, however, for it is still a very sustained pitch, even when this section has been done. The 'Graduate' and 'Peccadillo' are also worthy of attention,



Rob Matheson making delicate moves to gain the crucial groove on Pitch 2 of The Graduate, Deer Bield Crag.

as they too have lost their long slings and are quite climbable, even on windy days; but they both still employ aid points - a healthy challenge to any would-be jackals.

It would be wrong to say that all first ascents in the early 70s involved professional methods. Ed Grindley was notably pure in this respect. In 1972 he produced the masterful 'Fallen Angel', one of the best remaining lines on Pavey Ark. Two aid pitons were used and, as these were placed during an on-sight ascent, when any necessary gardening was also done, it was clearly a very fine lead; a model to which all should aspire. (The second ascent was led soon afterwards by Martin Boysen, who dispensed with the aid to produce one of the best Lakeland pitches, the on/off feeling being a constant companion.) However, in cases like this, there is a tendency for climbers to reward their own purity by granting themselves certain secret rests (biscuits) for the purpose of gardening cracks and cleaning mossy or lichenous holds. I have seen the purest of climbers pull on slings to inspect higher holds. In my opinion it is better to sort the line out first, and then climb it in a completely honest and pure fashion. Of course, the first ascent which should receive the highest accolade is the on-sight lead with no aid whatsoever, but I cannot recall any of the hardest Lakeland routes falling into this bracket.

During these earlier years the events on popular crags outside Langdale were dominated by Colin Read and John Adams. One of their 1968 routes, 'Athamor', on Goat Crag, illustrates a form of free-route evolution that many people would consider to be healthier than, and preferable to, a 'professional' ascent. Adams and Read used six aid points on their first ascent, indicating an on-sight approach. Over the next few years these were gradually whittled away by local teams, until

Jeff Lamb, a prolific jackal of this period, finally climbed it free. The result is a very difficult route, not particularly brilliant in line, but rather exacting in execution. One must remember, however, that in 1968 climbers had little pressure on them; they could afford to climb badly and just have a good time. In the early 70s, growing disapproval of the use of indiscriminate aid resulted in the trend towards professional methods. In the same way, climbers were led to think more about their own ability, and, with this catalyst, standards improved.

Read and Adams's greatest achievement was 'Lord of the Rings', the girdle traverse of the East Buttress of Scafell, put up in 1969. It took two full days to complete, and was climbed in the purest possible way, the outcome always being in doubt. Such was the reputation of the route that it was six years before another ascent was recorded, this time by two up-and-coming young climbers, Ed Cleasby and Bill Birkett. Other repeats quickly followed, culminating in Pete Livesey's impressive solo ascent (using a back-rope on the big pitch). Another Scafell route to be hit by the Jackals was Bonington and Estcourt's 'White Wizard' on the North Face. Put up in 1971, this utilised six points of aid - the result of an on-sight ascent by a traditionally trained pair. Should they have been more professional in their approach? In the following years the aid was gradually whittled away, leaving the way clear for the recent free ascent by Martin Berzins - a fine achievement.

At this time, I was active on Dow Crag, busy creating routes such as 'Holocaust', 'T'arkus' and 'Catacomb'. The crag was not particularly popular with high-grade climbers and was receiving little attention. 'Holocaust' became controversial, however, because it involved two aid points on one pitch, one being a hammered nut. Nevertheless, the best climbers failed to eliminate these, which at least gave me



Tarkus on
Dow Crag

the satisfaction of knowing that I had done a professional job. My foolish pride drove me to return to the climb in 1975 and, after some effort, I managed to climb the pitch free, by a line just to the left of the aid moves. No doubt the modern youngsters will want to know why that wasn't done on the first ascent. This I cannot answer, but I will say that in its free state the climb involves one of the harder moves in the Lakes. 'Tarkus' and 'Catacomb' presented no real problems and they provide climbs in the milder grade on some of the best rock in Britain.

In many ways the 1973 guidebook controversies represented a turning point in Lakeland climbing. Everyone had begun to think more about their contributions, and about their own ethical standards, as were those of others. Jackal ascents were becoming of increasing importance, taking some of the limelight from the first ascent teams, and it would appear that the professional ascent had been accepted by all but a few. A quotation from William Clegg's 1938 Dow Crag, Great Langdale and Outlying Crag's guide is apposite here:

'Today rock climbing enjoys more popularity than ever before... What new climbs will this great influx of climbers add to our sport - what new methods

- what new developments? The next new guide to rock climbing... shall tell'. Well, in 1973, Austin and Valentine failed to tell what new methods and developments had come to the fore in recent years. All they wanted to do was to 'preserve the true spirit of rock climbing', in their own image. Today, the Fell and Rock is no longer the leading light in Lake District climbing. As a club it has failed to recruit the young influential climbers, and indeed its present age structure gives a certain cause for alarm.

Fell and Rock climbing guides always contain wise quotations and, in 1974 when preparing the new Scafell Group guide, Mike Burbage wrote: 'One thing is certain, however, classic routes which use little or no aid are becoming more of a rarity each year. Will this trend be reversed by a new and more skilful breed of climbers in the future?' Taking stock of the last three years, the answer to this question has to be 'yes'. Classic routes, using very little aid and going in very unlikely places, have been produced by what one can only call a new and utterly dedicated breed of climbers.

The first and most influential of this breed was Pete Livesey. His aim was to climb new routes with as little aid as possible using, as tools, pre-programming methods, and an ever-improving ability. Along with many other pioneers, he could see no point in laying himself open to ridicule by using aid. Better to make a professional job of things first time round: there are too many jackals about today, ready to feast upon imperfect performances. The pioneer has to be careful, and Livesey has been very careful indeed! One afternoon in 1974 he thoroughly inspected Read and Adams's partially aided 'Nagasaki Grooves' on Great End Crag, before soloing the line with a back-rope. He employed no aid; a feat which has not been repeated to this day. Other leading climbers have either used one point of aid or skirted round

the nasty blank crux. It is a very fine climb, and one point of aid now seems to have become an accepted feature. Within hours of performing this feat, Livesey moved up the valley to Falcon Crag, digested the intricacies of a blank wall on abseil, and soloed back up, next to the hanging rope. 'Dry Grasp' was the result, and it is an aptly named little nasty: hard, technical, and bold.

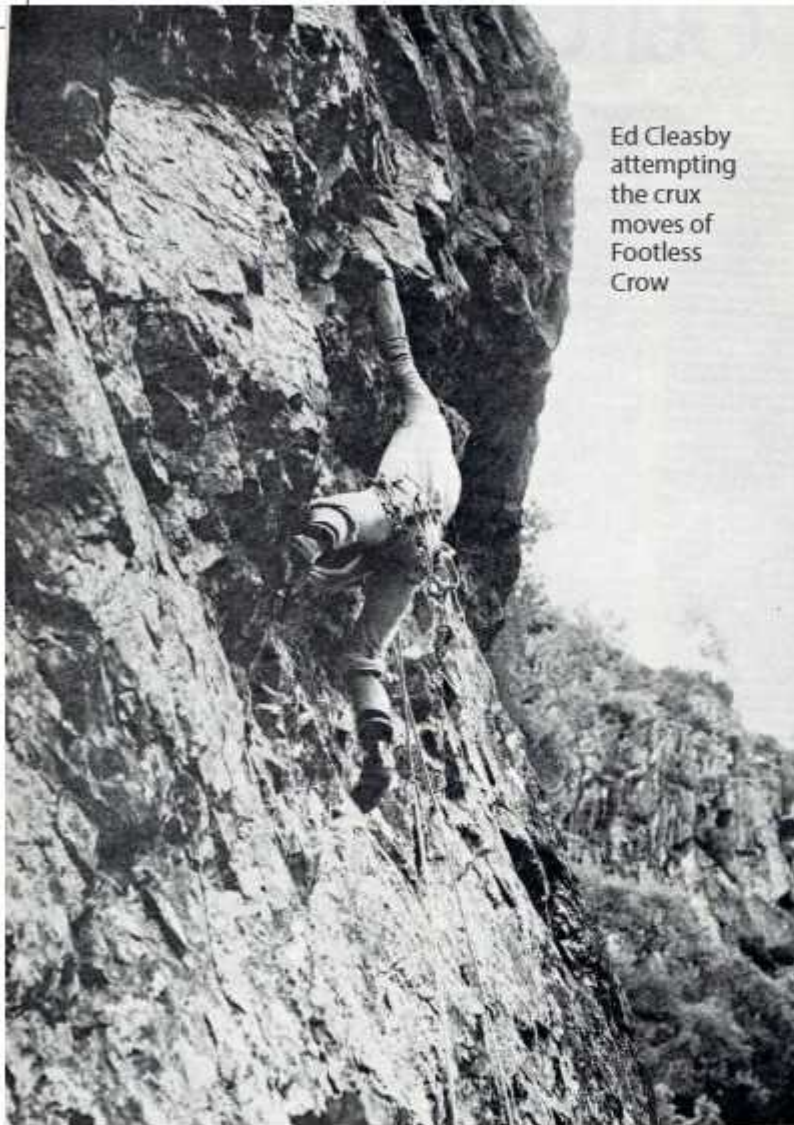
Grindley, however, remained firm in his conviction that first ascents should be on-sight efforts and, in 1973, before moving to Scotland, he had his final fling on Pavey Ark, when he established 'Brain Damage'. I had previously inspected the line from an abseil and had placed a piton under the top overhang, where I was sure that I would need one for a runner. The wall was so steep that I doubted if it would be possible to hang around without any biscuits in order to place protection. Shortly afterwards I got so cheesed off with the haggling and criticism I was experiencing that I virtually gave up climbing and left the line for someone else. Grindley was quickly on the scene. He removed the offending piton from a rope, but then replaced it during his ascent and used it for a rest, before completing the climb. The interesting fact about this route is that the horrific second pitch is not as difficult as the rather insignificant looking first pitch, which involves a very long reach on tiny fingerholds. In fact, Jeff Lamb failed here shortly before making a free ascent of 'Fallen Angel'.

Late 1973 was a period when everyone was very touchy and quick to criticise any indiscretion. The 'insular Lakeland syndrome', as Keith Myhill described it, was breached when he and Ken Jones (both Derbyshire-orientated climbers) added a fine new route called 'Empire' to Raven Crag, Thirlmere, using two aid points. Myhill (perhaps mischievously) made big claims for the climb's great

difficulty. Not unnaturally, the route received a lot of attention because of these invasion overtones, and local climbers quickly got to work to put the route into its true perspective. It was not long before Jeff Lamb eliminated all the aid, producing a very hard move on the final pitch, and the route's final demise came when Livesey, playing silly buggers, soloed it with an abseil rope hanging down next to him.

1974 was a busy year, especially for Livesey. It has been claimed that this long Yorkshireman initiated the rise in climbing standards in the Lake District. This is not true. What is true, however, is that he attacked lines on rock with a mind to free climbing them, lines that other climbers thought would need aid. The Great Buttress on Goat Crag had only been breached by the happy-go-lucky metal merchants of the 60s Borrowdale Brigade; it was thus real meat for Livesey. Stories were circulating about him: he was said to spend days suspended from a rope, studying the rock face and contemplating future actions. His deliberations produced two classics: 'Footless Crow' and 'Bitter Oasis'. Although Livesey claims that they are both of Hard Extreme standard, only 'Bitter Oasis' seems to be a reasonably feasible climb. This route is now very popular, and it is without doubt one of the great Lake District climbs, requiring strong fingers and a quick technical brain to succeed.

The first crux is only 20 feet from the ground. There are two alternatives: either a layback over a small overhang, to gain a shallow groove, or a few feet to the left, small fingerholds leading to the same position. The second crux is more frightening, as a fall would leave one dangling free. Again, confidence in small fingerholds is the key, as one traverses between roofs to reach the sanctuary of some bolt runners (remnants of the original bolt route). I think these should be removed, as the natural protection is adequate, but the job would have to be done by abseil.



Ed Cleasby attempting the crux moves of Footless Crow

'Footless Crow' is a bird of altogether different plumage. The first section follows 'Athanor' through its crucial moves, before striking off rightwards at an easier standard into the centre of the face. The final section is as appalling as it looks, for it takes the stepped bulges direct. After several hard moves, utilising a series of undercuts, a position of extreme discomfort is attained halfway through the bulges. Along with other climbers, like Ed Cleasby and Martin Berzins, I didn't have a clue what to do after that. A

certain amount of prior knowledge seems to be an essential requirement for the ascent of such difficult ground. Equipped with this knowledge, Ron Fawcett and Chris Gibb managed to repeat the route, but they are the only ones to have succeeded so far.

Livesey has also been active in Langdale. With Al Manson he produced the impressive 'Eastern Hammer' on Gimmer Crag, free-climbing the line taken by the old Ross aid route, If. On this ascent, Livesey utilised all the old pitons for protection; he then added to the controversies that regularly surround him (then and now) by abseiling down the route and removing most of the pitons. As it happens, 'Eastern Hammer' is laden with natural protection; it can, therefore, be fully enjoyed for its technical attractions and its position. Although only a one-pitch climb, it is extremely tiring on the fingers and demands a confident approach. But the positions, out on the front of Gimmer's finest bastion, are superb, and the climb easily qualifies as one of the finest pitches in Langdale. Several repeat ascents have involved yoyos, where the leader is lowered back to the stance from his top runner to rest.

If this is done to excess, it obviously detracts from the achievement of the ascent. Most leading climbers have from time to time accepted the yo-yo as being a reasonable technique to employ while making a free ascent. It may not be a completely satisfactory answer, but the present state of the game permits it. Indeed, there are still many variations on the exact meaning of the word 'free', especially in relation to the hardest routes.

Jeff Lamb, that friendly jackal from Carlisle, also got a piece of the action in 1974, when he and Pete Botterill established 'Zeus' on Scafell's East Buttress. This important climb follows the groove line to the left of 'Phoenix'. It soon gained a reputation

for difficulty and poor protection. Last summer, Ed Cleasby and I repeated the route for the first time, taking in a new finish directly up the arête between 'Phoenix' and Ichabod'. The first section of the climb had perfectly adequate protection and was of very high quality, involving delicate bridging up the main groove. With the addition of the arête, the climb certainty rates as one of the best on the crag.

Yorkshire-based climbers always seem to have had a strong affinity with Lakeland climbing, and Livesey's influence can be seen as part of a long tradition which includes such famous Yorkshire names as Austin and Dolphin. The current set of Yorkshire/Lakelanders includes, along with Livesey and Ron Fawcett, such climbers as John Sheard, Chris Gibb, Pete Gomersall and John Eastham, all of whom are trained in the skills and methods of their local limestone and gritstone areas.

How is it that these visiting climbers have been able to do the hardest new lines and cut aid from the most difficult recent routes? The answer is a combination of dedication, training and chalk. In the late 60s, gymnasium wall climbing, centred on Leeds University, became a popular and competitive pastime among the Yorkshire climbers. The better performers, such as Alan Manson and John Syrett (brilliant climbers who have virtually ignored the Lakes), pushed out the limits of what one could do with one's arms and fingers. Others followed their example, and standards soared. It was also at this point that chalk reared its messy but effective head.

The dust from the gymnasium floor was as natural as dry soil and lichen from the crags. But the dust was rapidly replaced by chalk, and soon white marks were to be seen on the local gritstone crags. In 1975, these marks also began to appear in the Lake District. Lichen and dry soil were out - the Yorkshire climbers

had introduced the white menace! When fingers and minds are pushed to the limit, one result is sweat, and chalk neutralises this factor. Unfortunately, there has been no market research into climbers' needs in this respect, and the only chalk readily available is light magnesium carbonate. Chemists must have been alarmed at the increase of stomach complaints in rural areas. But chalk in this form is totally unmanageable: it is thrown and blown all over the place, and the 'white explosion' has literally covered the crags. Climbers who use chalk should make an effort to buy solid gymnastics chalk, as this is quite sufficient to remove unwanted grease from the fingers. The pollution problem would thereby be greatly alleviated. I have used chalk for about a year, and I must admit that I have found it a very useful deterrent against sweaty fingers. Of course, some climbers refuse to use the stuff, claiming that it interferes with the enjoyment of others. This important aspect has caused most users to think twice, and, in the Lake District, many climbers are beginning to use chalk more sensibly - in small quantities and only on the hardest moves. Chalk, I am afraid, is here to stay but with careful management it can find an acceptable niche in British climbing. The reporting of chalkless ascents is a rather artificial step in my opinion, as some climbers suffer more from sweaty fingers than others. However, use of chalk will always be up to the individual, even if he is forced to secrecy.

There is little doubt that in 1974 the new route scene was dominated by Pete Livesey. But since then, having adopted many Yorkshire practices, local climbers have largely taken over the lead again. Jackal ascents, on the other hand, have remained in the open market and this has helped maintain a highly competitive atmosphere. The local climbers who have been making the pace can be divided into two groups: one is based in Keswick and the

other in Ambleside. Surprisingly, these two groups have always remained separate over the years, and a friendly rivalry has grown up.

The Keswick-based group has Pete Botterill, Steve Clegg, Pete Whillance and Jeff Lamb as its main figures, while the Ambleside group consists of a real mixed bag of emigre Yorkshiremen and climbers from the Furness area. Partnerships are not as settled as in the Keswick area, and teams chop and change according to circumstances. One partnership became familiarly known as 'loudmouth and foul mouth', due to the amount of noise generated both on the crags and in the pubs. The main dynamism has come from Ed Cleasby, with back-up roles being taken by Mike Lynch, Bill Birkett, John Eastham and myself. To list all the routes done by these groups would be a long and tiresome task and the facts can easily be gleaned from Mountain INFO pages. However, I will discuss some of the more important recent routes and the issues they have raised.

Livesey had shown that completely free routes of the highest standards were possible with pre-programming methods, but even so, some local climbers found that they still needed aid to overcome a few new lines. On Dow Crag, I used an aid sling on 'Abraxas', an impressive overhanging crack line just to the right of 'Balrog'. But the climb was soon jackalled into the realms of respectability by Martin Berzins. Berzins, an intense young Yorkshire climber, spent most of 1976 eliminating aid from modern routes, partnered mainly by his brother Bob. Nobody else has yet managed to free climb 'Abraxas', but, with or without the aid point, it is a very strenuous and sensational undertaking. Botterill, Whillance and Clegg have sinned twice. The first time was on their route 'Verdict', on Eagle Crag, where they used a nut for direct aid in the final smooth scoop, despite previous top-roped ascents. Again, Berzins

managed to climb the scoop without the aid. 'Verdict' is an enjoyable route, full of variety, and containing the most strenuous and delicate of climbing.

The other route on which they sinned was Eclipse, the open corner just left of 'Astra', on Pavey Ark. This obvious line had long been ignored because of its brevity and apparent impossibility. Changes in tastes made it a must, and Whillance, Botterill and Clegg, climbing further south than usual, grabbed it but employed an aid nut. A few days later, unaware of the earlier ascent, Berzins and Ed Cleasby climbed the line without the aid, creating a very hard pitch. The crux is similar to that on 'Verdict', so it would appear that Berzins is particularly capable on blank scoop problems.

The most recent line to be climbed with aid was 'Mother Courage', which takes an appalling looking overhanging wall to the left of Grindley's 'Brain Damage', on Pavey Ark. Both Cleasby and I inspected the line from an abseil, to see if it was possible and if it could be protected. Ed then made a very bold lead, placing a piton near the top - the quickest runner he could arrange at the time. He used the piton to rest before completing the final fingery moves. The pitch, although not particularly technical, is extremely strenuous, with large holds a long way apart. It is a very exhilarating climb, to say the least. The inevitable free ascent followed within weeks, this time achieved by the talented Bolton climber, Jerry Peel, who has quite a number of early repeats to his credit.

'Mother Courage' gives food for thought. If Cleasby had placed the piton runner before his ascent, he might have been able to climb the route completely free. Another alternative would have been to adopt a tactic that many Yorkshire climbers seem to favour - the practice of using tension from a runner above the

waist. Needless to say, a well-drilled second can help the leader quite effectively in this fashion, without it coming to the notice of any interested spectators. Everyone knows that this is aid and, of course, everyone is free to use the method, but guilty parties should never claim free ascents, especially if they are doing first ascents or jackal ascents. The crux of the matter is honesty: report the truth, even if it doesn't match your ethical and theoretical desires. Cleasby's other alternatives on 'Mother Courage' could have included continuous yo-yoing until a free ascent was achieved (wasn't 'Fingerlicker' climbed in this way?), or he could have fallen off until he had rested enough to complete the last few moves. One way or another, there is a large and assorted box of biscuits to choose from.

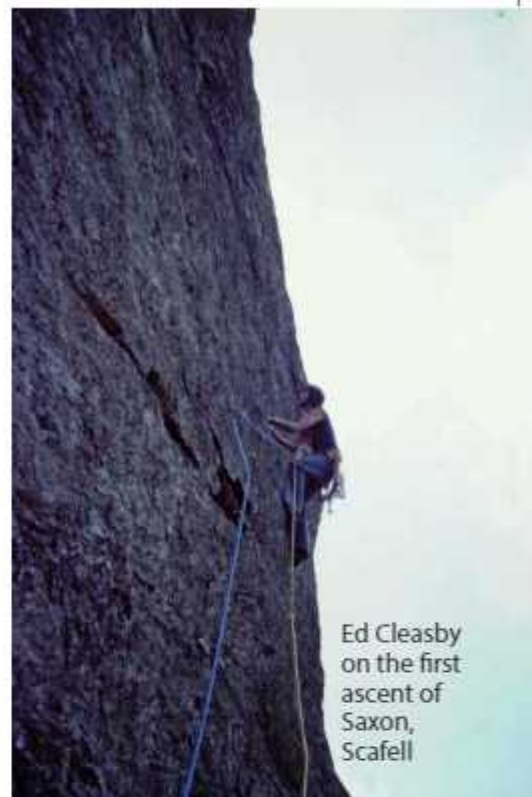
Climbers such as Martin Berzins argue that if a line requires aid it should be left alone. In the Lakes, over the past few years, I can think of only three important cases in which climbers have adhered to this fine, yet somewhat romantic principle, the climbs concerned being Shadowfax and Saxon on Scafell, and Tumble on Dow Crag.

Shadowfax is a steep, fingery wall to the left of Botterill's Slab. Having been inspected and left by various teams over the years, it was eventually climbed free last year by Botterill and Clegg. On Dow Crag, Pete Livesey and his faithful companion, Jill Lawrence, discovered and climbed 'Tumble' in June 1975. I thought all the free lines on Dow had been climbed, but Livesey had other ideas: he free climbed this very unlikely-looking groove line to the right of 'Holocaust' (a line that Cleasby had climbed with several points of aid in 1973) before anyone really started to train. 'Tumble' is very hard, very bold, and very poorly protected by all accounts. Reputed to be a brilliant pitch, it is an example of typical 'Liveseyan' audacity.

The third route was Ed Cleasby and John Eastham's 'Saxon', on Scafell Crag. This follows an intricate and delicate path up the very steep wall to the right of the Great Flake pitch on 'Central Buttress', until a slanting crack can be entered and followed to a good stance. Thereafter, the line is more contrived, but it still gives excellent climbing. Cleasby and Eastham

derived great satisfaction from climbing one of the last big lines in the Lakes without prior knowledge and without any aid. They were certainly helped by the fact that the route required hardly any gardening and the difficulties never rose to the harder Extreme category, but it was nevertheless a fine achievement.

Another recent free route is Livesey's latest creation, 'Lost Horizons', the obvious leaning corner line to the right of 'Centaur'. It had been half-heartedly tried by leading climbers for years, mainly in spirit rather than body. Although Livesey managed to free climb the groove, he hammered in two pitons for protection. The route is no doubt very hard indeed, but many will regard it as a retrograde step, partly because of the pitons (and because they were put in by someone who has spent so much time criticising and removing other people's iron), and partly because the route was inspected in advance. It will



Ed Cleasby on the first ascent of Saxon, Scafell

be interesting to see if the jackals make a meal of this one in 1977.

At this stage it might be worth referring to the large amount of gardening that has been going on recently in the creation of new routes - a fairly unusual procedure these days, with everyone craving for very hard lines on steep and generally clean rock. Dave Nicol, Chris Downer and friends (all Borrowdale based) have been well to the fore in this respect and, after major excavations, they have unearthed a number of very good routes. An outstanding discovery was 'Great End Corner', which was climbed in 1975 and is now regarded as one of the great classics of Borrowdale. It may be that the future will centre on freshly gardened crags or on the less popular crags that climbers like John Earl and Bob Hutchinson have been developing in recent years.

No doubt, some will describe the new routes as mere space-fillers. Such remarks are usually made by people who haven't done the routes, but it is true that climbs are being squeezed into smaller and smaller expanses of unclimbed rock between the classic lines, and this does lay them open to criticism of this sort. However, climbers are also showing a change of attitude, to accommodate and rationalise these climbs: much more attention is being focused on the actual moves, rather than on the independence or fineness of line. An early route of this type was Livesey's 'Longhair', on White Ghyll. Put up in 1971, it was 10 years ahead of its time. It is a 25-foot test-piece rammed in between 'Laugh Not' and 'Man o' Straw', and so far it has been virtually ignored. Several other recent routes fall into the same category, though none are as blatant as 'Longhair'.

Dove Crag had two routes of this type added in 1976: Explosion (Botterill and Clegg) takes a groove line

and plugs an empty space before the crag peters out into the hillside; 'Problem Child' (Cleasby and Berzins) is a steep and poorly protected pitch that fills a gap between 'Extol' and 'Hangover'. Although not as fine as their neighbours, these routes are harder: this will be their attraction. Livesey also got in on the act with his route, 'Rough', on Dow Crag. Crowded on to a heavily developed area, it crosses four other routes in its 150ft length. Nevertheless, though difficult, and rather contrived, it is a most enjoyable pitch. Two similar routes on Gimmer Crag will probably achieve considerable popularity. 'Equus', by Ed Cleasby, follows the shallow depression between 'Eastern Hammer' and 'Kipling Groove'; a hard move is needed to break through the overhang above the Kipling undercling, but thereafter the blank-looking groove provides enough small holds and adequate protection to make it one of the more enjoyable undertakings on the crag. The other route, Livesey's 'Breaking Point', is crammed between 'Gimmer Crack' and 'Gimmer String', but, as it takes an arête, it seems independent and should become very popular.



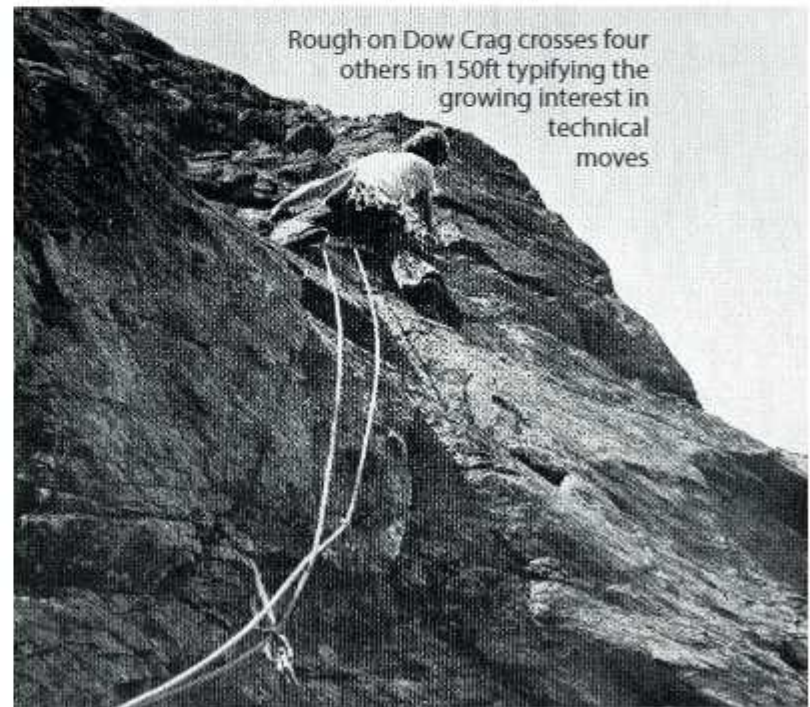
Rodney Valentine leads the second crux section on Bitter Oasis on Goat Crag

Other examples of 'space-fillers' can be found on Shepherd's Crag, where 'Stone Tape' and 'Savage Messiah' seem to keep the modern youths happy, even on hot days when one would have thought more satisfaction could be had on Scafell. There is no doubt that the gritstone attitude is flowing in: it is the delight of the individual moves that counts.

However, if one is thinking of pure, naked difficulty, two 1976 routes, 'Gates of Delirium' and 'Grand Alliance', probably deserve to join 'Dry Grasp' and maybe even 'Footless Crow' as the hardest Lakeland climbs. For once, Yorkshire had nothing to do with either of them. Ed Cleasby and I pinched 'Grand Alliance' from the locals. It takes the obvious line between 'Vertigo' and 'The Lastest', on Black Crag in Borrowdale. The wall was very mossy, so we spent some time cleaning it from an abseil rope; a few days later, armed with chalk and determination, I led the pitch. It starts with a very delicate traverse between roofs and then goes directly up a bulging and desperate wall to the top. Ed described the pitch as a monster, and the Berzins brothers, who made the second ascent, showed great surprise that local climbers could climb at such a standard.

The Berzins got even more of a shock when they repeated Botterill and 'Clegg's Gates of Delirium', which takes the very steep rock just right of 'The Medlar', on Raven Crag, Thirlmere. By all accounts, they didn't make too good a job of the second ascent: Martin Berzins used aid while seconding the strenuous first pitch, in order to save himself for a free ascent of the crucial groove pitch. One can only assume that Botterill and Clegg made a very professional job of the first ascent, making use of all the pre-programming methods available, before doing the actual ascent - which was as great an achievement as 'Footless Crow'.

The dramatic rise in standard that has taken place in small cliff climbing over the past few years has given new impetus to the endless debate on grading. What should be the grade of these new routes? The FRCC, of course, calls them all Extremely Severe, which is no better than the Very Severe grade in Scotland, as it covers a vast range. The 1976 Dow Crag Area guide, for instance, grades both 'Catacomb' and 'Tumble' at Extremely Severe, which is ridiculous, as the latter route is far harder. Under the FRCC system, the writer of the guide, John Martindale, was not allowed to introduce new grades. Alec Sharp's new Cloggy guide, on the other hand, had a superior system, whereby the Extreme grade is subdivided and individual pitch gradings are given. I wish the Fell and Rock would wake up to such ideas. Their intransigence has led to increasing discussion on the grading system in Lakeland climbing circles, and some radical solutions have been advocated.



The super-fit devotees, being the influential climbers, have recently tended to downgrade the old routes, fitting the new routes into their place. Hence, under the Crew/Wilson system, the old 5cs have become 5bs, and the old 6as have become 5cs. But the system originated at a time when 'climbing athletes' didn't exist, so 'climbing athletes' have no right to downgrade. The crux on Ichabod has always been 5c as far as most climbers are concerned, and it should not be downgraded to allow grading space for harder routes. The system is open-ended, so the 6a and 6b grades should be used. The original intention of the system was to give a technical grade, but time and use have expanded its meaning: a pitch with a whole series of 5c moves must be a 6a, and so the argument continues. Lakeland climbers, however, have now developed a new system for Extreme climbs, and this, together with the 'old' system, can be examined on the accompanying list, which was compiled after taking into account the opinions of

several leading climbers. The new 'E' grade is simply an 'impression' grade for the harder climbs - based on the idea that everyone has an impression of a climb after completing it. It is a five-fold system, ranging from E1 (*Nimrod*) to E5 (*Footless Crow*). Using the Crew/Wilson system as it should be used, the crucial pitches of these climbs would be graded 5b and 6b.

What has surprised many people is the quality of the recent hard routes. Within the last few years, new routes have been discovered on almost every popular crag in the Lake District; many of them are as good as the classic climbs that previously formed the main attractions of Lakeland climbing. One outstanding route is Livesey's 'Bitter Oasis', which, though hard, is still within reach of many able climbers today. If one can tackle the established Extremes with comparative ease, then one should be able to struggle up some of the E3s - while failing with dignity on many!

Critical E6 6c

Glenn Sutcliffe

I've just looked at the date of the 1st ascent of this route and was somewhat shocked to see it was 30 years ago...



Dave Birkett attempting Critical on the day of Glenn's first ascent

I knew nothing of the line of the line of 'Critical' until a brief chat with Andy Hislop, who said he was working a line which he was finding tough.

A couple of weeks later he rang me at work to say it was probably going to be too hard for him, did I want to go and have a look at it? I'd never been that motivated by 1st ascents as they always seemed a lot of hassle, however having just done 'The Shining Path' close to it I knew the climbing in that area was superb.

That weekend I parked on the Walna Scar road with a view to abbing down the line and having a 'look'. On arrival at the parking I saw a certain Mr Dave Birkett who had obviously had the same call from Andy.

We wandered up to the crag and Dave got to the top of the route and set up a top rope. Both of us spent a bit of time on the crux in the crack, a long reach off a small 1 finger pocket. Dave having a reach advantage on me found this move far easier than I did. I'm not convinced I ever linked the move through the crux on a top rope.

Dave now solid on the crux decided it was time to go for the lead and set off up the route, dispatching the crux move with little difficulty. Ah well another 1st ascent to Dave to add to his collection I thought... However, neither of us had taken any interest in the headwall above the crux. Suddenly Dave was tussling and next thing he was hanging below the last runner having been spat off.

Lowering Dave back to the ground, and I'm guessing with a bit of a smirk on my face I realised it was my turn. All I had to do was climb through the crux and the headwall neither of which I managed to do on the blunt end of the rope.

Can't remember much of my ascent apart from finally sticking the crux and thinking there is no way I'm coming off now and somehow sketching my way to the belay.

I'm lowered back to the base of the climb and Dave made the 2nd ascent immediately.

A very good route. I suspect it's E7 not E6 but it is the Lakes...

Woodhouse's Arête E6 6b

FRCC Journal 1998

A superb route (best new route on Dow for years!) with a brilliant finish up the hanging arête above Woodhouse's Pinnacle. Start as for Woodhouse's Route below and left of the huge pinnacle on a grass ledge.

(6b) An easy groove and pleasant flake crack lands you in a polished leftward-slanting groove. Up this, a few feet, to stand on a good flake. From here, lean round the steep arête, on the right, to find a good jug. Swing round on this (Friend 2 in LH-side of jug, RP3 in crack on right) and up steeply to a small ledge. The short flake and wall (crux of P.M.) lead to a step right beneath an overhang (peg and small wires). Hard moves rightwards round the overhang gains a finger pocket (good Rock 5 but couldn't let go to place it). Swing left on to the undercut arête (brilliant position). The arête above is climbed to the top, an undercut pocket and a flat hold being most helpful (RP3 in tiny crack above flat hold).

13 May 1998

K Phizacklea, R Matheson

Top-roped prior to leading, but all gear placed on lead.

Scott Quinn
of Woodhouse's Arête



Woodhouse's Arête

Keith Phizacklea

The motivation was simple.

If I don't have a look and somebody else does what turns out to be a really good new route how pissed off am I going to be!

Straight away it's obvious I've hit the motherlode - it's steep, well positioned, and hard but not outrageously so plus The Pocket is bang on for setting up the finish. Back on the ground I'm very excited. Who to do it with is easy being Dow - Rob is a cert which if he wasn't so weak may have been a bad move? Throw in a bit of shakey top roping and we are ready to give it a go.

A few days later.

Rob abs down and smacks a peg in under the roof. The start's not easy but all's well up to the roof, hard moves round this gain a break and pocket for a wire which is exactly where my fingers are. A fruitless struggle ensues so I jettison the wire and crack on to the pocket - being a bit pumped it's no place to loiter which doesn't mean I don't try. Above it's hard 'n' sequey and when it goes wrong there's sod all I can do about it!

As falls go this was OK, better than rattling down a groove. We talk it over; drink some tea and I stare up. Walking over I retrieve the wire from the scree. Back up at the pocket, though more relaxed it still feels hard but this time I make it to the flat hold and a runner. On belay, somewhat pleased, I take in and Rob comes up far too easily for my liking and offers his hand: "Well done mate" cheers Rob. We head down for a celebratory bag of crisps.

Scott Quinn
on Woodhouse's Arête



The Mathesons – Murdoch to Craig

Rob Matheson

Murdoch, my Dad, started climbing at the age of 42 with a borrowed hemp rope and some handed down nailed boots, all in a quest for adventure. His natural grit and determination had, as a young man, led him to cycle to London from his home in Dumbarton, stop with his brother, learn the 'Knowledge' and drive a taxi for a few months before returning home. His partner, Neil, was equally enthusiastic but slightly more experienced having done 'C' and 'D Ordinary' on the mighty Dow Crag decades before.



Their first climb together was 'Gordon and Craig's Route' and, for their once a month outings, Dow Crag was their only venue for a considerable period of time. After two years Dad bought a pair of Hawkin's Scaffell boots and a karabiner, cutting off an end of the rope to make a sling. For five years, Murdoch and Neil did all the routes on Dow, up to Very Difficult, but never ventured to other valleys or crags. Not quite true as Dad took me up a Moderate on The Cobbler in his first year of climbing. I was 7 then but was not

Murdoch and Rob near Brackenclose in early 1960s

allowed out again until he gained more experience in rope handling and judgement. A few years later saw me on 'South Chimney', inevitably on Dow, where I climbed like a real tiger in white gym plimsolls - what better than to go out with your Dad! The bug really bit, and it was not long before my mother, Rena, was lured out onto the friendlier crags of the Duddon and Langdale enabling even more regular outings. At the time it was rare to see father, mother and son on the same route but for us it was the norm. At the time we just worked through the grades, and I remember our first VS - 'Gimmer Crack! I was 15 and Dad 51! Looking back, I remember periods of time by the family's car - A Jowett Bradford, which had 10bhp, looked like a shack on wheels and could only get up steep hills in reverse. Then the Austin Cambridge which was so low slung the passengers had to disembark on humpback bridges. ...and the beloved Mini Traveller, our companion for so many years.

My early memories of Dow crag include my first fright when my Dad fell off the block of 'C Ordinary'!



Rena, Rob and the Mini Traveller at Brackenclose

Only bashed about a bit and able to walk down, but it shook me to bits. From then on, I did most of the leading as it seemed a safer option!

Another time, the unique changeable weather caught out a large party of youths on 'C Ordinary'. It was May and a snowstorm struck! We had to lower about 10 of them off the face, including the instructors. The worst time was when a large rucksack suddenly landed at my mother's feet as she stood by the rescue box. But on second glance it had arms and legs. The young man was on the first stance of 'Murray's Route', belaying his leader, but had leaned out too far, losing his balance as the belay slipped off, and he fell to the boulders. The poor lad died as we carried him down and, to this day, I carry the vision of his 'soul' leaving him. The heart breaking, but thankfully rare, side of our challenging sport.

Great family days on Dow were many but our ascent of the wonderful 'Eliminate A' stands proud. My mother being coaxed across the dreaded 'rochers perches' pitch, piano playing her fingers to find the most satisfying grip, or not, depending on the melody of her mind. And emerging onto the summit slabs and savouring the achievement that now lay beneath our feet. Then having a sip of piping hot Campbell's condensed chicken soup from that, oh so delicate, vacuum flask. The long walk from Torver was the chosen approach in those early years, and on one particularly windy day, as we went over the rise to Goats Water, a freak gust catapulted Mum into the air and smashed her down, breaking the left arm in the process! A long painful trip to hospital and a few months watching from the side lines.

We were certainly guidebook 'tickers' and you had to earn the right to do the next grade up, by doing all the lower ones first. Same with first ascents - you should earn the right! I had done 'Holocaust' with my

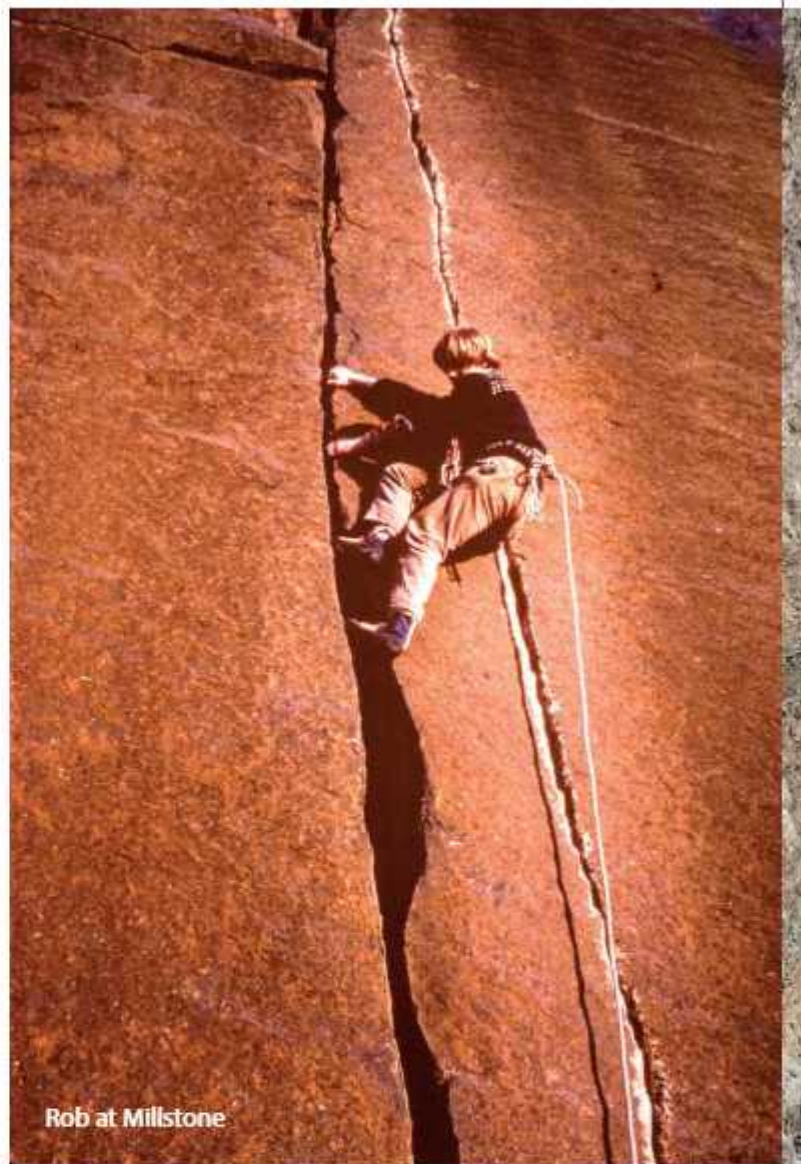


South Chimney, Dow Crag
- Rob's first Dow Crag venture

mates but Dad had talked of a rising traverse line on the same buttress. On a freezing day that November I launched out across the fierce overhanging start to the traverse and gave it a good clean, working out a top pitch above Giant's Crawl in the process.

The following March we did this route, calling it 'Catacomb', a tough E1, with 3 quality pitches and is now emerging as one of the classic E1s. The same week I then set about trying to climb the bulging wall to the right of 'Leopard's Crawl'. It was really committing, with a nasty landing, and I remember my mother being mortified at my use of the 'f-word' in front of her. This was 'Tarkus', another tough E1. The following year we did 'Pink Panther' together which was an even tougher call, being sustained, quite fingery and lacking the best protection. As Dad was seconding, I called down to ask if he was over the crux and into the groove, to which he replied 'In the groove, in the groove, I'm nearly in my f*****g coffin"! My mother was yet again suitably mortified. Upping the grade here to E2, but tough even today if you are climbing near your limit. As a family we climbed a lot together in the early 70s but July 1973 saw our last new route together, 'Hesperus', on the impressive overhanging left wall of Central Chimney, which was done after work one evening. Mum and Dad continued to climb together until September 1978 when Dad, at the age of 64, sustained a nasty double fracture of the skull as a result of a fall from 'Obituary Grooves' on Black Crag, Borrowdale. It involved a difficult helicopter rescue from the crag, supported by Chris Sice and the West Cumbrian lads, with my mother cradling Dad's head for hours. Dad never climbed again, and the injury seemed to trigger the onset of dementia which increasingly influenced the rest of their lives. My mother regularly said to me that her climbing days were the most precious of all and it is fitting that their ashes have been laid looking across Goats Water towards the mighty Dow Crag.

During 1974 and 1975 I teamed up with John Martindale from the infamous Ulverston Climbing Club and we did 'Murray's Super Direct' and 'Abraxas' together, as well as the free version of 'Holocaust'. But lurking in the background was an ambitious and



Rob at Millstone

talented young climber called Ed Cleasby and the following year we teamed up, tying the knot with the aptly named 'Grand Alliance' (E4) on Black Crag, Borrowdale. Up until my departure from the climbing scene in 1983 we worked very well as a team and did several significant first ascents together, but personally, that last time on Scafell's East Buttress, looking up at the potential line of 'Shikasta', was significant. We failed miserably to make any headway



Craig on Holy Braille, East Buttress, Scafell

on the obvious overhanging crack line which was permanently wet, and it would have made a stunning independent first pitch to the route. Instead, we started up 'Armageddon'. Why was that significant? Well 38 years later in 2021, at the grand old age of 71, I led that unclimbed crack - still wet, still overhanging but very climbable at E4 6a. This time with another ambitious and talented partner, my son, Craig.

In 1996 Craig was 16 and managed his first lead, which was a limestone Severe called 'Equity' on Pot Scar. Took him ages to fathom out how to belay at the top so I soloed up the route, showed him how, walked back around and seconded it. How the roles have reversed over time! I was climbing regularly with the 'Barrow Boys' at that time and Keith Phizacklea took Craig under his wing and immersed him in the traditional Cumbrian ways. First Ascents went on the back burner, and we just climbed all the time here, there, and everywhere and mostly on sight up to E6. Bouldering and Sport climbing was discovered and some of the team got stronger. Great days with adventures all over the UK and certainly worthy of its own story yet to be written, by a group of talented climbers who just got on with the job and climbed.

Craig eventually moved away to university and work, and this opened his eyes to the world of strength and power. But it's in the doing and not the seeing, so Craig applied himself. During this time Craig and I did our first new route together - 'A Ordinary' (E7) on Dow Crag which I could barely second. He was certainly getting stronger! While in Sheffield Craig certainly came under the influence of Mark Leach, the strongest of the strong, and his expression of 'if you can't pull it you can't do it' resonated with him.

I had never focussed on physical strength, and certainly never trained in a systematic way. I relied on keeping in the comfort zone by using mind control. If it didn't get above 5c I didn't need a runner. If I was on my feet, I didn't need a runner. If I could down climb, I didn't need a runner. But if a runner placement was possible, I was skilled enough to place it. Craig developed an opposite skill set based on power and power endurance and preferred the security of runners. He could hang on forever and the steeper the better. He preferred a project to get



Craig seconding Rob on 40th Anniversary ascent of Ten Years After at Hodge Close

his teeth into, rather than travelling vast distances in order to do as many 'comfort' routes as possible. And work and family put on severe time restraints. His idea was that he could do the easier routes up to E6 later in life but now was not the time to squander that power. Looking back, I think a turning point was when he tried to do 'Welcome to the Cruel World' E9 in 2013. Dave Birkett was watching his efforts with interest, as no other climber had succeeded despite the attention of some of the country's best. Dave thought it E10 and perhaps was influenced by the Lakes tendency to grade tough. Working it on the rope Craig realised that he just wasn't strong enough, so focussed on getting even stronger by using the methods of gymnastics training. On steep stuff core was everything! 5 years later he dispatched it - no one else has.

Craig had sport climbed up to F8b+ but found it lacked 'soul'. No lasting effect! His focus was hard trad and in 2012 he climbed 'Stopper Knott' (E8) on White Ghyll, a serious and powerful surge through the big roof right of 'White Ghyll Chimney'. This was followed by three more E8s in the following years: 'Thy will be Done' on Scafell East; 'Mr Cuddles' in the Duddon, and 'Prowess' on Dow Crag. The latter two characterised by ground fall probability. 2019 was perhaps Craig's standout year when he became known as the 'best climber nobody has ever heard of' - repeating Birkett's 'Hasty Sin Oot Ert Hoonds' (E9), 'Nowt But a Fleein' Thing' (E8) and 'Lookin' Lish' (E8). All on the terrifying Cam Crag, Wastwater Screes. These ascents were followed by the long awaited second ascent of Dave Birkett's 'Another Lonely Day' (E8) on Scafell East and the third ascent of his renowned 'If 6 were



Paladin, White Ghyll - 50th anniversary ascent

9' (E9) on Iron crag. Adam Hocking's 'The Keswickian' (E8) on Goucher Crag with the bold 'Barrovian Finish' was thrown in for good measure. I even got into the act and led a new route on the front face of Cam Crag, calling it 'Scarface' which I originally graded E5. Subsequent ascents have confirmed an E6 grade, also labelling it as one of the best E6s in the Lakes - the route next to it, which Craig led, is perhaps even better, but at an optimistic E7, 'Babyface' is certainly harder won! 2019 was indeed a good year.

Needless to say, Scafell East did not escape attention, as a few of my long term projects were duly completed. It's all hard won up here - weather, travel, walk, heavy sacs and the sometimes challenging logistics of cleaning the lines. One such was 'Barad-Dur'. When I went up on my own, several times, to

hang there in splendid isolation trying to fathom out how to get into the rock as well as trying to unlock the complex difficulties. I led this on my first attempt, on a freezing day in May 2014 but only took a few bits of gear as I didn't expect to do it. Getting more gear up to me was an 'interesting' exercise as I hung on for grim death determined not to weight the rope. Anyway, I got there by the skin of my teeth and even Craig thought it was tough to follow, grading it E6! The previous year I had cleaned a really impressive wall to the left of Trinity, but it lacked protection, so I tapped in a pair of poor blades. Dave Birkett was with me, and a crucial finger hold broke off under his mighty power, which made it a lot harder. As was the ethical understanding Dave left it for me, as it was 'my' line. However, I focussed on other things and to cap it all broke my finger in White Ghyll so



Craig and Rob below Cam Crag

took to the world of cycle racing for a few years. In 2020 I returned, sparked into action by the interest Scott Quinn was showing in the line. One return visit persuaded me that I couldn't do all the moves plus the protection was marginal, and it was indeed a lot steeper than I remembered. So, just one solution, Craig. This proved to be a bold and sustained pitch and 'Holy Braille' (E7) is certainly one for strong fingers in a sea of technical intricacy.

Without a sports plan you are in danger of drifting into your own personal mediocrity. Sometimes that involves challenging yourself with your pet weaknesses. For me that was sport climbing. Climbing totally at your limit was not the way I learnt the trade. Trad climbing was a survival game necessitating only 90% effort, as the remaining 10%

was needed to descend back to the safety zone. Falling off making moves upwards was not on, and I found that adjustment really hard, and still do today. On my first attempt at 'Scarface' I did forge upwards out of my safety zone, at the end of a long tiring day. Going for it, one move from the finishing jug, my arms hit failure and I took a huge 60 foot whipper, thankfully into thin air. No harm done as the protection was good at this stage. With poor or marginal protection, the 90% rule is the wisest option. Craig has taken this to another level. He has developed the power endurance to down climb on the hardest of routes, usually after placing vital protection. On the rare occasion, if reverse gear is not an option, he has shown the endurance to be able to recover and shake out. Such was shown on an attempt of 'If 6 were 9' when the crux holds at

the top were wet. He was able to down climb back into the safety zone of the skyhook and lower off in relative comfort. That vital 10% reserve always pays dividends on big bold E numbers. When he successfully led it, later the same day, replacing the gear on the way up, in shockingly wet conditions, he shook out on the holds below the crux for 10 minutes, before committing to that final scary effort.

In May 2021 Craig led his long term project - the stunning overhanging Groove in Brightbeck Cove. This was something else. 90% was out the window as the only reverse gear was hitting the ground! Overhanging in two directions, virtually blank, no runners to pull in on and the ultimate 'working' challenge. 10 meters and 25 moves with a small wire at 9 meters. Creating a new 'hybrid' test piece with mats as the only sanctuary if things went wrong getting to the runner placement, and then having the strength to fiddle it in. Craig fell off on one attempt and just caught the edge of the mats cartwheeling at high velocity into the boulder field. Not good and out of the game for a few weeks! He decided to try it with the runner in place, but still incredibly testing and scary, even with velcro fast clip technology. Success yes, but ultimately less satisfying than his own personal mantra of placing gear on the lead. This remained his goal throughout the summer and autumn, but due to Covid restrictions, poor weather, and that motivational feeling that it is perhaps time to move on. The opportunity slid away and only then did the wider world become aware of 'Hard Cheese' (E10 7a). The grade is, no doubt, very subjective but it was harder than any E9 he'd done; so one step at a time. Those that follow will be best placed to make judgments on this front. And good luck !!

So what of the future? Keeping fit and healthy is the priority. Training to stand still in an ageing body.

A sports plan that seems just beyond reach. Keep competing against yourself ... you could go on and on! But one thing's for sure; as soon as you let go, drift into mediocrity, and cease to drive yourself then the game is up, and there'll be no more stories to tell. In my 70s I'd love to climb the Sevens in all disciplines - E7, V7 and 7c, on different rock and in different areas, and continue with my '50 years after' campaign for as long as I can! Craig, no doubt, will immerse himself in pushing his own physical and mental boundaries, and perhaps to taste the delights of other rock disciplines further afield, when the opportunities arise. But it's in The Lakes where his heart and soul are and I think he gets that from his Dad!

Made in Borrowdale - The Greatest Valley on Earth

James (Caff) McHaffie

To say I feel a strong attachment to the Borrowdale valley would be an understatement. I was brought up in a house on Windebrowe in Keswick and dad would often be going down this valley, mainly on his bike, as he couldn't drive, and sometimes via lifts with friends. I thought he was wasting his time climbing. He'd taken me and my sisters, Heather, and Jennifer, out to Woden's Face when I was about five. I hated it, cried, and didn't climb for years afterwards. Although on Sundays, I did enjoy it when dad would take me for a walk over Walla Crag to Shepherd's Café. He built footpaths for the National Trust, and it would be my job to have the fire going at home, which heated the water in the house. He'd always come back in and stand in front of the fire saying: "I've had a hard day on the hill."

Around my mid-teens the climbing bug finally grabbed me. I asked to do 'Troutdale Pinnacle' with dad (who'd done it over 1,000 times) and he kindly took me up it. I think it was snowy and I vaguely remember slipping around on it in rock shoes on the descent. This must have been winter of 1995/6 and soon after we were out having epics all the time. Dad shouting at me, rightfully, because I was crap at getting gear out as a novice. We'd often walk or bike out to crags. Some of the first routes I seconded him up were 'Mandrake' on Quayfoot, 'Illusion' on Lower Falcon and 'Overhanging Bastion' on Castle Rock. He'd be telling me stories all the time – one about a friend of his who got a finger stuck in a crack and dad threatened to cut the fingers off, which made the guy try a bit harder and free his fingers... another about Pete Livesey doing ground breaking routes such as 'Footless Crow', 'Bitter Oasis', 'Dry Grasp' and 'Nagasaki Grooves'... and about Pete Whillance taking death defying 100-foot falls. It just opened up a world I

didn't know existed and Borrowdale soon became my favourite playground. I remember harassing dad into letting me do my first lead climb on Shepherd's - 'Brown Slabs Crack'. I wasn't ready, got wiggled, disco legged and slipped off it, cat-clawing down a little way, coming to a stop somehow then continuing upwards climbing really badly with poor gear placements and dad shaking his head.

At the same time two school friends were extremely active. Hock (Adam Hocking) had just won the junior British climbing championship - he could do one arm pull ups on his little finger without warming up and had immaculate technique. Wez Hunter was at a similar level to me and getting into trad leading. Hock was at such a high level at the time it was hard to comprehend from the viewpoint of a novice. I think around this time he soloed 'Ker Plunk' (an E5 on Shepherd's), 'Penal Servitude' (an E5 on Reecastle) and was making fast repeats of things like 'Bleed In Hell' (E8 on Hell's Wall) back when very few people were able to do routes like this so fast - he was only 14.

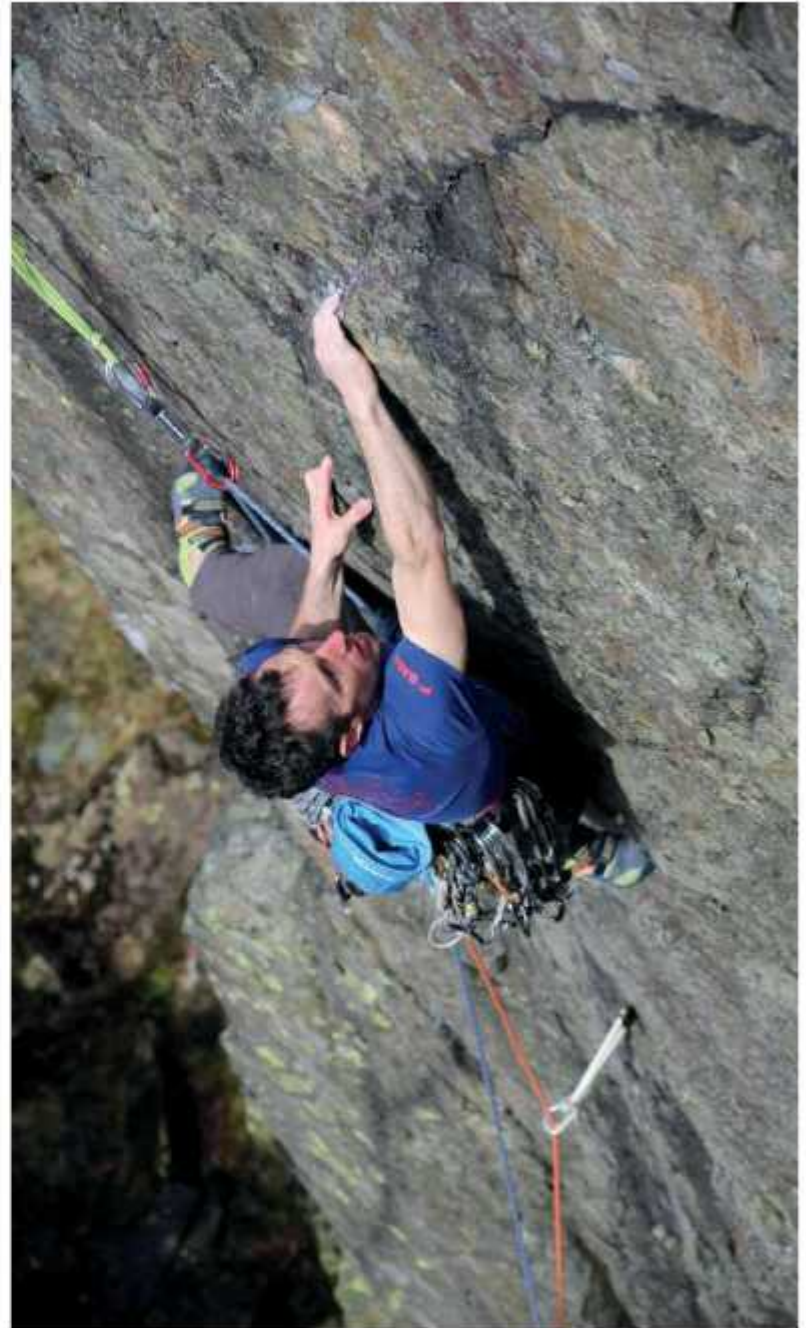
The first time Hock and I climbed together it was pissing down with rain and we cycled down Borrowdale to Dalt Quarry and did some 6as and 6bs in heavy rain - it was quite nuts looking back. I remember doing the 'Mortician', on Black Crag, in similarly grim conditions. I took my first trad lead fall, with him and Wez, off 'Wild Side', onto the peg - I think I didn't sleep for a week with the adrenalin of it.

Me and dad continued getting out together - he pointed me up his route 'Lakeland Cragmen', on Sergeant Crag Slabs, for my first HVS, telling me to space the gear as we didn't have many quickdraws. It's a stunning route and dad had found the crag

sometime in the mid 1990s when working on the opposite side of the Langstrath valley. He pointed me up 'Bold Warrior', an E1 of his on Reecastle, for my first Extreme. Then Hock and I did 'The Niche' on Lower Falcon which was my first E2 - another route of dad's.

This same year of starting, 1996, Hock failed to meet me at Lower Falcon Crag and frustrated I set off soloing up 'Spinup'. This was the start of a big and dangerous door opening in terms of climbing style. Once I got a taste for it, I was properly hooked and doing a route solo felt completely different to anytime you lead it. Without the faff of gear or belaying you can go so fast and do so many routes. Dick Patey was living in Borrowdale and was also a keen soloist, often found on Shepherd's, and we'd sometimes chat about possible routes to try. Big ones at the time were routes like 'Prana', 'Bitter Oasis', 'Dry Grasp' and 'Grand Alliance'. I hated school and would often bunk off and go down the valley - 'Tumbleweed Connection' was a regular favourite to solo but meant you had a lot of heather bashing to get back down. The number of near-death experiences on slightly damp rock over that period is hard to calculate.

I did 'Bitter Oasis' in 1997 with Kevin Avery and it was probably my first route from the Extreme Rock book. It's a stellar two-pitch route and the second pitch was bold, having lost a peg and was the pitch I led - my hardest lead at that point and I remember buzzing for a week afterwards. Although not long after both me and Hock took bad falls - surprise, surprise. I slipped off the start of 'Executioner' (Reecastle) without a rope, fell about 20/30 feet - the crag was busy, and everyone went quiet. I was fortunate in landing on grass rather than the rock a metre to my side, but thought I'd done something bad. I hobbled back to Shepherd's Café, with Wez, and I remember shaking inside there, with a cup of tea, before somehow getting home. Fortunately, I'd just bruised



James McHaffie - Hells Wall,
Bowder Stone Crag, Borrowdale

a strap muscle in my back, but I couldn't raise my foot above knee height for a few weeks.

Hock decked out on 'Star Wars', an E3 on Lower Falcon, when a hold snapped - again he was very fortunate not to seriously injure himself.

I remember being on the crux of 'Manpower', an E2 on Goat Crag, when I was having a hard time on it and shouted to dad, who was belaying, where the holds were as he'd done it before. He shouted back that he couldn't remember, and I got angry that he couldn't remember, as being 16, I thought you'd remember every route and move forever. Dad was in his 60s and still not too near his age I struggle to remember some routes I've done, let alone moves.

Dad had infinite energy for finding new routes on random outcrops down Borrowdale, such as those found high on the left on Castle Crag, in Borrowdale. We'd often climb more moss than rock on these things, but I have fond memories of spending time with him there. We spent a lot of time just drinking tea and eating cakes at Shepherd's Café - dad knew Martin the farmer well and they got on, I think dad got a lifetime supply of free tea there.

We did 'Interloper' together in 2002, 40 years after he did the first ascent with Adrian Liddell. He'd wanted to do 'The Niche' too, but his hip was bad enough at that point I didn't want to risk it, with the traverse on the first pitch. The views from this crag are fantastic and I've got a really soft spot for the routes. The last climb I did with dad was 'Hedera Grooves' there, I think, with one of my sisters, Jennifer, who doesn't normally climb joining us on it - It was a really nice outing. Dad carried on climbing until 2005 when he sadly passed away in Keswick. We scattered his ashes in a small gully a bit above his favourite climb - 'Troutdale Pinnacle'.

The biggest day I had in climbing involved Borrowdale a great deal when doing 100 Extreme Rock routes in a day, going from Scafell, via Flat Crag, Neckband, Gimmer, Pavey, then down into Borrowdale at Sergeant Crag Slabs. Hock met me there and followed me to most of the other crags - the climbs and landscape of our childhood. Taking in as many good routes as I could muster energy. I'll never have another day like it, with memories of the routes and who I did them with - dad, Twyford, Wez, Hock, Adam Wilde, friends, and family lost all going past in the day.

It may be my favourite place in the world, Borrowdale, and when I return there, it fills me with powerful nostalgic emotion. A warm embrace of a dear friend. I used to pop up 'The Niche' and routes like that when visiting, but nowadays I avoid soloing by and large, although I may brave Troutdale Pinnacle.

I'll admit to having become a bit of a detached, cold, and slightly caustic character the last few years but when Hock told me that Shepherd's Café had closed it did give me some small heartache. It was the end of that era. Of summers sat there waiting for friends to turn up, hitching home, getting married (didn't last), cream scones, endless tea, endless climbs, wasted youth.

What a boon to have been brought up with this on our doorstep.

The Greatest Valley on Earth.

Abraham's Covenant

Abraham's Covenant E7 6c 30m

The route tackles the huge roof above Abraham's Cave. Ape across the roof, then move up to some good jugs (pro). Some very hard climbing now leads to the wall above. Continue more easily to the belay.

First ascent 19 April 2011 J McHaffie, S Wood

Sophie and I had stayed at Woody's house in Ambleside, as has always been the case with Woody the booze had run freely. It was good to catch up with him and his wife, Sarah, having left Cumbria a decade earlier to move to Wales, it was a treat to catch up with friends in the Lakes again. Woody had given me my first job when I left school, at Rock + Run in Ambleside.

Our friend Dave Kells arrived in the morning, and we brewed up with bleary eyes and decided to head to Dow Crag. Kells had spent a lot of his last few years getting baked, and he'd tell the same story again and again, having forgotten that he'd told you it a few minutes earlier.

Woody had said there was a project to look at in the side gully a bit right of 'Abraxas'. We had a look at this, but I thought it somewhat eliminate and not particularly worthwhile. Sat at the base of 'Pink Panther' area I spied a crack through the right side of the overhanging ground above which formed a vague prow on its right.

Woody and I went up for a look whilst Sophie kept an eye on Kells who was slinging rocks from a catapult out across the lake.

I remember putting in a cam 0.5 in the roof somewhere and then some committing and powerful moves. I lobbed off these twice trying to suss it out then, after a short rest, go through these moves to good holds on the lip of the overhang. There was a good wire in a block there but I wasn't sure about the block's stability. Above looked like it should ease too but it ended up being pretty wild. Quite dynamic climbing, blind and difficult which I just scraped up. I remember being chuffed to get up it, without inspecting it.

I lowered Woody down it afterwards to check out the top section and he confirmed it pretty tricky. I think he named it while we were celebrating back at his house. It was a good day with good friends at the time.

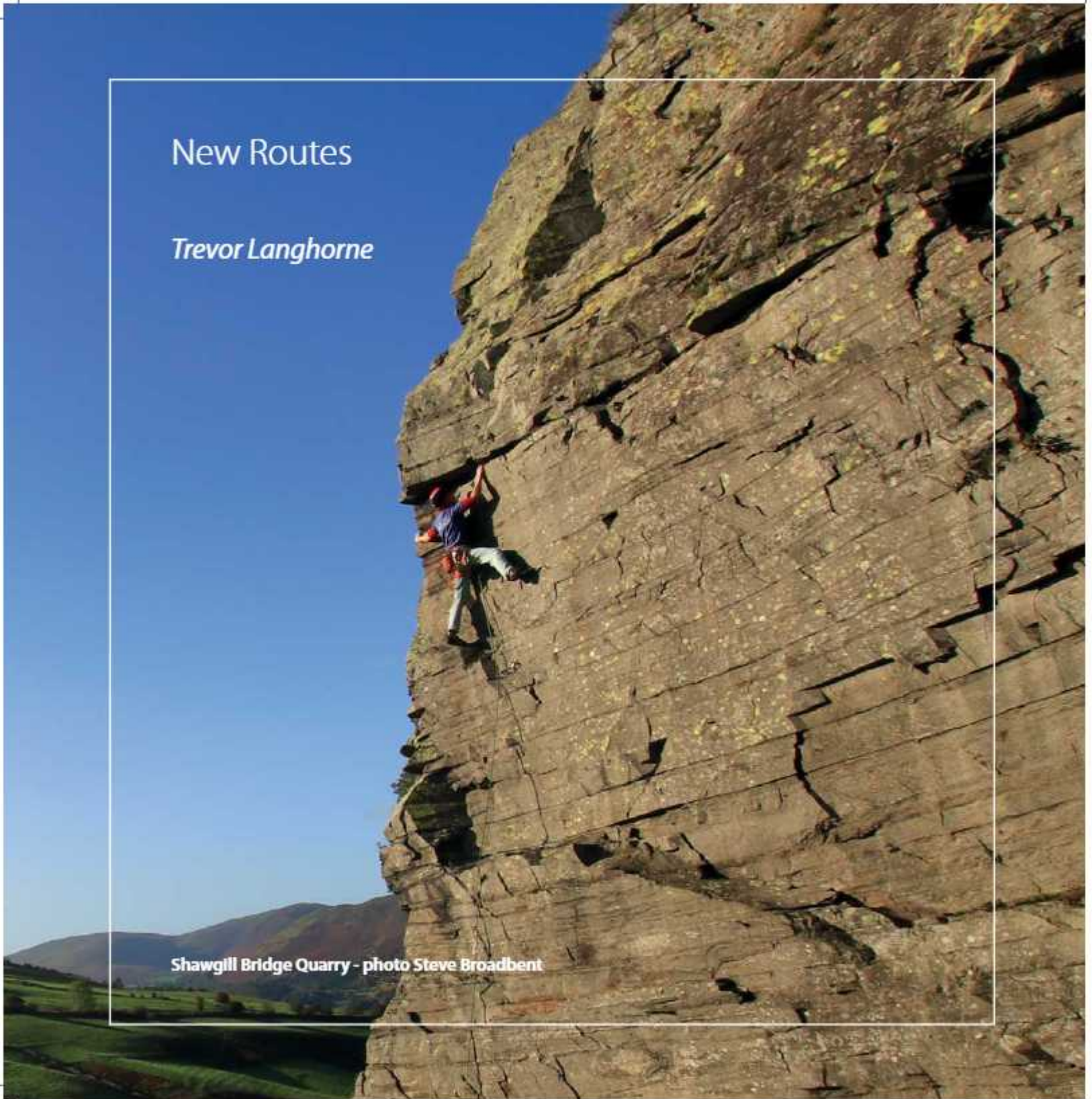
James McHaffie



New Routes

Trevor Langhorne

Shawgill Bridge Quarry - photo Steve Broadbent



There has been a lot of new route activity in the last year or so, no doubt due to more people enjoying staycations. This has also resulted in some new crags being explored and other crags having significant development. There is also an increasing number of sports venues. Many of the routes are short but often offer good climbing on nice rock: downloadable pdfs for many of these crags are available through the Climbing section of our website.

The 'biggest' additions in terms of difficulty have been in Langdale. On Bright Beck Crag (which is over the back of Pavey Ark) Craig Matheson climbed the ridiculously steep and smooth overhanging corner mentioned in the Langdale guidebook. The result is Hard Cheese (E10 7a), although short this one packs a big punch being both extremely technical and completely unprotected until just short of the top. On the East Wall of Pavey Ark Neil Gresham climbed a direct line up the impressive wall that holds Sixpence (E6) and Impact Day (E8) to give Lexicon E11 7a; its bold crux is right at the top with big air potential for the unsuccessful. Despite its high grade it was repeated within a couple of weeks by Steve McClure who took the big (70 foot) flyer before being successful.

Please remember that these route descriptions and star ratings/comments have not been checked - please treat grades and any other comments with a healthy dose of scepticism.

LANGDALE GIMMER CRAG EAST

This is the buttress immediately east of the current descent route from the main crag. There is a PDF mini-guide on the FRCC website.

Two Old Codgers Go Prospecting 77m S

I (Blue) Gray, M Biden (alt) - 23.04.2021

The lowest part of the crag is marked by a 5m flake pinnacle.

- 1) 12m Climb the front of this pinnacle and gain a rock shelf above it on the left by an awkward move. Belay at the back of the grass ledge above.
- 2) 25m The wall on the right gives an obvious line followed by easier climbing to belay at the back of the main terrace.
- 3) 20m Climb straight up to the bulging wall where moves left gain a pleasant groove. Climb this and the wall above to belay on the upper terrace.
- 4) 20m The left end of the slanting headwall is split by three cracks. Gain the base of these from the left and ascend the clean middle crack. Easier climbing leads to a grassy summit where good belays are a bit sparse.

Golden Fleece 65m VS 4c

M Biden, A Salisbury – 30 June 2021 (P1&2 M Biden, I (Blue) Gray)

To the right of the crag base and some 15m higher is an elegant pillar seamed by cracks. Start at an upstanding flake at the foot of the left-bounding arête.

- 1) 25m Starting up the left edge of the pillar, climb the attractive crack line. Continue up easier ground to belay at the back of the main terrace.
- 2) 20m (4b) The steep wall above contains a hanging groove to the right of this is a square-cut groove. Climb up and stand on a good rock ledge at the foot of the square-cut groove. Good gear in this protects a bold traverse left to gain the hanging groove. Climb this and the wall above, then traverse across the slabby rock rib to belay on a large, jammed block below a crack system.
- 3) 20m (4c) Step off the belay block and climb to a large, perched flake. Move left round this and, using handholds in the diagonal crack, step out onto the slabby wall beyond. Interesting delicate climbing leads straight up this wall to easier ground.

The next three routes lie on the slabby walls above the top of the main terrace (left of pitch 3 of Two Old Codgers). They are reached by scrambling up the terrace from the right. The main belt of these slabs contains a prominent vegetated crack with an arête on it's right. There is a band of easy angled slabs below the terrace which could provide additional entertainment.

Bellwether 45m VS 4b

M Biden, A Salisbury - 30 June 2021

The left side of the slabby wall is bounded by a pillar. Start left of some juniper bushes growing on a ledge.

- 1) 20m (4b) Climb up the right edge of the pillar until holds allow a step out left onto the front. Climb delicately straight up to the terrace above and its good belays.
- 2) 25m Move down the terrace a couple of metres and climb the cracked wall beneath the right-hand of the three cracks above. Between the right-hand crack and a series of perched flakes further to the right is an attractive red wall. Pleasant delicate climbing leads up this wall.

Sheepshank 40m VD

A Salisbury, M Biden - 30 June 2021

This route tackles the slabby wall left of the vegetated crack. Start just right of a juniper bush growing on a rock ledge.

- 1) 20m Good holds lead up the slabs left of several mossy streaks. Continue up to the good belays on the terrace above.
- 2) 20m The final slanting headwall is split by three cracks. Gain the base of these from the left and climb the right-hand crack, finishing up its right-hand wall when the crack runs blind.

Roasted Rib 40m D

A Salisbury, M Biden - 30 June 2021

Climb the arête immediately right of the prominent grassy crack line in the slabby wall (some 20m left of Two Old Codgers, P3).

- 1) 20m Climb the arête on good holds, finishing up a short slabby rib. Good belays on the terrace above.
- 2) 20m Climb up to the left-hand of the three cracks in the headwall and ascend this.

The next three routes lie to the right of the dividing rocky rake where the right-hand buttress rears up. They start from grass ledges reached by scrambling up grass or easy rock. The entrance to the rake on the left is guarded by a large chockstone block.

Shear Pleasure 35m D

M Biden, I (Blue) Gray 30 May 2021

This route starts just right of the large chockstone. A surprisingly easy route up steep rock. Climb the wall right of the block and follow the obvious line of features and good holds all the way to a grass bay and good belays.

Rough Diamond 35m MS

M Biden, I (Blue) Gray - 30 May 2021

Another very pleasant route. The centre of the buttress forms something of a blunt rib. Start below this and take a direct line to the final wall which requires a move right to finish.

T'Up an' Over 35m MVS 4b

I (Blue) Gray, M Biden - 30 May 2021

The right side of the buttress is split by a short groove with a large flake on its right. Climb up to the groove and move right to stand on the flake. Move further right and immediately back up left to gain the juniper ledge above the groove. Continue up to a steep wall where a short crack gains slanting rock ledges leading to another leaning wall. The left side of this contains a horizontal flake which

enables the wall to be overcome. Easier climbing leads to the grassy bay belays.

PAVEY ARK EAST FACE

Lexicon 33m E11 7a *PHOTO*

Neil Gresham – 4 September 2021

Start in between Impact Day and Sixpence at the obvious groove in the centre of the wall. Climb the groove (straightforward but poorly protected) then trend left to a junction with Impact Day at the overlap (rest and good runner on the left). Climb the middle wall of Impact Day, past a stacked knife-blade peg, to the horizontal break at two-thirds height. Make one move right, arrange your last protection and then blast directly up the headwall to gain a faint groove for the last six feet. The climbing on the headwall is technical and sustained with the last few moves providing the crux. *PHOTO*



BRIGHT BECK CRAG

Hard Cheese E10 7a *PHOTO*

Craig Matheson - 28 May 2021

The stunning overhanging corner on a small outcrop, left of Peppered Boursin. This has been climbed as a highball until a small RP placement near the top of the crag. *PHOTO*



Other developments in Langdale: Martin Scrowston continues to scour the area for new crags and has developed Lancrigg Crag, near the Lancrigg Hotel, on the side of Helm Crag, PDF on our website. Parking is available at the hotel, be sure to patronise it and enjoy some post-climbing refreshments.

SPORT & SLATE

RUNESTONE - LOWER QUARRY

All I really want to do 12m F6a+ ★★

D Geere, P Ibinson - 15 September 2020

Climb the slab, 6m left of Ska Train, passing the overlap on its left side.

The Beatmasters F6b+ ★★

D Musgrove, P Clarke - 20 September 2021

Clip the first bolt on Ska Train then span left to good handholds above the lip and step left into the niche on Betty Boo. Mantel onto the slab and traverse left to the arête. Climb thin cracks in the left side of the slab until a short traverse back right at the top to the lower-off.

The Beatmaster Direct Start - aka Betty Boo F6c+ ★

D Musgrove, P Clarke - 20 September 2021 (possibly M Miller 1990)

The original direct start to Ska Train is now protected by one bolt runner in the niche.

Rosa Canina 12m F6a ★

I Campion, G Campion - 15 April 2021

Wall to the left of Caspian before the corner. Start on a debris heap and go directly up to maillons on a hanger. Some small loose splinter flakes but will improve over time.

Precious 13m F6c+ ★★

Pete Whillance, Alan Towse - 20 September 2021

The right arête of the Gandalf block.



Buttocks 13m F6a ★ *PHOTO*

K Phizacklea - 2020

The narrow wall to the right of Gandalf.

Shoe In (and Panties) 10m F7a ★★

K Phizacklea - 2020

Route on right of New Booties - finishing at same belay.

Kobe's Cucumber 10m F6b ★

Ged Champion, Mathew Jackson - 1 July 2021

Groove immediately to the right of the large corner of Yo! Pick Poe before the large scree slope. Climb off the top of the boulder to reach small holds and then bridge the groove with difficulty to gain good ledges above.

Evergreen 10m F6c+ ★

K Phizacklea - 30 July 2020

The slim corner, right of Yo! Pick Poe with nice bridging.

Sickle Moon 10m F6b ★

Pete Whillance, Alan Towse - 2 September 2021

The left-hand curving line on the slab right of Fancy a Jump.

Matchstick Men 9m F6c+ ★★

Pete Whillance, Alan Towse - 7 September 2021

Central line on the slab right of Fancy a Jump has an excellent crimping start.

Hunters Moon 10m F6c+ ★

Pete Whillance, Alan Towse - 2 September 2021

Right-hand companion to Matchstick Men that climbs the initial overhang on undercuts. Powerful but short-lived.

RUNESTONE - MIDDLE QUARRY

Baskerville 15m F6b+ ★★

B Larkin, D Musgrove, P Clarke - 21 September 2021

The wall left of Hang Like a Hound. Rock-over, mantel and bridge before moving right to gain the crux headwall!

The Long Way Home 24m F6c ★★

Pete Whillance, Alan Towse - 15 October 2021

Start 12m right of Lucid Dreams towards the right hand end of the overhang barrier. Climb up via a jammed block then go leftwards through the overhangs to gain the slab above. Follow a ramp leftwards then climb a black streaked wall and move right to finish up a clean groove.

Delta Variant F6a

Pete Whillance, Alan Towse - 16 September 2021

The subsidiary groove left of Covid Corner. Scramble up to a good ledge at the base of Covid Corner. Climb this for a couple of metres then pull across left and follow a slim groove to a large ledge with lower offs above.

Covid Corner 10m F6b+ ★

Pete Whillance, Jonathan Lagoe - 4 November 2021

The blank-looking stepped corner line left of Three Cheers for Boris. Scramble up to its base (as for Boris) - now cleaner and much less scary. Climb the corner using holds on its left edge.

Three Cheers for Boris F7a ★★

K Phizacklea - 2020

Climbs the project named Contagion. Sling belay on trees at the top - best checked beforehand.

Nirbhaya 18m F6c+ ★

D Oughton, A Pegley - 1 August 2021

Means Fearless - project mentioned in the guide - now bolted and climbed. Not as sound as had been hoped. The rock where the bolts are seems to be sound and indication is stick to the line of the bolts and avoid the corner on the left and the rib on the right.

The Black Wall - this is the eye-catching wall as seen as entering the middle quarry.

Black Slabbath 15m F7a ★★

K Phizacklea – 21 May 2021

This takes the left-hand line.

Paranoid 15m F6a+ ★★

D Geere, K Phizacklea - 15 June 2021

A quarry classic up the centre of the Black Wall.

The Blocky Road To Ruin 15m F7c ★★★

K Phizacklea - 22 June 2021

The outrageous impending wall right of Paranoid.

Lanty's Groove F6b+ ★★

Pete Whillance, Alan Towse – 16 September 2021

The short groove at the lower end of Middle Quarry in the bay above Lanty's Cave. (Access down a short ridge from the path that crosses below the Middle Quarry). Excellent 3-dimensional climbing.

DOW CRAG

BLIND TARN CRAG

See **Ordinary** 30m E6 6b ★★

Chris Moore - 2 July 2021

Brilliant climbing straight up the centre of the crag, tackling the slightly overhanging headwall head on. Bold in its lower reaches, good gear can be arranged before the powerful and strenuous upper section. From the lowest point of the crag climb directly up the slabby wall to the left of the Goldscope groove line. Mantle onto the narrow ledge of Snitch and continue up and right, climbing a slightly bulging wall to reach the unaccommodating ledge shared with A Picture of Life's Other Side where this route steps left. Make thin and committing moves up and right to a good hold at the top of the slanting groove (gear). Powerful moves above, passing a good hold in a square cut hole lead directly up the headwall to an awkward top out.

ESKDALE

Activities in 2021 on various crags in anticipation of the new Dow & Eskdale guide (due late 2022). Routes climbed include the following.

GREAT WINSCALE

Oh England, my Loinheart 40m VS 4c ★★

Al Phizacklea, John Holden - 25 April 2021

Start at the toe of the right-hand buttress, about 12m left of the block at the base of the grass gully.

- 1) 24m (4c) Climb the groove line, through a blocky niche to reach a juniper ledge. Step right and use a diagonal flake to enter a shallow groove in the centre of the upper slabs. Follow this with increasing difficulty, culminating in an awkward pull left on a rounded ledge (John thought it should be HVS) where the belay can be easily reached.
- 2) 16m (4c) With a single runner in the flake above, make a delicate step up onto the upper slabs. follow these to the top.

Selling England by the Pound 24m E1 5b ★

Al Phizacklea, John Holden - 25 April 2021

At the right end of the crag is a short grassy gully with a small block at its foot. Start 3m left of this (2m left of Vrillis Gimmol) Pull onto an awkward ledge from the right, then step right into a short groove and climb to a heather ledge. Follow the twin cracks above to an excellent jug and runners and use a hollow (but seemingly sound) flake to grovel to the top.

LITTLE DOW CRAG

Dirty Little Habits 25m E5 6a ★★

Jon Read, Sophie Grieve-Williams, Chris Whitter – 24 July 2021

The upper wall to the left of Bad Obsession, aiming for the remarkable hanging square-cut groove. Climb directly past the 'hourglass' hold to the tombstone ledge. Shuffle left (small gear in thin

crack on the left) and aim for the groove - a short but technical sequence, reminiscent of a gritstone crux. Finish carefully above the ledge to a belay (flake, wires, and a boulder up and left). The route is clean but gathers debris from above - a quick abseil down with a soft brush is recommended.

CROOK CRAG

Hot Fuzz 10m E5 6b ★★

Jon Read, Sophie Grieve-Williams, Dave Hinton 25 April 2021

Takes the thin diagonal crack in the middle of the wall, gained directly, between the adjacent cracks of PC Cox's Route and The Peeler. Short, but 'packs it in'.

DUDDON & WRYNOSÉ

The new guidebook for the Duddon & Wrynose area came out in 2021 and has stimulated much interest in the area with lots of new routes climbed and some new crags added following its publication. PDF mini-guides can be downloaded from the FRCC website.

SCAFELL & WASDALE

SCAFELL PINNACLE

Bushwhacker Independent 50m E2 5b ★★

Ian Armstrong, Rob Coles - 20 July 2021

This variation eliminates the shared ground from Bushwhacker and gives more climbing at the given grade. Follow P1 from the guidebook, continue up the flake and crack above. Move up and left, passing some hollow blocks with care. Climb the blunt arête, first on its left, make a move rightwards to a small cam slot then up to the waiting room. Bold climbing on spaced good holds. Climbed as one long pitch.

EAST BUTTRESS

Holy Braille 20m E7 6c

Craig Matheson, Rob Matheson - 19 September 2020

Takes a direct line up the middle of the blank wall between Talisman and Trinity.

The route is marked by 4 pegs, but please note: the first peg will not hold a fall, the twin pegs are 'twin' because they are both poor and the fourth peg is thankfully good. The climbing is serious, intricate, and sustained. There is little in the way of rests and clipping the 'twin' pegs is tough. It is, however, a strong contender for the best piece of climbing on the East Buttress. Belay on the block (as for Trinity), with various finishes possible.

Roaring Silence (Direct Finish to P1) 35m E3 6a

Mike Gray, Sam Fletcher - 6 June 2021

As for P1, but where the original steps right beneath the short, steep crack (at $\frac{3}{4}$ height) continue direct up the crack. Re-join the original route at the belay up and right. A worthwhile and contrasting variation. This variation might follow the line on the topo (p130 of the current guide), which doesn't show the dogleg towards the top P1 of the original way. May have been climbed before

BROAD CRAG

Bombs Away 35m E3 5c ★★★

Chris Moore, Scott Quinn - 30 May 2021

Climbs the clean slab on the right end of the 'Huge Overhanging Wall' (left of Broad Crag Gully) described in the Scafell and Wasdale guide. From the gully easily surmount large blocks to reach the base of the slab. Move right across a sloping shelf and then pull up (crux) onto the slab proper. Follow this direct passing a big, embedded block (gear) at $\frac{1}{3}$ height. Upon reaching a large ledge at 20m, pull directly onto the wall above (right of the arête) and continue in this line to the top.

Piccadilly Circus 30m E4 5c ★★

Chris Moore, Scott Quinn (both led) - 30 May 2021
Climbs the centre of the Main Face to the right of Anthem for the Masses. A good route with sustained and interesting climbing. Start below a triangular niche. Pull into this and follow a series of smaller triangular holds above to reach the left end of a sloping ledge. Step up and right to a large side-pull and gear. Move up and left to gain a small sloping ledge. Pull onto this, then make thin moves right to a good undercling (gear). A difficult though well protected move above leads to the slabs which are followed to the top

WISTOW CRAG

Aah! Wisto 25m E1 5a ★★★ PHOTO

Chris Moore, Joe Flanagan, Tim Millen, Scott Quinn
- 3 April 2021

An immaculate slab of perfect grippy rock. Start from the right hand edge, step onto the slab and traverse left until a line of holds takes you up to good runners and an obvious line back up and right into the 'pod' from here follow the line to the top.



BLACKEM HEADWALL

Flowstate 22m E5 6b PHOTO

Scott Quinn, Tim Millen, Chris Moore, Joe Flanagan
- 17 April 2021

A very thin lower wall leads to a corner with a huge roof on its left, climb to this and make gymnastic moves through the roof (peg) to meet its final gut-busting pull to turn the lip. Memorable.)

Catharsis 22m E6 6b PHOTO

Chris Moore, Scott Quinn (both led) - 3 April 2021
The eye-catching groove system right of the arête provides a direct and almost perfect pitch with great movement, marred only by the rest between the two grooves. A stretched start gains a large flat hold, which leads to two triangular pockets (runners) step left into the slim groove (peg) following this into the upper right hand groove which is taken on its left hand side to the top.)

DAMPARSE CRAG

Masters of War 33m E7 6b ★★

Scott Quinn, Tim Millen - 24 April 2021

A direct pitch up the steep gully wall to gain the brilliant, bold, and technical grooved arête. Climb the vertical crack into the niche under the twin overlaps move rightwards up through the first and then back left on an obvious undercut to reach good holds above which are followed rightwards for 1m before climbing directly to the belay atop Dampers Crack (runners). Step right and climb the arête on perfect rock in an increasingly exciting position, finally reaching a good hold and runner (sling/poor cam) some 6/7m above your last gear. An awkward move left gains good sloping holds and easier ground which can be enjoyed to the top, excellent.

GABLE & PILLAR

PILLAR ROCK - SE FACE OF HIGH MAN

Eastern Approaches 95m HVS 4c
JA Daly, SJH Reid (alt) – 1 May 2021

Little of this is new. The initial groove was climbed, probably by Harry Kelly, prior to 1923 and the first wall of the upper pitch is the 8 foot drop of the early version of Slab and Notch in reverse, and often climbed in Victorian days, whilst the remainder of the pitch, though not described in the guide, showed signs of having been climbed before. Start just to the right of the entrance of Great Chimney at a short groove below a huge niche in the wall above.

1) 45m (4c). Climb the groove, and more easily up rightwards to a large spike. Go boldly up the wall above to good runners in a crack and make a tenuous traverse leftwards towards the left arête, before climbing straight up. Easy juniper covered slabs lead to a Christmas tree belay on the Steep Grass of Great Chimney.

2) 40m (4a). At the top of the Steep Grass is a short chockstone chimney: some 10m down and left of this, climb the wall to a junction with Slab and

Notch Climb. Above is a groove/niche: climb into it, moving left at the top to join the final part of The Arête, up which the climb finishes.

Stalingrad 30m E3 6a ★★★

P Winterbottom, JA Daly – 2 September 2021
Strenuous and technical climbing up the slim groove just right of the arête above the top left corner of the slab of Slab and Notch Climb. Named for the siege tactics used on early attempts! A bold boulder problem start up a smooth groove to the right of a pinnacle leads to a brief respite (by moving left onto the pinnacle a good high cam can be placed). Continue up the groove – well protected but sustained and very thin, until it eases. Move up and rightwards, keeping to the right side of the arête, to the top.

Secret Garden Direct 8m E2 5c ★

JA Daly, SJH Reid – 2 September 2021
Climb the obvious crack splitting the wall just right of the final corner of The Secret Garden. A good selection of extra-large cams is highly recommended.

SHAMROCK - UPPER SHAMROCK

Pyroclastic Fantastic Direct 20m E1 5b
JA Daly, SJH Reid - 1 May 2021
As for Pyroclastic Fantastic but climb the crack direct – bold and strenuous.

WEST FACE OF LOW MAN

Ooh 55m E1 5b *
JF Hughes, SJH Reid – 30 June 2021
A counter diagonal to Err with two good pitches, one strenuous but well protected, the other bold and technical. Start by scrambling left from the Western Scree, at a higher level than the West Wall Traverse, to pass under a large clean isolated buttress (on Auld Lang Syne) to a good flake belay

at its left side.

1) 25m (5a). Drop down slightly and move left to a shallow groove which is ascended easily to a grass ledge. Traverse left to the foot of cracks running up the right side of a stunning looking arête. Climb up onto a short pinnacle on the right, then step back left to gain the left-most crack and ascend this with difficulty until it is possible to move left to a ledge on the arête. Finish up the left-hand side of the arête to belay on the Pulpit.

2) 30m (5b). Descend from the Pulpit by a wide crack on its left side for 3m, then traverse left 2m to the left side of a clean rib. Step up onto the rib and swing right into a groove (as for Err), then climb the blocky rib on the left to some good gear at the top of a small pinnacle/flake. Make an awkward step left and up, then ease upwards and make delicate moves up right to better holds. Continue to grass, then in the same line climb a short slabby rib and even shorter wall to belay on The Old West Route.

Waterfall Climb Variation 30m MS ★

SJH Reid, JF Hughes – 22 June 2021

An excellent pitch. From a belay at the foot of the shallow square chimney on pitch 1 of Waterfall Climb, follow a thin crack up the narrow slab on the left to a steeper wall. Go straight up this on stupendous holds, then trend left to a short steep corner: surmount this and belay not much higher on the West Wall Traverse.

WEST FACE OF HIGH MAN

South-West Eliminate 80m E1 5a ★ PHOTO

JF Hughes, JA Daly, SJH Reid – 8 September 2021

A direct line with excellent climbing on superb rock: only the fact that it is escapable at several points means it is not worth more stars. Start immediately right of the start of New West Climb, at the base of a huge pale boulder lying on the scree.

1) 18m (4c). Climb the rib and wall direct to an easy



angled slab. Go up this and avoid the grass ahead by a short rib on the right, then step left to a spike belay on New West Climb.

2) 42m (5a). A bold pitch. The crux has an excellent runner at the start but the easier climbing above is very run out. Climb the short chimney of New West Climb above then follow the crack above (The South-West-by-West Climb) until it steepens. Launch directly up the continuation crack to gain a good ledge, climb up into a hollow and pull over a bulge. A slim right facing groove above leads to easier ground and a belay on the left on the pile of blocks on New West Climb.

3 0 20m (5a). Traverse back right 2m and then climb directly up pleasant slabs. Above, a thin crack runs up the slab just left of a mossy streak: follow the crack direct to the top with increasing difficulty.

RAVEN CRAG - ENNERDALE

Great North-Western - Dry Variation 35m VS 4b ★
P Winterbottom, SJH Reid – 15 October 2021

2) (4b). Traverse the long ledge to its right-hand end and climb slabs leftwards to the left edge of the buttress. Step up over a small overlap (possible belay) and finish up a short right-leaning groove on excellent holds.

Chasing the Sun 55m E2 5b ★

P Winterbottom, SJH Reid – 15 October 2021

1) 25m (5b) Gain an easy angled white ramp at the very bottom right corner of the wall and climb up it a short way until the wall above can be climbed boldly to a huge ledge. Traverse the ledge and climb a short corner to a steeper corner: hard moves up this gain another ledge. Traverse left again to yet another steep corner – climb this. A tenuous traverse left leads to a block and the wide crack of Great North-Western which is followed to a huge ledge.

2) 30m (4c) As for Great North-Western.

BUTTERMERE & ST BEES

BECKWYTHOP

Colin Downer and friends bolted the Embankment, next to the old road to West Cumbria, at Beck Wythop and produced a roadside clip-up with 18 routes. Unfortunately, this was done without the consent of the landowner who has subsequently banned climbing and asked for all of the bolts to be removed. The BMC is involved and there is a lesson to be learned from this unfortunate situation.

SCAWGILL BRIDGE QUARRY

Colin Downer continues his quest for sport routes and has turned his attention to this quarry which is on the west side of Whinlatter Pass. Routes had been climbed here in 1991 but were never popular. The quarry faces south, is easily accessible and well bolted. It is anticipated this will become a popular venue.

BORROWDALE

WOOF STONES

Situated in Langstrath near Cam Crag. Woof Stones is first buttress on right through the gate, below and to the right of Cam Crag. (OS Ref: NY 263 111 Alt: 290m). One main wall up to 20m with smaller subsidiary buttresses either side.

Woof Wall 20m HVS 5b ★★★

D Morgan – 29 April 2021

Climb the main buttress direct. Start at the lowest point of the buttress. Follow the right hand crack initially, climb through a thin section then up to a small roof and finish directly.

Collie's Groove 15m HVS 5a ★★★

I Johnstone – 29 April 2021

Takes the groove to the left of Woof Wall via a thin move and finishes left on the ledge.

GLACIATED SLAB

Trod Carefully 14m E4 5c ★★

T Millen (solo) – 29 June 2021

The arête to the left of Trod Pip has some good climbing but has no protection. Pull over the bulge onto the arête and climb it directly on the left side. Make a long reach over the bulge to finish.

STEEL KNOTTS

What will be, will be! 28m E3 6a ★★

J Shiels, C Shiels – 28 September 2020

Good rock, holds and gear up the wall between Free Falling and Terminal Velocity. Start 4m left of the corner at a slight rib at 2m. Climb up passing two small black roofs on their left. Up the wall direct to finish via the scoop.

DALT QUARRY

Mandy Glanvill and Julie Carter are replacing the aged bolts in this small quarry as they are probably unsound, if visiting please take care if using an old bolt.

Pat Kelly 8m F5

T Hughes, J Carter, A Salisbury, M Glanvill – 9 July 2021

Route climbed in memory of the founder of The Pinnacle Club, in its centenary year. Start to the right of Baywatch. Climb the rising diagonal crack on the right wall of the corner.

EASTERN CRAGS

LOCKDOWN BUTTRESS – STANDING CRAG

OS Ref: NY 298 136 Alt: 550m

Idyllically situated with sublime views. Developed by Colin Downer, this crag offers excellent climbing on superb rough bubbly pocketed rock. Well worth the pleasant walk. It is situated just east of Standing Crag and offers a dozen or so 20m routes.

Full details can be found on the FRCC website:

<https://www.frcc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Lockdown-Buttress-2.pdf>

GOUTHER CRAG - SWINDALE

The Keswickian - The Barrovian Finish E8 7a ★★★

Craig Matheson, Rob Matheson - 06.04. 2019

This is the alternative finish to The Keswickian finishing up the left side of the arête, avoiding the finish up One Step Beyond. Needless to say, it is bold !

EDEN VALLEY

COUDY ROCK

The following information is about traverses created by Iain Turnbull in 2021. The new bolts in between existing routes were placed with the use of a cherry-picker!

Pelham Wall 30m F7b +

Iain Turnbull, Polly Bainbridge - 2021

Start as for Perfect Weather to Fly. Climb to the second bolt then move leftwards using the obvious line of pockets and holds until you arrive, in pieces, at the ledge behind the tree at the far left of the leaning wall.

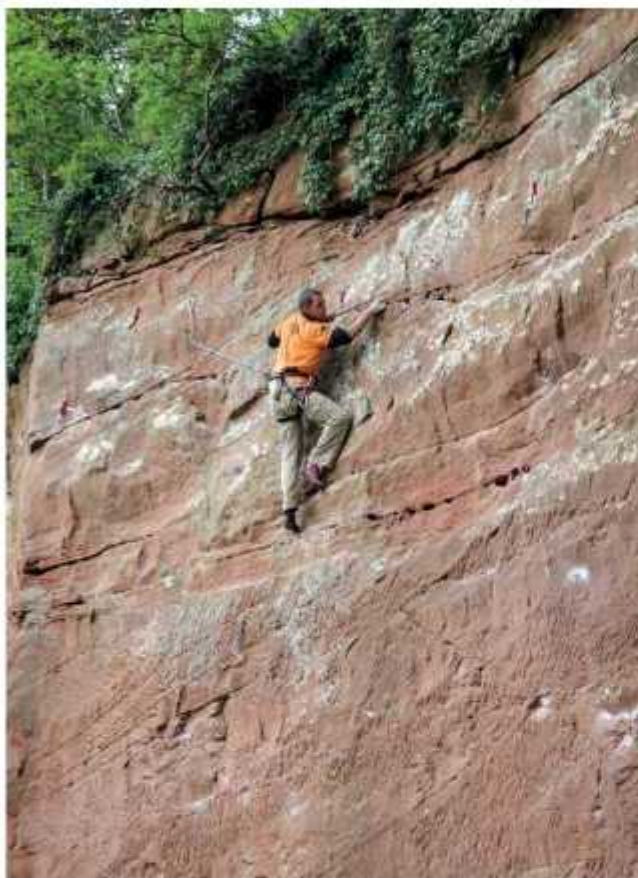
Strong youths should be able to link this pump fest with Repertoire, producing another monster outing!

Repertoire 60m F7b

Iain Turnbull, Polly Bainbridge - 2021

Low level traverse, staying below 2nd bolt height. Technical climbing leading into a pumpy finish - a safe and friendly mission.

Start at the right hand side of the crag, at Buffalo Bill, and keep moving left until you find yourself at the second bolt of Perfect Weather to Fly then finish up this route.



Resilience 61m F7b+ PHOTO

Iain Turnbull, Polly Bainbridge - 2021

High level traverse covering the length of the main wall. A brilliant outing!! Originally climbed left to right as part of a circuit linked to the low-level traverse of Repertoire.

Start-up Perfect Weather to Fly and from the belay of this route move rightwards using good pockets to reach the top of Big in Japan. Down climb the crux of Big in Japan to a good pocket and pull rightwards to reach the top of Sands of Time. From here reverse the existing traverse of Sandy Rippledithers, to arrive ultimately at the far right hand side of the crag at Buffalo Bill.

BROUGH SCAR

This was developed in the 1980s with tat for protection and never been popular. Retro-bolting of the existing routes started in 2021 and further new routes are being added.

MIDDLE BUSK SCAR

This is a micro crag (4m high!) near Orton, originally developed in 2008 it has seen extensive development in 2021. It is a bouldering venue with fine views to the Howgill Fells with over 60 easy problems it is a pleasant location and a possibly useful place to take children climbing. PDF available on our website.

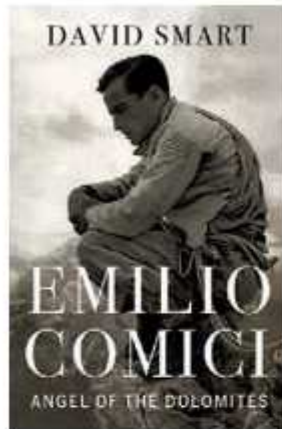
SOUTH LAKES LIMESTONE

A few sport routes have been added to the inland limestone and a series of short sea cliffs near Silverdale have been developed as a sport venue. They have been named 'Costa del Silverdale' and a download is available from the website.

Book Reviews



Emilio Comici The Angel of the Dolomites



Author: David Smart
Publisher: Rocky Mountain Books
ISBN: 978-1771604567

Any alpinist or big wall dreamer with an eye on the majestic beauty of the Dolomites would have come across the name Emilio Comici. His first ascents of iconic and classic grade VI big wall climbs are listed in the

guidebooks with accompanying descriptions and topos.

Angel of the Dolomites is a blast from a time when empires clashed. It brings to life the story of an individual through whom the spirit of Alpinism shone to create an everlasting legacy for others.

Born into a life of hunger and hardship, Emilio draws strength from the wilderness around him. The legacy of war feeds his inspiration to fight and endure like the heroes of the Alpini mountain infantry. Honour in strength and sacrifice, pride sweeps the nation of Italy and, after 500 years of Austrian rule, freedom arrives. The fascist clichés of masculine strength, roman virtue, iron will, sacrifice and victory dominated.

Taken from the handwritten journals of history, this book is remarkable for its realness and ability to capture the adventure. A life through the mindset of Emilio, takes in the world around him with great spectacle. As a reader, I wasn't expecting to be confronted so graphically with the historical horror of the time and it reminded me of the book 'Freedom Climbers' which depicts a similar story under the rule of communism; a sadness we western climbers of the modern age may never understand.

However, as always great alpine adventures provided both spiritual and physical sanctuary. The book provides accounts of early climbs which follow a well-trodden pattern as a young Emilio begins his alpine journey. Interesting are the climbing ethics of the day and the barriers of class and status. However, ambition, dedication and technical ability drive forward his desire to experience and overcome these challenges.

Unconventional as a mountain guide, kind to those downtrodden, with a willingness to teach skills and share knowledge. I got the feeling Emilio had huge empathy and a great understanding of the times gripping his world.

Emilio's climbs, a reflection of his being, left modern day alpinists with a great legacy of routes to fuel our dreams and ambitions. Such dreams realised by the privilege lost to so many of that time and advanced by the continual sharing of skills and knowledge.

I was looking forward to this read, being a great lover of the old school and the adventure of Alpinism; I wasn't disappointed.

John Proctor

Extreme Lakeland



Authors: Nadir Khan and Tom McNally
Publisher: Vertebrate Publishing
ISBN: 978-1-83981-125-8

There are many books written about the Lake District – from guidebooks to everything else; information; instructions; poems; drawings and many, many more! There are lots of coffee table picture book, which show off the area, many with the 'pretty landscapes and photographs'. The Lake District is styling itself as the adventure capital of England or is it the UK or somewhere in the universe - which draws in the punters - and there is so much "adventure" at all sorts of levels. A walk up Catbells on a busy summer's day will be an adventure for some but at the other extreme adventure is topping out on an E9 or base jumping off a summit.

Nadir Khan produced a book called Extreme Scotland and together with Tom McNally they have produced this book Extreme Lakeland which showcases adventure in the Lake District at an extreme level.

The book takes you through the seasons with a wide mix of activities from pleasantly adventurous, such as climbing Cam Crag Ridge, to downright ridiculous, such as a rollover base jump into Hodge Close!!

Getting the people and conditions together for the collection of photographs has taken some time and the end result is as Nadir says, "a celebration of life, of lives well lived, in all their messy glory. It's a celebration of a community of climbers, runners, walkers, mountain bikers and paddlers' - not to mention ice skaters, base jumpers, and skiers as well!"

I would imagine there will have been a lot of time spent arranging for the photographs with the locations, individuals, time of day and, the most fickle of all, with the weather. One turns the pages and marvel at the images such as Eliza Sandford on the top of Napes Needle with the mist in Wasdale behind or of Esther Newton skating on Scales Tarn, under the stars, or Adam Hocking reflected in a pool on Quarryman's Arete in Cathedral Quarry and many more.

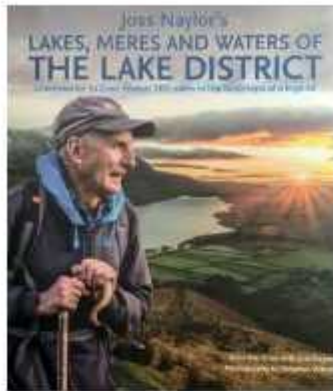
They say a picture says a 1000 words, but it is good to have words as well and there is a collection of writings, by various exponents, giving their personal insights such as "Solo" by Anna Taylor and "To Be a Fell Runner" by Ellis Bland as well as "Not Everything Goes to Plan" by Tom McNally.

The book is enhanced with paintings introducing the seasons as well as poetry.

It is wonderful to see so many young adventurers featured in this book who are definitely "doers". I am sure this book will give inspiration for all the "doers" at whatever level, though I suspect, for many, it will just be sitting in a warm chair with a glass of something and looking at and reading about some of these "off the scale" activities.

We are so lucky to have the Lake District to get out into and have our adventures at whatever level and a collection of Lake District books will not be complete without this book to show what can be achieved.

Lakes, Meres and Waters of the Lake District



Authors: Vivienne Crow with Joss Naylor.

Publisher: Cicerone.

ISBN: 9781786310873

In the June of 1983, Joss Naylor completed the Lakes, Meres and Waters (LMW) – a route of 105 miles, involving 20,000 feet of ascent and descent, visiting

27 bodies of water – in a record time of 19 hours, 14 minutes, and 25 seconds. Joss Naylor is a name familiar to many both in and outside of the fell running world, and his achievements prior to and following on from that day in 1983 are the stuff of legends, but that trip in 1983 has stuck with him as a magical day of (almost) perfect weather in which he visited beautiful corners of the Lake District that he would not normally have run through. The premise of the book is to provide a permanent record of that day, and to provide inspiration to others to follow the routes he took and discover those places for themselves.

To achieve these aims, the author, Vivienne Crow, set off to walk the route with Joss Naylor (now 85 years old) in the summer of 2020, accompanied by photographer Stephen Wilson. The journey has been split into ten sections, each of which forms a chapter of the book and could be covered in a day walk, and the narrative tells the story of Joss's record-breaking run interwoven with an account of their walk, descriptions of the landscape and its history, and biographical elements of Joss's life. The author has gathered the reminiscences of Joss and members of his support team to give a full and entertaining account of his LMW run, and also provides an introduction that gives a history of the

origins of the route and details of how both the 1983 run and the 2020 walk (and the logistics of getting it done in a COVID pandemic) came about.

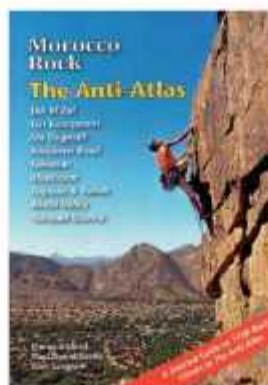
The book, as well as recounting the story of Joss's achievement, also aims to help others follow in his footsteps, and at the end of each chapter there is a map showing the route section and an accompanying description. The author does clarify that these are aids to route planning, not an alternative to map and compass, although the size of the book should indicate that it is not a pocket guide! The photographs taken by Stephen Wilson during their 2020 walk fill the book and are a beautiful visual record of both the landscape and the man, and there are also archive photographs of Joss Naylor's previous trip and other exploits. At the back of the book are appendices that give details of the stages of the 1983 run including estimated and actual timings, information on the bodies of water visited, a glossary of terms and dialect, a route summary table of the walk, and a list of some of Joss Naylor's other challenge runs.

When I initially looked over the book, I saw that it was aimed at fell runners, walkers and arm chair adventurers, as well as trying to help readers to plan their own walk or run over the route, and I was concerned that this was too broad a target audience. Once I started reading, I was reassured that it could indeed fulfill these aims, with content that will appeal to all these groups. I thoroughly enjoyed the book – the combination of the story of the fantastic achievement of 1983, the more contemporary trip and the sidelines into the history of an amazing man and the landscape he inhabits made a great read, and the descriptions of the route do make you want to get out and explore them (although maybe not all in one day!)

The book, although not hardback, makes a

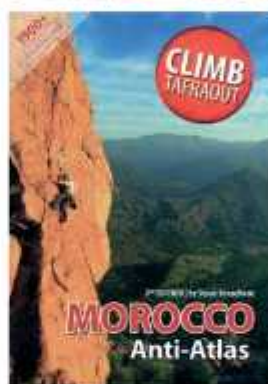
good armchair read – either to flick through to enjoy the photographs, to lose yourself in a tale of extraordinary exploits and the beauty of the Lake District, or to gain inspiration for future outings, and I would wholeheartedly recommend it. There is also an added incentive to make the purchase - a foreword to the book by Joss himself mentions that his share of the proceeds from the sale of the book (an amount that will be matched by the publishers, Cicerone) will be donated to his favourite charity - the Brathay Trust, an Ambleside-based organization that works to improve the life chances of children and young people, particularly those from deprived backgrounds, by engaging them in challenging outdoor and creative activities.

Alison Cresswell



Morocco Rock - The Anti-Atlas

Authors: Emma Alford, Paul
Donnithorne, Don Sargeant
Publisher: Crack Addicts
ISBN: 978-0-9573666-1-9



Morocco - Anti-Atlas

Author: Steve Broadbent
Publisher: Oxford Alpine Club
ISBN: 978-1-913167-07

It was in 2003 that I was let into the secret, by Chris Bonington, of the rock climbing location in the Anti-Atlas in Morocco. For a number of years, Tafraoute had been a gathering place of a group of climbing legends with Les Brown, Derek Walker, Joe Brown, Claude Davies, Paul Ross, Chris himself and quite a few more. Needless to say, if it drew those guys then it must be something special ... and it was (and is)! We had a great time not only finding new routes and crags but also a new culture. The 'legends' were at their usual lair of Hotel les Amandiers, where they would return in the evening with tales of another new 1000 foot mega classic. Initial interest had centred around the south side of the range, near Tafraoute, as well as the crags overlooking the road on the north side. One day Les and Derek ventured along a dirt track, I presume

beyond Ida Ougnidif, into the range on the other side and came back with tales of even more megacrag. Were they having us on?!

As those who have been out there will know - they were right - and now, with a nice tarmac road, access is much better. Claude Davies produced his guidebook, published by Cicerone, in 2004 with 175 routes. Now there are over 3000 routes in the area!

Amazingly there were two sets of guidebooks published in 2020 to the area - from the Crack Addict (CA) and the Oxford Alpine Club (OAC) - each being their second edition with now a

selection of routes in the area. It is interesting to see the first ascensionists. Initially 'the legends' and then others, with Emma and Paul as well as Steve getting a good proportion of the new route action. They say competition is good but two new guides to this area seems over the top. However, the climber is now supplied with two excellent guides as well as other guides and some useful maps. Cicerone, ever looking to open up an area, produced a walking guide to the area, by David Wood, and with publisher Crack Addicts, Don Sargeant has also produced a walking guide.

Both guides are now in the usual, A5 format and packed with information with some interesting comparisons:

	Crack Addicts	Oxford Alpine Club
Number of pages (A5)	480	488
Number of routes recorded in index	1593	2088
Granite routes included	108	43
Weight	775g	800g
Number of pages photographs	66 pages	29 pages
Maps:	Very different styles. OAC more topographic detail which gives better view of the geography of the area.	
Crag Maps:	CA indicate time from Tafraout and Kasbah whereas OAC just indicated time from Tafraout	
Crag Table/Selector:	Wider range of categories with OAC down to kid friendly, hitchable and handy (from Tafraout) and bolted.	
Sidebar locator tabs:	More detailed breakdown on OAC (which is very helpful).	
Photo diagrams:	CA generally better with clearer distinction between line colours and more consistent use of approach/descent lines. Important sections on the various nasties such as horned vipers, scorpions and euphorbia.	
Area information:	OAC appears less attractive but has more information.	

A maxim for climbing guides is 'photos sell guides' but photos also take up space. I was intrigued to compare similar size guides and looked at the two selective guides to the Lake District. Lake District Rock (Wired/FRCC) has 1504 routes and

83 pages of photos whereas Lake District Climbs (Rockfax) and has 980 routes and 183 pages of photos. With the A5 size of guides, many people do not take the guide onto the crags but just take a photo of the guide or use an app. Is the guidebook

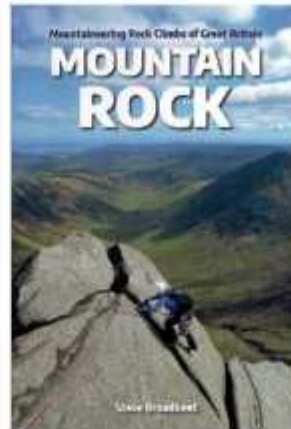
destined to be left on the coffee table or be useable on a crag? Personally, I like to take the guide and have a selection of guidebook holders.

When you open either of the Morocco guides you will no doubt be struck by the amount of rock - there is loads of it. The area is best known for its trad routes, on the quartzite rock, but, to the south of Tafraout, is an area of granite which over the years has seen development and now has a collection of trad and bolted routes.

I was amazed at the continuing development of the area and the number of routes which have been climbed over the last few years on what seems to be excellent crags with such areas as the Faulty Towers. I was last there in 2016, on a FRCC meet. With Dennis Lee, I climbed a new 300 foot route V Diff on what became Upper Temple Slabs - then undeveloped. We did not claim it as we hoped to get back and do some more there. We didn't get back and now see that Mandy Glanvill and friends have climbed 9 routes at V Diff/Sev standard 10 mins from the road and 20 mins from the Kasbah - the moral is that if you find a new crag get stuck into it!

I would be happy to use either guide and I am not going to be drawn as to which is best as they both fit the bill. On behalf of the climbing fraternity, I would like to thank these two guidebook producers for publishing the guides which give inspiration and a little irritation, at this time with the limits on travel, to this amazing area.

Mountain Rock



Author: Steve Broadbent
Publisher: Oxford Alpine Club
ISBN: 978-1-913167-02-8

The Oxford Alpine Club seems an odd publishing title however, over the last few years, it has produced a wide selection of guidebooks such as for rock climbing in the Anti-Atlas as well as Ibiza and Todra and also Ice

Climbing in Setesdal, Rhuken, Ecrin and Cogne.

Spearheaded by Steve Broadbent they continue to publish guidebooks and in 2021 produced Mountain Rock - Mountaineering Rock Climbs of Great Britain. This describes one hundred multi-pitch rock climbs in the main mountain regions of Britain - Scotland (28), Lake District (42) and North Wales (30) with a selection said to provide some of the best days out for climbers operating at the lower grades, up to VS, with the bulk at Severe and below.

The guidebook is 332 pages and slightly bigger than the FRCC Langdale guidebook so is a very handy size to pop into the rucksack.

The routes extend, over the three areas, from East Buttress on Coire Mhic Fhearchair on Beinn Eighe to Table Direct and Cyfrwy Arete on Cadair Idris. Each section has a short piece about the area with appropriate rock climbing definitive guidebooks ; appropriate maps ; details of pubs and also camping. Each route is detailed over two pages with an overall topo with details of the first ascent, conditions required for ascent, parking, and approach details as well as the route description. There are maps on three levels - at country level, area level and route level - and indication is given

for the appropriate OS map as well. In addition QR Codes are available for car parks as well as the all-important pubs!

The style of the guidebook is very user friendly with concise information aided by a good selection of topos and action photographs. The quality of the photographs however varies and on quite a few they would have been improved by a bit more face and fewer bum shots - but, I know, getting a collection of good photos is difficult.

I feel the quality of the cover is far from adequate - it is quite flimsy and easily torn. I would suggest that one not only uses a guidebook holder but also cover the cover in fablon (if you can still get it!).

What about the routes! Not surprisingly many of the routes are in Ken Wilson's Classic Rock book. Some routes give a good day on their own and in other cases there are a number of routes nearby which can be climbed at the same time. I was rather surprised, however, to see 10 routes on Gimmer Crag - Steve obviously likes Gimmer and, admittedly, it has a great selection of routes at the grades covered. Interestingly one route included is Merlin Slab on Pike o' Stickle but why nothing in Swindale such as Truss Buttress, The Fang or Kennel Wall. Good to see Auld Nick, on Hell's Lum but what about Clean Sweep as well as The Talisman; Squareface or Mitre Ridge - these are REAL Mountain Routes!

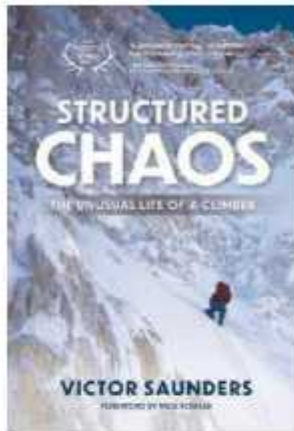
There are some interesting routes such as East Buttress on Beinn Eighe; Raeburn's Route on The Ben and Window Buttress on Skye in Scotland as well as the routes on Carnedd y Filiast and Cadair Idris in Wales.

Many of the routes are very popular and suffer from being polished and often with queues - this guidebook could increase these issues. Needless to say, one could change the selection of some but overall there is a fine collection of routes and this guidebook will no doubt help to get climbers

out on to mountain crags and this should be applauded.

Who will buy the guidebook? Always an interesting question, especially with a new concept such as this guidebook. Many climbers now just buy the selective guidebooks for an area which give a good coverage of routes and crags, and these will keep most people going for a lifetime. A big proportion of trad climbers in the UK are however operating in the grade range covered by this guidebook. Mountain routes are a more serious undertaking than local outcrops, but I would think this guidebook would help entice climbers, if they saw it at the local climbing shop or climbing wall, to go and savour Mountain Rock throughout Great Britain. I have, however, that niggly feeling that if I was going to the Lakes, North Wales or Scotland for the weekend or longer one would want the definitive or selective guide. A big aspect on which it definitely scores is its handy size and also a tick list with excellent details of some of the best climbing in Great Britain.

Structured Chaos (The Unusual Life of a Climber)



Author: Victor Saunders
Publisher: Vertebrate Publishing
ISBN: 9781912560660

This book was published in 2021, when most of us were dreaming of escaping the restrictions caused the Covid pandemic.

It is a refreshing, exciting read with anecdotes from Victor's

life, chronologically moving in time from his boyhood in Malaya, students' days in London, on to his life as an Architect and then mountain guide, with mountaineering adventures on the way.

Each chapter stands alone, as vignettes, so it is not quite the can't put you down book à la *Touching the Void*, but is in an amusing and entertaining.

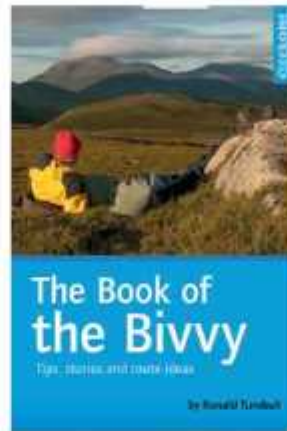
The book is accurately described by Mick Fowler, in the forward as he states that the book is about friendships, personalities, experiences and a journey through life.

I particularly enjoyed his account of being hauled before a judge for the illegal use of a mobile phone, as well as his growing old disgracefully adventure with Mick Fowler.

So, it is the sort of book to enjoy by reading a chapter a night by the fire in the hut with a whisky in hand, or alternatively in the airport lounge as you wait to fly off on your next adventure.

Peter Simcock

The Book of the Bivvy: Tips, Stories and Route Ideas



Author: Ronald Turnbull
Publisher: Cicerone Press
ISBN: 978-1786310781

This slim volume is very much a personal take on the bivouac. Advice is interspersed with suggested routes and 12 stories of the author's many experiences, illustrated with some inspiring photos.

The author's style of bivvying is quite minimalist and there are evocative descriptions of the joys and tribulations of nights in wild places, with many personal and pun-fuelled anecdotes of the *épave* and suffering. The author has slept out all over the UK and combined his wild sleeps with some long walks. Sometimes jocular and sometimes lyrical, these stories are an interesting addition to the book.

The author has researched bivvying in history and literature, with quotes from RL Stevenson on his *sleeping-sack* and from Heinrich Harrer, with a substantial section describing early bivouacs on the Eigerwand. His treatise on the orange poly bag, described as *like the western side of Scotland*. It's warmer, but also wetter, will raise a smile amongst those who remember sleeping out in the seventies!

The book covers 6 Bivvy Routes in the UK and one in the Sierra Nevada with maps and some description or humorous stories. Particularly interesting are details of Coleridge's overnight crossing of Helvellyn with quotes from the poet and the author's own experience intertwined.

As you would expect, he goes into the merits of

various types of bivvy bag, tarps and sleeping mat and covers most of the essential kit. He has some good tips for staying dry and warm on cold ground and a section on the ideal site for a wild sleep in 'Mr Brown's little green bag', referencing Joe Brown's pioneering Gore-Tex bags.

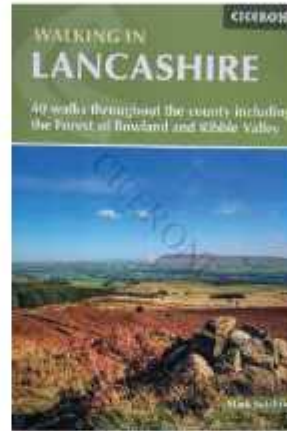
However, these tips sections are scattered throughout the book and the nuggets of advice can be hard to decipher, as they are often wrapped up in comedic writing. This makes it challenging to use as a reference book and difficult to pick out the useful.

There are also occasional contradictions, which might well fox a first-timer. The advice on how to pack for a bivouac recommends leaving many things out for weight reduction, and then putting them back in! He suggests not taking a cooker, just eating pork pies and custard creams, but then describes the pleasure of a hot chicken cup-a-soup at the Shelter Stone. He also suggests leaving out a breathable waterproof as this 'weighs a bit over 1kg'. Surely more like 500g?

The book could benefit from tighter editing and better organisation and signposting. Many of the jokes didn't quite land for me and I found the style to be an acquired taste. However, if you're a fan of puns and the kinds of stories folk tell over a few pints in the pub and are prepared to put the effort into finding the useful advice amongst the comedy and anecdotes, then this might be the book for you.

Helen Lago

Walking in Lancashire: 40 Walks throughout the County including the Forest of Bowland and Ribble Valley



Author: Mark Sutcliffe.
Publisher: Cicerone.
ISBN: 9781906148539

Like many FRCC members I have completed numerous walks within Lancashire. So I am always sceptical that a new publication will introduce fresh routes in different places. Inevitably this guide does include a few well-trodden walks, but it also offers routes to inspire renewed exploration across the county. These do cover some interesting highlights such as the ancient woodland and gritstone moors of Lancashire, historic Pendle and Pendle Hill, the RSPB reserve at Leighton Moss, Neolithic Bleasdale Circle, the Roman museum at Ribchester, tercet posts on the Lancashire Witches Way, Andy Goldsworthy's sculptures on Clougha Pike, the Inn at Whitewell, Jubilee Tower, the Abbey Lighthouse and Lancashire coast, Morecambe Bay, and Gragareth.

The guide includes walks in some of the less obvious, but more accessible areas in the south and west of Lancashire. They offer a flavour of the rich industrial and cultural heritage of Lancashire as well as its diverse natural history. One example is a 7.5 mile circular from the Farmers Arms at Great Eccleston with an ascent of just 30 metres! However, it does include other more challenging ascents including the 520 metre ascent of the mountain, Gragareth, Lancashire County's highest top.

These are suitable for any walker with a reasonable level of fitness. Clearly the higher level routes that climb above 2,000ft and are more of a challenge in winter conditions and require appropriate clothing and footwear, good navigational skills, and basic knowledge of mountain safety. No problem for FRCC members!

Another interesting addition is a 28.5 mile Bowland Traverse starting at Wennington and finishing at Giggleswick. A fantastic long day out but it can be split into two days with a stopover at Slaidburn - an excellent place for an overnight stay, although this guide does not give any information on accommodation. With the exception of a route over Whalley Nab this is the only linear route: all other routes are circular.

As you would expect with Cicerone guides the routes plotted out on OS maps and the directions are clear, giving you confidence to follow them. The quality of the publication, including the photographs, is excellent. An added bonus with Cicerone is that GPX tracks for the routes in this guidebook are available to download free at www.cicerone.co.uk/1003/GPX.G

It is clear from the potted history, descriptions of the wildlife and landscape that the author is an enthusiastic supporter of the County. If you know nothing about walking in Lancashire or even if you have long standing experience of exploring the area, then I would recommend this guide. I can't wait to get started!

Brenda Fullard

Waymaking - An Anthology of Women's Adventure Writing, Poetry and Art



Authors: Helen Mort (Author, Editor), Claire Carter (Author, Editor), Heather Dawe (Author, Editor), Camilla Barnard (Author, Editor), Melissa Harrison (Introduction)
Publisher: Vertebrate Publishing
ISBN: 978-1910240755

Waymaking is a collection of writing and artwork by women

inspired by wildplaces, adventure and landscapes. Following on from the writings of Gwen Moore and Nan Shepherd, this book aims to redress the balance of gender in outdoor adventure literature. Having sorted out my late father's collection of climbing and adventure books recently, I came to realise there were none by women authors.

This is a brilliant book to dip into. To read more than two or three pieces in one go can be overwhelming as there are over 55 contributors each bringing their own tales, experiences, and creativity. They range from wild, adrenaline-fueled adventures through to calm, reflective meandering strolls through rolling hills. The common thread is determination, independence, and passion - so lots to inspire, amuse and admire.

ēRewilding by Lee Craigie describes her need to race through mountains on her bike in order to tame the enemy. She set out on a 550 mile bike ride in the Scottish Highland, sleeping only 6 hours in 55, exhausted and dirty but finally achieving a buzz and a hum that comes from deep, deep down. Abandoning thinking and feeling, and a sense of self, she is able to just be.

In sharp contrast to this narrative is 'A Child in These Hills' by Solana Joy who left her home in Alaska and travelled around the world. Afraid of speed, bears, falling off mountains and social interactions she embarked on a 'find myself or die trying' quest. Spending ten days at the Edinburgh Fringe, she became 'exhausted with humans and their need for spectacle and attention'. Heading south, she found herself in the Lake District and within days was experiencing calm, openness, and a total connection with the landscape.

'Don't wait for the perfect time. Walk out into mud, ice, bog snow and sand.... free yourself from the filters of high-heeled humanity and you might find something truly precious: yourself.'

The book itself and the artwork are very attractive and with authors such as Helen Mort, Polly Atkin, Geraldine Green and many, many more, this is a book to cherish and return to.

Val Hawksworth

The Alpinist (a film)



Film by Sender Films/Universal Pictures

Cinematography by Jonathan Griffith, Austin Siaduk, Brett Lowell

Edited by Joshua Steel Minor, Peter Mortimer, Josh Lowell, Fernando Villena

School makes life miserable with ADHD and a compulsion to be outside and free;
Marc-Andre Leclerc

moves to the logging town of Squamish BC. He quickly ascends the ranks of the local climbing establishment finding a love for soloing on Stawamus Chief. He even beats Alex Honnold's solo time on Grand Wall. Surrounded by characters including the notorious 'Heavy Duty' and his partner and climber Brette; Marc navigates a narrow path through drugs, raves, and hard free-soloing.

The film moves on towards Marc's Alpine escapades: edge of your seat mixed free-soloing which is so intimate and gripping that you can feel the bite of the crampon or the creak of the ice beneath you. Leclerc blasts solo climbing in Patagonia to a new level after he makes an ascent of 'The Corkscrew' with 1000m of mixed, free and aid up to difficulties of 5.10d. No mean feat. Within that same year he completes the second solo ascent of the 'Tomahawk/Excocet' link up on Torre Egger.

After a handful of ascents that astonish the alpine climbing community, Marc is plunged into the world of sponsorships which clash with his honest and simplistic lifestyle. The world of consumerism intrudes on Marc's sense of freedom in the mountains. Many world class climbers have cut their teeth in the logging town of Squamish BC. Sonnie Trotter, Will Stanhope all international

legends; but have you heard of Marc Andre? 'The Alpinist' makes clear: the reason that Marc is relatively unknown is not down to a lack of achievement but rather a choice that he has made to protect a very personal part of his life.

Marc talks about why he climbs these borderline suicidal challenges, and his answers are amazingly humble. At the same time, we see the heavy loss that both Brette, Marc's mother and everyone who knew him feel after a fatal avalanche in the Rockies brings about Marc's early death. This raises hard questions for any climber.

The film leaves the viewer with a mix of emotions: heartbreak, doubt ... but you are left in no doubt that Marc had the most undeniable love for the mountains, something pure, that leaves lasting awe and inspiration. 'The Alpinist' is not just a climbing film, it is a documentary (one of the very best) that works hard to capture the wonders of our human life that we have through the world of an amazing personality. It does this in a way that 'Free Solo' or 'the Dawn Wall' is unable, as the sense of our own mortality is made so uncomfortably immediate.

Stuart Walker



In Memoriam

Dr George Leslie Booth

John Cheesmond

Tony Hutchinson

John Lane

Malcolm Lowerson

Margaret Loy

Chris Lyon

Derek Lyon

Barry Peay

Edward Pettinger

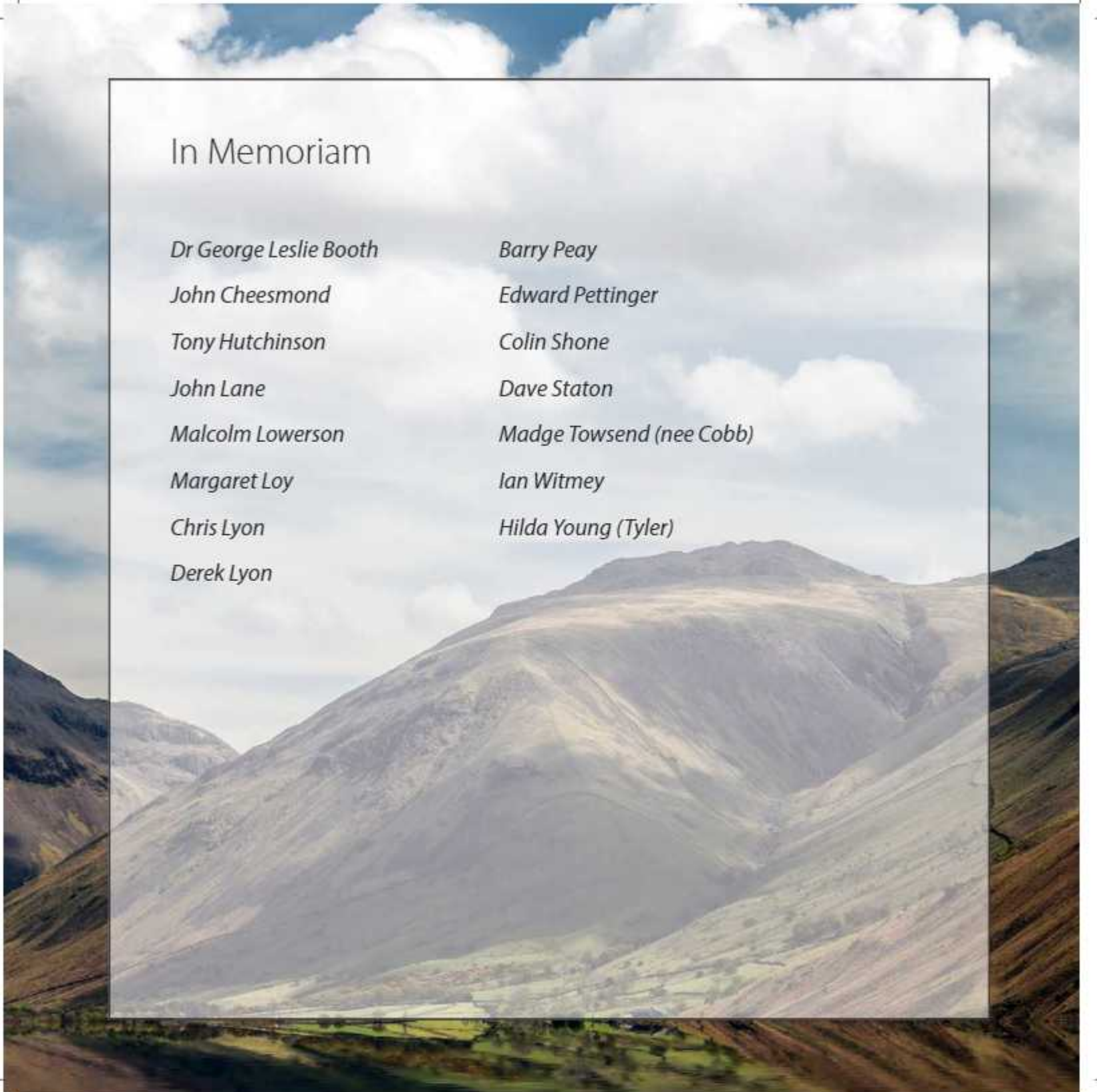
Colin Shone

Dave Staton

Madge Townsend (nee Cobb)

Ian Witmey

Hilda Young (Tyler)



DR GEORGE LESLIE BOOTH (24/12/1929 - 25/11/2021)

Dr George Leslie Booth (Les) was a retired University Lecturer in engineering at Leicester



University. When facing retirement, he opted to move to Subway College in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, where he continued to teach the first year Leicester undergraduate course and took on an administrative role co-ordinating both Leicester's engineering and law courses for some considerable time. He really enjoyed his time in Malaysia; good friends, the food, the climate of course, and the

chance to add windsurfing to his range of water sports. It was with reluctance that he eventually accepted retirement and returned to Leicester.

He led an active and varied life. Les was a keen competitive swimmer and water polo player, and for some time Chairman of the Leicester water polo team. He was also an honorary life member of Leicester Swimming Club.

Les was, throughout his life, a keen walker and climbed routes from the Derbyshire grit of his youth to more demanding and substantial routes in the Lake District and the Dolomites.

A more domestic side showed Les to be a keen gardener and DIYer. He spent a productive time tending his allotment, which produced a wide variety of fruit and vegetables - much of which he managed to turn into rather potent wines!

Until this last year, he would alternate the days between his allotment and visits to a nearby gym, where he impressed the younger members with both his fitness and capability.

A good man of high principles who didn't suffer fools gladly. A true 'no frills' Yorkshire man who said it as it is.

He will be missed.

Angela Lindsay

JOHN CHEESMOND (1937- 2021)

John Cheesmond's name will be known to anyone familiar with the history of Lake District climbing as he was one of a team of five inspired



by Geoff Oliver (who had been analysing Heaton Cooper's crag diagrams for obvious gaps) who put up the two superb new routes of Vandal and Goth on Pillar Rock on a glorious June day in 1959. The first major lines to be climbed on the

crag for a decade. The other three climbers involved were Len Willis, Nev Hannaby and Maurice de St Jorre, all based in the North-East. While St Jorre led Hannaby up Goth; Cheesmond and Willis followed Oliver up Vandal: both given VS at the time. The routes now rate E1 and HVS respectively.

John Cheesmond began climbing at 18 years of age and, after several years as a student and teacher on Tyneside, moved to instructing at the White Hall Outdoor Education Centre in Buxton in 1962, taking over from Joe Brown as chief

instructor in 1966. Throughout the 1960s, John climbed regularly in the alps making ascents of the classics of the day, including the Comici-Dimal route on the Cima Grande, the Salbitschijen, and Route Major on the Brenva: a report on his climbs in the Dolomites will be found in the 1962 FRCC Journal. He also continued to be active on British rock, soloing the first ascent of the Direct Start to West Sphinx on the Wainstones (1960) which is graded E2, 5c today, and with Joe Brown, the first ascents of Sinistra on Clogwyn Du'r Arddu (1965) and Blind Pew on Gogarth (1966). Also in the '60s, he joined friends on an expedition to Afghanistan, travelling overland and, on the way out, managed to get accidentally left in Kabul, when his fellow climbers thought he was in the back of the lorry! In 1969 he moved to North Wales, becoming the principal of Ogwen Cottage, Birmingham's outdoor education centre until 1972, when he moved to Scotland, working at Dunfermline College of Physical Education, and running diploma courses for students in outdoor education. He nevertheless found time in 1976 to take part in an expedition to the Karakorum, climbing Pyramid Peak (6470m). At this time, John also completed an external Master of Education degree at the University College of North Wales, Bangor. His final thesis was on the development of Outdoor Education in Edinburgh Education authority. In 1987, Dunfermline College was amalgamated with Moray House College of Education and John became the Head of the diploma courses working with Nev Crowther until he retired in 1992. A History of Outdoor Education at Dunfermline College of Physical Education and Moray House College and Institute of Education, Edinburgh - 1970-2000 by Nev Crowther, John Cheesmond and Pete Higgins was published in 2000 and details the contribution of these institutes to outdoor education and teacher training in this field.

In Scotland, John finally finished his Munros in 1997 (he had started in 1954!) and followed this with the Furths (2000) - many of the Munros were climbed with his wife Joyce (they married in 1983). In later years, John's main pastime in the mountains was skiing, both ski mountaineering and downhill (he held a BASI 1 ski instructors award). In his seventies he became a keen cyclist, spending several weeks with groups of friends cycling alpine passes, including the Route de Grands Alps from Lake Geneva to Nice. He and Joyce also made many cycling tours in Europe, covering long distances.

John had a lifelong love of mountains, an encyclopaedic knowledge of climbing and first ascents, and an enviable collection of climbing books, many first edition. With his mixture of intelligence and humour he will be remembered, and missed, by his many friends. In fact, if one wanted to be remembered in a few words after one's death, you could not perhaps do better than Paul Ross's simple summing up, "John was a great bloke... always full of fun..."

Kate Ross (AC) and Stephen Reid

TONY HUTCHINSON

Tony studied Physics at Manchester University and later worked in the computer control industry. Growing up on the edge of the Pennines as a teenager he explored the area around Kinder Scout. After a cycling holiday in North Wales, he decided to join a climbing club and became a member of the Mynydd where he met his wife Liz, daughter of Neville and Betty Morton of the FRCC. Together they went camping to inaccessible tarns and in Scotland.

In 1973 Tony joined the FRCC, spending holidays

in the cottages and huts with his and Liz's three children. He became Chairman of, the then, London Section from 1984 to 1986, and I knew him as a very pleasant Committee member during my time as secretary from 1998 until the Section closed in 2007.

Tony led many London Section walks near his home in Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire, and frequently led the Section's annual Lake District meets every September. He particularly liked the chat around the fire in the evenings.



Tony and Liz did the Lakes tour from hut to hut with their friend Elizabeth Wagstaff, starting and finishing at Beetham Cottage. In retirement, he and Liz toured extensively in the Alps, and spent several weeks each summer in the Scottish Highlands. About 10 years later he very unselfishly let Liz accompany me to Nepal with Hilda Brown from the London Section.

Tony suffered from Parkinson's disease for 15 years but still managed to enjoy walking in the Lake District until a year before his death last year.

Graham Daniels writes: 'I met Tony and Liz Hutchinson in the 1960s when Peter Ledebor was Chairman of the London Section. We had monthly walks around the southeast. As they lived in Berkhamsted it was natural for him to lead walks in Ashridge Estate. After retirement we both enjoyed walking alone and one sunny day, we met by chance in the Chilterns near Ivingho Beacon which was a great pleasure. We both had children in New Zealand where we went many times and we often found we had been to the same places and exchanged travellers' tales. Tony and Liz were great

cyclists and went out with their local club every week.'

Anne Hartley

JOHN LANE 1928-2021

John Lane was an ex FRCC treasurer and trustee who passed away aged 93. Born in Poplar, London, John was first introduced to climbing and hiking on trips to the Lake District as a teenager with the scouts. These holidays were great adventures that involved climbing multiple peaks in a day, finishing after nightfall and sleeping in barns. In his early twenties he also became interested in rock climbing. In the 50s



and early 60s he went on climbing holidays with friends to the French and Swiss Alps as well as to the Isle of Skye on numerous occasions. A trip to Skye involved leaving work in London, catching the sleeper train to Scotland, a long weekend climbing before catching a sleeper train back to London and going straight back into work.

John was hospitalised after a fall (which made the front page of the Telegraph) from a rock face on Glyder Fawr while climbing in Wales. Following this, with much pressure from his mother, he reluctantly adhered mainly to fell-walking.

In 1966 he was delighted to secure a transfer to the Kendal branch of Martin's Bank, whilst there with the help of his colleague and FRCC member

and past President, Dick Plint, he was able to complete the required number of peaks for FRCC membership. John spent seven happy years in Kendal before being transferred back South. From there he made regular trips up to the Lakes with his family, staying in the FRCC Climbing huts. These trips helped to give all his children the fell-walking bug, which has since been passed on to his grandchildren.

In 2004 John was happy to return to Cumbria and enjoy his retirement in the area he loved most. He made lots of great friends through the FRCC and continued attending annual meetings for many years and walking in the fells well into his 80s.

John is greatly missed by family and friends.

Stephen Lane

man who always seemed to understate everything he did. He climbed to an extremely high standard all over the UK and also tackled some of the classic Alpine climbs such as the Cassin route on the North Face of the Piz Badile and the Ober Gabelhorn (a 4000m peak next to the Matterhorn).

Climbing was a profound part of his life and he made significant contributions to the climbing community, developing and maintaining various crags throughout the North of England. He was a proud and active member of the NMC and FRCC, and regularly used the climbing huts throughout the Lake District and Scotland. The Lake District held a particularly special place in his heart, where he climbed and hiked extensively throughout his life.

Mark Lowerson

MALCOLM LOWERSON 1941 - 2021

On October 28th, 2021, our Dad, Malcolm Lowerson, died at the age of 80 as a result of cancer.



He died in his daughter's home in Malvern, surrounded by love.

Our Dad was born and grew up in the Northeast of England and spent most of his childhood in Warkworth, Northumberland. It was there, as a teenager, that he discovered his love of climbing. He found and developed Jack Rock and soloed all of the routes he created, which were later published in the NMC climbing guide in the early 1960s.

He was an extremely talented but very modest

MARGARET LOY



Margaret (*above centre*) was born in Greenhill, Sheffield in 1936 and was the only child of Doris and George. She had a very, very happy childhood and her parents involved her in everything they did, including major decision making.

At the age of 17, Margaret met John Loy at a dance. They married in 1957 and so began Margaret's outdoor life. Margaret soon realised that if she didn't learn to love the mountains, she would probably become a climbing widow. She joined the Peak Climbing Club and the Fell and Rock Climbing Club and loved both the activity and social side of club life. She developed many long lasting friendships and thoroughly enjoyed club life.

Margaret spent many weekends in the lakes and many holidays in various mountain ranges mostly in Europe. She and John had two daughters (Denise and Helen), she was very influential in both of their lives, often guiding and supporting from a distance.

Margaret unfortunately had a stroke whilst on one of her many trips to the hills with her friends, on this occasion she was on holiday in Sicily. Denise and Helen went to Margaret's rescue and brought her back to Sheffield. Margaret never fully recovered and spent the next 7 years in a care home. Perhaps very fittingly Margaret's stroke occurred when she was doing what she loved most with her friends around her and was then supported through her illness by her daughters and family.

Helen Loy (Margaret's daughter)

CHRIS LYON 1948 – 2022

Chris was something of a determined pioneer, always ready to try something new, with a love of nature and the outdoors. She obtained one of the earliest combined degrees, in Physics and Computing, at Leeds University in the '60s where, like me, she was active in the University Scout and Guide Club. The club was very much outdoor orientated and was responsible for her

early development in the mountains as well as our marriage in 1970.

After graduation we lived in Leeds and she went to work in industry, as an Operations Researcher, but was made redundant after two years, so she retrained as a teacher. My work took us to the Midlands, where Chris landed a post teaching Physics at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School for boys (BVGS) in Sutton Coldfield, where she was the only female member of staff. She subsequently introduced a course in Computing – before the days of mobile phones!

The school owned a rambling Victorian house in Betws y Coed, Snowdonia, which they used as an adventure centre and Chris quickly began helping to run weekends there. She set up a walking club for the younger students, which they named 'The Boot Bugs' (after BVGS), with a swap shop for outdoor clothing and boots. To do things properly, she obtained one of the first Educational Mountain Leadership Certificates which developed some climbing skills, but she was always predominantly a walker.

Another active member of staff asked her (us) to help run a group weekend in Langdale where, as a member of The Rucksack Club, he was able to book some beds in The Robertson-Lamb Hut. However, on arrival, some resident members pointed out that the club was all male, and she couldn't stay in the hut. She was resigned to sleeping in the minibus in March, when one of the members suggested that she went across the road (literally) to another club hut, which had mixed membership and ask to beg a bed. This we did and, having explained her plight, the family in residence kindly took her in as their guest.

That was, of course, Rawhead Barn and was our introduction to the club. Those were the days when you had to know a member who would sponsor you to join, which, of course, we didn't. Our saviour

(like many others in the club) was Francis Falkingham, the then Secretary, who enabled us to attend some meets as his guests. It was when the President, Charles Pickles, told Chris that she was putting too much money in the safe for a weekend's hut fees and she admitted that she was still a guest, that he recommended that she should put in an application to join! We subsequently coyly asked people to sponsor us and were able to join the club in 1978.



Chris became one of the many members who regularly attend meets but are rarely highlighted as they don't become officers. She had various absorbing activities outside of the Fell and Rock, including becoming Chairman of the British Computer Society's Midlands Branch. She also became very active in the expansion of computing in Midland Schools, subsequently working on the development of digital transmission of exam entries and results.

She ruptured all three of her Cruciate Ligaments in a skiing accident and her whole left leg was put in plaster. Typical of Chris, she hired an automatic car and carried on with her job on crutches! There is a picture of her navigating the Levadas on Madeira with a crutch as she recovered from that injury!

By this time, it was the mid '80s and computing was more established. One of the examination boards wanted her to move to Cambridge, which she wasn't keen on doing and, in search of a new challenge, she decided to join my developing freelance Industrial Quality consultancy to work in Information Security – again an embryonic field. There was a new British Standard just out – BS7799 Information security systems – against which companies with sensitive activities, involving banks

and the like, could be certificated. Chris led one of the first five companies in the country successfully to certification.

By 1997 we were in our early 50s and decided to run the business down to take early retirement. We had bought Holly Cottage in Skirwith in the Eden Valley from a club member (Eddie Hambly) in the late '80s as a weekend cottage so gradually spent more of the week in Cumbria, moving full time in

2000. In this period, we literally had the Pennine Hills on our doorstep, being able to walk onto Cross Fell from our front door, so we were absent from FRCC meets for a period.

In 2006, lifelong friends from The University Scout and Guide Club held a reunion in France, hiring two canal boats for a week cruising in the Loire Valley. Quite out of the blue, Chris collapsed whilst washing up after lunch. Luckily one of our number was a Trauma Doctor and he diagnosed a severe stroke. She was flown home and subsequently spent a year in various hospital beds coming out mainly confined to a wheelchair, but able to stand and transfer with assistance.

For someone so active, this was a completely new life which had to be developed. On a visit to a disability show at the NEC, we met representatives of The Disabled Ramblers, a charity run by its disabled members, which enabled Chris to get back out into the countryside in an off road wheelchair. Their rambles typically span five to six miles and can include a thousand feet of climbing – sufficiently challenging, even for Chris! We kept our FRCC membership and were able to join the Scottish Hotel Meet on numerous occasions. Many will also remember Douglas, Chris' assistance dog, on these

meets. He has started a new life back with his puppy parents and is doing well.

Unfortunately, her mobility declined in recent years, and she broke her hip in a transfer. The operation to pin the bone rendered her unable to stand and for the last year it was necessary to hoist her – but she never lost her optimistic outlook. I am pleased to say that, due to the kind gift of a portable hoist, Chris was able to go to the FRCC Dinner in November 2021, where we stayed in the hotel for the first time since her fall. Chris' determination meant that she made the best of what the cruel world threw at her.

In January, complications from an earlier internal problem led her to be taken into hospital in the early hours of a Friday morning and she died on the Sunday afternoon.

Ron Lyon

DEREK LYON 15/7/31- 29/1/21

Derek Lyon, the last town clerk of Barrow- in-Furness, was born in Stoke-on-Trent, August 15th, 1931, where his father ran a chemist's shop.

They moved to Barrow to start a similar business on Hartington Street when Derek was only 18 months old and that is where he proudly spent his boyhood and youth.

After he attended St James CE School, he progressed to Barrow Grammar School in 1942 during World War Two, where he was educated until 1949. His whole working life, except for his two years National Service, was spent in the legal profession as a solicitor in local authority service.

The school was to have an emotive influence on him for the remainder of his life and he spoke frequently of his time there, his love of reading, and

of his classmates. Being on the fringe of the Lake District the school had an active scout group and this is where Derek began his love of the fells.

In 1969 Derek joined the FRCC and was very active with the club, mainly as a fell walker, but this tailed off during the early 1980's as he became more involved as a volunteer for the Lake District National Park, serving some 45 years, the last 15 years as chairman of the volunteers committee. Derek was very much an outdoors man. His wife, Vi, was an accomplished climber who enjoyed the easier Alpine peaks and climbed the Matterhorn in 1960 with Peter Fleming, also a club member.

I first met Derek at an assessment week as a volunteer for the National Park in 1984. He was the co-ordinator and soon put me and others at ease with his affable, non-judgemental, and humorously self-deprecating approach to us rookies. In later years as his hips began to fail, he spent many hours manning the National Park safety boat on Coniston Water. Derek and Vi enjoyed travelling and walking, especially in the Lake District, Scotland, Italy, and the footpaths of the Alps.

Derek was involved in far too many charitable organisations to mention here, I have counted eight, there were probably more. Always welcoming anybody who called at his home Derek provided excellent coffee, biscuits, and anecdotes. The loss of his local knowledge and wisdom will be keenly felt by his friends and family.

He died of pneumonia in a care home, his mind being active until the end and is survived by his wife Vi.

Mark Scott

BARRY PEAY

Barry Peay who has died at the age of 78 was a long-standing member of the club, an active climber, skier and mountaineer, a gifted cricketer and administrator, and a committed campanologist.

We joined the FRCC together in 1964 after meeting and forming a climbing partnership at Oxford where Barry read Physics. We climbed in Wales, at Avon Gorge and Wintour's Leap and on bridges and buildings in the city. In 1965 we drove to the Alps in Barry's Clubman with Chris Eilbeck and Phil Watkins: to Chamonix and the 'M', Grepon, Requin and Chardonnay; on to Arolla for



the Pigne, Eveque, Tsa and then to Cortina where the car broke down and we climbed on the Cinque Torri.

Barry worked for a long time in the North and began climbing with my brother Ed and spent many weekends at the ODG where he became a third son to Sid and Jammy, and apprentice barman. He and Ed had many days out in the Lakes.

Every summer until around 2010 his cricket was put on hold for ten days in favour of classic Lakes climbing (with short forays into Wales, Scotland and even into dreaded Yorkshire) – repeats of the "old" classic VS venues on Gimmer West Face, Dow, Pillar, Scafell etc. headed the list - with the occasional final ticking off of one or two of the harder routes of the sixties (Red Edge, Sword of Damocles, Arcturus, etc).

After retraining as an Accountant, Barry worked for Unilever travelling weekly to Holland, where his office was based, from home in Sussex. This was a source of airmiles which fuelled much later travel! Later, we started skiing as a threesome from Ed's camper van. Skiing all day in a resort, driving to the

next resort for another full day and so on for a week. Our last trip in 2019 took in the resorts of Saalbach, Hopfenberg and Kitzbuhel. Barry skied proficiently, a bit like an unstoppable train on its fixed rails – no frills evident; then in the nineties and thereafter ski-tours saw him in a small group exploring the snows of the Oberland, Silvretta, Kandersteg, San Moritz/ Davos etc. Accident and illness unfortunately put a stop to that in 2020.

He skied with wife Sarah and daughters in the Alps and North America.

In summer Barry played cricket at Horsham where he had a considerable reputation as a batsman: he played for MCC and toured abroad being an opening batsman in the team which won the over-70s Ashes series in 2013. He became President of Horsham cricket club and organiser of an annual cricket festival, as well as dedicating time to running and umpiring Junior Cricket festivals for the ECB.

A great lover of the hills and outdoors, an always entertaining companion and a man of encyclopaedic knowledge gleaned from a wide-ranging collection of books. He will be sorely missed.

John Cross

EDWARD PETTINGER

Edward Pettinger, known as Ted, was born and brought up in Accrington. In the RAF he became great friends with Jim Walton but lost touch after his discharge only to meet a year or two later on the steps of Skipton Library. He started climbing on the gritstone at Widdop, along with David Jackson, John Wilkinson and Harry Ironfield, with whom he later spent time in the Alps and the Dolomites including an exciting incident involving an electric

storm on one of the Sella Towers!

Ted spent his life in religious education and learnt Ancient Greek to translate the Gospels, also having a stab at Hebrew which he said was difficult owing to lack of vowels.

He had a passion for music and an obsession with recording it. It was said that he had more recording equipment than Radio Blackburn and that if he were to play his tapes end to end, he would be dead long before they finished! He lectured widely, his favourite composer being Janacek.

Ted married Dorothy Webster in 1957 and they had two sons Alastair and Neil. The family were fond of the Lakes having a cottage in Guardhouse for many years, where their neighbours were Stan and Margaret Thompson.

In retirement he lived variously in Elsrickle, Rowrah and Crieff before settling at Biggar. He completed many long-distance walks, including the Coast to Coast and the Southern Uplands Way.

In 2015 Barbara Duxbury invited him to join the Beetham Cottage Anniversary as one of those originally present and he asked me to accompany him as his wife Dorothy, suffering from dementia, was unable to do so. Later with Dorothy in a home in Lanark he found life alone rather difficult and towards the end of November he suddenly lost momentum. He died on New Year's Day just two months before his 95th birthday.

He leaves wife Dorothy, sons Alastair and Neil and five grandchildren.

Martin Dawson

COLIN SHONE

Colin and his wife Monica enjoyed almost 50 years of association with the FRCC. Initially a keen climber and walker whose interest widened



through skiing, kayaking and much more. Monica of course – as many will remember – was a top class veteran fell runner, and Colin was content to support her in her competitive activities.

Colin was quite a raconteur, with a fund of stories about mountaineering

in general, a fireside story teller in the old style, someone with detailed knowledge of the lives and deeds of the sport's leading personalities. Throughout his life he enlivened many a hut evening with anecdotes, usually served with a liberal supply of tipples acquired on skiing trips. Professionally, Colin was something of a 'political technocrat' in the textile industry. There seemed little he didn't know about the commercial side of things, and being a skilled negotiator was engaged to work closely with what was then GATT (the trades and tariffs body replaced by the World Trade Organisation in 1995).

Colin was a mover and shaker in the early days of the Chester MC (stressing with modesty that he was not a founder member in 1953, Everest year); over three decades he was newsletter editor, Chairman, President and seemingly everything else. He was instrumental in securing the club's past and present hut accommodation in Wales, and Monica proved

an effective hut custodian (and woe betide those who failed to clean up properly after meals!) Colin virtually 'discovered' Creigiau'r Cadereirydd, a small crag (probably now dismissed as a mere bouldering ground) on the flanks of Snowdon above the present hut; sadly the details of the early routes are lost. He climbed widely in Snowdonia and the Peak, particularly; skied frequently in Austria; kayaked in the Scottish lochs. After joining the FRCC in 1973 he turned to walking in the Lakes; he turned from the CMC and both he and Monica devoted themselves to FRCC life, for a spell serving on the elective committee.

Colin and Monica returned to Welsh roots, spending their retirement years at home near Menai Bridge, Ynys Mon. Time never diminished Colin's love of mountains in Wales or the Lakes. A gifted, instinctive man of letters, he maintained a fascinating and informative correspondence about anything to do with people and places, traditions, crafts and local history. When I edited the CMC's 60th year journal in 2013, Colin (and fellow member Chris Simpkins) offered valuable historical background about the club's huts, a richly woven narrative that might otherwise have been lost to us. He had much to say about events and people in the wider mountaineering world (and occasionally some well-aimed broadsides!) His letters displayed a genuine concern for the myriad issues that beset the sport over the years. He could always sprinkle many a discussion with his wicked humour and sharp wit.

Colin made many good friends in the FRCC, and like Monica will be sadly missed.

Simon Jeffries

DAVE STATON

David was born in Darlington, and after attending school there, gained a place at Matlock Teacher Training College. He was always interested



in the outdoors, and it was here that his real passion for climbing developed. His first teaching post was at Birmingham, from where he spent many weekends in Wales, taking school and youth groups on climbing and walking expeditions. After moving back to Darlington, he

became more involved in youth work. This led to him becoming Youth Organiser for the town, and responsible for the development of the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme in the town. He joined the Cleveland Mountaineering Club, and spent time climbing and walking in the Teesdale area, and in the Lake District. In 1972 he moved to Lancashire, becoming County Youth Officer.

I first met David in 1977, thanks to my wife who worked for the same organisation and had heard he was looking for a climbing partner. We got on well, climbed at about the same grade, and were keen to get out climbing regularly. It was also very convenient, as we both lived in the same town.

For the next 20 years we climbed regularly in the Lakes, Snowdonia and Scotland. We both liked to climb major routes on mountain crags and aspired to harder, serious climbs, such as Saxon and White Wizard on the central Buttress of Scafell, The Grooves on Cymn Las, and Carnivore in Glencoe.

We also climbed in the Alps on summer holidays. This was mainly on multi pitch rock routes in areas such as the Grimsel and Furka Pass in Switzerland, and also included the classic south ridge of the Salbitschijen. Also, in the French Alps, we concentrated on multi pitch rock routes, such as the south face of the Aiguille du Midi above Chamonix.

David was a very keen skier, and often joined groups of Club members, and my family, on basic apartment holidays in the Alps. He was always sociable and joined in the social side of such ski holidays.

In 1990, David and I joined a Fell and Rock expedition to the Pamirs, arranged by a Russian Mountaineering Club. This had just become possible because 'Glasnost' had opened the Soviet Union to travellers. We flew via Moscow into Tajikistan, and then by an old military helicopter to land in Kergizia, among some striking granite peaks. We had a couple of weeks climbing in this remote area, with just a few sociable shepherds for company. We climbed a number of peaks, the highest being the 13,000 ft Isan.

In 1997, David joined a small group of Fell and Rock members on a trek and climb above the Langtang Valley, in Nepal. Snow conditions prevented us climbing our intended peak, but we managed to climb an easy 17,000 ft peak above the valley.

When I was about to become the Club President, the post of Club Secretary became vacant. I was very pleased when David took on this task and supported me during this period. As a professional administrator, he was very proficient in the role, and continued serving the Club for some years. Later he was appointed a Vice President of the Club.

As well as his activities in the Club, he also took an active role in protecting rights of way in the Kendal area for the Ramblers Association

David Miller

MADGE TOWNSEND (NEE COBB) 1923 - 2021

Madge was born on Boxing Day 1923 in Heeley, Sheffield and lived in Sheffield all her life.

Having passed the 11+ aged 9, she went on to Marlcliffe School then secretarial college. Her first job was secretary to Manny Cussins who founded the Waring and Gillow's furniture chain and who later became Chairman of Leeds United.

The shop was destroyed in the Sheffield Blitz, and she was deployed to Samuel Osborn's Steel works in the Wicker. Madge and her friend Eva were invited out to Stanage by a male colleague where they met other climbers including Ron Townsend who also worked at Osborn's.

They were soon spending most of their spare time on the gritstone edges of the Peak District. In those days they had to work on Saturday morning so as soon as work was over, they'd be off to spend the night in a Youth Hostel, a tent or whenever possible in a shooting cabin on Kinder or the surrounding grouse moors with one ear cocked ready for the gamekeepers.

Curly Walker (Tony's Dad) used to joke to Ron that back in the black and white days Madge was a better climber than him. Whether this was true or not, Curly knew his stuff - which reflects what respect for Madge's ability as a climber the climbing community had when women climbers were uncommon. The BMC Stanage Guidebook of 2002 features a black and white photograph of Madge and her friend Peggy Coates climbing on Jitter Face, Stanage, probably from the 1940s.

Ron was a founder member of the Peak Climbing Club in 1942 and Madge was the first female



member. They were both involved in writing the first Stanage Guide with Eric Byne. In 1966 Madge was working at Sheffield University department of Geology as a secretary/ librarian with Jack Soper and other climbers. It was Jack who suggested they may like to think about joining the Fell and Rock. Ron joined in 1967 and Madge in 1975. She was assistant warden at Rawhead from 1992 to 2006.

She particularly enjoyed recruiting fellow Sheffields for maintenance meets - some would say it was a command rather than a request! She took this role seriously and whenever we stayed at Rawhead Cottage, Dad would be outside tapping his fingers on the door complaining about her need to do a 'mini maintenance' as we were leaving.

Her joy in life was to be out on the hills, mountains and fells of the Lakes, Derbyshire, North Wales and Scotland or away in Europe in the Dolomites or the Alps. She worked part time until she was 79 and as well as enjoying the company of colleagues said the extra money was to enable them to have the holidays they wanted. She was never a solo walker, always loving the chance to chat. As one Fell and Rock member said, 'there was never a dull moment...or a quiet one'.

Madge was a character. In his tribute to her at the funeral Dave Wright recalled a typical phone call:

'Hi Dave, its Madge. Have you got a minute?' We all know how long a Madge minute could last and it wasn't 60 seconds. And a time when Dave invited her and Ron to a barbeque for his birthday, her reply was that

they'd love to come but they didn't like barbeque food so she'd have a ham sandwich and Ron would have a beef one!

She spoke her mind but never meant to offend. She had an opinion about most things and was always good company. The world is a duller place without her, and she is sadly missed.

Anne Townsend and Val Hawsworth

IAIN WHITMEY

I first met Iain in the 1980s when we were both members of Pendle Ski Club. The club used to organise ski trips to the Alps each year, so we found ourselves on the same holidays and soon got to being friends. Another ski club member and great friend, Bill Smith, was also an FRCC member and it wasn't long before we were all going on weekends to the huts. Iain became a member of the FRCC in 1992.

Iain's mountaineering background was climbing but he excelled at fell walking. He, and his wife Brenda, contributed to the FRCC guidebook for walkers 'The Lakeland Fells'. He completed the FRCC tops and Wainwrights twice. The last summit of his second time around at the age of 80 years. There are so many fabulous memories of walking with Iain in the Lakes in all sorts of weathers. We had to ensure we 'ticked' yet another summit!

Our friendship was not limited to the Lakes. With his wife, Brenda, and my husband, Barry, we went trekking in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco, completed the Tour of Mont Blanc one glorious sunny July in 2003, and later the Annapurna Sanctuary in Nepal. Iain and his brother, Stuart, also introduced me to potholing. A memorable experience which I really enjoyed but the open air is definitely my preferred option! Every year I have known Iain we have skied together until just the last 3 years. He was a great skier...adventurous, eager to try anything new, brave, and on top of all that, he was a marvellous travelling companion. We also



enjoyed a trip ski mountaineering in Switzerland. Since 2001 we have skied every year with other FRCC members at the 'unofficial skiing meet' based at Landry in the Savoie area of France. These trips were superb, and Iain loved it!!

Iain had a huge drive to travel, and he was single minded in doing so. Travelling was a priority. He was always ready to try anything including meeting up with a bunch of Americans to canoe down the Colorado River, and camping in the Namibian desert with Brenda. They enjoyed many trips to South Africa, USA and many other countries. Iain and Brenda's two daughters, Tracy and Gillean, both live in New Zealand so what a great excuse for frequent visits across the Antipodes. Oh... and 'let's not come back the shortest route' but round to the west coast of the United States and onwards round the world!

Iain gave a lot of his time to the FRCC, dealing successfully with at least one very challenging situation. He was the Archivist between 1998 and 2008, assistant hut warden at Brackenclose for 10 years until 2016 and Vice President from 2010-12.

Outside of the club he was a man of many interests including his motorbike and cars. His model railway was built with fascinating detail and filled the utility room at home. Brenda had to do a limbo dance under the track to get to the washer! He loved the finer things in life including good wine, dining out, beautiful hotels and wearing his suave and sophisticated jackets and Panama hat.

Iain was special friend. He was an absolute gentleman. He was humorous, generous, intelligent and above all he enjoyed life to the full.

He will be sadly missed by so many friends both inside and outside the FRCC.

Brenda Fullard

HILDA YOUNG (TYLER)

Hilda and her first husband, Ron Tyler, joined the FRCC in the 1960s. They had already climbed together for many years and were long-standing members of the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club (YMC). In Journal No. 61, Allan Austin wrote about them, 'they were particularly close; it was difficult to think of one without the other'.

During their moorland walks in the early 1950s they saw climbers on gritstone, and Hilda longed to have a go. She persuaded Ron, they tackled the Ordinary Route on Mystery Buttress at Widdop, and never looked back.

Their opportunities to climb were limited,



because Ron worked on Saturday mornings, and they depended on public transport. However, they joined the YMC in 1955, met Allan Austin, and progressed to VS on gritstone, including routes that are graded harder now. They used to instruct

police cadets on climbing courses at Ilkley.

In the late 1950s Ron and Hilda featured in the development of trad climbing on Yorkshire Limestone, especially at Attermire. They loved the mountains and joining FRCC gave them more time in the Lakes. They climbed many classics including Kipling Groove, Central Buttress, and North Crag Eliminate, and had climbing holidays in Scotland, the Alps and the Pyrenees, but it all ended in tragedy when Ron was killed in 1969 by a freak

accident at home.

Hilda joined the Pinnacle Club when she was recovering from the blow. She was a confident VS leader, light and elegant as she danced up the rock, always cheerful and encouraging. For several years she was active in the Club, serving on the committee, organising the Dinner, and writing in the Jubilee Journal.

Then, Hilda met Keith on a sailing course in Spain. He was a walker rather than a climber, and hillwalking and sailing became their main activities when they married. They made good use of the huts and came on many meets; Keith jokes about not being able to keep up with Hilda, but the Pinnacle Club remembers him always carrying the rucksack. They had a dinghy called 'After You' on Windermere, and they only capsized once in many voyages!

Keith is on his own now, with happy memories. We extend to him our deepest sympathy.

Angela Soper

Officers of the Club 2021

President
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Treasurer
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Joint Journal Editors
Chronicler
Guide Books Secretary
Guide Books Editor*
Librarian
Archivist (Acting)
Oral Archivist*
Obituarist*
Dinner Secretary
Meets Secretary
Webmaster
Compliance Officer
Huts Secretary

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Brenda Fullard
John Pulford
Peter Simcock
Tony Walker and Jim Sutcliffe
Simon Jefferies
Ron Kenyon
Steve Scott
Peter Lucas
Deborah Walsh
Mark Scott
Wendy Dodds
Margaret Skelton
Hazel Jonas
Philip Powell
Geoff Lyons
Andrew Paul

Hut Wardens:

Beetham Cottage - Humphrey Johnson
Birkness - Jackie Brindle
Brackenclose - Richard Tait
Karn House - Graeme Ralph

Raw Head - Peter Haigh
Salving House - Christina Paul
Waters Cottage - Mark Gear

Elective Members of Committee:

Janet Ashworth
Bernie Bradbury
Ian Bradley

Lis Cook
Andrew Duxbury
Amanda Halliwell

Graham Hardness
Gerard Hurst
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Sue Wales
Stuart Web

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Representatives on British Mountaineering Council Area Meetings:

Lakes - Ron Kenyon, Alan Strachan
Midlands - Hazel Jonas
Northeast - Graham Harkness, Mark Goodings
Peak - Clare Reading

Northwest - George Wostenholm
Southeast - Rosemary Scott
Yorkshire Humberside - Paul Clarke, Mick Johnson

*Not a member of the main committee.

Meets List 2021

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Meet Location</i>	<i>Meet Co-ordinator</i>
T	15/16 Jan	Beetham	Ian Bradley
E	22/23 Jan	Burns Supper Meet – Raw Head	Helen Elliott
	05/13 Feb	Ski Mountaineering Meet – Karn House	Jim Gregson
F	19/20 Feb	Family Meet -Birkness	Carrie Hill
Wel	26/27 Feb	Welcome Meet - Beetham	Geoff Lyons, Mark Wilkinson
W	01/03 Mar	CIC Hut, Ben Nevis (6 places)	John Taylor
W	05/13 Mar	Winter Climbing – Karn House	Anne Salisbury
E	19/20 Mar	Music Meet – Raw Head	Calum Barrow
BH	01/04 April	Easter Meet - Birkness	Mark Scott, John Barrett
T	09/10 April	April in Ambleside – Raw Head. Brackenclouse 24-Mile Run/Walk Fundraising Event	Richard Tait, Karen Goodyear
	09/23 April	French Spring Meet – Orpierre	Graham Townsend
	15/18 April	Glan Dena – Ogwen, Snowdonia	Phil Elliot
	16/17 April	Younger Members Meet – Salving House	Katie McKay
	18/22 April	High Moss - Duddon	Jane Wainwright
MM	23/24 April	Maintenance Meet - Beetham	Humphrey Johnson
	23/24 April	FRCC/Pinnacle Joint Meet – Raw Head	Dee Gaffney, Hazel Jonas
F BH	30 Apr - 02 May	Family Meet – Raw Head	Rob Muirhead
BH	30 Apr - 02 May	Bank Holiday Meet – Salving House	Steve Lyon
Wel	07/08 May	Welcome Meet - Birkness	Amanda Halliwell, Jo Nevin
	07/08 May	Langdale Rock – Raw Head	Max Biden, Wendy Stirrup
CM	14/15 May	Committee Meet - Birkness	Martyn Carr
	14/15 May	Eskdale Guidebook Meet, Eskdale	Rachel Somerville
W	15/22 May	Scottish Hotel Meet, Arrochar	Clive Beveridge
W	22/29 May	Glen Shiel Cottage Meet	Stuart Webb
W	22/29 May	Glen Brittle, Skye	George Wostenholm

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Meet Location</i>	<i>Meet Co-ordinator</i>
F BH	28 May - 03 Jun	Family Meet - Birkness	Gael Watson
BH	28/30 May	Cairngorms Wild Camp – Karn House	Inken Blunk
BH	29 May - 03 Jun	Scottish Classic Rock 1 – Waters Cottage	Rob Stone
W	29 May - 05 Jun	Cannich Cottage Meet	Stuart Webb
	4/5 June	FRCC/CC - Rawhead	Debbie Marsh
MM	11/12 June	Maintenance Meet - Birkness	Jackie Brindle
MM	11/12 June	Maintenance Meet – Karn House	Graeme Ralph
Wel	11/12 June	Welcome Meet – Salving House	Hazel Jonas, Tony Womersley
W	12/26 June	Irish Rock Road Trip	Andy Dunhill
	18/19 June	Lake District Classic Rock – Salving House	Janet Ashworth
T	18/19 June	Geology Meet - Beetham	John Moore and Dale Bloomer
	19/26 June	Via Ferrata – Dolomites	Gerard Hurst
	25/26 June	Ben Macdui Midsummer Bivvy	Graeme Ralph
D	25/26 June	FRCC Coniston Meet and Dinner.	VPs
	25/26 June	Ullswater Skyline - Beetham	Ged Cudahy
	25/26 June	Canyoning – Raw Head	Adrian Pilling
MM	02/03 July	Maintenance Meet - Salving House	Chris Paul
	02/03 July	Wasdale Skyline – Little Ground House, Nether Wasdale	Ian Charters
	02/03 July	BMC Youth Meet – Raw Head	Ron Kenyon
	04/25 July	Joint Alpine Meet	Keith Lambley
T	09/10 July	Green Travel Meet – Salving House	Paddy Feely
F	09/10 July	Family Meet - Birkness	Gary Hill
	16/17 July	Younger Members Meet – Raw Head	Nina Stirrup
	23/24 July	Wasdale Meet – Little Ground House	Humphrey Johnson
T	06/07/08 Aug	Brackenclose Appeal Hut to Hut; Beetham, Raw Head, Salving House, Birkness	Graham Harkness, Humphrey Johnson, Margaret Skelton
	7/14 Aug	FRCC/CC – May Cottage, Pembroke	Debbie Marsh
T	13/14 Aug	VJ Day – Unveiling of Ennerdale Plaque - Birkness	Peter Smith

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Meet Location</i>	<i>Meet Co-ordinator</i>
	13/14 Aug	Salving House	Steve Lunt
	20/21 Aug	Eden Valley	Les Meer
W BH	26/31 Aug	Scottish Classic Rock 2 – Karn House	Rob Stone
MM	28 Aug	Maintenance Meet – Waters Cottage	Mark Gear
CM	3/4 Sep	Committee Meet - Birkness	Geoff Lyons
MM	10/11 Sep	Maintenance Meet - Rawhead	Peter Haigh
	17/18 Sep	Climbing – Salving House	Norbert de Mello
Wel	24/25 Sep	Welcome Meet - Rawhead	Lis Cook, Sue Vaughan
	01/02 Oct	Salving House	Colin Goodfellow
F	01/02 Oct	Family Meet – Raw Head	Denise Andrews
T	08/09 Oct	Rock Stars Fundraiser - Birkness	Ian Bradley
	29/30 Oct	Beetham	Shirley Emptage, Fiona Burnett
	05/06 Nov	AGM and Dinner	The President
	12/13 Nov	Bonfire Meet	Rob Jones
	14 Nov	Act of Remembrance – Great Gable Summit	The President
CM	19/20 Nov	Committee Meet – Raw Head	Humphrey Johnson
T	26/27 Nov	Temperance Meet - Birkness	Charles Skeavington
	03/04 Dec	Beetham	Kath and Graham Willis
	17/18 Dec	Christmas Antidote – Salving House	Laura Shields
E	30 Dec - 01 Jan	New Year Meet - Raw Head	Phil Elliott

CM = Committee Meeting Meet

BH = Bank Holidays

D = Dinner

E = There may be music at these Meets

F = Family Meets

MM = Maintenance Meets

Wel = Welcome Meets

W = Midweek Meets,

T = Themed Meet. Those attending are free to choose whether or not to join in the themed activity.

Officers of the Club 2022

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Vice-President
Secretary
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Chronicler
Guide Books Secretary
Guide Books Editor*
Librarian
Archivist
Oral Archivist*
Obituarist*
Dinner Secretary
Meets Secretary
Webmaster
Compliance Officer
Younger Members Co-ordinator
Huts Secretary

Wendy Stirrup
Andrew Paul, Stephen Reid, Alan Strachan
Brenda Fullard
John Pulford
Ron Kenyon
Peter Simcock
Tony Walker and Jim Sutcliffe
Simon Jefferies
Trevor Langhorne
Steve Scott
Peter Lucas
Deborah Walsh
Lis Cook
Clare Kenny
Margaret Skelton
Hazel Jonas
Philip Powell
Geoff Lyons
Nina Stirrup
Mark Gear

Hut Wardens:

Beetham Cottage - Humphrey Johnson
Birkness - Jackie Brindle
Brackenclose - Richard Tait
Karn House - Graeme Ralph

Raw Head - Peter Farnell
Salving House - Christina Paul
Waters Cottage - Mark Gear

Elective Members of Committee:

Mark Baron	Lis Cook
Bernie Bradbury	Amanda Halliwell
Ian Bradley	Jane Hodgson

Paul Hudson	Sue Vaughan
Gerard Hurst	Sue Wales
Adrian David Lomas	Stuart Webb

Advisory Trustees:

John Barrett	David Miller	Stephen Porteus
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Representatives on British Mountaineering Council Area Meetings:

Lakes - Ron Kenyon, Alan Strachan	Northwest - Bernie Bradbury
Midlands - Hazel Jonas	Southeast - Rosemary Scott
Northeast - Graham Harkness, Mark Goodings	Yorkshire Humberside - Paul Clarke, Mick Johnson
Peak - Clare Reading	

*Not a member of the main committee.

Meets List 2022

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Meet Location</i>	<i>Meet Co-ordinator</i>
E	30 Dec - 01 Jan	New Year's Eve Meet – Raw Head	Phil Elliot
	20/22 Jan	Beetham	Peter Sharpe
E	21/22 Jan	Burns Supper Meet – Raw Head	Helen Elliot
	28/29 Jan	Winter Climbing – Waters Cottage	Roger Everett
F	18/19 Feb	Family Meet - Birkness	Carrie Hill
CM	18/19 Feb	Committee Meet – Raw Head	Jane Hodgson
Wel	25/26 Feb	Welcome Meet - Beetham	Geoff Lyons and Mark Wilkinson
	25/26 Feb	FRCC/Cairngorm Club – Waters Cottage	Susan Jensen
W	28 Feb - 02 Mar	CIC – six places	John Taylor
W	5/12 Mar	Winter Mountaineering – Karn House	Anne Salisbury
E	18/19 Mar	Music Meet – Raw Head	Calum Barrow
W	12/17 Mar	Winter Mountaineering - FRCC/KMC – Waters Cottage	Andy Stratford
T	25/26 Mar	'Class of 20/21' - Birkness	Hazel Jonas
	April	French Spring – Details TBC	David Miller
	01/02 Apr	Birkness	Dave Dixon
DM	02 Apr	Ropework Refresher – Peak District	Matt Pigden
W	03/08 Apr	High Moss - Duddon	Charles Kelly
DM	08 Apr	Photography, Pictures and Software – Raw Head	Phil Rigby
Wel	08/09 Apr	Welcome Meet – Raw Head	Trevor Brewster and Sue Fox
BH	15/18 Apr	Easter - Brackenclose	Les Meer
	21/24 Apr	Glan Dena	Phil Elliot
	22/23 April	Rhinns of Galloway Sea Cliff Climbing	Roger Everett
F BH	29 Ap - 2 May	Family Meet – Raw Head	Rob Muirhead
CM	06/07 May	Committee Meet - Birkness	John Pulford
	06/07 May	Younger Members Meet – Salving House	Joe Dobson
W CV	09/13 May	Shieldaig	James Gregory
W	14/21 May	Scottish Hotel Meet, Strathpeffer	Joanne Webster and David MacGillivray
W	14/21 May	Glen Brittle, Skye	George Wostenholm
W	14/21 May	Woodlands Cottage, Glen Shiel	Stuart Webb

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Meet Location</i>	<i>Meet Co-ordinator</i>
W	21/28 May	Old Stables, Cannich	Stuart Webb
F BH	27 Ma - 02 June	Family Meet - Birkness	Gael Watson
MM	10/11 June	Maintenance Meet – Karn House	Graeme Ralph
	10/11 June	New Routes Meet – Raw Head	Martin Scrowston
W	11/25 June	S. Ireland - Donegal	Andy Dunhill
MM	17/18 June	70th Anniversary Birkness Maintenance Meet	Jackie Brindle
T	17/18 June	Geology Meet – Beetham	John Moore and Dale Bloomer
D CV	24/25 June	FRCC Coniston Meet and Dinner	VPs
CV	01/02 July	Wye Valley – FRCC/AC	Nigel Buckley
MM	01/02 July	Maintenance Meet – Salving House	Chris Paul
	01/02 July	BMC Youth Meet – Raw Head	Ron Kenyon
	02/23 July	Joint Alpine Meet - Argentiere	Keith Lambley
W CV	04/07 July	Anglesey	Steve Lunt
F	08/09 July	Family Meet – Raw Head	Gary Hill
	08/09 July	Welsh 3000s – Glan Dena, FRCC/MAM	Toby Forrester
	08/09 July	Younger Members Meet - Brackenclose	Nina Stirrup
W	12/14 July	Mid-Week Climbing – Salving House	Steve Lyon
	22/23 July	Brackenclose	Ros de Fraine
W	24/28 July	Classic Rock - Muir of Inverey - Braemar	Steve Woollard
W	01/04 Aug	Mid-Week Climbing - Brackenclose	Steve Woollard
	12/13 Aug	Beetham	Jayne Moss and Keith Butterfield
MM	26/27 Aug	Maintenance Meet - Waters Cottage	Mark Gear
	27 Aug - 10 Sep	Iceland	Ian Bradley
CM	02/03 Sep	Committee Meet - Birkness	Janet Ashworth
	09/10 Sep	FRCC/Wayfarers - Brackenclose	Mark Baron
W	11/18 Sep	FRCC/CC - Count House	Rob Stone
MM	16/17 Sep	Maintenance Meet – Raw Head	Peter Farnell
	16/17 Sep	Wild Swimming - Birkness	Ross Outhwaite and Lis Cook
	23/24 Sep	Salving House	Simon Willis
BCM	30 Sep/01 Oct	Brackenclose	Chris and Sue Wales
BCM	30 Sep/01 Oct	Birkness	Norbert de Mello

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Meet Location</i>	<i>Meet Co-ordinator</i>
BCM	30 Sep/01 Oct	Beetham	Simon Jefferies
BCM	30 Sep/01 Oct	Salving House	Rob Stone
BCM	30 Sep/01 Oct	Raw Head	Peter Farnell
BCM	30 Sep/01 Oct	Waters Cottage	Alan Strachan
BCM	30 Sep/01 Oct	Karn House	Lis Cooke
	03/06 Oct	Hut-to-Hut (Raw Head, Brackenclose, Salving House, Raw Head)	Shirley Emptage and Fiona Burnett
Wel	07/08 Oct	Welcome Meet – Salving House	Sara Hayes and Kate Woodrow
MM	07/08 Oct	Maintenance Meet - Beetham	Humphrey Johnson
	07/08 Oct	Autumn Hill Walking – Waters Cottage	Roger Everett
FM	14/15 Oct	Family Meet – Birkness	Denise Andrews
T	14/15 Oct	Micronavigation – Beetham Cottage	Matt Pigden
	04/05 Nov	AGM and Dinner	The President
	11/12 Nov	Bonfire Meet - Brackenclose	Rob Jones
	13 Nov	Act of Remembrance, Great Gable Summit	The President
W Wel	13/14 Nov	Mid-Week Welcome Meet - Brackenclose	Geoff Lyons
CM	18/19 Nov	Committee Meet - Raw Head	Sue Vaughan
	02/03 Dec	Temperance Meet - Birkness	Geoff Lyons and Mark Wilkinson
	09/10 Dec	Salving House	Paddy Feely
E	30 Dec/01 Jan	New Year Meet - Raw Head	Phil Elliot

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MM = Maintenance Meets

Wel = Welcome Meets

W = Midweek Meets,

CV = Campervan Friendly, DM = Day Meet

T = Themed meet. Those attending are free to choose whether or not to join in the themed activity.

BCM = Brackenclose Celebratory Meet; a mass-hut meet to celebrate the re-opening of Brackenclose.

