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Photo by *T. R. Burnett*

FLESKEDALS SAETER.

"We appropriated the largest of the huts for our H.Q."

attention more than anything else, and that was a monstrous pyramid of ice to the west, rising about 4,850 feet above a high mountain ridge. This glorious peak could bear none other name than that of Petermann, the honoured originator of the first German Arctic Expedition."

With only a rough sketch made in 1926 among the Cambridge Peaks from which to decide a route, we were on our way up to the first proposed camp by 5 p.m. That same evening we bade farewell, for the time being, to Whittard, Parkinson and Dykes, who were going to do geological work from the ship in the fjords and return after ten days to pick us up. A tent and provisions and a small boat had been left on the shore in case the ship was unable to return owing to excessive ice, and we were left a party of six with loads for twelve—as three of the ship's crew had also helped up to the first camp at about 3,800 feet. This party consisted of J. M. Wordie, A. Courtauld, V. S. Forbes, V. E. Fuchs, Dr. J. F. Varley, and myself. We had three Mummery pattern tents and six specially designed double cover sleeping bags which proved extraordinarily effective. Everything possible was discarded so as to lighten the loads, but in spite of spring-balance rationing a lot of tiresome relaying had to be done. Everest carriers and a small edition of a canvas kit bag proved, on the whole, more useful and serviceable than rucksacks.

Camp 1 was on the slopes above the Riddar Glacier and our progress up this glacier the next day was desperately slow, in spite of its good surface. A 40-lb. pack takes a day or two to get used to when one is out of training, though it made one feel stronger to see Courtauld energetically chasing his hat rushing downwards in a glacial stream: but the stream was too rapid, and it had to be gallantly retrieved by Forbes' ice-axe lower down. Camp 2, perched 6,900 feet up on a sloping scree just below an ice ridge, overlooked to the west a biggish tributary of the Nordenskiold Glacier. The ridge was the southerly continuation of that reached by the 1926 party. On our way up Courtauld and I had made a little detour by one of the Cambridge Peaks to make some observations and it was from there that I had my first view of Petermann, rearing itself in triangular fashion high above its neighbours. Looking backwards to the east, Payer Peak stood out so that one could easily imagine the

exhilaration that the original two must have felt when they saw Petermann for the first time nearly 60 years ago. That view of the inland mountains with, here and there, little stretches of the ice cap seen through the serrated skyline, was the first of many surprise sights that were to come our way. Nobody knew, and we could only hazard a very rough guess at what we should find as we progressed further west, but it was at least apparent—and this was confirmed by Wordie and the others who, after finding a camping site, had ascended another of the Cambridge Peaks—that our route would be to the south round the horse-shoe watershed of the valley, which lay immediately in front of us.

We spent three nights at that camp. After the view of Petermann, it seemed likely that 10 days would be an under-estimate of the time required to climb it and, accordingly, Wordie decided to bring up more provisions from the shore and to leave a note to this effect, so that Whittard, when he arrived back with the ship, would not be anxious at any delay. In a lightly-falling drizzle of snow, Forbes, Courtauld, Fuchs and Varley departed the next morning as a relay party. Wordie and I waited a little until it was clear before prospecting further ahead to decide on the best route and to try and find a suitable dumping place for the theodolite and a certain amount of food. After a 2½ hours traverse of the eastern side of a snow mountain, across the sort of snow slope that a ski-runner dreams about, we came to a col (Outlook Col) beyond which another glorious panorama spread out before us. Petermann being in mist, and its direction from this point unknown, there was nothing to do but wait and eat icicles. We were lucky; the first icicle had barely disappeared when the last shreds of mist faded away and left no doubt that the route along the horse-shoe watershed was the right one. From higher up on Outlook Peak to the south of the Col we could see very little more, except to the south, where the glaciers all began to sweep down to the head of Kjerulf Fjord. At 10 p.m. we got back to the camp and found Courtauld and Varley just returned from Camp 1 and preparing a meal. The other two were staying the night at the shore tent. As a matter of fact, the meal was not progressing in the quickest of ways. It was not until after a frozen pool of water had been discovered some 200 feet above the camp,

that the preparation of a hot dish could be counted in minutes and not in hours. The route to the pool lay either along sloping ice, which necessitated crampons, or else along and up a rough scree at the edge of the ice. Two pans, one with and one without a handle, formed the only possible water carriers in the camp. But Courtauld is the acknowledged authority on the subject, for was it not he who, after a series of unfortunate happenings, was seen to arrive back at the camp with the two pans both empty!

Next day we relayed loads on to the Col, and at 7-45 p.m. Forbes and Fuchs arrived, having taken 10¾ hours up the 7,000 feet from the shore. We were not sorry to leave that camp the following morning. It was the highest camp we were destined to have and not particularly warm. Its one redeeming feature was the magnificent view of the mountains westward which greeted—or at least ought to have greeted—the early riser. However, on this particular morning, having been rudely aroused at 6 a.m. to join in the ecstasies of this vision, we crawled out to discover that, with difficulty, it was possible to see the next tent. In the end, our better judgments prevailed, and by the time we had had another 4 hours' sleep and arrived at Outlook Col, the mist rolled up and all was fine.

At this point the party split into two; one rope went up Outlook Peak (7,885 feet) south of the Col, afterwards bearing westward round the horse-shoe ridge, and the other traversed along the side of the peak below a big bergschrund, and met the ridge again at the next saddle. A snow dome, with a most impressive icicled cornice on the south side and rather a wind-swept ice slope on the west side, was next encountered. In our later passage along this ridge the "Dome" was avoided by an easy soft snow traverse lower down on the north side; the Doctor wanted to avoid, if possible, the necessity of using his chin again as a belay! It was a day, too, that Wordie will probably remember for some time, for not only did he disappear in a crevasse, whose natural concealment Winnie the Pooh would do well to study before making his next Heffalump trap, but later on, when in the act of negotiating 700 feet of rough rock and scree which lay between us and the only possible camping site, he and his rucksack, containing among other things two cameras and a telescope, parted company

and we can only guess his thoughts as he watched this precious bundle make a commendable imitation of a boulder let loose from the top of the Shamrock Chimneys.

Our next vantage point was afterwards known as Sentinel Col. Now for the first time a better survey could be had of the country immediately between us and Petermann. To the front a glacier dipped and curled its way down out of sight and could only be the big Nordenskiöld glacier, down to which, on the other side, came the very slopes of Petermann. There had been a hope (rapidly diminishing during the last two days) that the Nordenskiöld glacier would be found on the north side of Petermann, but now we were finally disillusioned. To make proof positive we again split up into two parties and ascended the two peaks to the north and south of the Col. From there we could not only see the two central moraines sweeping down the glacier from the west, but in a north-easterly direction we could see where the glacier, after tracing a big S bend, terminated in an ice cliff at the head of Franz Josef Fjord. In 1926 this glacier had at first appeared the best means of approach to Petermann, but as it looked highly crevassed with very steep sides, as well as being protected by four miles of broken icebergs, the first party tried another route. In 1929 all the bergs had drifted into Kjerulf Fjord, but it still looked by no means an easy route to force, besides being obviously unsuitable for survey work. We met again at Sentinel Col and then dropped a thousand feet down the Ptarmigan glacier to our next camp.

On August 12 Forbes, Fuchs and Varley went back to relay provisions, while the rest of us set out to spend the day reconnoitring ahead. After prospecting from the ridge (the Battlements) above the camp, we dropped down the glacier to where two rock sentinels, immediately nicknamed " the Butts," guarded the entrance to the Nordenskiöld glacier. It was nearly 1 a.m. before we had returned up the 3,500 feet of glacier to the camp. This Ptarmigan glacier had two other branches to the south, and was more crevassed than any previous ones we had seen : it also had a nasty habit of covering up its frozen holes of water so that one could not distinguish them from solid ice, which meant that one's feet were continually wet.

Breakfast was being " served " next morning when the relay party arrived with tales of high winds which had, apparently,

completely missed us. The day took us down Ptarmigan glacier, and up the south side of the Nordenskiöld glacier for about 2½ miles where we camped—just out of reach of masses of stones whizzing down from the cliffs above; all day we studied and scanned the slopes of Petermann opposite for the easiest route. The Nordenskiöld glacier has something of the appearance of the Aletsch glacier; on either side cliffs, here and there indented with variously sized glaciers, rise almost perpendicularly for over 4,000 feet, while the two central moraines, keeping a happy companionship in their race for the Fjord, delineate with almost a painter's fancy, the vagaries of its course.

The 3-4-mile crossing of the glacier proved comparatively easy until within a quarter of a mile from the north side, where some seracs near the edge made the pace necessarily slower. The other side was wonderfully sheltered and warm, and it was arranged that Varley, whose boots were almost completely disintegrated and were not up to any more rock-work, should keep one tent and remain there until our return. We would be forced to come back this way as the screes directly above seemed the only practicable exit from the glacier on to the higher slopes of Petermann. We camped 2,700 feet up those screes on the side of a subsidiary glacier, which eventually came to be known—under pressure from our South African member—as Disa glacier.

A cold wind greeted the start next morning at 9.45, and after two-and-three-quarter hours we had reached the last col between us and Petermann. If the rocks had been feasible higher up the Nordenskiöld glacier there would have been no necessity for this bye-pass route that we were now taking. A 1,200-feet descent and a westward traverse over soft snow brought us, two hours later, on to the flat watershed which separates the steep rock and scree slopes falling down to the Nordenskiöld glacier to the south and the beginnings of a big glacier, known now as the Gregory glacier, which extended northwards. Petermann, itself, towered above us as we made for a point on the South-West ridge across what then seemed to be an interminable snow slope. Here, at 4 p.m., at about 7,000 feet, there was a short halt and a welcome brew of tea. During the latter process, Forbes' sleeping bag managed to escape and slide down gracefully, coming to rest where the snow slope ended in scree just above the

precipices of the Nordenskiöld glacier. This decided our camp for the night: so dumping our kit where we were, we proceeded with cameras and some chocolate. By 9.30 p.m. we were within 100 feet of the top. Mostly it had been an easy rock ridge that we had been ascending, but twice a knife-edge of ice had to be crossed—the meeting of two couloirs. But now, in front, lay a pyramid of hard snow frozen to ice. To have gone straight up would have entailed step cutting—a process not pleasant, with a low temperature and a high wind; a traverse to the right seemed only possible from a point lower down; so we struck off to the left, and for 50 yards clung to the frozen snow slope, trusting to crampons almost entirely, till more rocks were reached. The wind became even more piercing here, and there was no respite until we had climbed up to the snow top over difficult ice-glazed rocks, had seen the rocky higher top 30 yards away, and had squatted down in the dip between the two. It had taken an hour to do this last 100 feet, and when Wordie at last led us on to the rocky and higher summit we bent to the wind gazing at the superb vista which suddenly took shape to the north. During the whole of the ascent we had had views to the east, south and west only; these were extensive and beautiful, but not unexpected. We had seen already the curves of the great Nordenskiöld glacier losing themselves in the ice cap and this sight was only enhanced as we gained height; but there had been no entirely new vision opened out suddenly as there was now looking north from Petermann summit. The Gregory glacier seemed to come to a sudden and indistinct end; beyond, one big and two small lakes, and after that a great S bend of another immense glacier; this made the central foreground of a picture of mountain upon mountain upon mountain reaching far into the icy distance.

It was too cold for more than a very brief admiration of this panorama, but before we started down, Forbes insisted on flying his Union Jack, and Wordie in pocketing "a few geological specimens." It could now be seen that the South-East ridge looked a possible means of descent. Previously, it had been seen in perspective only, and though it would have been shorter, we had hesitated to try it, as the other ridge had been seen to be possible. As we happily and silently—except for the

loose nature of the rock—returned down this ridge, behind us to our left, a low sun was playing with the heavens, cheating them, as it were, of night. The emblems of an approaching sunset came slowly and hovered, meditating before taking the final plunge beyond and below the horizon. That plunge was never taken, and as the sun once more began its upward course, that fiery glow lingered, chary, so it seemed, of relaxing its guard on the gates of darkness.

In due course we found Forbes' sleeping bag and soon after—at 4 a.m.—the flapping tent of Courtauld and Fuchs. We had left them 100 feet from the top intending to return for them, but, as events turned out, we were too long, and the cold and blizzard wind too severe for them to wait; so after boiling the hypsometer they had returned down the South-West ridge to look for a camping site. When the nights are all days time is of little import; for instance, the next day we breakfasted at 2 p.m., lunched at 8 p.m., and supped with Varley down by the Nordenskiöld glacier at 12-30 a.m. He had made, in the meantime, an amazingly good job of his boots and incidentally had a hot meal ready. Another two long days and we were back at the ship being entertained royally at 4 a.m. with fresh musk-ox meat. We had returned by practically the same route, only once or twice cutting off a corner. One of these happened to contain some stores which had to be retrieved, and we now found them separated from us by a deep glacial stream. Varley—already moderately wet—volunteered the crossing, and found a narrow shallow ridge which let him in about up to his knees. On the return journey, however, with his hands now full, a step was missed, and the next thing that was seen was a tin of pemmican suspended by a lonely arm. Only Wordie was there to watch it, so I do not vouch for its complete truth; all I did see was a dripping soul, who very soon emerged, naked, swallowing tea between chattering teeth and wringing some of the water out of his clothes before it froze.

The first day back at the ship was spent in finishing off some surveying, shooting a bear, and in interminable talk with the other three, who had had a grand and hard working geological tour of the fjords. The condition of the pack ice off the outer coast was unlikely to be any easier than when we came in, and so after only four more days in the fjords among marvellous

scenery, an attempt was made to push out from the coast. Already ice in Mackenzie Bay prevented another visit to the Norwegian wireless station and we were forced back to shelter for another 36 hours. After a change in the wind another attempt was made, and after six days, we were again in the open sea on the way *via* Jan Mayen and Thorshavn—in the Faroe Islands—to Aberdeen, where on the night of our arrival, I bought a ticket for London at the cost of 28/6. A true Scottish welcome!

Note—Times mentioned above are G.M.T. This would be, roughly, 2 hours ahead of local time.

LEAVINGS OF THE GERMAN MINERS

By W. G. Collingwood

Fell-walkers who are geologists, landscape sketchers and the like, with an eye for natural form, must often wonder at the queer facts they meet with. Our hills are full of details that can't have been shaped by erosion or any straightforward act of Nature, though we begin by fancying that everything is wild and primeval, untouched by man and his sophistications. When we were very young we rejoiced in the notion that God made the country by himself, whoever built the nasty town we had come from. But when we grow up, we find everything mixed, at any rate in the Lake District. We can't escape from the works of man; and, after a while, we learn that much of the romance of the fells means that men have been there before; that this is no undiscovered country, and that we are not the first who ever burst into the silence.

Perhaps the oddest instance of this is Ruskin's favourite seat at Beck Leven. He used to say, that if a single chimney of the Barrow ironworks appeared in the outlook from his rural retreat, he should never take joy in it more: and choosing the most retired spot for contemplation of its charms, what should he do but sit on a slag-heap, among the ruins of an iron-furnace, ancient, it is true, and overgrown, but none the less, the scene of once grimy, smoky industry. And there is Peel Island almost in view, the loveliest spot on the lake, so peaceful and idyllic in its pure retirement, without even a nettle to betray the presence of an invader! *Thorstein of the Mere* is pure fancy, and *Swallows and Amazons*, which, I hope, every lake-lover has taken to his heart, describes it, too, though cunningly camouflaged (I trust I am not letting cats out of bags). Well, you have picnicked there, but did you ever spot the ancient quarry at the harbour where you built your camp-fire? That was where Adam of Beaumont and his outlaws, in 1346, or certainly somebody of that time, got the stones to build their Peel castlet, to be a plague to the neighbours. That is romance of history.

Now in the fells—even in the high fells—these surprises happen in unlikely places. I pass the barrows, perhaps thousands of years old, the circles and dykes, all of which nobody has yet thoroughly examined, and many traces or sites of ancient strongholds, very little known, to come to a time much later, though old enough to be romantic. For the sake of sparing your patience, I shall confine myself to Coniston fells, and I think you will find some surprises even there.

The German miners, as must be pretty well known from *Elizabethan Keswick* and *Lake District History* came in Elizabeth's reign, to Keswick, at first, in 1565, and then to Coniston in 1599. The business headquarters were in Augsburg, but many of the men were Tirolese. At first there was opposition; but as they brought employment and money to the district, and married Cumberland girls, they soon became friendly with our natives; indeed, the industry was a great blessing at a time when the dissolution of the abbeys had left the dales-folk very poor. Many thousands of pounds came from Germany and went into English pockets; perhaps, the fact is a surprise in itself to some.

They began work by digging down upon any outcrops they found. They complained bitterly of the wet; no wonder: and spent a good deal in bailing it out. Then they took to driving levels to drain these trenches, which were sometimes huge. The tunnels were as small as they could make them, for they had not tumbled to the notion of using a jumper and gunpowder for blasting rock, and the Coniston stratum of rock in which the copper usually lies is about the hardest known. It had to be picked out, bit by bit, with various devices of wedges and with softening by fire, all very tedious. And the result was the coffin-shaped holes, just big enough for a man to squeeze through. When these levels are found here they mean the workings of the German miners, and they are usually just beneath the great trenches, which were the real mines, in their early form.

The mining monopoly ceased with the outbreak of the Civil Wars so that, in the Coniston fells, work would be from 1600 to 1650; and, of course, the original holes and heaps are weathered and defaced. Also, in many cases, later work was restarted on the same spot; so that the actual relics are not always easy to distinguish. But we have descriptions dating

from 1600 onwards, and with these in hand, Major Oscar Gnosspelius has worked out the ancient sites which I will describe. The list I can give is rather better than the one printed three years ago in the *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian Society*, for it gives additional information contributed by Mr. John Shaw, foreman to Mr. Gnosspelius, and an authority on local mining traditions.

The earliest were those called (1) the Low Work; (2) the White Work, and (3) Tongue Brow, within half-a-mile north of the present mines buildings and up Red Dell. In looking for them care must be taken, for later operations have enormously enlarged the underground excavations and in one place, at Tongue Brow, there is a gaping hole, fenced, but not to be played with. Forty years ago, when the pump was still going, one could go by the rotten and ricketty ladders and gangways, smothered in a cobweb growth of ghastly gray fungus, down far below sea-level, to 255 fathoms, more than 1,500 feet beneath the surface. But since the great water-wheel was demolished, water has partly filled the abyss, and the fate of anyone who fell into these black depths would be irretrievable perdition.

But the German trenches are there, as the old plan shows, and visible enough if you know where to look. The Low Work is at the foot of Rough Gill, just east of Red Dell or Thriddle Beck, below the cart track and above Taylor's Level, as marked on the 6-in. map. The White Work is on the west of the beck—an east-and-west trench almost continuing the Low Work; and Tongue Brow workings run E.S.E. and W.N.W to the west of the last under Kernel (*i.e.*, the crenellated) Crag.

Enough ore was taken out in the first few years to make it worth while to build a stamp-house for crushing it before it was sent, on pack-horses, to Keswick, in its prepared state for smelting. Documents at Rydal Hall show that in 1620 the farmers downstream complained of the sand so created, which over-ran and spoiled their land, until the course of the beck was straightened so as to carry it off. That beck is now known as the Church Beck, but was then called St. Martin's, obviously from the chapel built in 1586. It is unfortunate that the name was lost. There was no tradition of St Martin at Coniston when the present church was restored and named

St. Andrew's by Bishop Goodwin; and it is only recently that I found the solitary deed that preserves the interesting name.

Several papers give the old workings; the most complete is in an article of the year 1700, in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, which repeats lists drawn up for Sir Daniel Fleming. As owner of the estate as well as antiquary, he had a direct interest in Coniston mines and made some attempt to revive them, though without success. From these we learn that the German digging before the Civil Wars was at ten sites, of which the three already named were the first. I will go on from these to the rest.

(4) At the Red Dell or Thurdle or Thriddle Head they found a promising spot, five-sixths of a mile north of the last named. Indeed, it was supposed that this was going to be a gold mine, just as Sir Walter Raleigh and other explorers of the age were always taken in by a glitter in the minerals they found, and jumped to the conclusion that their fortune was made. Some small amount of gold is, indeed, present in the ore: more silver: but when Queen Elizabeth's charter claimed in addition any "pretious stones or pearl" that turned up, it was no more than a quaint manner of speaking. This mine, its pious founders called "God's Blessing," just as they called the rich deposit in Newlands "Gottesgab" or "God's Gift," corrupted by the natives to "Gowdscope," whence "Goldscope." There, too, you find the great open trenches and levels still to be seen.

(5) Hen Crag, really on Swallow Scar, at 1,800 feet above sea-level, half-a-mile due east of the last, is another German working; which shows how thoroughly they explored the high places in the old days.

(6) The "Semy" Work, by which I understand *Seamy*, because it was in a number of separate seams, on the south-east shore of Levers-Water, was started early by Fabian Erhart (who had been foreman at Caldbeck) and six others, where trenches are now disguised by later workings. About these, it was said that "if the Tarn were drained, it's thought that all these seven would come into one, and that it would be the best work that ever was seen in these parts." In the nineteenth century the forecast was justified by work done *under* the tarn, which the Germans were unable to tackle. The great artificial chasm, called Simon Nick, shows how rich the place was. I

suppose Simon Puchberger was the hero, one of a large family at Coniston. By the legends he died tragically; they say the devil, who had been his accomplice, turned on him at last; but not before he had made his fortune: for he was buried in Hawkshead Church, not in the churchyard, and by that token must have been a rich man.

(7) Gray Crag beck. One end of Puddingstone cove is filled with the outcast from the Paddy End mines. Most of this is later work and the original German digging has been obscured. But the place has been so disturbed, all the way up to the waterfall, that it looks like a patch of volcanic eruption.

(8) "Brumfell," as Brimfell was formerly called, is the crag between Paddy End and Low-water fall. You see a later level at the foot of the cliff; but higher up, and only to be reached by climbing, is the ancient John Dixon's work.

(9) The Wide Work, or Thomas Hirn's, is described as "wrought to sixty fathoms and over twenty-six inches wide.... from the last about two miles." I thought once that it was the old working you find between Great and Little How crags (as they are called on the Ordnance map); but the distance better fits a site of old digging north of Wetherlam cove, near the Haystack.

(10) Finally Tilberthwaite. The Three Kings—no doubt Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, which were all names of German miners and their favourite saints, though the Germans were Protestants—was the name they gave the mines above and in Micklegill. In 1600 they were given up for a time because the ore did not turn out well in the smelting. But later, they were worked again to advantage. Some of the holes and trenches seem to be ancient, but I can't identify the St Edward's *stollen*, or tunnel, mentioned in 1600.

So much for Coniston. To treat the rest of the Lake district even in this sketchy way, would make a long story—Newlands and Borrowdale, Grasmere, Buttermere and Eskdale, and little unsuspected diggings in various out-of-the-way places, not to say the whole of the Caldbeck area, at the back of Skiddaw; I don't pretend to know them all so intimately. But one point emerges. When the Germans were at work, there was bitter opposition, for one reason or other. Where is it now?

And some day, Nature will have got the better of all the builders and engineers, and Lakeland will be itself again. But meanwhile?

AN ASCENT OF THE WETTERHORN

By W. G. Standring

A Lakeland climber's first visit to the Alps held many wonders, the wild grandeur of Switzerland, a dream country, the beauty of ice and snow and glacier formation, the first sight of marmot and chamois and the tiniest and most exquisite of flowers, and the other-world experience of living high up in the heart of the mountains away from sign of man, among the steep rocks and the wide snows. Many scenes and incidents are treasured in the memory, and a special place is held by the Wetterhorn, for the beauty of her snow-clad summit above the great precipice of the Scheidegg face, and for the gracious reception she afforded her worshipper.

After a fortnight in the Bregaglia, spent at the Albigna hut, we went to Rosenlaui to climb in the Engelhörner, taking our guide, Joseph Georges, le skieur, for the remaining day or two of his engagement—E.M. had expressed a wish to try the North side of the Wetterhorn, and this occupied a prominent place in my thoughts. We arrived on the 1st of August, the Swiss National Fête day (to find we had completely lost a day somewhere), and planned an easy day to follow a late night—E.M. to rest a bruised knee, Joseph and I to go along at leisure to look at the face of the Wetterhorn and see if he thought it practicable. This North-West face had been climbed once, by Dr. Finzi in 1929, but we had not read his account. On walking up to Rosenlaui E. M. had indicated to us the easy snow route up the Wetterhorn from the Dossen Hut, and Joseph had seen the Wetterhorn on a day's visit to Grindelwald. Beyond that neither he nor I knew anything of the mountain. I emphasize this in order that Joseph's remarkable flair for route finding, a flair amounting to genius, may be appreciated. We had already had experience of it in the Bregaglia, but on this occasion it was demonstrated in a really amazing manner.

Breakfasting at leisure and leaving Rosenlaui after 8 o'clock we made towards the Great Scheidegg, examining the face of

the Wetterhorn through glasses on the way, and reaching its foot at 10–30 a.m. The climbing is difficult and exposed and belays are few, and we put on rubbers for our exploration, leaving our boots and one ice axe near the foot of the climb. I heartily cursed the other axe many times—it was a particularly long one of Speaker's, very awkward on rock, but later it proved an essential instrument. The steepness and exposure reminded one of the joy of being on the beloved face of Scafell—with a difference, for here the scale is magnified ten times. On the lower part smooth limestone slabs formed sloping terraces and led us by a long zig-zag, first to the left, then to the right, to a couple of chimneys. That on the left looked the sounder and provided a delectable pitch of sixty feet, started by bridging and continued by backing up facing first one side and then the other, followed by a through exit. After the chimney another long traverse to the left brought us to the edge of the couloir dividing the face from a rock ridge to the north. At a short chimney in this section of the route we had a brief halt for a drink and a bite of food. A little short of the couloir we mounted nearly vertically for sixty feet to a piton, and traversed a short distance to the right. This was the most severe and exposed part of the climb, but the rock is rough and good and holds adequate. Subsequent reference to the *Alpine Journal* (No. 240) identified the piton as Dr. Finzi's, and the whole route up the face as substantially the same as his.

A little above this point Joseph declared that he thought the ascent was possible, for what was to come would be easier than what we had done, and my heart leaped when he said we had come so far that it would be quicker to go over the top than to return—as perhaps it would have been had the weather held, or if I could have climbed like Joseph with the speed of a chamois. It may then have been about half-past three, but I am uncertain, and only remember clearly that thereafter we never stopped to look at the time or for anything else, but steadily bent our minds on avoiding a night out. As fast as I safely could I followed Joseph up easier but loose rock to the level of the glacier above the big couloir, and then by snow and rock to the North-West ridge leading to the summit of the Wetterhorn.

But now we had a reminder that however friendly a reception the great mountains may give to their lovers they only admit

us on sufferance and are always to be treated with respect. Rapidly gathering clouds soon enveloped us, and a thunderstorm broke bringing a cold, wet, sleety kind of snow. The upper ridge consisted of thin strata of rotten rock sloping slightly towards us and, if dry, would have provided easy and rapid progress, but, instead of its being the easiest, conditions made this the most difficult part of the whole climb. The falling snow eliminated all hold for our rubbers and made things excessively difficult and delicate. With the long ice axe firmly planted under his seat, Joseph was raised till he could get some purchase, then, when " bien placé," came his turn to assist me. Alternately we cried : " Poussez, monsieur, poussez," and " Tirez Joseph, tirez," pouring out, with any breath we had to spare, " Diables " and complaints about the snow, the bad rock, and the discomfort of cold hands and feet. At one point it was necessary to abseil fifty feet, and hands which had lost their feeling were glad it was no more. A rope sling indicated that a previous party had passed this way.

At last, after nine hours' good going, of which the last two or three had seemed interminable, the summit was visible, and a minute or two later we paused on it and hugged each other with brotherly satisfaction. Then, for the time was 7–30 p.m., we sped down the snow slopes on the other side. The bad conditions had delayed us a great deal and there was pressing need for haste if we were to get down before dark. Difficulties were also sometimes accentuated by imperfect understanding, though usually overcome by Joseph's patience and demonstration—considering the primitive condition of my French and Joseph's English it is not really surprising that his instructions to a beginner were not always clearly understood. Crossing one bergschrund improperly my feet broke through, so at another Joseph went first. Leaping well out and landing on his seat and back he shot over the crust to safety, and digging in his heels came to rest in the snow below, calling to me to " faire la même chose." This time the feet were launched well into the air and did no damage. As the slope became easier we began to run, following traces of a previous caravan, and it would be hard to imagine anything more fatiguing than plunging through bad snow endeavouring to keep pace with Joseph. Our one concern was to get down and avoid causing anxiety at Rosenlaui, for we

Photo by *J. O. Walker*

THE WETTERHORN FROM THE NORTH.

had left in the morning not dreaming of anything more than a tentative look at the Scheidegg face.

We were not to get off so easily, however, and lost the traces of the ordinary route when darkness overtook us. We had then, had we known it, completed the major part of the descent, and were just above the Rosenlaui glacier, where the ordinary route goes up a steep snow slope to the right between rocks, and down to the Dossen Hut. But in the mist we could see no rocks, and had no idea we were near the hut. Joseph declared the descending glacier too steep and crevassed to negotiate in the dark, and that we must march all night on the level part above to keep our feet from freezing. Feet in flimsiest plimsolls felt that they already were frozen and tired limbs that to march all night was impossible. But Joseph burst into vigorous song, which necessitated a reply, and for three hours I staggered round in his footsteps, thinking how different it would have been had the weather held good, or had we started a little earlier, or had we even had a lantern, and wishing we had our boots and more clothing. The storm had passed but the mist remained and a light but cold rain. About midnight the mist cleared and we saw rocks close at hand. On them we found a level spot about two yards by one under a slightly overhanging wall which sheltered us from the rain. But Joseph would not allow any rest and said, " Let us build a house ! " So like a pair of infants we arranged a few stones across the front and then danced up and down inside our " house." The rocks were much more comfortable than the snow had been, and with rubbing and exercise the feet became warm again. So we danced and sang to each other all night until, at about 4 a.m., daylight enabled us to find the traces we had lost the night before.

Soon we reached the Dossen Hut, and had the joy of realising that Rosenlaui itself was in sight and that all our worries were over. After a welcome cup of coffee from the hut guardian we made our way down, reaching Rosenlaui at 7 a.m., to greet our astonished friends, and, after a good breakfast and a delectable hot bath, enjoy a much-needed sleep. The following day, we strolled along and retrieved our boots, and town-bred eyes searched laboriously through field glasses for chamois which Joseph excitedly spied unaided.

So ended a wonderful experience and a thrilling expedition,

a God given gift on the one day possible in a period of unfavourable weather. Though no part of the route is new this was the first time the complete ascent had been made, and its accomplishment, on Joseph Georges' first visit to the mountain, must be regarded as a remarkable achievement.

Photo by *J. O. Walker*

THE SCHEIDEGG WETTERHORN.

SOME MOUNTAINEERING CONTROVERSIES*

By R. S. T. Chorley

Once upon a time, during the silly season, I happened to be in the Dale Lodge Hotel at Grasmere. There were sundry numbers of the *Fell and Rock Journal* lying about in the drawing room, and having, at that time, a certain parental affection for those red-backed volumes, my eyes naturally wandered to a gentleman, in plus fours, who happened to be perusing one. His face bore a look of mingled contempt and amusement which did not ingratiate him with me. By and by there entered a devil like unto him to whom the first addressed himself in some such terms as these : " Those silly fools who clamber about the crags up here are actually at daggers drawn as to whether they should risk their lives in clogs or sandshoes. There is page after page of it in this silly journal "—and he pitched one of my best numbers towards the waste-paper basket. Restraining myself with difficulty from making some cutting remark—largely because I am one of those who never think of one until it is too late—I continued to watch these products of cultivated England with a jaundiced eye. Their talk turned to golf. I gathered that there was a question of the highest moment agitating the country, or at any rate the responsible part of it, and this had to do with whether the golf ball should be large and light or small and heavy, and whether to do one thing or the other did not make the game too easy, and whether the Americans were really sportsmen, and whether some system of safeguarding or protection should not be introduced, not against foreign manufactured goods, but against a ball which was too big or too little or too heavy or too light.

The humour of the situation dawned upon me at last. I really ought to have appreciated that these controversies are part and parcel of every sport, indeed of every human activity. What a platitude ! Yet I had never counted the rubber-leather controversy as being one of a dozen others which had

* A paper read before the Rucksack Club, October 1930.

embittered or amused, as their temperaments dictated, three generations of mountaineers.

The first big controversy in Alpine history, I take it then, is that as to who was responsible for the first ascent of Mont Blanc—Balmat or Paccard. There is an admirable account of this historical problem in a recent number of the *Alpine Journal.** It is also discussed in Gribble, Lunn, Mathews and elsewhere, so I take it that you are all familiar with it in outline. It is of considerable interest. In Victorian times, when Republicanism and Democracy were worshipped—at a safe distance—the tendency was all to magnify the exploits of the bold peasant and minimise those of the bourgeois amateur. It is almost an affectation of amateur climbers of that time to pretend that they were mere luggage to their guides—as many have no doubt been in fact through all ages. Leslie Stephen says, somewhere, that he had never seen an amateur who was as good as a third-rate guide. Compare this sort of thing with the remarks of a present-day author about trusting one's life to an ignorant Swiss peasant, and we see that the wheel has turned full circle. The romantic Victorians were on the side of Balmat. Moreover, he had a journalist of the first order to write him up. Balmat's triumph on Mont Blanc was due to the author of the "Three Musketeers." The journalist, naturally, takes the side of the professional. For one thing, the professional sportsman is the modern gladiator. Crowds hang upon his every gesture, and there is much to be made out of reporting such gestures to the gaping throng. Moreover, the professional is not only illiterate, but he has a certain modesty about putting pen to paper, while the journalist, who is almost always equally illiterate, has no modesty of any kind whatever. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Dumas and other writers who followed him magnifying the triumph of Balmat at the expense of poor cowardly Paccard. Even Whymper, who ought to have known better—but he was after all, professionally, a journalist—takes this line. Dumas was a racy fellow, and if any of you have not read his "Reminiscences of a Great Mountaineer," specially written up for the *Sunday Chronicle*, you will very much enjoy doing so. It is given in Mathew's *Annals of Mont Blanc*, Gribble's *Early Mountaineers*, and elsewhere.

* No. 238 May, 1929.

A later and less sentimental generation, who have treated the history of mountaineering with the respect which it deserves realised that on *a priori* grounds it was unlikely that a man like Paccard, a man of education, an amateur scientist of some capacity, distinctly a man of affairs and one who had gained considerable mountaineering experience, was unlikely to have played such an unheroic part as that attributed to him in Dumas' account. It is true that the earlier narrative of Bourrit, who was a contemporary, largely corroborated the Dumas version, but a dispassionate survey of the available documents showed considerable grounds for suspecting Bourrit, who had himself aspired to be first up Mont Blanc, of jealousy. If he couldn't have the honour himself of being the first amateur up Mont Blanc, he would see that the guide got all the credit for it. One is rather regretfully forced to the conclusion that in this golden age of climbing, when all should have been virtue, pride of priority was with most, and not least with our own countrymen, the dominant force. If you couldn't be there first, it wasn't worth doing. I have always thought Whymper's account of the Dent Blanche expedition very significant in this respect. Of course, one has to read between the lines. Kennedy had made the first ascent of that mountain in 1862, but in very thick weather, and there was considerable doubt expressed as to whether he had really reached the summit. Whymper climbed it in 1865, according to his account in order to uphold Kennedy. Yet it is a curious fact that having persisted under the most trying conditions and against the advice of his guides in pushing his attempt to the summit ridge, as soon as he saw Kennedy's cairn it was enough, and although the summit was only 20 yards away, and level going at that, he would not go to it. "It was needless to proceed further. I jerked the rope from Biener and motioned that we should go back."

There have been some violent controversies as to who was first up numerous mountains and many routes. The question as to whether Mr. Graham really got to the top of Kabru has recently been the subject of newspaper controversy and, of course, the alleged ascent of Mount McKinley by that celebrated impostor, Dr. Cook, he of the North Pole, caused much excitement. At home, we were worried for years by the fact that Messrs. Abraham, who had apparently taken upon themselves

the position of official recorders of Lake District peak walks, disallowed the claims of Mr. Dawson, who furiously contested their decision, which, I believe, rested on the fact that he had not been observed on one of the peaks. Fortunately, this type of controversy is rare, and if a man says he got to the top of a mountain, we believe him, even if he be an American.

To return to the Paccard-Balmat controversy, Mathews, writing in 1898 on evidence then available, had come to the conclusion that there was nothing in Balmat's accusation against Paccard, and that, while Balmat no doubt acted as leader, they deserved equal credit for the feat. The extraordinary feature of the controversy, however, is the way in which it was set at rest over a hundred years after it had arisen, by the providential discovery of the diary of an eye-witness of the actual climb—one of the most remarkable incidents in the writing of history. The Baron von Gersdorf had watched them through a telescope and left it on record that the two men arrived on the summit together after having during the last half-hour occasionally changed leadership. Yet all the old lies are repeated in a book published as recently as 1929.

The mention of Whymper and the Dent Blanche reminds me of a controversy as to when is a top not a top. For instance, if there are three cairns on Ben Macdhui, and one climbs two of them, can one be said to have climbed Ben Macdhui ? Or could Kelly be said to have climbed Scafell at the time when he had only done the Pinnacle by all the severest routes, but never reached the summit cairn ? The difficulty, if one does not lay down a hard-and-fast rule, is to know where to draw the line. This is very well illustrated by the case of the Dent du Geant. This forbidding pinnacle was stated by Mummery to be " absolutely inaccessible by any fair means," an opinion not shared by the modern rock expert. The first ascent is usually given in a list such as that in Gribble's little *Story of Mountaineering*, to Signor Sella, to whom, certainly, as a writer in the *Alpine Journal* says, " Generosity, if not justice, demands the attribution of the chief honours of conquest—if any honour at all is due to a man who employs an army of guides literally to quarry a way up a peak. And yet if we cut steps with an axe in ice, why not in rock ? Sella actually only reached the top of the first peak, and his statement that to go to the second

would have taken "an hour which I had not at my disposal" is rather inconsistent with another sentence where he says that the ascent of the second point had no longer any importance whatever. Three weeks later, Graham and his guides reached the second summit, which is the higher. Their route differed considerably from that of Sella, but the final and most difficult section on the first peak was the same, so they, no doubt, profited by the quarrying. The rock between the first and second peaks is easy, and the honour, if any, was Sella's, or rather his guides', yet the peak was technically Graham's. This shows how really absurd is the importance attached to first ascents. In the case of the Grivola (1859), Messrs. Ormsby and Bruce reached the summit ridge, but not the actual summit, which was first touched by M. Dagué. Gribble prefers the claims of the English but the A.J. preferred the technical claims of M. Dagué. The same rule was adopted in the case of the Dufourspitze, the highest point on Monte Rosa, which was first climbed by Messrs. Smyth and Hudson's party in 1855. The Grenzgipfel, which is only 20 feet lower, had already been reached by Herr Ulrich's guides in 1848, and by the Schlagintweits in 1851. It is true that these projections are quite distinct, but they are on the same ridge and quite close together—15 to 30 minutes apart. (*See* Coolidge: *Alpine Studies*). Even closer to the Dufourspitze, and practically the same height, is the Ostspitze, which was first climbed in 1854, a year before, by a party including Smythe, but otherwise different. In their great traverse of the eleven peaks of Monte Rosa, Reade and Farrer were on all three projections within 30 minutes.

Another and final instance, for our purpose, is that of Mount Cook. Mr. Green's ascent of this mountain in 1882 was a very fine effort indeed. He reached the summit crest as late as 6 p.m. in bad conditions with a thaw rapidly destroying the cornice and a violent wind blowing. The guides urged an immediate retreat and Mr. Green, having satisfied himself that the actual summit was only 20 minutes away and about 30 feet higher and that the only obstacle, which was a break in the cornice, presented no difficulty, accepted their advice. His claim to the first ascent was, however, violently contested by a Dr. Von Lendenfelf, who having reached the actual summit of the Hochstetter in the same neighbourhood wrote to the

A.J. and pointed out that Mr. Green did not get to the top of Mount Cook. " I have always believed that an ascent is accomplished successfully only when the top is reached." This is, I believe, the only case where the right to claim such an ascent as the first has been seriously challenged, the attributions in the case of the Grivola and Monte Rosa having caused but little comment. It will be noticed that the Grivola case corresponds to that of Mount Cook in this, that there was then no question of a subsidiary peak, a mere point on the summit crest, from which the actual summit was visible, being reached.*

I have referred to the extreme partiality of the Victorians for their guides and this brings me to what I regard as by far the most important of all mountaineering controversies, that as to climbing guideless ; one which still re-echoes in the hall of the Alpine Club, though elsewhere it is perhaps settled. These re-echoings are, I fancy, mere sound and fury signifying nothing, for the real controversy has been dead for a long time. Indeed, I regret to say that (*a*) the controversy was never as serious as has been supposed and that (*b*) there never really was so very much between the responsible protagonists. All the smoke seems to have come from a very small fire and largely, I fancy, because denunciatory conversation is so very easy and warming to the heart ; moreover, it comes particularly easily to old men, who naturally regard the methods of their youth as perfect.... Beards no doubt wagged at the Alpine Club and heads were shaken on the verandah of the Monte Rosa hotel at Zermatt, and some of the younger men bit their thumbs back. Until one gets to middle age, it is impossible to look through the spectacles of the old, but there appears to be one cardinal principle which explains a good deal. To the aged children never grow up.

Though, as I have suggested, the Victorians had a romantic attachment to their guides, I do not think they started with any prepossession that it was illegitimate to climb without them. The more experienced did, indeed, dispense with their services on occasion. In 1855, two years before the Alpine Club was founded, a party of experienced amateurs, of whom the most prominent were E. S. Kennedy, Charles Hudson of Matterhorn fame, and

* The first ascent of Mt. Cook is usually given to Messrs. Fyfe, George Graham and Clark, who climbed it in 1894.

Christopher Smyth, made an attempt to climb Mont Blanc by an entirely new route involving a camp on the south-east side of the Aiguille du Midi. They met with bad weather and failed, but not before they had reached Mont Blanc du Tacul. Nothing daunted, they crossed to St. Gervais and endeavoured to force the mountain by the old route over Les Bosses which had turned so many parties in the earliest days. The conditions were not good, however, and after some hesitation they traversed across and joined the usual route. In the end, therefore, this route was simply a combination of old ones, but it was the first ascent from St. Gervais, and, as the late C. E. Mathews said, it was a fine expedition. These guideless climbers felt no shame about their expedition, just the reverse. Hudson and Kennedy published a little volume entitled *Where there's a will there's a way*—a fine motto for guideless mountaineers. Next year, Hudson, with two other amateurs and only one guide—hardly an orthodox complement—made the first ascent of Les Bosses ridge. Now E. S. Kennedy was not only one of the founders of the Alpine Club and the first Vice-President, but one of the other participants in this guideless attempt on Mont Blanc was an original member. How did it happen then that in the mind of the average climber, the Alpine Club became identified with opposition to guideless climbing?

The answer, I believe, is to be found in the Rev. Girdlestone's egregious book, *The High Alps without Guides*, which appeared in 1870. Before I started investigating this subject, I imagined Mr. Girdlestone as an intrepid hero fighting a lone hand against the diehards of the Alpine Club. Mr. Girdlestone was certainly a pioneer; he does deserve a certain amount of qualified praise, but his intrepidity was rashness, and but for extraordinary luck, his bones should have bleached repeatedly. He then had the hardihood to recount his rash deeds in his book. I am afraid that Mr. Girdlestone's weakness was a love of seeing himself in print. He started in 1867 with a letter to *The Times*, describing an attempt with one companion to cross an insecure bridge over a bergschrund on the Trift glacier, which gave way while they were both on it. This was naturally followed by some fairly scathing comment in the general press directed rather to mountaineering in general than to the guideless species of it. That Girdlestone should have brought all this

abuse upon their beloved sport must have been riling enough to the stalwarts of the Alpine Club. I remember feeling much the same personally over one or two press episodes during our own time. One of them did reply in *The Times*, not, be it noted, condemning guideless climbing as such, but pointing out that those who indulged in it should be fully versed in the ordinary rules of their craft, while Girdlestone had broken the first rule as to two on a glacier, and the second rule, that two should not be on a bridge at the same time. Against this letter, which he very fairly sets out in his book, Girdlestone proceeds to defend himself and in the course of his defence it appears that the two climbers had only one axe between them and though they had a rope, they did not use it; moreover, the second climber was so shortsighted that he had, apparently, to have the support of the axe held out to him while he shuffled his feet into steps which Girdlestone had cut.

It is quite obvious that Girdlestone was a very average performer, yet the people he took with him on these guideless expeditions were almost invariably novices and often boys of 16 or 17. In 1867, when the Matterhorn accident was still fresh, and public opinion must have been very hostile, he had a party of four, two of them undergraduates who had never been in the Alps before, and that, of course, meant that they had never done any climbing. A third had once been before, when he had done one easy pass. Girdlestone sets all this out with relish. Those who knew him must have expected to read of his death with three or four innocents any time during any season. The result of all this was that F. Craufurd Grove, a widely experienced climber, who was one of the pioneers in the Caucasus, raised the matter in the Alpine Club in a paper read in June, 1870. Grove took a thoroughly reactionary line and expressed the view that English amateurs would never be able to accomplish difficult climbs in safety. It is clear, however, that his main object was to save Girdlestone's innocent young men from sudden death, for he finishes up with the remark that if he can be the means of "preventing any enterprising young gentleman from knocking himself into little bits, breaking his back, rubbing his head off or enshrining himself in a glacier" he will not have written in vain. Grove evidently knew something about Girdlestone's

skill, or lack of it, as they had been members of the same party in one of the early ascents of the Matterhorn.

The Alpine Club accordingly expressed its opinion, and considering the provocation it had been subject to, I think it was extremely moderate in tone. It was agreed that no hard-and-fast rule could be laid down and that the matter must be left to the discretion of each particular party. But that Girdlestone had "not taken proper precautions, that if his example were generally followed (*i.e.*, such slipshod methods used) the result would be a frightful increase of accidents, that in particular he was to blame for taking novices and that neglect to take guides on difficult expeditions and especially neglect to take them when the party was not exclusively composed of practised mountaineers was totally unjustifiable." Remembering that in those days there were no huts and that therefore every expedition was twice as long as it would be now, I think this resolution was remarkably moderate.

It is quite clear that the members were alive to possible delinquencies of guides, for in the same number of the *Alpine Club Journal* which contains Grove's paper two guides came in for severe censure over an accident on the Lyskamm. The same year, 1870, eight guides were lost with three amateurs on Mont Blanc.

It must be admitted that the record of guideless ascents by English climbers about this time is scanty. No doubt various guideless ascents of recognized routes were being made, but these were not judged worthy of record, or at any rate were not recorded. In 1875, Mr. Pendlebury's party made an ascent of the Grand Paradis from Ceresole with only a porter, and this was a first ascent from this side, and Messrs. Bastow and Lacey made the first crossing of a col from Overthal to Wenden glacier. In 1876, what may, I think, be regarded in many ways as an epoch-making guideless ascent of the Matterhorn, was made by Mr. A Cust and two other amateurs. Cust was a well known and competent mountaineer of many years' experience. His expedition, so far from arousing anger, was hailed on all sides with approbation, and was singled out by the President for special eulogy in his annual review of the season's work at the Alpine Club dinner. Cust took the opportunity, in a paper which he read about the climb before the Alpine Club, to deliver

a little homily on guideless climbing, in the course of which he laid down four heads which should be satisfied: a party all experienced, gradual practice, unexceptional weather, an expedition fairly within the powers of amateurs. In the discussion which followed the reading of Cust's paper it was not suggested by anyone that the expedition was unjustifiable, though the paper itself gives the feeling that he was on the defensive.

After this, guideless climbing went ahead rapidly and within a few years had become not only respectable, but almost the thing. It was made respectable by Messrs. F. Gardiner and Charles and Lawrence Pilkington, the last of whom, I am glad to say, we still have with us. All three were accustomed to walking and climbing in Lakeland and especially in the winter season. Their expeditions far transcended the modest standard laid down by Cust a few years before. In 1878, they climbed many of the best peaks in Dauphiné, including several first ascents like the Pic Jocelme, and though Gardiner in his paper read to the Alpine Club was still a little on the defensive, the proceedings of the Club record that they were "on all sides warmly congratulated on the remarkable success of their experiment. A general feeling of satisfaction was expressed that it should have been reserved for three members of the Alpine Club to show what an extraordinary degree of skill mountaineers of exceptional experience and aptitude might in some instances attain. At the same time it was felt that this example should only be followed by equally competent mountaineers." It was still felt that "mountaineering without guides is for the general a highly dangerous form of amusement." Next year the same party practically cleaned up the rest of Dauphiné, including the Meije, an expedition which attracted particular attention, and a number of first ascents. Again they were warmly congratulated on all sides. It should be mentioned that Gardiner was a member of the Committee and Charles Pilkington soon afterwards held that position. It became customary for several years that one or other member of this party should read a paper on some feat or feats of guideless climbing, one fine effort being the Jungfrau by the North face, and, perhaps, the best of all, the discovery of the correct route up the Disgrazia, which the guides over a very long period, had failed to find. About the same time the brothers Szigmondy began their series of extraordinarily fine guideless

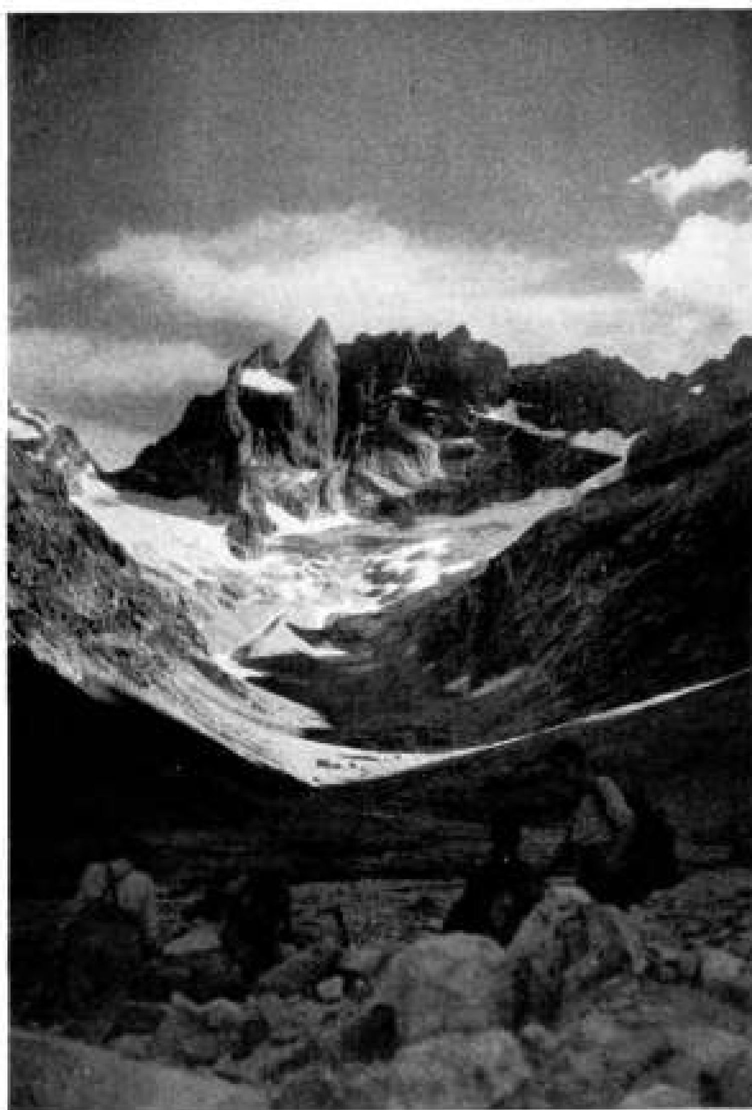

Photo by *M. H. Wilson*

The Meije from the South.

expeditions. It is noteworthy that when Emil Szigmondy was killed on the Meije, Mr. Coolidge, at that time Editor of the *Alpine Journal*, who invariably climbed with guides, regarded it as specially worthy of note in his article on the accident that out of ninety-nine successful expeditions up peaks of over 3,000 metres only six had been with guides. Nor would Coolidge take the opportunity of delivering a homily against guideless climbing; indeed he says: "We are distinctly in favour of guideless mountaineering within proper limits."

In 1885, Clinton Dent, then Vice-President of the Alpine Club, in a paper on "amateur and professional guides of the present day," expressed the opinion that the competence of amateurs had increased out of all proportion to that of guides and that there were at that time a number of amateurs equal in skill to any but the very best guides. From which it follows that since good second-class guides can do all but the most exceptional expeditions, those amateurs were certainly qualified to do likewise. He adds that there were a large number of incredibly bad amateurs, but then the number of incredibly bad guides was also increasing. Yet he thought the attitude formerly taken up was still the correct one. Each expedition must be considered in relation to the party attempting it, with the qualification that in 1885 there were so many more competent parties than in 1870.

I will pass to 1892 and then leave the subject. In his presidential address of that year, Horace Walker said that "guideless climbing, which under proper conditions had received the approval of the authorities on mountaineering, had been increasingly practised during the year, and on more than one occasion the amateur had succeeded in wiping the eye of the professional climber." All we can say is that things had perhaps moved a little.

The great guideless controversy turns out therefore, much to my surprise, if not to yours, to have been a comparatively mild affair. Would that I could have made it more exciting.

Other matters of controversy, such as two on a glacier, solitary climbing, climbing with external aids, such as crampons and rubber shoes, would no doubt furnish material for further research.

LONGSLEDDALE, THE RUINED VALLEY

By W. T. Palmer

Scores of people are making farewell visits this summer to Haweswater, passing along the sweet little valley to the quaint and tiny church and to the Dun Bull Hotel beneath the great screes of Harter Fell. Some of us admit that we have paid more than four final visits, and each week-end we find that the roar of engines never ceases on the rough worn road, and that parties of walking folk come over the tracks from Shap, Ullswater and Windermere. Few, however, except persons of local residence or origin, recall that the tragedy of Haweswater, condemned to make a reservoir of Manchester water, involves the destruction of Longsleddale, down which the new pipe-line must be laid. This description was written before the engineers attacked the old dales road.

The guide books have little to say about this southern dale. It is the Long Whindale of Mrs. Humphry Ward's novel of clerical life, *Robert Elsmere*, and that is all. The guide-maps are usually erratic, or at least uncertain, about a place so far from the great lakes. The other day I had the pleasure of introducing a veteran rambler, whose knowledge of the Lake country, Wales, Derbyshire and Yorkshire is profound, to a fresh countryside, and he pronounced it good—yes, very good. We started from Kendal, but the Shap road was humming with motors so an escape was made into the lanes at Mint Bridge. Here, for a mile, we tramped between hedgerows lit up with wild roses and trailed with honeysuckle. At an old bobbin-mill (now a factory of pick-axe shafts) we joined the little River Sprint which drains Longsleddale to the Kent above Kendal. A more conscientious start would have brought us to Burneside Station, and then past the ruined pele tower, partly a white-washed farm (where the film of *Owd Bob*, a story of sheep-dog life, was mainly shot), past the thin shell of " George Fox's Oak " at the cross-roads to Sprint Bridge, and so by footpath up the riverside to Oak Bank mill. From Oak Bank the path bumps along drought-hardened river-banks and meadows, with here and

there a glimpse into the clear low pools of the Sprint. At one place we watched a crayfish grope and hunt along the rock floor. For ten minutes it was easily visible, then it passed out of sight beneath some trembling water. Above the farm of Bethom Bank, there is a fine little view; one is conscious that the stream comes through a deep gorge between the hills. Beyond Gurnal Bridge, the direct route upstream is uncertain. On the right side (or left bank) there is a long coppice wood through which campers and angling folk have worn a path. This leads to a most delightful bathing pool, a great rock-basin overhung by feathery birch and rowan, with larches and great masses of sycamores. The water is deep, and one sees shoals of trout cruising at all levels. There were one or two fine chaps to attract the covetous, but in clear waters of summer, only night-fishing has the slightest chance of success. These giants, such as they are, represent the survival of many "fittests."

Going forward, the route is either coppice wood or rocky pasture, where little damage can be done by the wanderer. One prefers to climb out of the gorge to the Burneside road, crossing by the rocks above the little force and cutting up the coppice. The rights of way hereabout are somewhat hazy, but many a year ago there was a definite but perhaps only neighbourly short cut across to the Shap road which saved considerable distance on the way to Whinfell and Grayrigg. The situation of Garnett Bridge, as seen from the Burneside road, is interesting. The little tangle of old mills and cottages seem to spill across the gorge, and really the place is worth a glance. A generation ago there was a bobbin mill as well as the corn mill and the joiner's shop, and one heard that in still earlier times there was a mill for local wool, and a great shed where the coppice fellers sorted out their bark. The old cobbler at Garnett Bridge was a famous tanner of cow hides and a sportsman with rod and gun. The shop has long been removed to the Shap road, an isolated cottage where the worker depends on trade from ploughmen and shepherds and farmers who believe "there's nowt like leather." We tramp the old ways in new crepe rubbers. The Sprint comes through Garnett Bridge by a deep gorge cut in rock. There is a clean green pool below the two mill spouts, and the stones are cupped and worn into smooth shoots and gentle curves. Here we enter Longsleddale proper, a dale

in which for fifty years no new house was built. In the prosperous times when old Mrs. Howard was owner of Levens Hall, she had farms rebuilt even on the outlying estates, and to keep them in countenance she rebuilt the church and school and added a vast parsonage. I don't know what the vicar's stipend is worth to-day, but it would take £1,000 a year to keep the house and grounds in the worthiest order. Just above Garnett Bridge is the ruin of another bobbin mill, that of Cocks Close, so long out of service that I doubt whether more than one man lives who worked at its lathes. The ramshackle wooden footbridge has gone, doubtless jerked away by some flood. Forty years ago it was so staggery that one used it with caution. There is memory of a step, one stormy night, with the torrent roaring below, through a gap in its structure, and a wild half-second before descent was pulled up.

Dalefoot, half-a-mile beyond, has its porch overtumbled with roses. Now for a couple of miles one walks a road through scenes almost as beautiful as those between Brothers Water and Patterdale village. This is a cameo of true Lakeland, the last outpost of beauty toward the tamer Pennine dales. One cannot write of it without enthusiasm, though caution is always preached. Who can fail to find joy in the land of his fathers, in looking at sheep walk and hillside where they worked, at white-walled cottages and farms where they lived? However, one's pride is soon tumbled into the dust. Right in the old dale is a squat, cement built garage with the inscription in raised letters—" Hail, Beloved Ones." There is record of the mileage to London, Yarmouth and Edinburgh for the practical, and signs of the Zodiac to suit the mystic—and the infernal smell of the place is none the less because it provokes sulphurous language from the passer-by who has known, loved, aye and respected this dale. Anyway, roll on, Manchester, with the pipe-line; if the scheme does nothing more it will wipe out this bannt of vandals who can live in a dale and yet not give it proper respect.

Longsleddale rises in four or five benches; the narrows at the church mark one, and there is peaty meadow and shingly marsh above. There is another narrow near Li'le Lunnon, where one farm is all that remains of a most stirring community which kept the lime-kilns burning in the hillside and knapped, from the Stockdale grits, the finest whetstones known to the scythemen of many dales. Longsleddale is now a mere rift in

the mountain head for half-a-mile, until we reach the hamlet of Sacgill, with two empty steadings and the farm over which Mrs. Fishwick used to preside. Nowadays, the house does not cater for casual strangers, but one recalls those pre-war times when 250 persons might drive or walk up from Kendal and Staveley, and be sure of lavish supplies of food and drink. Now we are within half-a-dozen miles of the Dun Bull inn at Mardale with a cart-track winding into the gap between Gray Crag and Harter Fell on its way to Gatescarth pass. This is a fine walk though the slate sleds have cut up the going. The open dale head is striking, though in dry weather its feature of dashing water is not visible. The Sprint beck has been trickling gently over mossy stones, now near, now across the dale, and at Sacgill there was the music, thin and hushed, of a beating cataract. Under Goat Scar there is a shingly level where the streams wander any way, and then the rivulet is lost in a deep rock cleft. In a normal summer there is vision of tossing white waters, of broken spray blinking in the sunshine, but to-day the springs are almost dry, and we see sun-dried rocks where usually there are cascades. When the path begins its steep ascent, Gray Crag seems almost to overhang and to threaten with loose blocks. That pile of debris to the right is famous Buckbarrow earth. When hounds are out in the dale, a good deal of "stopping" is necessary and, more than that, the shepherds take up posts waiting with any stray hounds which they slip when Reynard makes a burst to get to an impregnable haunt. Often enough the redskin is turned into the jaws of the chasing pack. Among these fells, the fox is a terror, and every hunt aims at a kill. For half-an-hour, the gritty steep track takes up most attention. The rugged front of Goat Scar is well seen in profile behind; so are the crumbly spires of Gray Crag. The rivulet is now a mere spout among the stones, often hidden, and never greatly in evidence. In time of storm, however, every yard of rock hereabouts seems to give off the thunder of waters. But here ends the joy of the dale. Just as the pass seems about to ascend a final ladder and become a second Stye Head, we enter a dull, boggy, grassy basin: in a hundred yards we pass from the Lake Country to disappointing Pennine scenery. We are out of Longsleddale before the scene is redeemed and we can look over the deep trough of Mardale, over the rocks of Riggindale to shapely

Kidsty Pike. Nature has played a trick on us in that last bit of Longsleddale after promising so much. Worst of all, Manchester's new water scheme will not alter this blighted picture......

THE MITTELLEGI RIDGE OF THE EIGER

By E. O. Walker

The village of Grindelwald is shut in and overshadowed on the south by the great wall of the Eiger. Along the crest of this great wall lies the Mittellegi route up the mountain. A salient feature in the view from the village, the Mittellegi ridge is also an important factor in its climate. Behind it in winter the sun retires about lunch-time, to appear again in an hour or so and shine on rinks refrozen and curlers refreshed. It serves as an enormous sun-dial; one can tell the time by its shadow on the rinks.

Seen from the village, foreshortened and in profile, the appearance of the famous ridge is deceptive. It seems innocuous, even benign, an easy and obvious approach to the summit. To appreciate it in its true colours, one has to walk up the valley towards Grosse Scheidegg, where the Eiger is seen end on, and the extraordinary narrowness of the ridge and the steepness of the supporting walls become apparent. It is a superb and inspiring sight. Designed in the grand manner and on lines of severe simplicity, the great ridge sweeps up in one continuous edge, without subsidiary buttress of any kind, from the cliffs of the Eiger Hörnli right to the very summit.

On the last day of August 1930 I found myself at Grindelwald with two days of my holiday still in hand, with two strong guides straining at the leash, and with the Mittellegi staring me in the face. Having reached an age when a man has to count his seasons backwards rather than forwards, it seemed for me to be a case of the Mittellegi now or never. The guides professed themselves willing to undertake the necessary haulage, and the weather looked good, so it was decided forthwith to put the matter to the test. My guides were old and trusted friends, Gottfried Bohren, head-guide of the Grindelwald, and Christian Almer, third of a famous name.

The afternoon train from Grindelwald took us pleasantly to Kleine Scheidegg, where we changed to the Jungfraubahn. Our journey to Eismeer through the bowels of the Eiger, for all

the world like that in a London tube, was enlivened by the conversation of a party of young Americans clad in singlets and shorts who, on hearing that nailed boots could be hired at Jungfraujoch, promptly decided, with a fine perception of essentials, to climb the Jungfrau. Engaging a guide, fortunately a good one, they caught the train on the hop and, as I subsequently heard, did not perish miserably, but had a splendid day. *Sic transit gloria Jungfrau!*

But to return to our Mittellegi, a word on its history might not be amiss, although the subject has been fully and faithfully dealt with in a recent issue of a distinguished contemporary.* The outstanding features of the climb occur about halfway along the ridge and are the Great Gendarme, the Gap and the Great Pitch. This last is the crux. It is an abrupt steepening of the ridge for some 700 feet of smooth and difficult rock, and for 47 years this obstacle proved insurmountable.

Towards the close of the Golden Age of Alpine climbing, when most of the great peaks had been ascended and mountaineers were beginning to seek out alternative routes, the Mittellegi ridge first attracted attention, and in 1874 the Messrs. Hartley, with local guides, starting from Alpiglen, traversed across the lower part of the Eiger wall and reached the spot now occupied by the hut. Three other early attempts by Englishmen are recorded, and in 1881 Messrs. Oakley, Maund and J. Baumann, with the guides Johann Jaun, Andreas Maurer and Emile Rey, attained the top of the Great Gendarme, a success which was not substantially improved on until the ridge was finally conquered in 1921.

The earliest attempts had been made by our countrymen, but in 1885 continental climbers began to take a hand in the game, and Herr Von Kuffner, with Alex Burgener and J. M. Biener, accomplished a notable *tour de force*. Having failed in a determined attempt to climb up the ridge, they conceived the idea of climbing down it. Armed with much spare rope, they ascended to the top of the Eiger by the ordinary way and, after hours of perilous climbing down the smooth slaty slabs of the Great Pitch, succeeded in completing the first descent of the ridge.

The fame of the ridge was now established, but its ascent still remained for many years one of the unsolved problems of the

* Alpine Journal No. 239 p. 282 seq.

Photo by *J. O. Walker.*

THE FINSTERAARHORN AND FIESCHERHORNER FROM THE EIGER.

Alps. Numerous attempts were made by the best climbers of their day, and the records show names famous in Alpine history. A second descent was made in 1904 by Mr. Hasler and his guides, but it was not until 10th September 1921 that the Japanese climber Mr. Yuko Maki, with Fritz Amatter, Fritz Steuri and Samuel Brawand, at last succeeded in forcing all difficulties and making the first ascent. Their equipment included iron pitons, 400 feet of rope, and a pole 20 feet long furnished with hooks. Even so, they took seven hours to climb the 700 feet of the Great Pitch. The summit was reached at 7-15 p.m., 12¼ hours from their bivouac, and descending by the ordinary way through the night, they reached Eiger Gletscher at 2-30. the following morning.

The opening of the Jungfrau railway greatly facilitated access to the ridge, in itself no mean task in the early days, and in 1924 the Grindelwald guides, assisted by the generosity of Mr. Yuko Maki and Mr. Hasler, erected a model hut which obviates the necessity for a bivouac. The following year the ridge was descended for the third time by Dr. von Kehl, with Fritz Amatter, Fritz Suter and A. Rubi, and with the help of the pitons left by this party, the Grindelwald guides fixed the permanent ropes which now have tamed the ferocity of the climb.

Arrived at the Eismeer station, we passed down cavernous corridors and, squeezing through a small window, found ourselves on the upper snows of the Kallifirn. A tumbled sea of serac and icefall stretched steeply down from our feet, while beyond rose the great range of the Schreckhörner standing out superbly in the evening light. I had been here before in winter, and it seemed strange to remember that a way led through this complicated maze of ice and snow which could be easily and safely followed on skis. Two hours plodding across easy snow slopes and a simple rock scramble brought us just as night was falling to the hut, which is poised sensationally on the very crest of the ridge.

I hesitate to record the doings of the next half-hour, sanctioned though they be by local custom. We let off fireworks. The genial Gottfried, chief guide of the valley, ex-Mayor of Grindelwald and member of the Bern Parliament, whooped and yodelled like a two-year-old as our rockets rushed out into space, illumining for a flash the grim cliffs of the Eiger, while Christian danced

giddily on the edge of nothing, partly from an inborn love of the terpsichorean art, partly because a Swiss match held in finger and thumb is not the best way of igniting a Bengal light. The excitement became intense as answering flares sprang out from the chalets of the guides and from my family at their hotel. All very frivolous and childish, perhaps, but very good fun !

While the guides busied themselves preparing a meal, I was left to enjoy the situation over a contemplative pipe. It is always intriguing at night time to look down from a great height on the lights of a distant town, and here the effect was increased by dramatic contrast. The lights of populous Grindelwald twinkling 7,000 feet below suggested domesticity, the comfortable things of life, but a turn of the head revealed a different world, lifeless, remote—vast snowfields shimmering coldly in the starlight backed by the looming spires of the Schreckhorn, Finsteraarhorn and Fiescherhorn.

The guides are enormously proud of their little hut, which, though under the jurisdiction of the S.A.C., they maintain themselves independent of any section. Christian was careful to point out that here the crockery is crockery, and not tin, nor is the hut-book as other hut-books. A sumptuous volume decorated with a really beautiful water-colour, it records the good deeds of benefactors in cash and kind, and relates the early history of the climb. I became so absorbed in it that the guides had to yawn loudly and in unison to convey the idea of bed.

We postponed our start till daybreak next morning as the climbing commences immediately on leaving the hut and would be irksome by candle-light. A few minutes after 5 a.m. we were roped up and under way, with our axes packed in our rucksacks to leave our hands free. Bohren led, and Almer brought up the rear. The weather was auspicious with light mists drifting in the valley and a cool breeze blowing from the south-east.

The way lay straight along the crest of the ridge, and the climbing at first, though not particularly difficult, was always interesting and exhilarating. The rock is a hard slate, very smooth and slippery in texture, and for the most part it is sufficiently sound, though it requires careful handling. Here and there a fixed rope safeguards a particularly exposed step or unreliable patch of rock. The mountain was in fine condition and for three hours we made steady progress till, passing the

cramped recess which had to serve Yuko Maki and his guides for a bivouac, we reached the foot of the Great Gendarme.

Here things begin to happen, and one is apt to abandon any illusion one may have cherished as to the necessity of the fixed ropes. The ridge narrows down to a mere knife-edge, and then rises abruptly in an overhanging pitch of 15 feet which forms the front of the Gendarme. On the left a smooth sheer cliff plunges uncompromisingly to the Kallifirn, while on the Grindelwald side a very steep slope of rotten rock is scarcely less forbidding. Emile Rey, the famous guide, once made a perilous traverse of the northern slope and thus outflanked the gendarme, but now the route is up and over, and the ascent is facilitated by a knotted rope. Casting all pretence to the winds, we went up hand over hand, and soon were gasping on the top. Perched on this vantage ground, we rested for a moment to recover and take stock of the position.

The top of the Great Gendarme is one of those delectable places in the hills which every climber knows. It affords a momentary respite from toil and something reasonably flat to sit upon. The prospect is both stimulating and appalling. Imagine oneself on an attenuated Pisgah looking across Jordan Gap, but instead of the short side of Pillar Rock the whole of the great north face should be envisaged, and that north face fined down to the proverbial knife-edge. The longer we looked at it the less we liked it, and we could understand how for nearly 50 years every party had turned back appalled by the terrific appearance of the place. Then there was no fixed rope reaching down like a silver thread of hope.

The descent of the gendarme was made by a rickety chimney, and, balancing across the gap, we assembled at the foot of the Great Pitch, which soared upwards for some 700 feet above us. Filling each a pocket with snow—Nature's lubricant is apt to run out when there is much rope-handling—we started up steadying ourselves with the fixed rope and using the iron pitons as belays. Gottfried Bohren led. The rock is steep, but it is less in its steepness than in its smooth slippery texture and unbroken continuity that the difficulty lies. We wore boots; rubbers would have been a comfort. The exposure is extreme, and the tilt of the strata is against one, nor for some 300 feet did I see a stance commodious enough to accommodate the three

of us. The route lies up the slabs of the northern face a few feet to the right of the sky-line. About two-thirds of the way up an indefinite sloping shelf gives some respite, but immediately afterwards occurs the worst bit in the whole climb, a bulging, holdless wall some 20 feet high, and as near an overhang as makes no difference. It was to tackle this place that the first party carried their hooked pole. Even with the rope we found it stiff, and for me the climbing of it was an act of faith, faith in the rope and the good Gottfried entrenched above. Then the slope eased off, and soon we emerged into welcome sunlight on the ridge again with all serious difficulties behind us.

The rest of the climb was pure joy, balancing along the roof-tree of the mountain in an ecstasy of sun and light and air, the sport of climbing at its very best. And always the amazing view, the sheer plunge of the eye to the patchwork meadows and the roofs and roads of Grindelwald 10,000 feet below, and on the other side the elemental world of ice, a maze of shattered peaks and twisted icefalls—trim civilisation opposed to chaos. All too soon we had surmounted the last snow-crest and we were shaking hands on the summit.

The top was reached at 9-40 a.m., 4½ hours after leaving the hut. This, I imagine, represents normal steady going under good conditions for a party of three. But the time required for a climb of this nature must always vary according to conditions.

The descent by the ordinary route is rather an anticlimax, though the ice-slope immediately below the summit is capable of furnishing excitement. I remember, many years ago, seeing a French climber fall out of his steps here with surprising thoroughness. Fortunately, his guide had him on a tight rope and held.

Once off the ice, we took things easily, relieving the tedium of the interminable scree-covered slabs by numerous halts to smoke and admire the view. By 2-30 p.m. we were off the mountain and celebrating at Kleine Scheidegg, the whole expedition having taken approximately 9½ hours. As we had loitered extensively on the way down, it will be seen that the climb nowadays under good conditions is by no means a long one.

I fear that the repeated reference to fixed ropes may have caused pain and scandal to the members of this Club, and I hasten to state that my views on this matter are wholly orthodox.

But without adopting the rôle of *advocatus diaboli* or enquiring too closely why it should be an evil deed to swarm up a mountain on a fixed rope, but a meritorious one to slide off on an abseil, I submit that the Eiger with his Mittellegi arête had had a pretty good innings, and the choice for ordinary mortals lay between a roped climb or no climb at all. Whether the ridge would ever have been climbed without such aids is an interesting speculation. It is at least certain that it would not be justifiable, judged by present standards. And after all there is still enough genuine climbing to satisfy the most ardent enthusiast. From hut to summit is nearly two miles long, and the roped portions are small compared to the whole.

Nowadays the Mittellegi ridge can claim small distinction as an exploit, but presumably we climb for pleasure. As an enjoyable ascent, unique in the stimulating character of the climbing, and in the extraordinary exposure of the situations attained, it is unsurpassed in the Oberland or indeed in the whole of the Swiss Alps.

DOW CRAG OR DOE CRAG?

BY W. P. HASKETT-SMITH

From time to time there breaks out a fierce discussion of the proper pronunciation of what may be called our favourite climbing ground.

The adherents of " Dow " cannot understand how anyone can be so fatuous as to talk about " Doe," whilst the devotees of " Doe " marvel at the perversity of those who venture to call it " Dow."

One man writes to me that he has put the question to every quarryman for miles around, and has found them unanimous in favour of " Dow " ; while another, who has lived within a few miles of the rock for many years and knows every inch of it, assures me that he has never even heard any pronunciation but " Doe."

In such cases an important element in the zeal of the disputants is constituted by a preconceived opinion as to the origin of the name. To some people every name in the Lakes is Scandinavian ; to others everything is Welsh, if it is not Gadhelic. Years ago the same sort of battle raged round the name of the "Old Man." The Celtomaniacs said that it must be Welsh, Allt Maen, " the steep rock," while the less romantic minds preferred the more homely explanation that the hill had taken over a name intended at first to describe only the cairn built by hand on the top and dimly resembling a human figure. Of late years this prosaic treatment of the problem has gained favour. The late Mr. F. H. Bowring, who was well acquainted with Welsh, had an ingenious explanation of " Sergeant Man," making it Scir-Cant-Maen, " the rock marking the shire and the hundred " ; but the elements here are not exclusively Celtic.

Many of those who contend for " Dow " are unconsciously influenced by the belief that we have here the Welsh " Du " or Gaelic " Dhu," but in that case the name would be far more common than it is, and we should find in every dale not only a " Dow," but in contrast with the " black " one of the words for " red," Coch or Dearg.

In these cases the only way of getting at the truth is by study of records and old maps. Greenwood's large map takes us back over a hundred years, but unfortunately, though he gives Goats Water, he did not discover that it has any hill near it. When the Ordnance surveyors were at work some 90 years ago the local evidence then collected left them in no doubt that the two summits west of Goats Water were Buck Crag and Doe Crag, and the implied contrast makes the pronunciation certain.

It must be borne in mind that in the Lake Country -ow, though often written, is not really a favourite sound and, when not carrying the accent, has a strong tendency to pass into -o, -ah or -a. Thus Skiddaw was once Skit How, and in pronunciation has dropped to Skidda. Of course, a monosyllable carries the accent, and so "Dow" is protected against this change; but, when a native uses the common adjective "how" (hollow), if you listen carefully you will sometimes find that he pronounces it to rhyme rather with "no" than with "now." To sum up: all we can say is that, though we must be prepared to revise our conclusion if earlier evidence turns up, the earliest we have at present is decidedly in favour of Doe.

A FIRST TRIP TO NORWAY

By T. R. Burnett

It has been suggested that some notes on a tour undertaken during the summer of 1930 might be acceptable to readers of the *Fell and Rock Journal*. That the trip was full of interest to those who participated is readily admitted by all of them; but with a reluctant pen and limited space for reproduction of photographs it may not be possible to " get it across." Our idea was to have a walking-cum-climbing tour with the least possible time spent in mechanical transport. Whether we made the wisest selection of routes, those who know Norway will be able to judge—for ourselves, we are convinced that we made excellent use of a holiday whose only defect was its brevity.

The party for three weeks consisted of E. Wood-Johnson, A. F. C. Brown and T. R. Burnett, with (for the last two weeks) C. J. A. Cooper and, intermittently, K. Spence and R. North (non-member).

The reputation of the North Sea being known, appropriate precautions were taken by the bad sailors. For instance, a supply of negative emetics was laid in, an ample meal was taken before leaving the Tyne estuary, and one member travelled steerage so as to avoid the waste of expensive food. As it turned out, the sea was quite calm, and no casualties occurred. On the contrary, the crossing was thoroughly enjoyed—particularly the approach to Bergen, reminiscent of the West Coast of Scotland, with its rocky islets and land-locked waters through which it is often difficult to discern any passage ahead.

As one arrives at about 7 p.m., it is necessary to spend a night in Bergen; so, after securing quarters, we made our first ascent (mostly by funicular !) of the hills overlooking the beautiful town and obtained a glorious view over land and sea.

At 8 a.m. the following day (Monday 28th July) train was taken to Voss on the Oslo line, and a very remarkable journey it is. Stores were then purchased and the trek by motor-car to Stalheim undertaken. We were at first puzzled to see a small boy take his place on the running-board, and North tried to order him off; but he turned out to have a use other than as a mascot, namely to open the many gates.

Photo by *E. Wood-Johnson*

HORUNGTINDERNE FROM LOWER SLOPES OF FANARAAKEN.

The journey has to be interrupted at Stalheim, as at that point the valley suddenly changes its level, and the descent to the lower portion is too precipitous for cars to negotiate. We were suspicious that the duration of the forced halt was partly influenced by a conspiracy to make the innocent traveller partake of an expensive lunch at the swell hotel. Anyhow, the place was too civilized for the likes of us, so we decided to send on our baggage and to make the remainder of the journey to Gudvangen on foot rather than await the relay of cars at the bottom of the "struggle." The tramp through the deep valley with huge precipices rising on either hand was impressive but stuffy, and we were glad of a bathe (which was interrupted by a violent thunderstorm) prior to the arrival of the little steamer which was to be our home for the next twelve hours.

The journey on the Sogne Fjord was interesting but sufficing, because the scenery is so much of the same type, and none of us wishes for a protracted fjord cruise. For the night we got comfortable bunks in the fo'c'sle, which had only one other occupant. He was the means of solving a problem which was troubling us, viz., does a Norwegian wear a night-shirt or pyjamas? The answer is "neither." The night was disturbed only by that diabolical machine, a winch, which operated just above our heads upon the slightest provocation. There was also an early morning panic when we found ourselves unexpectedly approaching a pier, and W-J. dashing on deck in his pyjamas to find out whether it was our destination, ran into a party of other travellers all dressed in their Sunday best.

It was a false alarm, so we cooked a first breakfast; and those who were unaware of the trick of using the ship's steam tap were surprised at the speed with which the spirit stoves boiled the water. We landed at Aardal at 5 a.m., relieved to feel that the formal part of the journey was at an end, and that we were at last entering on serious business.

A short walk, followed by a sail in a motor-boat up the exquisite Aardals Lake, brought us to Farnes, Spence and second breakfast: "All good things, brother," and thereafter we set out with heavy sacks but light hearts and in intense heat for Vetti. The way lay up an ever-narrowing valley with numerous waterfalls on either hand, and grand mountains ahead. In the early afternoon we reached Vetti and put up at a farm where the

comfort and hospitality were on the liberal scale which Spence had led us to expect. In the evening we strolled to the foot of that prodigious waterfall the Vettisfoss—said to be the highest in Europe—850 feet sheer.

Next morning (30th July) we set off again in sweltering heat away up the valley side, through pine trees, scrub and dwarf willows to the top of the Vettisfoss. From here the fall looks still more appalling than from below, its snow-white column being constantly traversed by bombs of water like fiery darts, each leaving its trail of spray until its own individuality is merged in the mass of falling spume.

On over the plateau through Vettissmarken, where a couple of bright lassies tended many goats and exchanged a friendly greeting with the unwonted travellers.

It had been our intention to make Skogadals Boën that day; but on reaching Fleskedals we came on a paradise which was far too good to be passed by. A level alp of lush grass sprinkled with a multitude of flowers, a crystal-clear river, a group of habitable but deserted huts, and the whole surrounded by a most impressive group of rocky peaks each flanked with glaciers. We appropriated the largest of the huts for our H.Q., and, after some searching, brought in Brown, who had fallen (asleep) by the wayside. Spence and North passed along the path above us, but could not be recalled.

An evening reconnaisance convinced us that Stölsnaastind was the most attractive peak for to-morrow's climb, though there were many other expeditions only slightly less imposing which could be undertaken from this charming spot.

W-J.'s landlady keeps poultry, and is generous. A roast chicken had travelled thus far with us, and the evening meal was obviously the occasion for making its closer acquaintance. A few choice morsels we held over for the next day, and in particular the wishbone which was to be pulled on our first summit.

For the sake of comfort, and not on account of any unsociability or disagreement, each of the three occupied a different grass-roofed hut as dormitory, and, as the proposed route was mostly unknown, we made an early start—getting up at 4 a.m. The ascent gives every variety of experience—scree, snow, glaciers with crevasses and a big bergshrund and, finally, a perfect rock-cone. Slingsby was the first to ascend the Stöls-

Photo by *T. R. Burnett*

FLESKEDALS SAETER.

"We appropriated the largest of the huts for our H.Q."

naastind, and, perchance, the small moss-grown cairns we found were erected by his hands. The view from the top is magnificent, embracing as it does snowfield, rocky ridge, fertile valley, deep blue lakes and, dominating all, the imposing group of the Horungerne. A pleasant descent, in which glissading played a considerable part, brought us back to our fascinating quarters at 4-30, ripe for bathing and tea.

The following morning was pleasantly occupied in the walk to Skogadals Boën, which is a hut of the Norwegian Touring Club. These huts are much more like simple hotels than mountain refuges, and provide great comfort and liberal fare at very modest prices. We bathed in sun and river and, on account of rain, spent the afternoon in indoor pursuits. By the next morning (2nd August) the weather had taken up again, and we left soon after 10 o'clock in intense heat for the Keiserin Pass and Turtegrö. Finding a willing pony going the same way, we gladly gave him part of our loads, and later we saw him bravely crossing the top of the pass where we again encountered Spence and North. Having less than a normal day's march by the direct route, we decided to extend it, and from the pass top we climbed an unnamed mountain to the north, which the map said was snow-clad but which we found to be all rock. Next we made for Fanaraaken, an outstanding peak with an observatory on top. Our route thence was sadly ill-chosen, consisting as it did of a slushy glacier like Concordia Platz in the afternoon and a wearisome boulder-strewn ridge. But it was well worth while, for the views in all directions were simply superb. We hoped to glissade down, but instead found the way to be composed of intolerable big scree till we reached the valley bottom, whence it led through bog and scrub to the Mecca of the district, Turtegrö. As an hotel, the place fell far short of our expectations, especially as it lacked baths, but as a centre for excursions it could hardly be bettered. To compare it with Zermatt, as is sometimes done, is, however, absurd.

Skagastölstind, familiarly known as Skag, is the first ambition of all climbers who visit these parts. The natural attractions of this rocky monster are enhanced by the thrilling story of its first ascent by that pioneer of Norwegian mountaineering, W. C. Slingsby—*Lord* Slingsby they call him. To mention his name here is to secure immediate attention, but to say that one knew

him personally and even was his humble successor in the presidential chair of the Fell and Rock Club led to attention which almost amounted to embarrassment.

Nowadays the summit can be attained without any great achievement, for the Bandet Hut is conveniently placed for the ascent by a route much less formidable than Slingsby's first. When we announced our intention of spending several nights in the hut, we were regarded as mad. The place was described as being cold, damp, dilapidated and generally uninhabitable. So we carried even more baggage than usual, including in addition to sleeping-bags, large quantities of clothes, food, firewood. We also took a porter who, though no mountaineer, was a good goer whose load equalled that of the best of us. The way to the hut (three hours) is full of interest, one remarkable feature being a deep blue lake into which icebergs are constantly breaking off and floating slowly across the water. We arranged to arrive in good time, so as to have the whole afternoon for digging ourselves in. This process consisted mainly in pointing the walls externally with moss and mud and lining them internally with blankets to curb the cold draughts which were blowing through the cracks. In a couple of hours all was shipshape, and we had time for a good rock and glacier scramble before supper and sleep.

One advantage which Norway has over Switzerland is that there is not the same necessity for early starts, and in getting away at 8-30 a.m. we were satisfied that we had ample time. The noble summit of Skag carried a sugar-like sprinkling of new snow, but we rightly foretold that this would yield to the strong sun before we reached it. The lower two-thirds or so of the ascent consists of unroped scrambling—so indiscriminate that frequently each member of the party chose his own route, with the result that individual difficulties were frequent, and waits occurred before all assembled at the beginning of the serious work. The actual climb involves a delightful variety of chimneys, traverses and slabs; and, when the summit was attained, the conditions were ideal alike for views and for repose. An hour we spent in bliss and idleness, and W-J., whose chief items of diet are Eno's Fruit Salt and sardines, consumed his *nth* tin of the latter.

The proposal to attempt a new descent met with unanimous

approval, and the route worked out wonderfully. Starting down a scree gully to the north, we worked steadily downwards, and to the left by a series of delicate traverses and steep chimneys, and, without a single check, we joined the ordinary route below the steep rocks. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that in one chimney, No. 1 made an involuntary descent in close company with a boulder which jammed again just as the rope came tight, while in another No. 4 found himself without holds and was rescued by No. 3 reascending and generously providing his head as a temporary stance. The sun bathed hut soon welcomed us, and the rest of the day was spent in feeding ourselves and other passing climbers, and in preparing for the morrow in blissful ignorance as to the experiences which it held in store.

The Ringstind—a challenging peak which we had frequently seen in the distance—was the objective; and, as the way appeared to be almost entirely over snow, it promised no great difficulty. On the ascent all worked out according to plan, and leaving the Hut at 8 a.m., we made good time over the glaciers—assisted in part by crampons—and reached the magnificent summit before noon. After the usual ceremonial, viz., resting, feeding, photographing and stone-rolling, we descended to the glacier by a rocky route so as to avoid the steep snow which had now begun to avalanche, and then retraced our morning's steps to the great col. The day was still young (1 p.m.), the weather gloriously fine, and the party in good form. Someone suggested that the remaining half of the return journey should be made by rock instead of by snow, and a magnificent ridge offering an obvious route issued at once an invitation and a challenge. A glorified Skye expedition tempted us, and the die was quickly cast. The ridge—as is so often the case—turned out to be more difficult, more undulating, and more amply furnished with peaks and gendarmes than had been anticipated. Time slipped by, and the desirability of abandoning the complete project led to several futile attempts by means of the foulest couloirs to find a way down. But no ; once a Norwegian ridge has got you, it has a knack of keeping you ! So onward we pressed until, as evening approached, we reached the end of the knife-edge and stood at last at the lip of a prodigious precipice overlooking the Hut. We set off with confidence, but with the extreme care which the circumstances demanded. Progress was slow, abortive

routes were tried, laborious returns made while the ground grew so difficult as to necessitate abseiling, and the daylight waned. By 11 p.m., after many fruitless efforts, it was realized that we were in for a night on the rocks, so each devoured his remaining particles of food, which by this time had been reduced to the smallest portions of jam, sugar, Horlick's Milk and raisins, put on all spare clothing, and tied on to the rocks where he stood. The empty flask was lowered to Cooper, so that he could have the doubtful satisfaction of smelling it! His position was the most uncomfortable, as he was astride a flake of rock with one leg dangling over the precipice, while the rest of us could at least sit down.

After an earlier "false dawn," at 3-30 a.m. it was light enough to move with caution, but prolonged exploration still failed to reveal a downward route, and we were at last forced to reascend and retrace our steps along the ridge. At the first snow patch (6 a.m.) we made a cup of tea, taken perforce without sugar or milk, and thus exhausted the very last of our supplies. We watched continuously for a way of release from the grip of that ridge, and at long last it was decided to try a repulsive mode of escape. It started down loose rocks and steep slabs and continued on an ice slope with a yawning crevasse at its foot. In less desperate circumstances such an invitation would have been scorned, but the time had come for bold action, and the descent was negotiated without mishap. The relief on reaching the glacier obliterated feelings of fatigue and hunger; and good time was made over the snowfield, across the col on which two involuntary glissades were checked by careful belaying, over the final glacier on which the pace of the "old man" who was leading was described as "indecent," and to the Hut, which was reached at 1 p.m. after an outing lasting 30 hours. Naturally, the afternoon was spent largely in feeding, and at 4 p.m. we went to bed, and were quickly asleep. Curiously enough, all woke at eight, and the problem as to whether it was night or morning presented itself. There was no sun to tell us, and the mists hanging in the valleys seemed to suggest morning. On the other hand, we did not feel particularly hungry, and the fact that we were greedy for more sleep proved nothing. Finally an inspiration came. I knew that I had wound my watch before turning in at four, and, on rewinding, I was delighted to find that only

a couple of turns were required. Joy! It was evening. So, after a cup of soup, we turned in for another twelve hours of sleep, which went far towards wiping off arrears.

Next morning we descended in pouring rain to Turtegrö and made plans for the ascent of the Austabottind.

But my space is exhausted—and perhaps your patience also, so I must leave over the account of our last few days. How we foregathered at the delightful little hotel at Fortun; how the strike of the sailors on the fjord steamers compelled us to make a long detour by car; how we traversed the fjords in motor-boats, often changing in the open water; how we enjoyed the luxury of Fretheim hotel and of hot baths at Bergen; and how the North Sea showed its true self, to the great discomfort of some of us on the return voyage.

I would conclude by saying that this first experience of Norway has given us all a keen desire to return, and confidence in recommending the "Northern Playground" to all mountaineers in search of a sporting holiday.

NOTES

Cost—With the exception of the North Sea steamer, prices are very moderate—about £30 for three weeks including everything.

Natives—Most friendly, hospitable and helpful.

Stores—Difficult to obtain except in towns. Supplies should be sent to suitable centres. Wild fruit (bilberries and others) abundant.

Language—English understood at tourist centres. Odd words in German and Cumbrian useful.

Rock—Mostly sound and very rough, except where moss-grown. Wears the finger tips even more quickly than that of Skye.

Snow—Much less trouble than in Switzerland. Even after bad weather we had no soft new snow.

Comparisons—The rock ridges of the Horungerne are like those of Skye with the scale doubled.

LI'LE BITS OF DIALECT

By Darwin Leighton

Many of us who visited Lakeland thirty years ago still have happy memories of dialect stories related either at the evening fireside in farm or cottage, or in the company of dalesfolk at a sheep shearing or a pig killing. The dalesman has few words for the stranger. A lady on her first visit to the head of Langdale valley met a shepherd and his dog coming down the road; she felt she must speak, and greeted him with "Good morning; I am so charmed with this country of yours and these wonderful hills; how I envy you, for I know you must have climbed them every day." The shepherd replied: "Dog hes," and walked on.

One day in Borrowdale three climbers got back to the farm very proud of their first climb; the farm lad met the leader at the yard gate and said: "Are ye yan o' them climmers?" "Yes, we have climbed Cust's Gully to-day." "Cust's Gully! Why, ya don't caw that climmin? Ah'd tek a horse an' cart up theear!" During a dry spell of weather these enthusiasts asked a farmer if he knew Piers Ghyll. In a very grave and solemn voice he replied: "Piers Ghyll, Piers Ghyll! Ah, it's a most tremendous queer spot."

There is an old mine hut at the head of Ennerdale where one very wet day four climbers sought shelter on their way from Seatoller, intending to climb Pillar Rock. A shepherd who was also taking shelter with his two dogs made them welcome; he had come up that morning from his farm down at "Innerdle Brig," as he called it, to "leuk sheep." He rented 10,000 acres in Ennerdale at three farthings an acre and kept about 2,000 sheep. It was an entertainment to listen to his conversation; talking about hard work and long days, he said: "Yan hes ta tee yans garters gay sune in a morning. Wet days, dud ya say? Ah why yan gits used to sich like; it's far warse i' winter. Doon at haam t'other neet my missus was sending oor li'le lad an arrand doon tat village; it was dark and black as a bull hide, rained and blew ter'ble; lad stood at dooar; Mother went to leuk oot and said: 'Ay, what a neet; come in, mi lad; it isn't fit ta turn a dog oot; thee father'll gang.' I hed ta gang."

Someone suggested that instead of lunching in Great Doup and sitting on wet rocks we should have lunch in the hut. The shepherd had his snack at the same time; the two dogs got the scraps, after which pipes were filled. The rain kept coming down in torrents, clouds were lowering down Black Sail Pass, the beck was in flood. Somebody started singing "Slattery's Light Dragoons":—

"We're not as brave as lions,
But am brave nor a hen;
He who fights and runs away
Will live to fight agen."

The kindly host warmed to the singing and would insist on "John Peel". How the rafters rang. Then he told this story:—

Years gone by, High Bank Farm had a very big hay-time before the days of mowing machines; all the grass had to be cut by the scythe, and this required many extra men. They worked hard, from early morning to long as they could see. Men would say, "Yans shoes is nivver caald." Old John of High Bank was a fine type of yeoman, but Betsy, his wife, had the name of being very careful and not too lavish with meat. She would give the men dishes of curds and whey in place of more substantial food. Each day Old John would go up to see how the men were getting on with the haymaking. One morning he was very disgusted to find his men just dragging their scythes through the grass and chanting a very mournful dirge slowly: "Curds and whey, ivvery day; ivvery day curds and whey."

John went straight back to the farm and shouted: "Betsy! Wheear is ta?" "I'se here; what's up noo?" "What's up? Why, thoo's hungerin' them lads wi' thee curds and whey; they can hardly lift ther leighs [scythes], th'r that wake and faintly like. Noo, think on, thoo'l fry 'em a girt dish of ham and eggs for breakfast in t' morning." Betsy said: "We can't affoord it." John said: "Ay, but I'se maister here." So next morning the men were amazed when Betsy lifted a huge dish of fried ham and eggs on to the table. This put them in fine fettle for work, and when old John went up later to the hayfield he could hear a different tune; and, on looking over the wall, saw them working like steam engines and singing in very quick time: "Ham and eggs! mind thee legs. Mind thee legs; ham and eggs."

The clouds were lifting; Gable, Kirk Fell and Pillar were just

discernible through the mist, our host talked of setting off home as he had to be back for milking time; but before leaving he told a story about a woman in Lorton Parish.

A farmer's wife from a lonely house in the fells landed down at Cockermouth one dark winter's night to ask the doctor to come and see her husband who, she said, was "Varra bad." The doctor had been out all day and got wet through and didn't want to turn out again if it could be helped. "Now, my good woman, just tell me what's the matter with your John."

"Ay, Doctor, his heed's bad and he shivers frae head to foot."

"Well, Mrs. ——, just go back home, get John to bed, give him a pint of gruel, take his temperature, and I'll look in and see him to-morrow."

Next day the doctor walked into the farm kitchen and said to Mrs. ——: "Well, and how's John to-day?" "Oh, he's better," she exclaimed, "but I hed a terrible job wi' him. I gat him ta bed—and, ay, he was stupid; then I hed a job to git that pint o' gruel intul him. I couldn't tak' his temperature, 'cos wi hevn't a thing to dew it, saa ah put barometer on his chest; pointer whizzed roond and roond, but it stopped at dry. Saa ah warmed him two mair pints o' gruel; then he gat ta sleep, and to-day he's better and gone up t' fell ta leuk sheep."

The rain had ceased; it was too late to start for Pillar, so, bidding the shepherd and his dogs good day, soon the steep sides of Haystacks were climbed, and by way of the Drum House and Honister, Seatoller was reached in time for tea. Those were the days when no sheets of zinc desecrated Honister Pass, no hoot of motor-wagon or smell of oil invaded the pure air. Now the din of machinery grinding stones and sawing slates is hideous; the once clear crystal stream is discoloured with by-products all the way to Gatesgarth. Bob, the old road man who had his stone heap near Seatoller, was a rare type. One remembers a story told of him. A quarryman passing on his way home about five o'clock stopped a moment to bid old Bob good day; he noticed a small bundle on the stone heap tied up in a red handkerchief. "What hes ta int' hankercher, Bob?" Bob looked, scratched his head, then replied, "Damits mi dinner; ah'd fergitten it."

A NIBBLE AT THE ROCKIES

By E. O. Ransome

Business having taken me as far as Chicago, the mountains made an urgent call to go further West. Hence, August 14th, 1929, found me leaving Chicago on the " Mountaineer " on the two-day journey to Banff. The journey across North Dakota and Southern Saskatchawan could not help being dull. In a very hot summer, the train becomes a sort of moving purgatory. Calgary brought relief in cool breezes from the foothills and on the morning of August 16th, I reached Banff. The town of Banff is oddly reminiscent of Zermatt. At one end is the " depot," then some distance away the main street with low wooden stores selling food, fruit, furs, moccasins, photos and a collection of souvenirs which would be quite at home in Zermatt, including wooden bears carefully labelled " made in Switzerland." At the far end is the huge Banff Springs Hotel with its own wonderful open-air swimming bath, and various other hotels and institutions.

I found a very warm welcome at the Canadian Alpine Club Hostel built on high ground overlooking the town. The veteran secretary of the Club, Mr. S. H. Mitchell, had already helped me considerably with advice as to ways and means and was good enough to introduce me to Mr. and Mrs. Sibbald, who were leaving on an expedition next day.

Next morning, Mr. and Mrs. Sibbald and I commenced our trip with a thirty-mile car drive to Marble Canyon in Kootenay Park just over the Alberta British Columbia boundary. We left the car in the forest warden's yard—we left his wife with more difficulty; she seldom saw visitors and liked to make the best of any that did come along. The walk in front of us was a bare eight or nine miles on the map but took us eight hours. Heavy packs and three days' food made going slow. Our route lay up Prospector's Valley and for the greater part of the way there was no path, merely a blaze through the woods. The streams were full and frequent detours were needed up the side streams to find a way across. The Fay hut built by the Canadian Alpine Club lies on a wide rock shelf and our first attempt to climb the

wall below the shelf was frustrated by a cannonade of falling stones. This meant dropping down to the stream again and a detour to pick up the usual and safer route. It was dark when we arrived at the hut (6,800 feet). At the commencement of the season, the warden had been up to look at the hut but no other climbers had been up to it. There are very few huts in the Rockies and those there are get very little use. Climbing there is a very different proposition from climbing in England or Switzerland. Long distances and the necessity of horses for long expeditions limit the number of climbers and make the question of supplies the first consideration.

Our first night was not a great success, there were too many noises. The worst offenders were pack rats—pleasant grey fellows with pretty tails but given to keeping late hours. The greatest trial was a noise like a drunken man advancing with heavy steps for a few yards and then stubbing his toe on a tree trunk. Next day we found it was only a woodpecker at work. Although animals at night may be a nuisance, the animals are one of the great charms of the Rockies. As no hunting or shooting is allowed they are all tame after their various ways. A black bear with two cubs was to be seen regularly on the Banff–Windermere highway begging from passing autos. One day we made friends with a Hoary Marmot and were telling our experience to an American lady from the hotel. " Why sure he's tame," she said. " I feed him candy every day." A very different sort of animal from the timid Swiss marmot.

Next day, Mrs. S. elected to stay in the hut and cook a good dinner against our return. This struck me as a wonderfully good idea and one that married climbers might be interested to know of. S. and I, after various troubles with falling stones, reached the glacier lying behind the Ten Peaks. It was very level and free from crevasses and we reached the col between Peaks 3 and 4 without difficulty. The arête to the summit (10,028 feet) was an easy scramble up scree and loose rock. Weather conditions were perfect but all hope of a view was spoiled by smoke from forest fires which obscured all distant views.

We set out next morning to leave the valley and had to begin by getting thoroughly wet in the alder bushes. There was no trail and we had to make our own way, sometimes in the woods,

sometimes on the gravel beds in the stream. We saw one small deer and tracks of moose and bear. The Eagle's Eyrie, a curious rock formation at the head of the valley, was full of marmots, and ptarmigan were plentiful. The glacier at the head of the Opabin Pass was made a little difficult by new snow, but we were quickly over it and off the other side. Our destination was the Camp on O'Hara Lake, a typical bungalow camp. Centred round the main building, which was mess room and lounge and had a limited number of bedrooms, were a number of small huts for sleeping quarters.

Next day was wet and obviously intended for an "off" day. I got to know Dr. Rassetti, an Italian, and fixed up to climb with him the next day, as Mr. and Mrs. S. had to return. Our early start next morning—not very early, about 6 o'clock—was very unpopular with other members of the camp. One German was particularly indignant and in the evening demanded to know "where had we been after our so noisy start." Our peak was Mt. Schaffer (10,175 feet), an interesting rather isolated peak with two summits connected by a very broken arête. The usual route lies across the glacier to the col at the centre and on the west side of the summit ridge. As we reached the edge of the glacier, the first cannonade of the day swept it almost to its bottom edge. It was clear from the appearance of the rocks that the hot summer had brought the top edge of the glacier many feet lower than usual. Even had we been able to cross the glacier, it was doubtful if we could have scaled the newly exposed very bare rock to the col. This route was evidently impracticable and we were soon engaged on the steady trudge along the arête to the southern and lower summit. From here to the col we were stopped by a vertical drop in unpleasant black shale. It was far too rotten to trust and we had to descend on the east face. This was a very unpleasant passage. The shale was in broken sloping slabs covered with loose stones and new snow. Eventually we got low enough to reach a streak of yellow rock which led to the col. From there the arête to the summit was much better. In fact, the final gendarme and final arête gave us a short amount of real good climbing on good rock. After the previous night's rain, the air was clear and we had a marvellous view. Westwards, the more familiar peaks we had seen before, Victoria, Lefroy, Hungabee, Biddle, Neptuak,

then further away Assiniboine, Goodsir and beyond them, range on range, the Purcells and the Selkirks. Northwards, the whole length of the Yoho Valley and the great ice field beyond. Eastwards, the Kicking Horse Pass and Mount Cathedral. It was a day and a place to linger.

Next morning early, we walked to Wapta and flagged the train for Lake Louise. Here I spent a trying three days searching for someone to climb with. I paced round the hotel examining visitors' boots or their luggage. If a rucksack arrived, I watched it like a faithful dog, to see to whom it belonged. The only Swiss guide not away in the mountains was Ernest. He was booked by an American. Then the American had a wire calling him home. Ernest and I soon had all arrangements made and were to leave at 6 p.m. for Mrs. Feuz's cottage on the Plain of the Six Glaciers. At 5 p.m., a sudden storm blew up, and when it cleared, Mount Victoria, covered with dazzling new snow, seemed to have advanced half down the valley as if with an invitation to her now treacherous slopes. Ernest refused to move from the hotel. Next morning was gloriously fine and I wandered up by myself to the Plain of the Six Glaciers. The route up Lefroy looked invitingly practicable but I had unwisely (or wisely ?) left my ice axe behind and no temptation to do a solitary climb could overcome that difficulty.

Three further days spent at Banff in a fruitless search for someone to climb with brought my time to an end and I had to take to the train again.

The greatest difficulty of my short visit was finding climbers to complete a party. A party of two or more climbers who could afford to hire one or two experienced packers to take food and camp supplies to suitable places could have a wonderful time among virgin country. Solitary climbers who are able to get out for the Annual Camp of the Alpine Club would be sure of a good time there and would very possibly be able to join up with a party after the Camp.

The distances, lack of huts and shortage of guides make difficulties which are unknown even in Switzerland. But the beauty of the mountains and the pleasure to be had from watching the animals can be enjoyed without any such elaborate preparations.

OWD JOE O' WASD'LE 'EAD

Words by

GEO. BASTERFIELD

Music by

GEO. BASTERFIELD

and

E. HILTON

OWD JOE O' WASD'LE 'EAD

By George Basterfield

It's fine to be doin' wid nabbut wot
When I ga gadderin' sheap,
I gang aboot an caw ont dogs
Ta laet 'em 'oot ont steap.
There's chaps as cums ta Wasd'le 'ead,
Fer why I nivver cud tell,
Wid nivver a sheap ta coont, mi lads,
Tha' slidder aboot ont fell,
O wid nivver a sheap ta coont, mi lads,
Tha' slidder aboot ont fell.

Chorus :
Hi, hi, git awa', git awa', cum' ere Lassie and Jack,
Hi, hi, git awa', git awa', cum' ere git awa' back.

These climmin' chaps when tha' ga oot,
Reet oop tha rocks tha' graep,
There's nobbut yan road oop tha' naas
Togidder, and teed wi raep
Tha' tuk mi fer a climmer yance
On Scowfle top yan day,
Ah nivver owivver was I a climmer
I wark it awe the way.
Ah nivver owivver was a climmer
I wark it awe the way.

I watched 'em clim' a rock yan day,
Reet oop on "Gabble" side,
At last tha git oop pretty 'igh,
Wid nivver a spot ta bide;
An then I laffed ha!, ha, ha, ha !
By gok I 'ad sum fun,
A blidderin block was t'end ot rock,
An doon tha 'ad ta cum,
O, a blidderin block was t'end ot rock,
An doon tha' 'ad ta cum.

'OWD JOE O' WASD'LE 'EAD

Allegro moderato

PIANO

It's fine to be doo-in wid nu but wot w'en I ga' gad-der-ing sheap. I gang a-boot an' ca' oot dogs tae leat 'em oop on't steap. There's chaps as cums to Was-d'le 'ead, fer why I niv-ver cud tell, Wi'

niv-ver a sheap to count, mi lads, the' slid-der a-boot on't fell.___ Ho, wi'

niv-ver a sheap to count, mi lads, the' slid-der a-boot on't fell.___

REFRAIN

Hi, Hi, git a-wa', git a-wa', coom 'ere, Lassie and Jack.___

Hi, Hi, git a-wa', git a-wa', coom 'ere, git a-wa' back.___

D.S. 𝄋

after last verse

Tha ask ma t'rooed ta Gabble top
An ar' points 'em 'oop sty 'ead,
Then 'oop tha gar bie Gabble nees,
Tha knars tha wain't be sed.
Tha nobbut git reet 'oot 'ont fell,
Ta tak' tha shorter cut,
Wen tha awe lig doon arf deead tha knars,
Awe sweeat fra' 'ead ta foot,
O tha awe lig doon arf deead tha knars,
Awe sweeat fra' 'ead ta foot.

Av watched 'em traepsin oop ont fell,
Wid nivver a sheap ta coont,
Then awe cum moiderin doon agen,
As soon as ivver tha' moont,
Then back ta Wasd'le 'ead tha' ga'
Moowed oop wi faces red,
An awe o' a ledder an nowt but bledder,
Till we git them awe ta bed;
O, tha awe o' a ledder an nowt but bledder
Till wi git them awe ta bed.

Wen snars aboot tha' awe ga 'oot,
Wi axes lang an' sharp,
An' in yon gully on gert end
Tha' git thirsels ta wark,
Tha chop aboot ta git a odd
Thar anging on bit spike.
Wen thars warkin' awe tha' way, tha' knars,
Reet 'oop ta Scowfle Pike,
O thars warkin' awe tha way, tha' knars,
Reet oop ta Scowfle Pike.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

By George Basterfield

After all, it must be *my* year with the club. I cannot write *your* year, dear member; I am not sufficiently able, and yet I am expected to write " *The* year," which will have to be " mine."

I am not a " meety " man. An unworthy confession to make, perhaps, but a true one. I attend meets because of their social aspect in the evenings. I like my crags fairly silent and free from falling fragments. " Selfish," sez you. " Selfish," sez I; but I shall always hope to have inexactitudes to exchange in the noisy evenings following on the silent days. So here goes:

The horn of Old Winter is heard on the hill;
He blows with a vigour, his music is shrill;
Apart from his sounding, the valley is still;
For
  Ere his strongest blast is blown
  The Philistine, in fear, has flown.

And so the cream of the club drive to their delightful dungeons in early November, and enter only to break out in defiance of internal restraints. They, the cream, court sweet liberty on hills clothed in the faded beauty of death, the mantle of white being not yet thrown over the russet gown.

The N.W. face of Gimmer frowns where,
  Beneath the precipice brink,
  The vital " missing link "
Was well and truly inserted by G. S. B.
Also " Joas," where G. G. M.
  Proved his power and " pep "
  By Just One Awkward Step.
And, where that wizard H. S. G.
  Produced an asterisk, said he:
  "One h-asterisk at times, you see."
And, where A. B. R. first led " The Crack,"
  With just a line 'twixt he and Mac.
And a wan light shines about
  The brief alphabet on the west,
  A face displaying all that's best.

And the cold " South East,"
Where "Amen Corner" is a beast,
And "Chimney Buttress" proves a feast.
And some, they go to " Pavey "
To practise for the Navy,
That's if the day be wet and cold
And men and maids are brave and bold.
Or, if age will tell,
Then " Middle Fell."
Or, if this middle course should fail,
Then O for a tramp o'er hill and dale.

" There are no hills like the Wasdale Hills." They call at all seasons. And so December 25th finds the stray orphans of the club, fatherless and motherless brats of uncertain age, waiting; waiting wide-eyed, open-mouthed and cock-eared, listening in excited anticipation for the tragic pop ! of a coloured balloon, floating somewhere in the depths of a fervid chimney; but, strange to say, no pop ! is heard and no fragile inflation floats to the freeness afar, and so yet another mystery wraps itself round that ancient inn.

Later the timid serving-maid inquiring, " Plum pudding or rice pudding, please ? " and " What do you think ? " from a greedy orphan in reply. The maid responds with a large-sized replica of " slab and notch," worked out in a brown, alluring mass on a large plate. We go the gamut from soup to crackers and enjoy the adventure of a possible disaster. And so the afterglow, the fellowship of Ishmaelites in the desert, and desert is heaven, for here we are, above and outside the law of commonsense; we eat and drink to excess, we wear fools' caps, we see Old Bill and hear his heavy steps along the corridors at midnight, we hear him calling his sheep dogs through the storm outside, we spend our frail bodies in the snows, we consume our energy on steep rocks, we lose our sweat on long, toilsome slopes, and we renew our strength, once again, on the wings of a bird.

Be it turkey or goose,
No waistcoat is loose

when we have fed.

And the days and nights pass away all too soon, yet we get

nearer to new hopes. Soon we make our way over the hills by way of Blacksail and Scarf Gap to the land of good wishes, fresh vows, and piecrust promises.

Here we meet many well-fed folk fresh from the festive board, folk who have escaped from home after the feast of Xmas. They seek soft sofas and easy chairs, and look forward to billowy beds. Why? Because their feast has not been justified; the flesh is soft and pink, and needs tenderness awhile.

The ponderous committee ponderously wastes the whole evening over something or nothing as an excuse to smoke and lounge and enjoy easy comfort. The pow-wow over, the old year practically talked out, there comes the joining of hands, the last stroke of twelve, greetings exchanged; and the glorious opportunity to break our nice new resolutions is with us. Ere the smaller finger rounds the face of the clock, some castaway will be clinging to the Pillar rock. January 1st, 1930, the heavens told and kept telling, yet there was a goodly number of deaf ears, for human derelicts drifted out and back to the haven of comfort and warmth as the day wore on. Of course there was the usual splash for the Pillar, but I fear only one was successful from Buttermere, and that one, walking sideways, proceeded, unobserved by the storm, and so won through. As for myself, I made for Wasdale direct, in spite of silent crags, and being like the Pillar fiend, " not meety," I broke all previous personal records in reaching my destination.

March finds the Club basking in " The Sun." Outside, it rained; it rained hard. An unpromising sabbath morn, and so a wild soul subdued, sat within sacred walls, 'longside a sage, when lo! the legitimate sun burst forth from the clouds. Joy and sorrow respectively came to unrepentant vagabonds on Doe and the humble worshipper marooned in Pewdom.

The Coniston gatherings are reminiscent of the Club's youth, the atmosphere is always delightfully like home.

And although the rain is wetting,
" The Sun " leaves no regretting,
For we revel in its setting
In that happy, happy vale.

There is one expedition on Doe, given fine weather, will last an expert party the whole of a March day, and here, as elsewhere, in the region of meets,

There are ribboned streaks through a world of green,
To thread on the swinging stride,
With a hitch of the load as we eat up the road,
To the fells where the giants abide.

Where there is

Joy in the click of the closing gate,
From a man-marred world we pass
To the draining sod of the mountain trod
That writhes through the toughened grass.

"There are no hills like the Wasdale Hills" when the club goes up the dale. The hibernators turned up at Easter, and the new lounge at the old inn was the scene of much merriment and music. The new setting was so overwhelming that several shy members of "the ancient school of fives" lacked courage to enter; thus the smokeroom reached saturation point in absorbing an undue amount of: "He came on the rope, but I had him tight." "That's not new, we did it in 1901 in a high wind and heavy snow, and found it scratched even then." "Absolutely unjustified"; "jolly fine"; "severe be hanged, it's not even difficult"; etc, etc.

The lure of Wasdale is, undoubtedly, the old time atmosphere of remoteness, and its seven main crags each attained by one ascent. In spite of electric light, wireless and a comfortable lounge displacing candles and lamps, funny stories and fives respectively, the spirit of the old pioneers still pervades, as witness "Old Bill" and his Xmas perambulations.

In August we go once again. The August meet tests the true patriot, and it is surprising how many go to Cumberland and spurn the foreign "fastness," for, after all, "There are no hills like the Wasdale hills" when mists lie round the dale.

There entered and emerged from the grey obscurities at frequent intervals, moist and merry groups of poisers and pedestrians; it was a *great* meet, both in quantity and quality. "The zephyred creations that clothed the contours were surely 'raiment divine'."

Grasmere in February, the mystery meet where the club members, so I am told,

Enter at dusk and leave at dawn,
This summer health resort in pawn.

Where, in hot days,

Vandal and vagabond repair to rest,
Each, to the other, a perfect pest.

Of course, I know,

The play's the thing; yet mark!
They go, they sit, and return in the dark!

I could never face this last outpost of civilisation as a meeting place, because of first impressions. I once attended the famous sports as a Philistine, and the hills laughed. I visited again as a vagabond, and the Philistines laughed. I shook the mud off my feet; it was raining. When I die I shall bequeath Grasmere to the " flannelled fool " and ask for my ashes to be scattered on Scafell—— Sorry. A. T. H. tells me there is an adjacent crag with two " severes " attached, near Grasmere. Truly a redeeming feature. I may change my mind about Grasmere yet.

Borrowdale in May. Beauty, foliage, cool glades, snug comforts for bodily desires, the best of friends to meet, mandarins at Seathwaite, growing dogs at Thornythwaite, much barking, much joy, much song and climbing according to conditions, usually good on Gillercombe, Scafell and The Napes. Undoubtedly, as far as meets go, Borrowdale is ideal from the purely æsthetic side. I hope to indulge many times again; if it rains I shall keep away most certainly, because J. Wray usually attends, and he *will* drag folk out in wet weather; and the rain down there is twice wet.

Langdale in June presents all that can be desired on the crags above. Down in the valley there are buses, there are motors, there are motor-cycles, we can see and hear them, and sometimes we ride them, but that is only when we come and go. There is much for feet and hands in June in Great Langdale, and many members took advantage last June of its bright welcome.

A hut shall be the mountain lair
For those who do not dungeons dare.
Friendly wayfarers Ahoy!

Coniston again in July,

And what befell I cannot tell,
I visit there so oft and—well——

Very likely it rained; I cannot swear to it. But there was a nice " turn up," and the committee held parliament, which is important if not interesting. Why do many famous climbers neglect Coniston? Are they afraid of being " eliminated " on

Doe? Or is the travail of the traverse an overwhelming proposition? I take my hat off to T. M. and N. R., M. B. and a keen few who have sampled " the stuff" that Doe now offers.

And in the fulness of time we go to "The Esk."

Not the promise in the giving,
There thrice blessedness obtains:
Bright the blossom, yet the living
Full-juiced fruit new life ordains.

September, with full hands extended, everybody on top form, ripeness of recent experiences at home and abroad, everybody eager " to get something else done " while the going is good, young cockerels ready and roasted, one between two of us, plenty of pack beneath the wool and lots of wool in the pack, Penny Hill is valued at a much higher figure; but no secrets! And, last but not least, ripened friendships. All was well, all was complete, but one thing; maidens and men, fitness and ambition, outfit and food, all complete. One thing was lacking to make it a real Eskdale meet; it rained—yet everybody went forth and "did something." You see, there were other things as well as roasted cock chickens to consume, and these also were well and duly consumed.

And the grand climax of Windermere, truly grand in social values. And let me leave it at that; for the sake of Windermere I would not proceed further. Our hostess is all that we could wish. Sheer numbers certainly is not the only compelling factor, yet

" Give to me the mountain farm
In sunshine, snow or rain."

* * *

I speak from the club pulpit, the coward's castle. The situation calls for respectful silence on your part. I am safe. I have had my say; it is the time to romance. I have nothing more to add except that I have enjoyed a few quiet, warm, windless, rainless days through 1930 with one and sundry Club members. These days and others have become involved in the meetdays, but they all belong to " the year with the Club," so why worry about order? It has all happened somewhere, somehow, at some time.

IN MEMORIAM

GEORGE SANG

The proper place in which to look for a memoir of George Sang is in the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, but we cannot allow so conspicuous and old-standing a member of this Club to pass without notice here.

He joined the Club in 1911, in those far-off days when Cecil Slingsby was President and Grayson Secretary. He and I both spoke at the Club Dinner for the first time on the same evening in 1913 at Coniston and, since then, or at any rate since the war, he and his wife (they always came together) have been seen regularly at the Grasmere February meet and at the Coniston-Windermere dinner meet. If it be said that he did not usually work very hard on the rocks at these meets, but just amused himself on Dow or Gimmer, that was because he came there chiefly to be with his friends, of whom he had many in the Club. He was really a brilliant rock climber and a sound mountaineer in the fullest sense, with a wide knowledge both of his own country and of the Alps. A true wanderer, he had explored, with the aid of car and camera, probably all the remotest peaks and glens in Scotland; he had established an international reputation for guideless climbing in the Alps, and was also an expert on ski. His Scottish "treks" resulted in a constant succession of articles and photographs in the S.M.C. Journal over many years, and a typical one on Mam Soul is to be found in its last issue.

Both as writer and speaker he had imagination, vivacity, and originality of expression, with plenty of Scottish humour. He had a great number of good stories, and many of us will long remember how at Club concerts he would stand up and tell one yarn after another in the Scottish vernacular, glancing surreptitiously meanwhile at his little book to see which he could tell next.

Sang served as Secretary of the Scottish Mountaineering Club from 1914 to the time of his death, and was also a member of Committee of the Alpine Club, which he had joined in 1912. He was unable to take part in any of the Mount Everest Expeditions, but served on the sub-committee of the Alpine Club which made arrangements for them.

By profession he was a lawyer, having entered the Society of Writers to the Signet in 1899.

Quiet and unassuming at first, the longer one knew him the more one was attracted to him. Only last year I discovered quite by accident, after knowing him intimately for so many years, that during the war he was awarded the Edward Medal and the Carnegie Certificate for gallantry in saving life. He had helped in the rescue of four girls who were trapped in an explosives factory which had taken fire.

He was a most ardent lover of the mountains and everything connected with them, and a day on the hills with him was always a red-letter day, for he was one of the most delightful of companions. The day on which I climbed Sgurr nan Gillean with him and sat on the summit at seven o'clock on a perfect summer evening, when it seemed that one could see every peak in Scotland and every island and rock out in the Atlantic, was among the three or four finest mountaineering days of my life. And the five week-ends I have spent at Magdala Crescent, the most hospitable house in Scotland as I always called it, who shall take them from my memory? He was a man whom it was good to know and his friends greatly mourn his departure from amongst them at the comparatively early age of fifty-five.

H. E. S.

G. L. BRAITHWAITE who joined the Club in 1919 and died in 1930.

J. G. HOWARD who was an original member of the Club and died in 1930.

DENNIS G. MURRAY who joined the Club in 1913 and died in 1930.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The Editorial Notebook discloses few matters of sufficiently wide interest for comment.

Just over a year ago, in December 1929, our representatives gave evidence before the Government Committee on National Parks. The report has not yet been published. Meanwhile, the disfigurement of the District goes on, fortunately slowly, but even so, surely. The most noticeable contribution is probably the new mine-workings in Langdale.

The Regional Planning Committee (South Lake District) have issued a useful report.

In the spring the Club published a booklet called *Lakeland : A Playground for Britain* which was intended as the Club's effort towards forming an enthusiastic and instructed public opinion in regard to preserving the District as a National Park. This pamphlet contained short descriptions of representative and successful efforts that have been made abroad, in Europe and also in America and South Africa, to preserve beautiful areas of country and showed how eminently suitable was the Lake District for treatment as a National Reserve. The dangers of letting things drift were explained and various suggestions made as to how residents and visitors might give practical help pending Government or some other concerted action. The booklet was generously illustrated with photographs emphasising the various points made. It was sold for sixpence throughout the District during the tourist season, and the first edition was cleared out rapidly. A second was printed, of which a number of copies are still on hand. These will be put on the market again during the coming spring and summer. Members who have not already done so are therefore advised to order copies at once, direct from The Whitehaven News, Whitehaven, enclosing 8d.—6d. for the booklet and 2d. for postage.

Congratulations to George Wood-Johnson on his lion's share in the work of the International Kangchenjunga Expedition. It is generally acknowledged that but for his courage, endurance, skill and self-sacrifice in handling the transport, the Expedition would certainly not have achieved the measure of success it

did and might have been landed in a very serious situation owing to failure of supplies. George Wood-Johnson has generously promised his diary to the Journal, but since his return to tea-planting he has been too busy to put it in form in time for this issue.

The Journal is indebted to J. O. Walker for the blocks of photographs illustrating his article on the Mittellegi Ridge, to N. Ridyard and J. Musgrave for block of photograph of the Black Wall Doe Crag, and to Dr. Whittard for the loan of a block of one of the Greenland photographs.

I have by me a cutting from a *Westmorland Gazette* of last autumn giving the story of two lads, R. Cloudsdale and C. Dodgson, from Ambleside and Grasmere respectively, who have "ticked off" all the 2,000-foot tops in the district. They reckon that there are 182 such tops marked on the 1-inch Ordnance Map and they have taken three years to finish them off. Now then, Fell and Rockers!

I have another cutting—which is printed below—from an ancient *Manchester Guardian*, undated, giving a list of notable Fellwalks up to 1905. A leader on the back of the cutting informs that the Naval Estimates which were discussed in the House of Commons the day before were substantially the Estimates of the late Government and showed a decrease on those for 1904–5. Historians may therefore date this list of Fellwalks fairly accurately.

NOTABLE FELLWALKS

A correspondent sends us the following formidable list of long-distance walks achieved on the Lake Mountains, and begs that others may offer any additions and corrections needed to make it a perfect record of such performances:

1864.—J. M. Elliott: Wastdalehead, Scafell, Scafell Pikes, Great End, Great Gable, Kirkfell, Pillar Fell, Steeple, Red Pike, Wastdalehead, *via* Stirrup Crag. Time, 8½ hours. Total ascents, 6,500 feet. Distance, 15 miles; estimated as equivalent to some 40 miles on the level. (The aggregate ascents in this case and throughout are given approximately in round numbers.)

1869.—Leonard Pilkington and Bennett: Keswick, Scafell, Helvellyn, Skiddaw, Keswick. Time, 20 hours. (The details of the exact route taken have not been given, so that it is

impossible at present to give the aggregate ascents, mileage, and equivalent mileage.)

1870.—Watson and Wilson: Keswick, Scafell Pikes, Esk Hause, Langdale Combe Head, Wythburn, Helvellyn, Saddleback, Skiddaw, Keswick. Weather very bad; snow, mist, gale. Time, 19¾ hours. Ascents, 10,500 feet. Distance, 48 miles; equivalent to more than 70 on the level. (High Raise, on the Langdales, seems to have been included in this walk.)

187—.—An Alpine Club man and Mackereth: Bowfell, Scafell Pike, Helvellyn, and Skiddaw. Time, within the day. Ascents, 9,000 feet. Distance, 41 miles; equivalent to nearly 60. (As yet full particulars of this walk have not been forthcoming.)

1871 (the *Cornhill Magazine* of April 1899 gives the date of this walk as 1876).—Jenkinson: Keswick, Great Gable, Scafell Pikes, Bowfell, Langdale Combe Head, Wythburn, Helvellyn, Saddleback, Skiddaw, Keswick. Much delay caused by mist. Time, 25 hours. Ascents, 12,250 feet. Distance, 53 miles; equivalent to more than 80. (High Raise apparently included in this round.)

1871.—Leonard Pilkington and Bennett: Dungeon Ghyll, Bowfell, Scafell Pikes, Great Gable, Skiddaw, Saddleback, Helvellyn, Fairfield, Dungeon Ghyll. Time, 21 hours 10 minutes. Ascents, 12,900 feet. Distance, 60 miles; equivalent to nearly 90.

1878.—The brothers Tucker: Elterwater, Bowfell, Scafell Pikes, Skiddaw (*via* Borrowdale), Helvellyn, Grasmere, Elterwater (*via* Rydal and Ambleside, some ten miles extra). Time, 19 hours 38 minutes. Ascents, 9,000 feet. Distance, 50 miles; equivalent to more than 60.

1883.—Charles and Leonard Pilkington and Matthew Barnes: Lodore, Great Gable, Scafell Pikes, Great End, Bowfell, Fairfield, Helvellyn (*via* Dollywaggon Pike), Saddleback, Skiddaw, Lodore. Much delay on Scafell group and Fairfield owing to mist. On Fairfield cairns had to be built as guides for the journey off. Time, 24 hours 25 minutes. Ascents, 13,800 feet. Distance over 60 miles; equivalent to more than 80. (Charles Pilkington, who had only come up the day before, had to give up at Threlkeld owing to a sore foot.)

1893.—Robinson and Gibbs: Keswick, Great Gable, Scafell (by Pikes traverse from Skew Ghyll and Deep Ghyll, West Wall traverse), Scafell Pikes (*via* Broad Stand), Great End, Bowfell, Langdale Combe Head, Wythburn, Helvellyn, Saddleback, Skiddaw. Abandoned on Skiddaw. Weather atrocious—wind, frost, and snow. Time, 23 hours 25 minutes. Ascents, 13,850 feet. Distance, 56 miles; equivalent to 90. (High Raise apparently included in this round.)

1895.—Dawson, Poole, and Palmer: Elterwater, Bowfell, Scafell Pikes, Skiddaw, Helvellyn, Grasmere, Elterwater (*via* Rydal and Ambleside). Time, 19 hours 18 minutes. Ascents, 9,000 feet. Distance, 50 miles: equivalent to more than 60. (Palmer injured his knee on the Pikes and missed the middle of the walk.)

1898.—Broadrick: Windermere, Bowfell, Great End, Scafell Pikes, Scafell, Great Gable, Skiddaw, Helvellyn, Windermere. Time, 20½ hours. Ascents, 13,450 feet. Distance, 60½ miles; equivalent to nearly 70. (Twelve miles of the course were done on a cycle.)

1899.—Westmorland, Johnson, Strong, Beaty: Seathwaite, Great Gable, Great End, Scafell Pikes, Scafell, Bowfell, Wythburn (by Langdale Combe Head and High Raise), Helvellyn, Saddleback, Skiddaw, Keswick. Walk abandoned owing to exigencies of business nine miles (on road) from Seathwaite. Time, 19 hours 25 minutes. Ascents, 14,150 feet. Distance, 52 miles; equivalent to 80. (Messrs. Johnson and Strong continued the walk from Helvellyn.)

1899.—Westmorland and Beaty: Threlkeld to Threlkeld, over the same fells. Time, 23¾ hours. Ascents, 14,150 feet. Distance, 61 miles; equivalent to 90.

1901.—Broadrick: Rosthwaite, Great Gable, Pillar Fell, Scafell, Scafell Pikes, Great End, Bowfell, Fairfield, Helvellyn, Saddleback, Skiddaw, Rosthwaite. Much delay on Skiddaw owing to wind and mist. Time, 23½ hours. Ascents, 18,500 feet. Distance, 70 miles; equivalent to 90.

1902.—Johnson: Threlkeld, Helvellyn, Fairfield, Bowfell, Great End, Scafell Pike, Scafell, Pillar Fell, Great Gable, Skiddaw, Saddleback, Threlkeld. Time, 22 hours 7 minutes. Ascents, 18,500 feet. Distance, 70 miles; equivalent to 90.

1904.—Wakefield: Keswick, Great Gable, Kirkfell, Pillar Fell, Scafell, Scafell Pikes, Great End, Bowfell, Fairfield, Helvellyn, Saddleback, Skiddaw, Keswick. Time, 19 hours 53 minutes. Ascents, 19,000 feet. Distance, over 70 miles; equivalent to over 90.

1905.—Wakefield: Keswick, Robinson, Hindscarth, Dalehead, Brandreth, Green Gable, Great Gable, Kirkfell, Pillar Fell, Steeple, Red Pike, Yewbarrow, Scafell, Scafell Pikes, Great End, Bowfell, Fairfield, Helvellyn, Saddleback, Skiddaw, Keswick. Time, 22 hours 7 minutes. Ascents, 23,500 feet. Distance, 90 miles; equivalent to nearly 120.

Since going to press we hear that the new mine workings in Langdale, mentioned above, have been abandoned.

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

By H. S. Gross

The miserable weather of the past year may possibly account for a somewhat lean list of new climbs. The following comprise the total as shown in the club books :—

LANGDALE : White Ghyll. White Ghyll Slab Climb. First ascent 15/9/30, 150 feet. The climb is on the slabs to the left of the chimney. The slabs are often dry when the chimney itself is wet. The start is at a large embedded boulder to the left of the middle of the slabs.

(1) 25 feet. Easy rocks leading diagonally to the right are climbed to a good stance and belay.

(2) 15 feet. The little wall above the stance is climbed a few feet, then a semi hand traverse is made to a narrow ledge with two good belays.

(3) 50 feet. Almost vertical rocks straight ahead are climbed to a narrow ledge, and an easy 15 feet traverse to the right leads to a good stance with a magnificent belay about 5 feet to the right of the stance.

(4) 40 feet. From the stance the steep slabs to the left are climbed straight up for a few feet, then diagonally left across a groove, and straight up again to the upper of two ledges seen on the left-hand skyline from the stance. Good belay under a little overhang at the back of the upper stance.

(5) 20 feet. The obvious dirty crack above is turned by its right-hand wall on good holds to nearly the top, where a long stride to the left is made to an easy rib. Ascend heather for a little way to the foot of a mass of rock where there is a belay.

After a scramble up heather, it is possible to move to the right about 20 feet and climb a not difficult arête to the summit.

The fourth pitch is severe for the first 20 feet, the rest of the climb, though exposed, has good holds. Geoffrey Barker (non-member), A.T.H.

Impressions No. 2.

CASTLE ROCK OF TRIERMAIN Direct Route. First ascent. 10/5/30. "A small rock belay was found high up to the right of the Sentry Box, and the second man can be brought up to the Sentry Box. Good conditions are preferable for this climb." A.T.H., G.G.M.

GIMMER CRAG The Crack. The second ascent of this climb was made by G.G.M., A.B.R. and G.S.B. on the 30/9/28. Mention of this was overlooked by the author of this article in Journal No. 22, and this may account for the fact that the second ascent was claimed by two members of another club. Actually their ascent was the third ascent, and followed the second by a matter of minutes !

CONISTON : Deer Bield Crack. (Far Easedale.) What is believed to be a new climb was made on Deer Bield Crag on 16/2/30.

Deer Bield Crack lies on the opposite side of the Buttress from Deer Bield Chimney, and is mentioned in the F. & R.C.C. Journal, Vol. II., page 350.

The climb starts a few feet to the left of the lowest part of the buttress facing the crag.

A shallow scoop is climbed on the left for 7 or 8 feet, then an awkward step is made to the right, and the ascent is resumed for 15 feet to a stance and pedestal belay. The climb is continued for about 10 feet up a slab to the left with a crack in the corner on the right which has a jammed stone suitable for a thread belay. A pull out gives access to a crack which leads to the site of the first Raven's nest. The route is obvious up the crack till after a couple of pitches the second Raven's nest is reached. A remarkable cleft provides a view of the D.B. Chimney route, but even the slenderest human climber would have difficulty in effecting a through route. The crux of the climb is the next 35 feet or so, which one backs up most easily facing right. The overhanging part at the top may be found arduous, but in a few feet a grateful ledge is reached and about 3 feet higher a jammed stone provides a stance and belay.

The route continues up the crack, which has a difficult start above this stance, and eventually the climbers will reach a large recess which looks like a super "Amen Corner." This has been

climbed by the leader without any aid from the second man, and provides a satisfying finish to the climb. The holds at the top are excellent. The climb is well provided with belays, and two loops of rope were left, one of them a difficult thread which took 20 minutes to arrange.

The first ascent took four hours. On the second ascent a party of three completed the climb comfortably in two hours. The total length of the climb, like Deer Bield Chimney, is about 200 feet. No cairns were made.

First ascent. 16/2/30. A.T.H., G.G.M.

Second ascent. 2/3/30. A.B.R., A.T.H., G.G.M.

DOE CRAG. Eliminate "A" Route.

"On the R.P. pitch the second man dislodged one of the blocks which formed a left-hand hold. The pitch is probably harder now, as both second and third had considerable trouble in getting across the groove." A.T.H., W. Clegg, B.T.

WASTDALE : Kern Knott's "Sepulchre" Climb. 17/8/30. "Led by—Watson (non-member) using slab-route and hand traverse." M.M.B., B. Cowan, S. Wilson, — Horne (non-member).

CONISTON. C. E. Benson writes to make two corrections in the "Doe Crag" Guide.

Abraham's route on A Buttress.

The lower part of this climb is not as given in the guide, but as shown in the "Climbers' Club" Journal, Vol VII., No. 29, page 225, by G. F. Woodhouse, and in G. D. Abraham's "British Mountaineering."

Also the original route up D Buttress traversed to the right from the big belay and finished up the " Raven Route.

Key to initials :—

A. T. Hargreaves	B. Tyson
G. G. Macphee	G. S. Bower
A. B. Reynolds	Miss M. M. Barker

LONDON SECTION

LIST OF OFFICERS:

President: Dr. Chas. F. Hadfield.

Committee:

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

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

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

The total membership is now 100.

The following is a summary of the activities of the Section during 1930:—

Sunday, 19th January—Circular walk from St. Albans through Harpenden Common and back through No-Man's-Land. Leader, Gervase Smith.

Sunday, 9th February—Walk from Seer Green via Great Beards Wood, Penn Wood, and Shardeloes, to Amersham, led by Miss D. E. Thompson.

Sunday, 2nd March—Leader, G. C. M. L. Pirkis. Walk, about 14 miles, from Merstham to Dorking, via Colley Hill and Boxhill.

Sunday, 23rd March—A walk of about 10 miles, from and around St. Albans, led by R. S. T. Chorley.

Sunday, 13th April—Walk from Roydon to Bishop's Stortford, led by A. F. Godwin. About 12 miles.

Sunday, 11th May—Leader, Dr. Hadfield. Walk from Sevenoaks, via Knole Park, Everlands, Ide Hill, Crockham Hill Common, and Squerry's Park, to Westerham.

Sunday, 1st June—A 12-mile cross-country walk from Boxmoor to Harpenden. Mrs. Garrod kindly invited the party to tea at her house, after which garden games were enjoyed. Leader, George Anderson.

Sunday, 22nd June—A walk over Ditchling Beacon, led by W. McNaught, from Patcham to Rottingdean.

Saturday–Sunday, 5th–6th July—Midnight walk, led by Sylva Norman, from Lewes, via Glynde, Firle Beacon, Alfriston, West Dean, and four of the Seven Sisters, to Birling Gap.

Sunday, 21st September—Walk through Hatfield Forest, from Harlow, via Sawbridgeworth, Woodside Green, Hatfield Forest, Takeley Street, and Birchanger, to Bishop's Stortford. Leader, A. F. Godwin.

Saturday, 4th October—Club Annual Meeting and Dinner at Windermere.

Sunday, 19th October—Leader, George Anderson. Walk from Guildford to Runfold via Compton and Crooksbury Hill. Tea at " The Spinney," Runfold, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. A. Anderson.

Sunday, 2nd November—A walk of about 12 miles, from Chalfont via Latimer, Layhill Common, Chesham, to Great Missenden, led by R. H. Hewson.

Sunday, 23rd November—Circular walk from Windsor through Bray and back, led by W. P. Haskett-Smith.

Saturday, 6th December—Eleventh Annual Dinner of the London Section. The members, desiring to honour George Basterfield at the end of his first term of office, attended in force : 54 members and 70 friends sat down to dinner, with R. S. T. Chorley in the chair. The guests were : George Basterfield ; H. M. Kelly (President, Rucksack Club); Mr. G. E. Gask (President, St. Bartholomew's Hospital Alpine Club) ; Miss Lucy E. Beattie (Ladies' Alpine Club); Mr. C. T. Lehmann (Swiss Alpine Club); Lt.-Col. John D. Hills (Climbers' Club) ; and N. E. Odell. A message of regret came from Dr. Claude Wilson (President, Alpine Club), that owing to indisposition he could not attend. Everyone was presented by the Committee with a copy of " Songs of a Cragsman," containing a selection of the more widely-known and popular songs of George Basterfield ; the London Section have had an edition of a thousand copies printed, so that each Fell and Rock member may have one ; the remainder of the available copies have been placed at the disposal of George Basterfield and application should be made to him, with 1/- per copy to cover postage, etc. With the kind assistance of Darwin Leighton it was possible to provide authentic Cumberland dishes and Westmorland sweetmeats, which latter included Sarah Nelson's Grasmere ginger cake, also Kendal mint cake and rumbutter candy. The health of the guests and kindred clubs was again proposed by G. H. Doughty ; replies were made by Mr. C. T. Lehmann for the guests and by Lt.-Col. John D. Hills for the kindred Clubs. W. G. Pape proposed the health of the chairman.

Sunday, 7th December—A cross-country walk from Leatherhead, via Tothill and Buckland Hills, to Reigate, was led by G. R Speaker, and a large party enjoyed an excellent tea provided by Mr. and Mrs. Holland at their house, The Rock, Reigate Hill.

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PETERMANN PEAK

By R. C. Wakefield

It is amusing to speculate sometimes on how much a climbing holiday depends for its absolute enjoyment on climatic conditions. If you are one of those people who visit Skye in the damp season, from July to June, and get six fine days in a week, or one who has never been in mist on the Pillar or lost in the vicinity of High Whitestones ; if, indeed, you have never seen a snowstorm or been benighted during your fortnight in the Alps, then it is not for you to peruse these eulogies about mountaineering in Greenland. Rather it is for those who want a peep into the combined attractions afforded by a twenty-four hour sun, set anti-cyclonic conditions, and snow, ice, and rock climbing of all descriptions. There are not many other countries which can boast of all these attractions at one and the same time.

In a Norwegian sealing vessel of 64 tons which had been chartered for the summer under the captaincy of Karl Jacobson of Tromsö, we left Aberdeen in the first week of July, 1929—a party of nine under the leadership of J. M. Wordie, bound for the North-East coast of Greenland. Had a certain well-known hymn never been written, few people would have heard of Greenland, still less have known where it was ; and if Mercator had never invented his projection, a less distorted idea of the size of the country would be more general. The West coast boasts quite a large population, but the East coast is guarded by the outflowing current from the Polar Basin carrying with it the slowly melting polar ice—impenetrable for nine months in the year. In 1926, when a similar expedition from Cambridge set out, this ice belt was negotiated in three days. In 1929, however, the ice proved to be more contrary than usual and after entering it, it was 28 days before we reached land. Sometimes we would be stationary for days on end, while at others we would be steaming full-speed ahead in open leads. There was always plenty to do apart from pushing the ship forward through the narrower places inches at a time. At first seals and then polar bears were the excitement and the latter gave more than one good chase over the floes.

On August 4th we reached the last of the closely-packed floes and in the afternoon the ship was within a few miles of land, making for the mouth of Franz Josef Fjord, where, nestling in a snug and sheltered bay, is the tiny settlement of half-a-dozen Norwegians, who attend the Mackenzie Bay wireless station and hunt the blue and the white fox. These people are now the only inhabitants of this part of the coast. All the Eskimo, whose deserted dwellings can be seen widely distributed among the fjords, seem either to have died out some centuries ago or else to have migrated south some 250 miles to join their comrades in Scoresby Sound.

Roughly speaking, the hills below 5,000 feet are free of snow, though, of course, the glaciers reach down to within 2,000 feet and less of the actual fjords. Taking this coastal region as a whole, the inland ice cap, some 6,000–8,000 feet high, seems to be separated from the coast by a belt of mountains of approximately the same height, about 150 miles in width and intersected by numerous fjords and sounds as yet unexplored in detail. On the coast the vegetation is sparse, but under the shelter of the inner fjords there is a much less barren appearance, and up to 2,000 or 3,000 feet bilberries and Arctic willow abound, with here and there the variously coloured Iceland poppy and occasionally a harebell. The reindeer, like the Eskimo—even, perhaps, owing to the Eskimo—have vanished; but the large, shaggy and fierce musk-ox remains a valuable source of fresh meat. The fox, the arctic hare, the lemming and an occasional wolf are the other chief mammals, while bird life is abundant. Once the limit of the fjords is reached and one is among the high mountains, signs of life disappear. Perhaps a ptarmigan, a snow-bunting or a fox track is the most that is likely to be seen above the 5,000 contour.

It was mid-day on August 6 before we reached Kjerulf Fjord, the southerly branch near the head of Franz Josef Fjord, which was to be our starting point for Petermann Peak (9,650 feet), some 30 miles due west. This striking peak, first seen in 1870 by Copeland and Payer, from a mountain which they climbed from half-way up Franz Josef Fjord, had only been seen once since, when Wordie explored the mountains—now known as the Cambridge Peaks—at the head of this fjord in 1926. In the words of Payer: "One thing attracted our