

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

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EXCURSIONS AND ALARMS

C. F. Holland

I believe a wise man once remarked that it is the first step that counts. It is a matter for conjecture how many climbers have been lost to the sport through an unfortunate start, and how many owe their success to some lucky combination of circumstances, the right day, the right climb, the right leader.

It is almost terrifying to me personally, to reflect how my own climbing was due in the first place to chance, and secondly to good fortune, while the first step that counts was within measurable distance of not being taken at all.

In January, 1913, I went to Engelberg for the winter sports and by chance there was that year no snow suitable for ski-ing. All the usual amusements of a winter sports holiday, except skating, were out of the question in the absence of new snow, and I had long before discovered that skating held no magic for me.

Walks up the mountain sides were the only thing left, but an extremely narrow escape emphasized the fact that these had a distinct element of danger, at any rate for mixed parties without proper equipment.

I then discovered that there was regular climbing in the summer, and that in the exceptional conditions excursions might still be possible with a good guide.

Melchior Kohler, from Meiringen was staying in the village, and a companion and myself had a day with him to see how we got on.

My recollections of this day are extremely hazy, but I do remember feeling grateful to the rope. A more formidable expedition was mooted but my companion had had enough, and no one else was willing to join me, so I abandoned the idea. Kohler, however, fired my imagination with a project for a first winter ascent of the Schlossberg, a peak facing the Spannörter. He was uncertain whether it would go ;

apparently there was a steep rock face of about 300 metres, and the chimneys by which it had to be climbed might be too heavily iced for us to manage in the limited daylight at our disposal.

Though my memories of our first excursion are almost non-existent, those of this ascent are still most vivid. In fact it was for me a most notable occasion, a day to be marked with a white stone indeed.

First, of course, there was the unusual experience of setting out from the hotel at 3 a.m. by lantern light in the deadly cold of a mid-winter night. I must confess that for three hours or so I was completely miserable, and had an incessant struggle with an almost overwhelming desire to lie down in the snow and sleep.

Kohler told me later that he fully expected me to throw up the expedition at this stage.

However, the arrival at a hut which we entered in unconventional fashion by means of a skylight over the door, followed by a hearty meal, restored my flagging energy, and when we emerged once more I felt ready to carry on. The difficulty of my having no climbing boots was met by fixing crampons over ski-ing boots, and the weight of them must have added considerably to my fatigue. After an hour or *more up steep snow we reached the foot of the wall and roped up.* Now it was that my career as a climber was nearly nipped in the bud.

Kohler had started off up the wall and I was watching him intently, when I suddenly realised the steepness and great height of the wall ; a vision of myself clinging to icy knobs high up on the great cliff and afraid to move gave me a feeling of vertigo, and I sat down in the snow. At this moment Kohler looked down and called to me to follow. I continued to sit.

Kohler watched me for a few moments and then said : 'Are you all right ?'

This was I think one of the most unhappy moments of my existence. I was quite honestly frightened and wanted desperately to answer, 'No! I can't go on.' What actually happened was that I got up, assured Kohler, in what must have been I fear a somewhat quavering voice, that I was perfectly fit, and started the climb.

I am quite certain that all my future climbing hung on my reaction at this crisis.

Once struggling with the difficulties of the rocks, and they were difficult, all was well, and at no point during the rest of the day did I have any return of this trouble.

Kohler had considerable difficulty in forcing the route, and one chimney was so awkward that it was only at the third and what would have been the final attempt that he succeeded in making an exit through the icy canopy at the top of it. It need hardly be mentioned that at several points I found the rope essential to my progress on my part.

The ascent of the thousand feet of rock took us well over three hours, and it was nearly 3 p.m. before we reached the summit of the mountain. My chief recollection of the descent is that Kohler did not seem to consider that I was going nearly fast enough, and that he was afraid that we should be overtaken by darkness while still on the wall; but when we reached the foot of it the gorgeous lights of a perfect winter sunset still lay like a benediction over the wild mountain landscape, an unforgettable scene.

The return to the valley seemed interminable, and I was seemingly in some danger when I got entangled with my crampons and took a good toss down steep snow in the darkness.

Kohler fielded me expertly, but pointed out that I really must refrain from doing it again, as he could not guarantee stopping me a second time. I was too tired to care much, but there was no recurrence.

We reached the hotel about 9 p.m. after an eighteen-hour day, during which time we had always been moving fast apart from rests, and never in my life have I felt more tired, while Kohler himself confessed next day to extreme fatigue. I have never met him since, but my grateful and affectionate regard for him is still as strong as it was when we sat down by the path to have our last meal on that cold January night twenty-six years ago. I still remember the little bottle of Cognac he produced, which he had been hiding all day, and which just gave me strength to stagger back the remaining two miles.

The extremely narrow escape mentioned earlier is also an occasion that is still fresh in my memory, though the period of danger probably lasted fewer seconds than there were hours in the ascent of the Schlossberg.

My own part in it was insignificant, in fact rather incompetent, but I was the amazed witness of the finest exhibition I have ever seen of quick appreciation of a dangerous situation and of instantaneous action to cope with it. So close-run an affair was it that quite literally a delay of half a second would have had fatal results, not only for one of the ladies of the party, but possibly for myself as well.

The occasion was an apparently innocuous walk in the hills on one of those perfect days, so familiar to those who go to the mountains for winter sports. Not a cloud in the sky, a hot sun, but perhaps five degrees of frost and air that richly deserved the epithet 'champagne-like.' What danger could possibly lurk among those innocent looking snow-covered slopes among the brooding pines? Though quite unsuitable for ski-ing the snow was excellent for walking, lovely crisp snow giving an inch or two under one's feet, supplying firm foothold without the trouble of kicking steps, and yet the danger was there, dogging our footsteps but biding its time.

There were, I think, eight of us in the party, and after

eating our lunch at a considerable height four of us wandered on some few hundred yards to a further ridge which seemed to promise a more extensive view than the one we could see from the luncheon spot. The rest of the party stayed where they were until we should rejoin them. Our ridge was further away than it looked, but the view when we reached it well repaid our trouble.

The four of us stood drinking it in, two girls and my friend Bernard Hopps.

As we stood there the sun dipped below the rim of the surrounding hills ; suddenly we were in shade and the air struck cold.

We began to retrace our steps. We were on ground that seemed almost level, but a few feet to our right it shelved away, steepening rapidly some twenty feet lower. Below there lay a snow covered hillside sweeping down at an angle of some 45 degrees for a couple of thousand feet ; and dotted about on the slope were innumerable rocks jutting out through the snow.

We were walking at intervals of four or five yards, and I was just thinking that the snow was getting rather harder, when the girl in front of me suddenly sat down, and then turned over on her face ; at the same time she dropped her alpenstock and remained lying apparently motionless on the snow.

The danger that had been stalking us had reached the moment for striking ; it was on us ; but I had not yet realised its presence. And then I saw that the girl was slowly, very slowly, sliding down the gentle incline.

If she had made any effort to stop herself I think she could have done so, but she lay perfectly straight, with her arms vertically above her head, and still except for the gentle movement downwards. A shout from Hopps, who was well ahead, awoke me to the necessity for action, and I started

down the slope after her, holding out the looped end of my ski-ing stick for her to seize.

I thought I had reached her, but the slope was steepening, and just as I thought the loop was within her grasp her speed quickened and she slid away from me. I was conscious of two rocks some ten feet below, with a gully of snow between them and the pitiless slope below ; I saw the look of horror on her face and realised what was happening. It was at this moment that Hopps acted. He had been perhaps twenty yards away on the same level as, and to the left of myself when the girl started to slide, he saw the only possible chance of saving her, and it came off, thanks to his amazing speed of action.

He came across and in front of me from the left, running at full speed over the frozen snow, taking a running dive for the two rocks.

As he fielded himself on them the girl, now moving rapidly, shot down the narrow gully between them. Just as she passed below him he pinned her to the snow with his left hand and held her there.

Almost simultaneously my feet shot from under me and I came down on the top of them.

How we extricated ourselves and got the girl safely up the slope to level ground I really do not know ; she had no nails in her boots and was in a state bordering on collapse ; but we did manage it, though the snow was by this time frozen quite hard and in a highly dangerous condition.

When we rejoined the rest of our party we found them furious with rage at our long absence and extremely cold. A hint, however, to the effect that all had not been well with us quietened them, and the subsequent difficulties of the descent took the thoughts of all of us off any consideration except as to how to reach the next pine tree safely.

I am still amazed that eight people could get themselves into such danger without realising that the snow would freeze very quickly when the sun went off it ; I am still amazed that no one warned us of possible danger ; I am still in an even greater state of amazement and admiration of Hopps's extraordinarily prompt and courageous action, but for which I am fairly certain that I should have followed, quite involuntarily, the girl down that appalling hillside and become a highly unpleasant corpse.

Even if this had not happened the assuredly fatal result to the other member of the party would have put an end to our activities, and but for the climb with Kohler I do not think I should ever have known the feel of the rocks.

And so when I count my blessings Hopps is among the major ones, as in a sense I am indebted to him for all the splendid friends I have made in the mountains, and the glorious days spent with them ; imperishable memories whatever may happen in the future, without which life would indeed have been stale, flat, and unprofitable.

In conclusion, there is one more excursion with alarm attached, to which I look back with no pride, since, though I did get myself out of a tight place, this was due more to good fortune than to good management.

I had been climbing in Wales and had had a fall on the far-east buttress of Lliwedd ; those who have read Dorothy Pilley's Book, 'Climbing Days,' may remember it, for she gives an excellent description of it which was given her by Ivor Richards, who was my companion at the time, and who saved me from sudden extinction ; the third person mentioned in this article as having saved me from a fall likely to prove fatal.

My nerves had been rather more upset than I realised, when I was in the Lakes a fortnight later and took on the lead up Gimmer A.

High up in the 'Lichen Chimney,' surely no chimney was ever less like one, I had a slight check and paused to look for holds while in a most exposed and rather delicately poised situation. At this moment I was seized with fright, that awful paralysing feeling which those who have been unfortunate enough to experience it can never forget.

Though it took probably less than ten seconds the episode has left an indelible impression, and I can remember quite distinctly my mental processes. I knew that in a moment or two I should fall unless I did something about it. The possibility of return presented itself but was rejected as I was so far above my second, and also sensed that the psychological effect of the feeling of failure involved in retreat would not be helpful. My only chance was to go on up, and I went for it.

Now I finished that pitch by a route to the left of the one that I usually took, and by a sequence of holds previously unknown to me.

I dared not stop to look and see what I was doing, and just clawed up it blindly. The great goddess of luck decreed that the holds should come to hand readily.

When I landed on the capacious ledge below the final chimney the feeling of elation and self-confidence was as powerful as the earlier condition of funk had been.

I think it is sound advice to anyone who should find himself in a similar predicament to say that it is better to go up, rather than down, and the sooner the better.

It must of course be understood that when nerve failed me I was on small holds in a very steep place and that I could not stay where I was. Nor was I anywhere near a safe resting place below me. My point is that if you must do something drastic it is better to go up rather than down.

If one is in full control of oneself one would of course retreat, but when in a state of dither attack is the safer plan.

And now that I have started giving advice may I be permitted to go one step further and say what I consider one should do in the event of a fall. If you do fall do not on any

account try to save yourself, but let yourself go as limp as possible. There is probably just a split second at the start of any fall when it is possible to check it by snatching at some convenient projection ; but it is highly unlikely that this opportunity will be utilised, and when once you have really started to fall no effort on your part can be of any avail.

Any attempt to snatch at projections will result in the stiffening of the whole frame, and inevitably some outlying part of the body, probably the feet, will act as a fulcrum on the rock and send you hurtling out into mid-air. Falling limply you will keep close to the rock, thus reducing the speed of the fall and giving you a chance of coming to a halt, and also lessening the strain on the rope.

In any case surely it is preferable if you are doomed to be bashed about, to approach the bashing in a nonchalant and dignified attitude, and not with undignified scrabblings.

I have fallen several times, I believe eight times in all, but have always preserved *otium cum dignitate*, and have never tried to save myself. As a result I have never fallen more than fifty feet and have never been hurt.

It is true perhaps that there has been a certain element of luck attached to these falls, just as in the events recorded in the earlier part of this article I may seem also to have been the recipient of a certain amount of good fortune. I sometimes wonder whether Rupert has had anything to do with it.

MOUNTAIN JOURNEY

(For G. R. S.)

I have no more astonishment
in unfrequented places ;
the grey moraine, the stony wilderness,
the scarred snow where the avalanche
trailed its savage hurricane
convey a wild familiarity.

I am at peace where the last flower
raises its tiny face, and where
the attenuated air
constricts the labouring lungs,
or in that thin obscurity
of sun-pricked particles of cloud
when direction is the ultimate perfection.

I have seen the wandering moon
leave her cloud anchorage, and sail
behind those granite battlements
larger than huge cathedrals,
and vanish in a silvery content.

I have known security to be delusion,
and home an unconsidered goal
when the sun increases
and the murmuring crevasses
open their green lips, calling
to wind and water and ice towers falling.

I am content where the snow crest
curves like a tempered blade,
and the body's concentration knows
a single purpose and accomplishment,
when the illuminated world

sheds its complexity, and grows
into the recognition of a dream.
And then, after the long descent,
each individual flower, each sound,
and every little scent are luxuries,
and safety is a cloak to wrap you round
lulled by fatigue, and the long road
shines like an odyssey
in memory.

Marjorie Scott Johnston

DOVE CRAGS

C. R. Wilson

The first time we even knew there was such a crag as Dove Crag was when we read the following notes by E. Wood-Johnson in the proofs of the *Outlying Climbs*—‘Dove Crag: There is said to be good climbing on this crag. In particular a route has been made up the face about 100 feet to the right of an “inaccessible gully,” but no particulars are on record, save that it is of Moss Ghyll difficulty, and that the route was cairned. The present writer is of the opinion that this crag would well repay exploration.’

The very idea of an ‘inaccessible gully’ was itself a challenge, but a seemingly virgin crag sounded too good to be true. It was there however, and it was decided to visit it as soon as possible. Looking it up on the map we found the crag at the head of a valley called Dovedale; this is situated near Brothers Water and is very easily reached, as a road runs along the west side of the lake terminating at Hartsop Hall, which is at the entrance to the valley.

The first exploring party, consisting of E. Wood-Johnston, M. M. Barker, and Vince Owen, left the camp at Seathwaite on May 17th, 1937. It should have been a much larger party, but a fortnight’s fine weather had put Scafell East Buttress in such a dry condition that the majority of those in camp went there.

This was to be primarily an exploring party, and they did their work very thoroughly, missing none of the principal features of the crag. These consist of a large and conspicuous gully called South Gully, which as its name suggests is to the south or left-hand of the crag. Some distance up the gully divides; the left branch called Easy Gully, being a wet moderate, and the right branch being a hanging gully, the ‘inaccessible gully’ of early explorers. The right (true left) wall of South Gully, is of steep and continuous rock, being

the left wall of a long and obvious ridge which commences from a large boulder in South Gully and rises for some 200 feet before it merges with the face. To the right of this is a steep wall of smooth rock, with beetling overhangs which extend across the face of the crag. Some day someone may force a route up this face, which looks even more formidable than Scafell East Buttress.

E.W.J., M.M.B., and V.O. first climbed the Easy Gully, and although it was only a moderate, they all felt that it could not be recommended as an easy-way-off owing to its liquid contents. After this an attempt was made on Inaccessible Gully ('I.G.' hereafter) by E.W.J. and M.M.B. The first two pitches which consist of awkward climbing to a platform went very nicely, but a steep and slightly undercut wall rising from that point, stopped their progress. In the right-hand corner was a large flake some twelve feet high which seemed to offer the solution. M.M.B. thought the wall would 'go' if the flake could be used as a hold: E.W.J., however, was sure that it was loose, and said it should be tested and if it proved so, pulled off before further attempts were made: so they descended.

During this attempt they had noticed a cragfast sheep precariously perched on a ledge some distance above the '20-foot wall,' and it was decided to rescue it. M.M.B. climbed down the gully protected by E.W.J.'s rope and traversed across the right wall to the sheep, carrying V.O.'s 80-foot rope. She then had the dubious enjoyment of an 'all-in' wrestling match on a two-foot ledge: once the sheep dived off the ledge, but was hauled back by its hind leg which M.M.B. had grabbed as it was passing. After a hectic struggle the sheep was lashed with the 80-foot rope: then ensued a tug-of-war between M.M.B. and the sheep, which finished when the stupid creature tucked its head and shoulders behind a corner in such a way that it could not be pulled off from that side. She then unroped herself, tied its short rope to the long one and climbed up the gully: and having joined

E.W.J., the sheep was then lifted from above and lowered until V.O. at the bottom of the gully shouted that it was on a ledge immediately above 'the wall.' They could not dislodge it from here, and as the sheep had now 200 feet of climbing rope fastened to it, and could not possibly get off itself, it was decided to pull it down rather than leave it to die.

Some of the rope had luckily reached the bottom, and this was taken across to the opposite side of South Gully to a position horizontal with the sheep, and held as much as possible by friction on a rocky corner. After a long pull and a strong pull the sheep landed in the main gully after a flight of some 70 feet. To everyone's surprise, all that seemed to be broken was a horn ; it recovered, trotted off down the gully and across the fell.

By the time this was over it was too late to do any more so they returned to Seathwaite.

On May 30th, a party consisting of M. M. Barker, N. H. Hamilton, Joe Bell, Douglas Tweddle and myself gently wended our way under a blazing sun towards the crags. From the trod, a huge crack seemed to offer a route up the main face, but on closer inspection it proved to have an impossible overhang. The route we were going to attempt was the ridge to the right of South Gully, and very fine it looked as our eyes wandered over the face of the crag seeking possible routes. After an hour's walk from Hartsop Hall we arrived at the foot of the arête, and all donned rubbers as we did not know what we might encounter in the way of difficulties.

Commencing from a large boulder in the bed of the gully we ascended smooth but easy rocks to a rocking stone. I could not find holds to round the corner on the right, and came back so that M.M.B. could have a go. Whilst she was trying, belayed by J.B., I unroped and turning this corner, ascended the ridge until its junction with the face. On descending I found M.M.B. had got round the corner and up the grassy slab on the right. By utilising my long reach, I could use a pump-handle hold, and so joined M.M.B. by climbing the clean rock

on the left side of the slab. The others came up using both routes, and some exciting moments were experienced when one of them slipped, was not held, and lost most of his rear covering. The remainder of the ridge is straightforward climbing until it merges with the face. A small broken wall on the right, then a long grass slab on the left, are ascended to a ledge and a flake belay. The route was now none too obvious, but M.M.B. and I thought it would go on the right. After a hectic time surmounting two small overhangs and then being stopped by a holdless scoop, I had a still more hectic time getting down. When M.M.B. and I first met at the belay on the ledge, we both agreed that it was a pity the slab was grassy, but on descending the overhangs I kept wishing the turf was much more luxuriant and springier as a very forcible contact seemed more than possible! Eventually we climbed the wall above the belay, made a traverse to the left, rounded an awkward corner and so to a commodious ledge with a large belay. The wall above the belay finished the climb, which we had all enjoyed immensely, especially as it was our first real 'first ascent' on a large crag. The grading of this climb which we called Wing Ridge, is about as hard as Lucifer Ridge on Great Gable, but less rough rock.

Leaving the rest of the party M.M.B. and I descended 'I.G.' as far as the ledge above the flake, measuring the pitches whilst doing so. I tried to descend the wall, but could not, and on finding the flake moved when pulled, retreated in haste. We thought that if the flake was removed, it might leave something in the way of a hold, but we should have to wait and see.

Jack Carswell, Ieuan Mendus, Sidney Beck and M.M. Barker paid a visit on June 20th, climbing some unnamed and unrecorded routes on the slabs below the crags. These slabs have been named the Bird Ladder as they offer an ideal approach to the home of the dove.

'I.G.' was the venue, and again the flake was discussed. Its position was so tempting as a possible hold that it was a

menace, and only its removal would make the wall safe for others. To this end they had brought M.M.B.'s old 80-foot rope, a veteran of the 1925 ascent of 'C.B.' with C. D. Frankland, and long pensioned off. J.C. tied it to the lower corner of the flake, which would just allow it to pass behind. They carried the other end across South Gully, and hauled as well as they could from the poor stances on its small ledges. The old rope was in quite a good condition as it stretched surprisingly.

After long and varied manoeuvres, with apparently no result, they came to the conclusion that the flake was firm and might as well be used. J.C. therefore tied on another rope and climbed up to the platform to untie the old rope and then lead through. But on reaching the platform he gave a startled exclamation and made a record descent, for the lower part of the flake was now several inches from the parent rock. The next time they managed to get a direct pull, but could not all stand together: the flake began to give ominous cracks and everyone shouted to S.B., who was just in front of them, to get out of the way. Before he could move, the flake came away, all in one piece, and crashed into the bed of the gully: the rope coming across S.B.'s neck, luckily only removing some skin and not his head.

The flake came away perfectly clean, leaving no vestige of a hold where it had been. It was then obvious that the wall must be climbed by the centre or not at all, the corner being hopeless. At least the unsound temptation had been removed and E.W.J.'s caution justified.

J.C. and M.M.B. then tried the wall direct, but when M.M.B. got on to J.C.'s shoulders she felt sure that a stronger grip than hers was needed for success. Anyway everyone was tired by then, and rain stopped further efforts.

Further attempts were made during a visit on July 25th, by Jim Birkett, Nancy Ridyard and M. M. Barker, but wet rock made the ascent impossible. N.R. was sure the wall would be conquered if a good handhold at the top could be lassoed !

Descending the South Gully for some 50 feet, J.B. made a route up the steep wall on the right. It was an awkward climb, with a severe flake to be passed in its upper part. The climb then continues up steep slabs to join the Wing Ridge at the top of Pitch 5. It was called the Tarsus Climb and graded severe. We had noticed the rocks in this climb's upper portion when we did Wing Ridge and remarked how bad they looked: yet they proved to be the easiest part of a very fine route of some 260 feet.

In spite of the fact that these new climbs had been made, the gully still lived up to its name of 'inaccessible,' and although fresh attempts were planned, continued wet weather intervened. From a base camp at Hartsop Hall, we made several interesting routes on Dovedale Slabs. These are the conspicuous slabs on the right above the last gate on the way to Dove Crag, and would be a splendid place to train a beginner in the noble art of boot-climbing. Their angle is reasonably steep, and the holds whilst sufficient are not big enough to pull up on, without a certain amount of footwork. They are easy to get at, being some half-hour or so away from the car, and offer enough in the way of difficulty to satisfy most normal people's idea of a pleasant afternoon's climbing. It may be of interest to say they are of volcanic ash and are incredibly rough and clean.

It always was a problem where Gilpin Ward and I should climb on the Saturday afternoons during the summer of 1937: a problem which usually ended in our going to Carrock Fell, where there is excellent climbing to be had on gabbro outcrops. On Saturday afternoon, August 21st, it had come to a toss-up between Mouse Ghyll Direct and Dove Crag. The latter won and so at about 4 p.m. we were donning our rubbers at the foot of 'I.G.' Conditions did not look so cheerful as water was spraying over the lip of the 'hanging gully' on to the platform, and more than half of the unclimbed wall and the first two pitches were wet: but we decided to have a look at it. I led the first two pitches and tied on to a very doubtful

spike embedded in a crack in the platform, enjoying all the discomforts of a cold shower until G.W. arrived. He stood on my feet, carefully dried his rubbers, then moved to the sloping right-hand end of the platform which was comparatively dry. Bracing myself, I got into the 'combined antics' position, impressing on G.W. the negative value of the belay and the distance to the gully floor. It was hardly necessary as he had already looked and no hasty moves were likely to be made by him. He then stood on my right leg, and so to my shoulders, the bulge in the wall and the wet platform making 'combined antics' in rubbers very precarious. Three times he moved up on small damp holds, and on the fourth glided up the wall to grasp the 'jug handle' at the very top. Then followed a traverse to the left, and the ascent of a slimy, wet scoop landed him at the belay where M.M.B. had the tug-of-war with the sheep. I have a vivid recollection of being shaken out of that tense mood a second gets into when the leader is making a difficult ascent, by G.W.'s loud cheers, and how heartily I joined in myself—the gully was ours. G.W. made the rope fast to his belay, and after a futile attempt to climb the wall direct, I swarmed up the rope to the top of the wall.

The gully does not fade out after this pitch, but gives some 190 feet of enjoyable and interesting climbing, with magnificent rock scenery and lovely views of Dovedale framed in vertical rock walls. Although we had made the first 'through' ascent, we had really climbed on the shoulders of M.M.B. and her willing helpers who had done most of the spade work. I must confess I felt a little guilty that she hadn't been in at the kill, but I consoled myself with the fact that everyone had had his chance, we being the lucky ones.

Perhaps future climbers of this gully will not appreciate the difficulties we had in getting up the wall, but it was a little thing like this that held up the ascent of that fine climb, Tophet Wall, for a long time. We are all of the opinion that if any place deserves a piton as a belay, it is the platform

below the wall, as the spike there would definitely not hold the second in the event of a leader falling.

The following notes on the Dovedale rocks are added by M.M.B. :—' The rocks in Dovedale all belong to the Borrowdale Volcanic Series, and the geological map calls them andesites. Dove Crag itself is so fine-grained and hard as to be virtually a green slate, and indeed it appears to have been quarried as such, for at the foot of the north side are the ruins of a hut, and huge blocks of artificially-detached rock lie about.

' The track from Hartsop Hall (which passes the lead mines low down) is an old built trod and leads right to this point.

' The hard and slaty nature of the rock gives little help by friction to the climber, and the tilt of the beds is at an angle, which also intensifies the apparent difficulties. But the Bird Ladder, Dovedale Slabs, and the disappointing Dovecot to the south of Dove Crag, are of a very different type, being so coarse-grained as to give the maximum of friction. They are volcanic ashes becoming coarse breccias in places.

' The Dovecot was "seen through" in one sense on the first visit, and looked tempting : but closer inspection showed it to be a mass of blocks on an unstable base. The quality of the upper rock is good and it would give interesting boulder problems. I got up the "window" on July 25th and had a nice scramble above it.'

To conclude, I can only voice what all our party have remarked at some time or other : Even if you don't climb it's grand to be in Dovedale which must surely rank as one of Lakeland's prettiest valleys !

SEAT SANDAL—A SECRET MOUNTAIN

W. T. Palmer

For years I used to pretend that Seat Sandal, 2,415 feet above Grasmere, was a truly secret mountain—at least in some part—and I could have pointed out that though road and footpath west and east, were thronged, though people could look down and over it from the Fairfield and Helvellyn ridges, no one appeared on the top, at least in hours of daylight. It was entirely a forgotten place, to which shepherds and followers of hounds did not climb because ‘earths’ and ‘trods’ were far below, and neither sheep nor the chase went that way.

Several times I walked across Seat Sandal at night, in that clear lucidity which extends from dusk to dawn in June. Sometimes the night turned cold and wet, and a frozen jacket as well as a wet shirt was imposed. Driving rain and gale were not uncommon. I have reached the top after a steady all-night ridge walk from Kirkstone Pass across the top of Red Screes, Dove Crag and Fairfield, following the fence from the latter into the head of Tongue Ghyll, and taking a loose, stony scramble up the steep shoulder which from Grasmere looks like the hollow or shadow of a breaking wave. The wheatear chucked as its rest was disturbed, and of course the meadow pipits resented my passage.

At other times I approached from Grasmere by that cart-track which Wordsworth and the villagers used when a family trip was being made toward Patterdale (Ullswater) or for a picnic up Helvellyn. The route is still used. You find it by turning in at the Swan Hotel, and contouring below the brackened intakes, between walls, and along a worn track. You might find it at some Grasmere Meet when the hill tops are hidden in clouds, and there is nothing else to be done. Tongue Ghyll house is not an ancient landmark—that was

the old and many times rebuilt Travellers Rest below, a public house at which only beer was sold for many years.

Another route I have taken up Seat Sandal follows the pony track past Tongue Ghyll house, and climbs near a wall to a point where the last vestige of a path for Grisedale Pass turns to the right over plenty of stones, scree, and bracken. The rest of the route up Seat Sandal is straight ahead, and should be traversed without incident. But here I once met a big red fox which trotted away on its own occasions, passing within three yards of me. I did not try to hit the creature or to scare it: Reynard was on his own mountain—I was a trespasser. I have heard young and old bark and whine from some recess in the rocks which is their summer abode. They have a stronger hold for winter, when terriers and hounds are 'out' to hunt them to the death. I also climbed this way one summer morning when from Grasmere the whole slope to Seat Sandal was covered with dainty, fluffy, clinging cloud. When I reached the frill—alas! it vanished, whipped away by the spirit of night, and in place I had the hottest burst of morning sunshine it has been my lot to endure, with the barking of ravens and the mewing of buzzards as defiance, and the song of the mountain lark as welcome. I went on over the top to Helvellyn ridge, by a route which I then discovered through the moss hags, and which has long since merged on sludge and pool. It is easier to drop down to the stream north of Seat Sandal and cross it to sounder grass than to assay my old short-cut, which no longer exists. If you find another path through the mosses, which is quick and direct to Helvellyn do let me know. I still dislike missing the top of Seat Sandal when descending from Helvellyn direct toward Dunmail Raise and Grasmere. Even today I have not climbed Seat Sandal by the nearest and most obvious route, from the car park at the top of Dunmail Raise. I leave that to you.

The only people I seem to meet on the summit in these days are parties with note-books, maps, ruled cards, 'little

lists' of 2,000-foot peaks which they aspired to tick off in due time and become a complete hill-walker. The experience is worthy, but laborious too. And you must get at the high ground in rain-storm, thunder-shower, gale and snow as well before you get all the fun there is in it.

Once I signed six little memos that such-and-such a person had duly climbed to that particular top. Some holiday party was conquering all the Grasmere peaks in turn. To one party, with a tiny sketch map of the peak, I noted that the Seat had more than one cairn on its wave-like top. After consultation in due secrecy, the party declared that as the others had gone down without adding further peaks to their exploration, they must, in fairness, do the same. And they did. That outlier has a view of Grisedale Tarn.

It must have been a busy day about Seat Sandal for lastly some quite ordinary and sensible persons strolled up. 'We have watched and followed the others—do tell us what it is all about?' I would not have added to my reputation for truth by giving the exact happening—to the last foot of the total ascent from the Raise and from Grasmere—so I told them instead the legend of Dunmail, last king of independent Cumberland, killed in battle, and his golden crown carried over the stormy peak to be sunk in Grisedale Tarn, until the King Comes Again.

'The crown of Dunmail was charmed, giving to its wearer a succession in his kingdom. Therefore King Edgar of the Saxons coveted it above all things. When Dunmail came to the throne of the mountain-lands, a wizard in Gilsland Forest held a master-charm to defeat the purpose of his crown. Him Dunmail slew. The magician was able to make himself invisible save at cock crow, and to destroy him the hero braved a cordon of wild wolves at night. At the first peep o' dawn he entered the cave where the wizard was lying. Leaping to his feet, the magician called out "where river runs north or south with the storm" 'ere Dunmail's sword silenced him for ever. The story came to the ear of

the Saxon king, who after much inquiry of his priests found that an incomplete curse, though powerful against Dunmail, could scarcely harm another holder of the crown. Spies were accordingly sent into Cumbria to find where a battle could be fought on land favourable on the magician's words. On Dunmail Raise, in times of storm ever in unromantic today, the torrent sets north or south in capricious fashion. The spies found the place, found also fell-land chiefs who were persuaded to become secret allies of the Saxons. The campaign began. Dunmail moved his army south to meet the invader, and they joined battle in this pass. For long hours the fight was with the Cumbrians; the Saxons were driven down the slope again and again. As his foremost tribes were tired out, Dunmail retired and called on his reserves—they were mainly the ones favouring the southern king. On they came, spreading in well-armed lines from side to side of the hollow way, but instead of opening to let the weary warriors through they delivered an attack on them. Surprised, the army reeled back, and their rear was attacked with redoubled violence by the Saxons. The loyal ranks were forced to stand back-to-back round the king; assailed by superior masses, they fell rapidly.

RAMBLINGS OF AN OLD MAN

A. R. Thomson

A group of ancients was assembled—one of them an excellent story-teller, as I know from experience, was yarn-ing. Suddenly, there was an exclamation 'Oh, spare us, we've heard that so very often already.' I know that I had begun to repeat myself years ago ; a near relative used often to point out the fact—now he's gone I have probably got worse, so I hesitated when the editor asked me for an article. But I will try to say something new. Now it would be cheek for me to mention Wasdale at any length but it is still a delightful memory, and before referring to other districts I would say that Wasdale surpasses them all. Where can one find a more delightful walk than the 'high-level' ! Was any first-class climber ever disappointed by Walker's Gully or the North-West on the Pillar ? And I never heard anyone say that the North Climb or the New West were unsatisfactory, or the Napes or Kern Knotts either ! I was once going over the old climbers' book there—I can always spend an evening with that book happily—when I came across a reference to Ill Ghyll on Kirkfell. I easily found it. The pitches were occupied by waterfalls and the rock was rotten, but one passes it on the way to the Napes and I often wonder that none of the modern climbers seem to have tried it. It obviously has dangers peculiar to itself and probably it is not much harder or more rotten or more full of water than Piers Ghyll.

When I was writing the Climbers' Guide books for Borrowdale and Buttermere I took particular pains to indicate where the climbs were situated. That was a mistake. It was peculiarly interesting to find the Epaulette on High Crag at Buttermere when I climbed it about eighteen months ago. It is true that unlike my leader I avoided the hardest places—also I strained my knee and it isn't right yet, but I was

satisfied. Some day I will have a hunt for the Neckband in Langdale—I don't want to climb it, but I should like to find it. The Holly Tree Crack on Helm Crag I can't find. I've looked for it often, but I did find the Cave on Helm Crag. It is just under the first summit, a little to the left of it. By the by, it is often wrongly stated that Harter Fell is the only fell in Lakeland where you have to use your hands to reach the summit ; the second point of Helm Crag—by that I mean the point farther from Grasmere—calls for the use of the hands far more than Harter Fell. But enough of these trifles. The modern climber will perhaps ascend Helm Crag, then descend into far Easedale, climb Deerfield Crag Gully, go on to Pavey Ark, ascend Big Gully, descend Little Gully, ascend Rake End Chimney, and then after a climb or two on Kern Knotts end up at Wasdale Head. They are like that nowadays. So why mention the little climbs round Thirlmere. If one walks up the Wythburn valley one finds Nab Crags; the farther one goes up the valley the higher the Crags get. Then there is Lameley Ghyll—one sees the principal pitch on it from the farther side of the lake and it is generally a good big waterfall. I once explored this ghyll and managed to wade through the deep pool where Abraham says strong swimming powers are required. I went in up to my chin—but after doing so I didn't mind climbing the waterfall pitch. But the only really good climbing that I know of there is on the Castle rock of Triermain. It is not, however, for the likes of me !

Now, Borrowdale : Walla Crag Gully isn't bad but short. I venture to say that Black Crag Buttress is distinctly good, though the rock is inclined to be rotten. I did the direct start given in the Guide years ago but I must say that to my mind the start from, say, 50 yards up the screes on the right of the buttress by a traverse is more interesting. However, the climb does not fill a day so I should go on and do the Boulderstone pinnacle. This used to be started by a steep little chimney on the left and a shoulder was given at the top

of this in order to reach the rocks on the left. Now the start is from the foot of the rock and it is well scratched and obviously often done. Sergeant Crag Gully though situated in Langstrath is a worthy climb too, and those who consider it insufficient for a day can add the sound climbs on Lining Crag which is easily seen and reached from Sergeant Crag. They are a welcome addition to the Borrowdale climbs and look interesting and sensational and none too easy. There are not many climbs worth doing in Borrowdale. The ones mentioned, Mouse Ghyll, Raven Crag Gully, and the climbs on Gillercombe—that is about the lot. There are plenty of little things all over the fells, and I know that good climbers have found some of George Abraham's inventions at Castle Head hard enough. But there is an old man who finds some of the lakeland walks about all he can manage, and he was mightily vexed when a youth offered to assist him over them. I seem to be offering a good deal of advice. An African traveller noticed the absence of old men in a certain village—'You seem to have no old men here,' 'We used to have,' his guide replied, 'but they were always offering advice, so we stuffed their eyes with mud and threw them to the crocodiles.' Fortunately, there are no crocodiles in Derwentwater!

IN DEFENCE OF THE WALKER

J. G. Kekwick

I meet him only too frequently. He is up for the week-end. On Saturday he has walked up Gavel Neese and apparently proceeded at the same pace up the Needle and Kern Knotts Crack. On Sunday he means to walk up Base Brown and then on up Moss Ghyll, Jones' Route from Deep Ghyll and possibly some four or five others of the same nature. If it is raining and the soles happen to be out of his boots he remarks that his 'walks' may be of a rather more varied nature. With what object these remarkable perambulations? Is there some strange record to be attacked? If so, what is it? Who made it? Or is he some incarnation of the tree-bear or the Barbary ape? Yet his attitude is only too prevalent. Our elders, and I venture to say at least in this respect our betters, would have been horrified had they met him. But let them speak for themselves:

Dr S. and I travelled down to Drigg one night. We breakfasted there early and walked twelve miles to Wastdale, halting only for a plunge in cold Wastwater. (Twelve miles to Wastdale! what would our lightning acrobat have done with that?) After the manner of our kind we inquired at once for the Climbing Book to learn the latest news of the Fells. The Pall Mall Budget article of June 5th, 1890, had been inserted and we read how it might be conquered.

(O. G. JONES)

Since then, the problem is now before us, what place should walking take in the outlook of the rock-climber? Is rock-climbing to be merely a search for adventure? To those who would make it such, I would heartily recommend the sport of boxing, for I believe that there is no element in adventure which can rival the tension with which the out-matched pugilist awaits the next blow from his assailant, uncertain whether it will be Tom Sayers' 'auctioneer' or a blow to the solar plexus which may leave him paralysed for the next twenty minutes and possibly for the next ten days.

Is it to be nothing more than the physical joy of exercise? If so, again I confidently recommend, in the sure knowledge that science is behind me, a session with the gymnasium instructor or a course of Strongbow. But for those of us who refuse to accept it as primarily either of these, to what extent should enter the pure pleasure which is to be derived from the knowledge and contemplation of the mountains? Is it to be a mere appendage to a series of acrobatics? Or are we to take a broader view, to seek a knowledge of the wild life and the birds, of the dales and farms, of the land tenure and the sheep, of the history and nomenclature—and I venture to say that the history of no county makes better reading than that of Cumberland—of the Norse walls and the Gosforth Cross, of the port of Ravenglass, of Hardknott camp and the optimism of the Roman commander, of monks and of mines, of shepherds and dogs, of wrestling and Wonderful Walker, or simply of when and why they ‘walled’ the cuckoo in Borrowdale? Then if a knowledge of all these things is desirable, is our interest in Lakeland to be forever confined to Gavel Neese and Base Brown?

On the ground of interest there is everything to be said for extending our interest in Lakeland beyond those districts where the best rock-climbing is to be found and even for visiting far-off Black Coombe or going in search, as a friend whose knowledge of Lakeland is unrivalled in my experience of the source of the River Calder amongst the bleak wastes of Cold Fell. And what about the Fell scenery? Is anyone to make us believe that the finest views of the mountains are only to be obtained from some remote ledge ninety feet in space, that the mountain-panorama, like some giant door which is only to be pulled ajar with block and tackle, reveals itself solely to those who go equipped with ropes, tricounis, and the other paraphernalia of the mountaineer? I am sure that there is no fine view which cannot be equally well obtained without climbing one foot of rock. But the case for the walker is stronger. If we be frank and admit that we

spend part of the time on the 'way-up' contemplating the difficulties which are ahead—and I remember too many instances of hushed conversations in Hollow Stones to believe the contrary—much of the time whilst we are climbing considering the hazards of the next pitch, and much on the 'way-down' analysing the errors of the past, does not that jar the feeling of synthesis with the mountains, the feeling that we are part and parcel of the surroundings?

Finally, what will be the tendency of future mountaineers? Will they be a group apart like some troupe of Chinese acrobats or Algerian tumblers, or will they cultivate a deeper affection? If we desire that the latter tendency shall prevail, then we must develop it now, for it is only on the ground that it is but part of a whole, one amongst a series of similar interests that any true justification can be found for rock-climbing as a sport or as that which it is to most of us—a devotion.

THE BORDER LINE

Mabel M. Barker

There had been some talk in the local paper of a pilgrimage along the Border Line. This did not come off, but the suggestion of it led to some debate on the question ' Could it be traversed in a week ? ' The W.E.A. Local History class in Carlisle was interested in the Border, and out of our discussions arose the idea that some of us should try to walk it, not necessarily in a week. Whitsuntide was the only time available, and as it turned out, exactly a week and no more was ours in which to carry out the plan. For various reasons most of those who first hoped to do it were unable to come, and the party was eventually reduced to Miss M. Short, myself, and Roc the dog, and as things turned out this was just as well.

We began at the east end, arguing that if any must be omitted it would be easier to complete it at a later date at the home end.

So off we went on a Monday morning, by train to Newcastle and bus to Berwick ; and after a delightful evening in that lovely town, began the real business on Tuesday, May 31st.

The first surprise to one bound on this adventure (and that in spite of much map study beforehand) is the large amount of England lying north of the Tweed. Buses on the Great North Road proving few in number we walked the three miles to Marshall Meadows : and the day was hot, and our packs were heavy. Once there, however, the fun began. With some local help we found a hole in a field, and popped down it like rabbits, into a red sandstone tunnel which brought us out onto the rocky shore by the North Sea. The tide was out, and for half a mile we scrambled along, looking for the wall which here marks the Border Line.

Time passed, but no wall appeared. We came to a great mass of fallen cliff, and saw two men on top of it.

'Where is the Border Line?' I called. They pointed back.

'Then I'm in Scotland?'

'Ay, ye're in Scotland.'

On the grassy terrace just above the shore was the wall, very 'sore decayed.' We solemnly sat on it, took photographs, and made for the top of the cliff, where the men awaited us. They greeted us in friendly fashion and came as far as the railway, where the Border is marked clearly enough. Only twice does the Line actually cross the metals.

At Lamberton Toll an old man was working in his garden.

'Are you in England or Scotland?' we asked.

'Ah'm in Scotland. The March is *there*,' he said decisively, pointing to his garden fence.

So we followed the March, over fields and along stone walls, leaving the sea behind. We were a bit uncertain (not for the last time) as to which wall was *the* wall; but lunched about the highest point, looking over the battlefield of Halidon Hill; and at Mordington Church came down onto the road, where Messrs Binns informed us exactly which country we were in.

From here we followed the Bound Road, the only piece of the Line which is actually *on* a road, so that for about a mile one could walk in England and the other in Scotland. This road degenerates to a sunk lane, running down to the Whitadder. Here there must once have been a ford, but neither ford, ferry nor bridge could we see now, though traces of the lane continued on the other side: so round we had to go to the bridge on the main Berwick road. It began to rain, and kept it up steadily all day. At Paxton Old Toll we came back to the Bound Road, which runs down to the Tweed and stops. Well, the Line was safe now in the middle of the river, and not likely to get mislaid for many a mile; so we set off to follow the Tweed, charmed by its rare beauty, and interested in the number of fishermen. We pushed through woods on the steep concave banks, and walked over grass in the great

meadow-filled meanders ; but even here the going was not too good, owing to the rain which made the mud slippery and deep. We crossed into England by the Union Suspension Bridge, first of its kind in Europe ; and took to the river again below Horncliffe.

The pouring rain could not damp our joy in Norham Castle, and we lingered too long over that magnificent ruin, so that we decided to stay the night at Ladykirk instead of pushing on to Coldstream. This was our first mistake, and we hereby advise all successors to stay in Norham. Ladykirk proved to be the most inhospitable little hamlet ever : clustered round an enormous church, built by James IV because he was not drowned in the Tweed. We vainly sought shelter in every house in the place, including a large farm and a very large and empty manse, but nobody would offer so much as a settle to sleep on ! Wet, weary and hungry, we set out for Coldstream : had another shot at a house on the way, and jumped at its owner's offer to take us in his car to Coldstream. Thus we missed the walk past the mouth of the Till, but hot baths and supper at the Crown Temperance Hotel were welcome indeed.

Next morning we turned upstream to Coldstream bridge (which shares matrimonial honours with Lamberton and Gretna), and followed the Tweed again through woods, private grounds, on the road, and over grassy meadows. At Baa Green the Line is actually the north hedge of the road, for here a scrap of Scotland is south of the Tweed. We rested on the mound which was once Wark Castle, the greatest fortress on the Border, and reputed scene of the Garter episode. Near it is a deserted graveyard with one stone standing in pathetic loneliness. And so on to Carham Church, shortly after which we reached the Redden Burn, and bade farewell to the Tweed.

The Redden is so insignificant that we were doubtful of its identity : but some men in the first field it crossed assured us that we were indeed on The March.

After going under the railway the Line makes a very curious salient, and a bit of England is consequently north of Scotland. Here we did our duty by it as faithfully as we could, but its behaviour was puzzling, and we were glad to verify our locality at a hamlet called Nottyless, where the inhabitants gave us help with interest. It was not possible, however, to follow it meticulously just here, for the fields were under springing crops, so we followed a track across them, as near as made no difference. Just over a fence a gipsy woman sat by a winter tent of wattle and blankets.

'Now are you in England or Scotland?' was answered by, 'Well, this is English ground, lady.' But it wasn't. We were just west of our Line there.

At Holefield Farm, where they were busy sheep-shearing, we sought water for tea, for there was no inn or village for far enough.

A little farther the Line touches the road, and then crosses 'No Man's Land.' A car drew up, and its driver courteously asked where we were going. Our answer intrigued him. He knew Logan Mack (whose 'Border Line' was our book of words, though its weight precluded its presence); insisted on taking us up the half-mile of road before us, and gave us much helpful information and good advice.

Thanks largely to this, the Line was not difficult to follow over the moors to Bowmont Hill. These were chiefly remarkable for the great number of hares we saw on them.

Over Bowmont the Line passes between two camps, and I went up for a look at the English one. Parallel earthworks cross the hill, and at its end is a circular work with some stone visible. It would be a fine place for excavation.

Below us now lay Bowmont Water; and we could study the morrow's route (we hoped), for from Yetholm Mains the Line runs up onto the Cheviots. For the night we had to go on to Town Yetholm, where we found refuge from the rain, then beginning, with Mr. Sutherland and his daughter.

But the following morning, June 2nd, was perfectly foul.

Rain fell in sheets, and the wind howled. Miss Short decided to go by road to Cocklaw Foot. I felt that if I did not then and there follow the Border Line onto the Cheviots I might never again have the chance to do so, and that to omit this section would, in a way, spoil the whole adventure for me. So I set off with Roc on what was, perhaps, the maddest walk I have ever taken.

I was wet through before reaching the end of the village street. I passed Church Yetholm, and in Yetholm Mains, to keep the map dry, asked for direction from a woman who must have been one of its famous gipsies: and then from a shepherd, who told me to follow the Halterburn—'That's the Bound,' said he, adding that when a line of trees ended a wall could be followed right up.

I had a look at map and compass in comparative shelter before leaving the burn.

The course seemed clear, and I took to the sheltered side of the wall, just able to see the col on Coldsmouth Hill, after which was thick mist and utter solitude.

The wall played up till I judged that we were on Whitelaw Hill. Then it ought to go down, of course, but seemed to be overdoing it. Still, I dare not leave it: and it might be as well to get out of the mist and have a look at things. They turned out to be a farm in a lonely valley by a raging burn. The farm was not in the bond, but I made for it. I got over the burn by a sheep hurdle. Roc with one look at me, went in, and to my relief came out on my side, some way farther down.

The farmer stared in amazement, and to my rather faltering request for the Border Line bade me come in.

'Where are you making for?'

'I wanted to follow the Border Line onto the Cheviot.'

'But you're not going onto the Cheviot to-day?'

I simply dared not say that I was! I would go as far as I could—and where was I, anyway?

It was Burnhead: the stream was the Halterburn: the Line was on the divide between it and the Curr Burn. They

were most anxious for me to take the easiest way to Cocklaw Foot.

By this time the kettle was boiling. I thankfully drank hot tea with my lunch, and had a good look at the map. I had gone too far west off Whitelaw, and was about half a mile from the Line.

Once out of sight of the farm, I made for the divide. I was not any too confident, for in the mist all landmarks were lost again: but on what felt like the divide was a wall once more, and it seemed to go in the right direction. Wind and rain kept it up well, and the wall ended. . . .

Then a few rocks, enormous in the mist, began to emerge and a huge cairn loomed up. This, I found later, was the Schil, second highest in the whole range.

The next section was open flat moor with no indication of any divide or Line whatever. The compass was of little use with nothing to take readings from. But after a while, like a faint streak in a negative, a dark line developed. Into my mind came the recollection of something Logan Mack said about posts on a moor. It was a post all right, and after what seemed a long way another appeared—and another. Carry on!

At last came a wire fence: and this began to go up steeply. It *must* be going onto The Cheviot—or rather (for the Line does not actually go onto the summit of Cheviot, which is in England) onto Auchencairn. It went up, and up—interminably up, into thicker mist and howling wind. I dare not leave it, and it seemed endless. Roc toiled up beside me—no wall or stone now, to shelter either of us. And suddenly it ended. Whether this was the highest point of the Line or no, I could go no farther. But in a sudden lightening of the mist I got a glimpse of a great white streak to the left. It must have been the 'Hen Hole.'

So working round to the right and down we came to a stream. Going down that valley, Cheviot Burn as I hoped, was the coldest and most unpleasant part of the whole day. The wild waters were all over the place, and it was difficult

to get round the concave bends. At a low level I met a shepherd.

‘Where am I making for?’

‘Cocklaw Foot.’

‘Thank goodness!’

Round the next bend was the farm. Miss Short would be there, and all arranged. Not a bit of it! The door was opened by a very stout and surprised woman, who had never heard of either of us—and she doubted if she had room. Well, might I come in? Of course: and while she got me some tea we discussed the situation. She was sure that my friend would have been unable to get up the flooded road. She contemplated me while I ate bread and cheese ravenously; and suddenly said:

‘If you’re not that particular about seeing her again to-night, I could mebbe air a bed for ye.’ Rather! And in no time she had a roaring fire in a room off the kitchen, and I had the jolliest evening and most comfortable night ever.

The rain stopped. Next morning brought sunshine, a good breakfast, dry clothes, and Miss Short about 10 a.m., with her own story of the day before. Unable to get up the road, which showed only as a line of telegraph poles, she had stayed at Mowhaugh. A shepherd bound for Cocklaw Foot had tried to take a message, but he couldn’t get there either. They assured her that I could not possibly make it—no experienced shepherd would go onto The Cheviot on such a day. (Well, perhaps not. It sounds fine, but after all, shepherds are not in the habit of steering in mist by map and compass.)

We went back up the much-reduced Cheviot Burn, and took up the Line at the end of the fence where I had left it. About 100 yards beyond it were the big cairns on Auchencairn. The Cheviot itself lay before us—a great flat peat moor. We decided not to try for its summit (which indeed is a moot point), but did our best by the Line, which here has no demarcation. The peat bogs were extraordinary. They

always seemed to intoxicate Roc, but he was the only one who appreciated them.

We doubled back and found the Hanging Stone where East and Middle March meet ; and below us could see a bedraggled fence following the divide. We were indeed on the tops of the Cheviots, and now every mile was one nearer home.

So with little incident we passed Crookedsike Head, King's Seat, Cocklaw and Windygyle with its huge cairns. From this a green ridge led north-west with the headwaters of Coquet Dale on our left. The day was clear, the views perfect, and all we had to do was keep on the divide : though some of it was pretty hard going through peat and heather and—worst of all—ground covered with high tussocks of grasses, which, we were told later, the shepherds call ' bulls' snouts.'

The Line makes a curious rectangular bend onto Rushy Fell. It is fenced here, and easy to see even from a distance : and is memorable because we saw a horseman with a dog : one of the two human beings we saw on the Line from Yetholm to Kershope Foot : the other being a shepherd near the head of Kershope.

Descending a little to the west of Blackhall Hill, we struck Dere Street, running from Hunnam-on-the-Wall to Newstead and pointing to Inveresk. It took us straight into the 'Ad Fines' Camp. In our all too short inspection it seemed that camps of several periods and curious outlying earthworks cover a large area. It is strangely situated in the bottom of a high valley, and on the headwaters of the Coquet Burn. This Dere Street is the road blocked at Hunnum in Kipling's vivid story, saying ' Finis ' to Parnesius. The camp must have been falling to ruins then and the road overgrown, away behind the Wall in the late days of the Roman period : but the main crossing of the Cheviots was *here* and not at Carter Bar, when the Province of Valentia was a going concern, and this place must have been a centre of activity for the Roman legions.

It was good to find clear running water in the infant Coquet, where for the first time since Yetholm Mains the Line, for a very short way, follows a stream. After some boggy going over Harden Edge and Hoggerel Hill we left the Line for the night, and went down Spithope Burn to Byrness. It was a long valley, but less wearisome than the main road at its foot, and the long search for rooms. We were advised to try Catcleugh Farm, but knew as soon as we saw it that it was too large to have any room for us! Finally we found a kindly hostess in one of the cottages near Catcleugh Reservoir. A larger party would have had yet more difficulty in finding resting places; and for a really big pilgrimage the problem would be serious.

We went up again by the Hawk Burn next morning, making Hungry Law and Catcleugh Hill. The way was easy to see between the headwaters of the Ramshope Burn and Kale Water: but on Lap Hill we were just saved by a timely look at the compass from following a fence too far north. From Ark's Edge—a long and rather featureless shoulder—we came down to the main road over Carter Bar, and lunched on the site of the Reidswire Raid, now occupied by road-menders' tackle, while cars passed and we were once more informed by Binns as to the whereabouts of England and Scotland.

Round the shoulder of Catcleugh Hill and Carter Fell we followed a nice old road, not marked on the map nor referred to by any writer that I can find. We left it to climb to the big cairn on Carter Fell. From here there is nothing whatever to mark the Border, and probably we began to go wrong quite soon in the great peat bogs. They were beyond anything of their kind that we had hitherto encountered, and in concentrating on the problem of progressing at all we lost our direction. Also we travelled more slowly than we reckoned. (I had by now evolved a sort of inverted system of determining our position: we made about two and a half miles per hour, therefore after two hours' going we should be in

such-and-such a place. It worked generally, but not here !)

We saw what we took for a cairn in the trackless moss, and made for it joyfully, but it wasn't a cairn, and led us farther astray. At last a valley beneath us—with a river and farms—but there *should* have been a railway ! We went down to investigate. The first farm reached was Kielder Head. We were about three miles from the Line, and at the foot of the Scalp Burn, while we should have crossed its headwaters at Haggie Knowe.

However, the day was yet young, and the distance to Deadwater much the same whether we returned to the Line or abandoned it, so with instructions from the folk at Kielder Head and another map consultation we made up the Scalp Burn, and, rather hot and tired, regained our Line at Haggie Knowe. (At least we did expiation for the mileage in a car on the Tweed !)

And so we came to the Kielder Stone : old meeting place of March Wardens, and a magnificent bit of rock.

Thence up again onto Peel Fell, whence a view of the Solway can be had, but it was not clear enough that evening. From the edge of Rushy Knowe we looked down on the Deadwater Burn and Farm, our objective. A nice slope seemed to promise speedy and easy going—but once off the steep, the whole valley proved to be part of a huge afforestation scheme, and a network of little drainage channels put the brake on very effectively. However, we reached the desired haven and the promise of supper and bed, just before its folk turned in for the night.

On the following morning, Sunday 5th, we could for the first time start right on the Line with no retracing of our steps. It comes down from Rushy Knowe by a wall which had been on our right the night before : and here for the second time crosses a railway at Deadwater station. There was once a spa here, still marked on maps as a 'Bathing House.' It is now a small unattractive sulphur spring among ruins.

We climbed Thorlieshope Pike, came down a little burn past Blackhope, and, cutting a funny little peninsula of Scottish ground, came gladly to the lovely Bells Burn. This is a charming part of the Line, and it was good to follow a real running burn after all the peat bogs.

But we had not finished with these, for on leaving the burn we met them again on Buckside Knowe: 'bulls' snouts' also, and very wet going. A wall takes the Line over Larriston Fells, but after a sort of half-hearted look at them it leaves their summits to Scotland. So we left it, and went onto the tops whence the views are glorious. Below lay Liddesdale, and clear in the distance were the Solway and the Lakeland Hills.

We rejoined the Line at Bloody Bush, marked by the big obelisk which was a toll bar on the road from Dinlabyrein to the North Tyne. A fence could be followed for a time, but it died away, being literally drowned in a bog which waxed as the fence waned. I forgot Logan Mack's advice to avoid this section and seek higher ground, and we walked doggedly through the thing. A single upright stick in a waste of bog was the last ghost of the fence!

In time it began to grow firmer, and to gather into the headwaters of the Kershope. The Line was once more safe on a river, good to be followed for miles without brain work or reference to the compass. We came to a cairn, the county boundary of Cumberland, and were in home waters.

'Dinna ye cross . . . the wrang side o' Kershope, my man, or there'll be a toom chair at the Redheuch.' The quotation kept running in my mind as we took whichever side of the growing burn seemed best. 'The *wrang* side o' Kershope'! May it be that some day all national boundaries will matter as little as this once turbulent frontier does now.

We kept by the water, and the following of it was a pretty rough job. From Kershopehead (now deserted) both sides were afforested. Roc found a dead deer and wallowed on it,

surprising us by his smell, and by the fact of the afforestation commission allowing deer to remain in their infant forests.

After a cheery chat with the inhabitants of Scots Kershope we pressed on, now on the English side, and suddenly came to a road, or what has the intention of being one in the future. It is being constructed up the valley by the unemployed in camp at Kershope Foot, for use when the timber is grown. After a bridge, annotated by Binns, we followed a charming cycle track to where, under a railway bridge, the Kershope joins the Liddel, and transfers to it the responsibility for the Border Line.

After a fine night at Under Burnmouth Farm we set off on our last day's tramp. To enquiries as to the best side on which to follow the river, our hosts replied rather uncertainly, and said it would be difficult. Feeling that the end was well in view, I said rashly that it would probably be like walking on a bowling green after what we had been over.

Soon began the same game that we had played with the Tweed: difficult passages of steep wooded banks, and easy going on flat ground in the concave bends. We had chosen the English side, but crossed at Watleyhirst. For a time all went well, and a little path led us into lovely woods. But the path died, and the woods became a jungle, and while we fought through it on the steepest slope we had yet met, the hoot of a train on the other side sounded derisively, while Miss Short said something about a bowling green!

We climbed out of it, and abandoned the Liddel for the moment.

But a few fields brought us to Penton Bridge: whence easy paths through those lovely woods brought us to Rowanburn-foot. Here was the problem of the Whitadder again, for the Esk had to be crossed, and hope of a footbridge failing, we had to go back to Canonbie, where we fell for the first café. So fortified, we attacked a road walk to the end of the Scots Dyke.

This curious earthwork, now wooded, divides the Debatable Land between Liddel and Sark, having been constructed in 1552 by a joint commission from both countries, with the French Ambassador as umpire. It runs in a straight line for three and a half miles, and we expected pretty plain sailing ; and so it was for the first mile. Then a detour had to be made to cross the Glenzier Burn on a sheep hurdle ; and after we regained the Dyke it was more overgrown. Tangled thickets, bogs and growing weariness slowed us down. After the Glenzier Beck we came to open fields on the Scots side, and a ploughman told us that the March followed the edge of the wood ; so by a path along it we came at last to a road at Craw's Knowe where the Scots Dyke joins the Sark, and the Line is in its keeping to the Solway.

At Sark Hall, Miss Short decided to make for Longtown and a bus to Carlisle. I wanted to finish out now, so took to the grass by the Sark. It proved an unexpectedly pleasant and interesting little river, with small but steep cliffs of boulder clay.

But after the Black Sark joins it at Newton came Solway Moss—another peat bog !

On the river bank it made real peat scenery. There was a peat cliff about twelve feet high ; a gully in it with a waterfall : a huge peat ' boulder ' at its foot, and a sort of peat cave in which I sheltered for a while from the rain which was now coming down steadily. Under the Longtown road, under the railway and the Gretna road went the Sark carrying the Line : then over flat green pastures, and through a marsh dyke with great red sandstone pillars : a last meander in the salt marshes—and then its waters mingled with the Solway.

On the Monday evening, just a week since we left the point ' where the sea takes charge ' at the eastern end of the Border Line, we walked on Solway sands.

We had covered about 136 miles in the seven days from sea to sea.

THE PILLAR IN ENNERDALE

A SUMMER RAMBLE

July 24th, 1873

The Pillar Rock was still in mind,
Its bare defiant face to find ;
And then the giddy height to scale,
Once more we ventured up Black Sail.
We felt the keen and fresh'ning breeze ;
Traversed the mountain ridge with ease ;
With Ennerdale down on our right,
And Mosedale on the left in sight.
We higher climb'd and nearer came,
And, bent on victory or shame,
Approached the long-sought Pillar Stone,
A task unseen—a place unknown.

Our eyes at length ' The Rock ' beheld,
And fear and hope our bosoms swell'd.
The massive, rugged, rocky height
Grew more imposing in our sight ;
With awe was filling every sense,
And stealing fast our confidence.
Surveying from our height the ground,
We cast a furtive glance around,
And lo ! old Scawfell's head was capp'd,
A mantling cloud ' The Pikes ' enwrapped.
We hasten'd then and scann'd the place,
Descended to ' The Pillar's ' base,
Examined it from side to side,
And one way saw that might be tried
By starting on the east to climb,
And, rounding northward for a time,
Then up a fissure in ' The Stone ' :
It seemed a chance—the only one.

A moment more—the thought seemed vain,
Began to fall a drizzling rain,
And, silently, a rolling cloud
Closed down upon us like a shroud—
Its every whirl that folded o'er
Was denser than the one before.

The mountain donn'd his robe and vest,
 And pressed us to his rugged breast ;
 Embosomed thus, we were alone—
 Shut in beside ' The Pillar Stone.'

Quoth Tom, ' To be, or not to be ?'
 ' The top of this bold rock for me.'
 Quoth Ned, in calm response, ' Agreed ' ;
 And May,¹ ' I'll follow if you lead.'
 With ready hands and cautious feet,
 Not rashly bold or indiscreet,
 We clung and climbed in single file,
 Right hopefully, and all the while
 We called and answered through the mist
 With Annie,² who did not enlist.
 She sat alone, with watch in hand ;
 The indicators seemed to stand ;
 The passing time so slowly wore,
 Ten minutes seemed an hour or more ;
 And when her call brought no reply,
 And keen anxiety ran high—
 When mild suspense had grown to fear—
 Our shout of triumph reached her ear.

Tradition said from time of yore
 This Pillar on its summit bore
 A bottle, which the names contain'd
 Of those who had its summit gain'd.
 Tradition had not spoken guile.
 There, bottom upward in the pile,
 The fabled bottle met our view.
 With eager haste the cork we drew.
 Nine gentlemen of hardy frames
 In it had placed nine honoured names.
 A lady's name now graced the list³ ;
 We added ours ; then in the mist
 We stood erect, with May between,
 And proudly peal'd ' God save the Queen.'

¹Later married John Mounsey—a direct descendant of the King of Patterdale.

²Later married Walter Brunskill.

³Miss A. Barker was the first lady to reach the top on 9th July, 1870.



ASCENT OF PILLAR ROCK

24TH JULY, 1873

By Annie Edward, May, and Tom Westmorland

Again we stood by Annie's side,
And held a council to decide
What home to seek—what course to steer,
And fixed our choice on Buttermere,
And downward straight for Ennerdale
Essay'd to go. 'Twas but to fail.
We trode on steep and trait'rous ground ;
The cloud still densely closed us round ;
A rocky cliff on either side
Narrowed the way to three feet wide.
Here Tom cried ' Hold ! a precipice ! '
Close at his feet a sheer abyss,
With open jaws, of depth unknown,
Fixed in an everlasting yawn.

Over the brink—into the mist,
He hurled a stone and paused to list.
Now dawned a sense of peril great ;
Seem'd our position desperate.
In brief debate we changed our plan,
Gave up descending, and began
An upward course, the scars to find
That our descent had left behind.

Emerged, at length, in joyful mood,
High on the mountain ridge we stood ;
Watched well the compass as it veer'd,
With care and caution eastward steer'd,
Till, with a shout of merry hail,
We struck the path in steep Black Sail.
Just then we thought of Burnthwaite fair,
A moment—and our hearts were there ;
We greeted Wastdale with a cheer,
And turned our backs on Buttermere.

For Wastdale is a lovely spot :
Who that has seen it loves it not ?
In its wild glen 'twas joy to stay.
We linger'd yet another day,
Then took the pass, and crossed the hill ;
And ' Moss ' remembers ' Pansy ' still.

WITH ROPE AND SPY-GLASS

J. W. Haggas

Glen Clunie looked wholly delightful on this July morning. It still lacked two hours to mid-day and the rugged corries and shapely ridges of Aonachair Crith and the Saddle stood out well in the morning sun. We were en route for Skye and many times the steering wheel changed hands that all might enjoy the magnificent view. Slowly Coir' ant Slugain unfolded itself to sight and admiration gave way to speculation ; two rock masses held our attention : the North face of Aonachair Crith looked steep, but was in deep shadow and gave little idea of its potentialities. The West face of Druim Shionnach showed up well through the glasses : of a light grey hue, the rock seemed little broken up and uniformly steep. A crag as yet unscaled, alluringly steep and in a delectable setting, what more could we desire ? Thus a firm resolve to come again was born.

Ten days later our tents were pitched on the sheltered banks of the river Clunie, and two o'clock saw a trio plodding up the shoulder of Druim Shionnach in close file. I carried out the functions of cow's tail to Phyllis while Syd performed the same kind office for me. Gradually the stream retreated beneath us and the flies diminished. The corrie simmered in the early afternoon heat and a large herd of deer were only just visible in the haze ; a little while later they started to ascend the West side of the corrie and kept going till they reached the ridge, and we realised we had unwittingly been the cause of a great deal more exertion on the part of the sundry gentlemen who would shortly be coming this way on venison bent. Chastened by this happy thought, we traversed round a corner into full view of our crag and soon afterwards were reclining against a boulder at its foot. Of about 300 feet in extent at the highest part, the cliff is divided in the centre by a wide gully (perhaps the Central Gully),

and, while the right-hand of the two buttresses so formed is much broken up and not likely to yield climbs of any merit, the left-hand one is uniformly steep, little fissured and relatively free from vegetation. The latter is bounded on the left by two large caves, on the right by the Central Gully, and is divided in the centre by a shallow chimney, petering out after 80 feet. Immediately to the left of this chimney we roped up, intending to take a line directly upwards as far as possible. The rock is of a grain somewhat like gritstone, but provides sharper, more accommodating holds and is shot with silvery particles which adhere to rubbers. I believe it is mica-schist and on the route followed it was sound, with the exception of very small ledges which were liable to shelve clean away.

Four o'clock on a calm, sunny afternoon is an ideal time to climb, and enthusiasm and curiosity lent spring to the first few steps; rounded ledges and slight bulges enabled press movements of some delicacy to be accomplished. With 40 feet of rope out there came a check; the face in front and to either side was devoid of any definite hold, and the problem was solved by an exercise of considerable refinement. An insignificant bulge enables a press-up on the left hand to be prolonged until the right foot can be raised to the said uncommodious position, the process being assisted by a pocket-hold for two fingers of the right hand. The ensuing face was delicate and after 40 feet more, a peg of singular attractiveness on the right of the chimney encouraged a crossing of the latter. Safely ensconced, I settled back to enjoy watching the efforts of Syd; to my intense chagrin he surmounted the *mauvais pas* without difficulty and very soon afterwards ousted me from my chair. Six feet of vertical ascent made possible a traverse back to the original line which I followed until the slab became holdless above a good ledge. A crack in the corner on the left went by means of a slight layback, during the execution of which the distance, quantity, and significance of the scree below

were highly apparent. Traversing back to the right, a good stance with unsatisfactory belay enabled me to contemplate the unbroken sweep of rock beneath, while Phyllis did the first pitch.

The situation was now critical ; we were on an exposed face, the angle of which was steepening as we rose and the possibility of a forced descent had occurred to us.

An upward traverse to the right led to a vertical crack, very smooth and supported by a sloping ledge ; this was on the intended line of the climb.

Above an overhang blocked the way, while a traverse left led to a crack in a corner. The first looked impossible, the second definitely was, so the crack on the left it had to be. This went quite well, it being necessary to break out on to the face on the left at one point, the only cause for anxiety being unsound rock at the top. It was with feelings of relief that I found myself on the edge of the crag with lush grass underfoot.

Syd now traversed to the right from the stance below, safeguarded to a decreasing extent as he did so, and inspected the redoubtable crack ; he did not think it would go and joined me at the belay. Returning to the face on the right, the climbing shortly became easy and 50 feet of climbing projected us to a pinnacle-cum-belay of impeccable dimensions ; the following and final pitch was in the same key, the finishing hold being the signal for an emission of sound which masquerades as a yodel and to which many of the recent rock-falls have been attributed.

With one voice the SILVER SLAB CLIMB,* as we had named it, was voted 'most enjoyable,' but rather a fair-weather expedition, as it would be very hard in boots or wet weather. The indulgence of those using the foregoing description of this first ascent must be invoked on the score of inaccuracies of minor detail—it is now some time since the climb was made.

* See page 237.



DRUIM
SHIONNACH

*THE SILVER SLAB CLIMB, W. FACE OF DRUIM SHIONNACH, AONACHAIR CRITH GROUP, INVERNESS-SHIRE.

A steep face climb, provided with a short approach which will no doubt commend itself to those who have enjoyed a plethora of Skye bog. From Glen Cluanic walk up the ridge bounding Coir' an t-Slugain on the East until 2,800 ft contour is reached, and traverse right to the foot of the crag. Between a wide gully in the centre of the crag and two large caves on the left there lie two buttresses separated by a smaller gully. In the centre of the left-hand one of these two a shallow chimney rises, petering out after 50 ft. The climb starts on the face immediately to the left of the chimney. Small cairn.

- (1) 80 feet—Straight up by delicate press movements. Traverse right across chimney to good belay.
- (2) 70 feet—Straight ahead from belay for 6 feet, traverse left and continue up on original line until the slab becomes almost holdless above a good ledge. Climb the crack to the left and traverse right to a good stance and unsatisfactory belay.
- (3) 60 feet—The wall above for 10 feet and a delicate traverse left into a corner. The crack in the corner, the face on the left, rejoining the crack and reaching a grass stance on the edge of the crag (way off). Return to the wall on the right and a shaky belay in 15 feet. Best taken in the corner to the left.
- (4) 50 feet—Straight up, then right, to a pinnacle and belay. After the first 15 feet the climbing becomes easier.
- (5) 30 feet—The wall above, traversing right later, leads to the finish. Done in rubbers and considered to be just Very Severe.

First ascent, August 1st, 1938 : J. W. Haggas, S. Thompson, Phyllis B. White.

P.S. The Eastern Gully, Sron na Ciche, Skye.

First two pitches climbed direct, July 24th, 1938 : J. W. Haggas, S. Thompson.

MY CHOICE

Some may sigh for airy heights,
with slabs all sleek and greasy,
and holdless walls with overhangs
to traverses not so easy.
But give me a chimney, brother,
despite its dirt and slime,
where I can thrust my back and foot
and wriggle up the climb.

These holdless walls are quite all right
for those of fairy build,
and oafs who come into the Lakes
in order to get killed.
But what I like is an arête
with man-size holds to grab
and not to have to trust to faith
on a slimy, slippery slab.

I'm not afraid of mantelshelves
nor cracks of good proportion,
but what I hate to go upon
is a traverse that needs caution.
The climbs I like, I need not add
are those one climbs in ease,
where nothing but an Act of God
could drop one to the screes.

L. Muscroft

THE MOUNTAINS OF MULL

E. C. W. Rudge

Like so many of the Western Isles, Mull has its mountains grouped together in one district, namely, the south. They are fine hills, with striking outlines and a good deal of exposed rock, but few continuous faces or ridges suitable for rock-climbing. Even the great crags of Ben More and A'Chioch are far too broken and rotten to give good climbs ; much of the volcanic stuff of which they are composed is ' dead ' and continually coming down to form vast scree-fans all along the base of the main peaks.

The scenery of this mountainous area of Mull is very beautiful, with great sea-lochs plunging deep into the heart of the hills and smaller inland lochs, such as Loch Ba, Loch Airedeglaish and Loch Fhuaran, almost completely surrounded by them. The mountains themselves, often rising steeply from sea-level, are wild and lonely ; they are devoid both of tracks and cairns (except on their summits), and from their tops wonderful views of island and loch can be seen. Off the west coast of Mull is a mass of islands of all shapes and sizes, from the big low stretch of Tìree with Coll to the north of it, to the strange, conical outlines of Bac Mor (the ' Dutchman's Hat ') and tiny Erisgeir between Staffa and the Ardmeanach coast. Ulva and Gometra form what is almost a continuation of the north shore of Loch Na Keal ; they are desolate, rocky stretches of moorland, volcanic in origin, and in character rather like the north of Skye. Ulva has a beautiful wooded area at its eastern end from which a magnificent view of the hills of Mull is to be seen. Beyond these islands are the Treshnish Isles, while Iona lies off the tip of the Ross of Mull, to which from many viewpoints it appears to be joined.

By far the highest hills in Mull are Ben More and A'Chioch, the former rising over 3,100 feet from the shores of Loch na Keal and the latter being about 200 feet lower. These two

peaks form the opposite ends of a ridge, and they are hundreds of feet higher than any other peak in the island. They have therefore a very striking appearance when viewed from any distance, and especially from the sea ; set in the heart of the mountains which cluster round them like a large family of children round their parents, they dominate the whole district with their lovely shapely summits. However, their outstanding height has one great drawback, since it means that any clouds which are in their neighbourhood settle upon them, and they are often invisible when the other, lower peaks, are quite clear.

My friend and I spent eight days in Mull, and most of the time it rained. However, the last three days were fairly fine and, armed with map and compass, we did not allow the mist and rain to keep us off the hills.

On our first day we climbed up into the mist and traversed the long, undulating ridge of Beinn Fhada, a 2,300-foot cone which forms roughly the central point, or elbow, of a ridge two miles long extending from the south shore of Loch na Keal to Glen Clachaig. At one point on this ridge we found our compasses useless, probably owing to the presence of ironstone in the rock. After over two hours of walking, during which our view was limited to the scenery within about fifty yards of us and we seemed to have negotiated an absolutely interminable series of 'tops,' we descended into Glen Clachaig, which runs from the eastern flank of A'Chioch down to Loch Ba and is over three miles long. Unfortunately we did not get much idea of its real appearance, as the mist was very low and turned to heavy rain soon after we left the ridge of Beinn Fhada. We followed it down to Loch Ba and then walked along the shore of the lake to the hamlet of Knock, where we joined the road to Salen, our headquarters. The four-mile trudge back to this village was relieved by a lift which we got from a passing van.

It may here be stated, that although Salen is the best centre for exploring the hills, it is not ideal since there is always a

longish road-slog to accomplish before reaching them. Still, there seems to be nowhere better, since the other villages such as Craignure and Lochbuie, are even further from the principal hills, and so far as we could ascertain the few small cottages which might be more convenient do not take lodgers. There is plenty of accommodation in Salen, used almost entirely by fishermen, climbers being rare fauna in Mull, and one might camp out, although this would be a somewhat hazardous business since there seems to be no suitable dryish ground near any stream and the rain of Mull has remarkable penetrating qualities! The hotel at Salen has two cars, and hiring them does not come very expensive if, as we did, one shares with other people and is put down at some convenient point. To take one's own car from Oban costs (perhaps fortunately) about £3.

On our second day we walked from Salen up Glen Forsa, and climbed a finely shaped peak near the head of it called Beinn Talaidh. Glen Forsa is a beautiful glen, about seven miles long, it was once the home of many Highland families, but there are now only a handful of shepherds' cottages in it. It contains deer, a herd or two of Highland cattle and a few flocks of sheep. We also saw hares and rabbits, but practically no other animal life. There was, however, the track of a motor-cycle running a long way up into the glen, and this we found out later belonged to the machine used by a shepherd who lived right under the shadow of Beinn Talaidh, five miles up the glen. His wife, who was once the cook at our hotel, gave us tea and was very glad to see us, as she found the life very lonely cut off so far from any centre of population.

We ascended a low, rocky shoulder of Beinn Talaidh, called Beinn Bheig, where my friend reposed a little while I finished the climb by crossing the final pyramid of the mountain over steep scree and grass, descending on the far side into the very remote Coire Bhainn. From this corrie a burn descends steeply through a narrow, rocky gorge; I followed it for some distance and then bore away from it round the

base of Beinn Talaidh to the shepherd's cottage, where I rejoined my friend. Having had tea we returned to Salen in pouring rain, which had come on shortly before I reached the summit of Beinn Talaidh, accompanied by dense mist which had robbed me of a very fine view.

Two pouring wet days followed, during which we did not go higher than about 1,400 feet, to the summit of Beinn na Uamha, though we got in an interesting walk along the north shore of Loch na Keal and saw a cargo of timber being loaded on to a little loch steamer appropriately called the 'Spartan.' The little boat had been beached on the shingle, and the pine trunks were hoisted on board by a derrick, being carried down to the boat on the backs of horses. When the tide came in the loading was still continued, until the water became too deep for the men and horses to stand up in it.

On the following morning I saw what looked like sunshine near Craignure, and pointed out to my friend the desirability of investigation. Four of us accordingly hired a car and went to Craignure, where we arrived in rain. However, we started off with the intention of climbing two peaks above the village, named respectively Mainnir na Fiadh (the Peak of the Deer) and Dun da Ghaoithe (the Headland of the Winds), both about 2,500 feet high. Our optimism was fully justified: the rain stopped, the mist cleared and we had a grand walk over the tops all the way back to the entrance of Glen Forsa, down a gradually descending ridge about seven miles long. During this walk we had splendid views of the peaks of Mull, and of Morvern on the other side of the Sound of Mull. We also had glimpses of peaks on the mainland beyond Loch Linnhe, but clouds obscured all the higher hills in that direction. During our descent we were much struck by the great variety of rock we found. Mull is said to be a geologist's paradise, and judging from the numerous different kinds of stone which we saw, of every imaginable colour and texture, this is easy to believe. We were specially struck with a large

number of large, roundish rough textured stones looking very like haggises, or partially decayed thunderbolts. We presumed they were of volcanic origin, but none of us remembered having seen any like them before, in Skye or elsewhere. Just before reaching the end of the long ridge, we were suddenly confronted by a large herd of deer which crossed our path only a few yards from us. There were three or four fine stags with the herd.

Our next expedition was the ascent of Ben More, followed by that of other peaks on our way homewards. Ben More is the mecca of every walker who has designs on the attainment of immortality in Mull: some of these worthy souls are so determined that their success shall be enshrined in literature for evermore that they write in the visitors' book of the inn at Salen such words as: 'Climbed Ben More,' or, to make certain that there shall be no doubt about it: 'Climbed to the *summit* of Ben More.' Considering that Ben More is no more difficult to climb than Great Gable—though it is true it has no track up it—this seems a little superfluous. Our intention was to ascend Ben More, followed by A'Chioch, Beinn Fhada and perhaps Beinn A'Chraig, so back to Knock whence we should be transported by car to Salen. It was a fine day, and we hoped for some views. However, Ben More refused to lift his 'bonnet' and we reached his summit-cairn in dense mist. After the consumption of sandwiches, the question of the proper route to A'Chioch was debated resulting in divided opinion—and here I must justify the advice given by the only member of the 'Fell and Rock' who was present by saying that he was right! Anyway, the result was that we descended by the way we had come as far as the base of the final peak of the mountain, by which time we were clear of the mist and could plainly see the whole of A'Chioch and the ridge connecting it with Ben More. I then climbed up to this ridge where it met the main peak of Ben More, and followed it over the summit of A'Chioch down to the bealach between that peak and Beinn Fhada. The rest of the

party contoured round the big corrie below the ridge, and we became reunited on the summit of Beinn Fhada. The following of the Ben More—A'Chioch ridge needed some care, since it was narrow and the rock was very loose. Steep slopes of rock and scree in alternate layers fell away for about eight hundred feet on the south side, while to the north the ridge dropped sheer to steep scree slopes over a hundred feet below its crest. It was an interesting bit of scrambling, needing care but without real difficulty. The long ridge from the summit of A'Chioch down to the bealach was also interesting ; it was steep at the top and the great, precipitous flanks of the mountain fell away on both sides. However, it eased off lower down and ultimately flattened out on the bealach. If one started the ascent of Ben More from this pass, and took A'Chioch first, it would be rather like making the ascent of Tryfaen by the north ridge, followed by that of Glyder Fach by the north-east ridge, with the difference that the rock of which Ben More and A'Chioch are composed is a great deal more rotten than that of Tryfaen—though perhaps not of Glyder Fach !

From Beinn Fhada we came down over a little cone called Beinn nan Gabhar (the Peak of the Goats) to Knock, passing on the way through a most curious little glen inaccessible—or so it appeared—in its lower section owing to a deep-cut gorge, formed by the junction of two smaller clefts down which flowed streams from the broad main ridge of Beinn Fhada. On our right as we descended was the curious, long ridge of Beinn A'Chraig, with knobs of grey rock sticking up everywhere through the grass of its lower slopes and pink scree, like that of the Red Cuillin, falling from its crest. Beinn nan Gabhar was covered with heather, which seems to be rare in Mull, it reached above our knees and was full of numerous pitfalls in the form of loose boulders.

This was our last mountain expedition in Mull. The next day we spent on Ulva, wandering over the moors and bathing. We had some good views of the islands and were thoroughly

lazy—which was just as well since everyone else on Ulva seemed to be the same ! We had to wait an hour for the ferry while the local innkeeper, who worked it, tried to repair the engine of his motor-boat with the help (?) of a youth who was camping near the inn. When they thought they had successfully dealt with the trouble, they solemnly rowed the motor-boat out into the middle of the loch and tried to start the engine. Prolonged efforts having failed to produce the slightest result, they solemnly rowed it back again. We thought we had seldom seen such a touching example of energy being wasted through lack of a little foresight. By this time signs of activity were visible on the opposite shore of the loch, where the ferry-boat was : the Postman had arrived, and it seemed quite likely that the innkeeper's brother, who was asleep near the boat, might wake up and bring him over. For some time this hope showed no signs of realisation ; in fact the Postman himself seemed quite content to stay where he was. But duty, after all, is duty—even in Ulva, and after chatting long and amiably with the handful of locals assembled by the jetty, he got into the boat.

Half-an-hour later we had left Ulva behind us and were on our way back to Salen. We had had fine weather all day ; there it had poured with rain.

THE GRÉPON : MER DE GLACE ROUTE

Brenda Ritchie

On the 17th July, 1938, a party consisting of G. R. Speaker, Brenda Ritchie, and Joseph Georges set off from the Montenvers for the Tour Rouge hut. The Grépon by the Mer de Glace face had been one of our greatest ambitions. For my part, I used at one time to know by heart most of the chapter in which the first ascent is described in 'On High Hills.' A climb which is pictured in the mind for ten years, and then realised, is dangerously likely to disappoint us. But this climb was to come up to and beyond expectation.

Since the building of the Tour Rouge shelter in 1934, the route has been made very much more accessible ; but the difficulty of the climbing will prevent it from being overcrowded, short of the disgrace of fixed ropes.

To get to the hut itself is an expedition of some charm. We took three and three-quarter hours' easy going from the Montenvers. It is a difficult piece of route-finding, though Joseph Georges made it seem easy, to thread one's way at the right height through the steep rounded slabs of the Trelatête shoulder. A short pull up the Trelatête glacier, and a detour up steep slabs to avoid an impassable rimaye, bring one to the foot of the rocks. From that level they rise up in the continuous wall of close on four thousand feet, up which the route lies. The 'hut' or shelter, 500 feet up this wall, perched precariously on a sloping platform, is of the dog-kennel variety—no window, and not high enough to stand upright. It was very nearly filled to bursting point with eight people that evening. There were a party of two, one of them the woman climber of the Grandes Jorasses North face, bound as we were for the Grépon, and a party led by Camille Tournier, bound for the Aiguille de la République.

When we stumbled somewhat giddily out of the hut next morning at 3-30 a.m., the great sweeps of rock above and

round us were lit by brilliant moonlight. Joseph's determined efforts to boil some tea on an uncertain-tempered and explosive Primus stove were for him possibly the most dangerous moments of the expedition. We left the hut at 4-45 ; climbing begins at once up a succession of not too easy chimneys and corners, leading into the immense slabby hollow, too broad to be described as a couloir, which runs down the upper two-thirds of the face. Here Joseph took a line on the right for some way up, till it was possible to cross the water-worn slabs fairly easily. About an hour after leaving the hut we had seen two figures walking rapidly up the glacier to the foot of the rocks. These two, though originally two hours behind us, now caught us up ; they were the guide Hermann Steuri and a young Swiss woman climber, very good and very fast. They had started from the Montenvers, and their pace must have been terrific. They soon passed us, and though Steuri was delayed by taking the wrong route a little higher up, he finished well ahead of us. Record-breaking speed of this sort, admirable perhaps to watch, would not be so admirable, to most of us, to take part in.

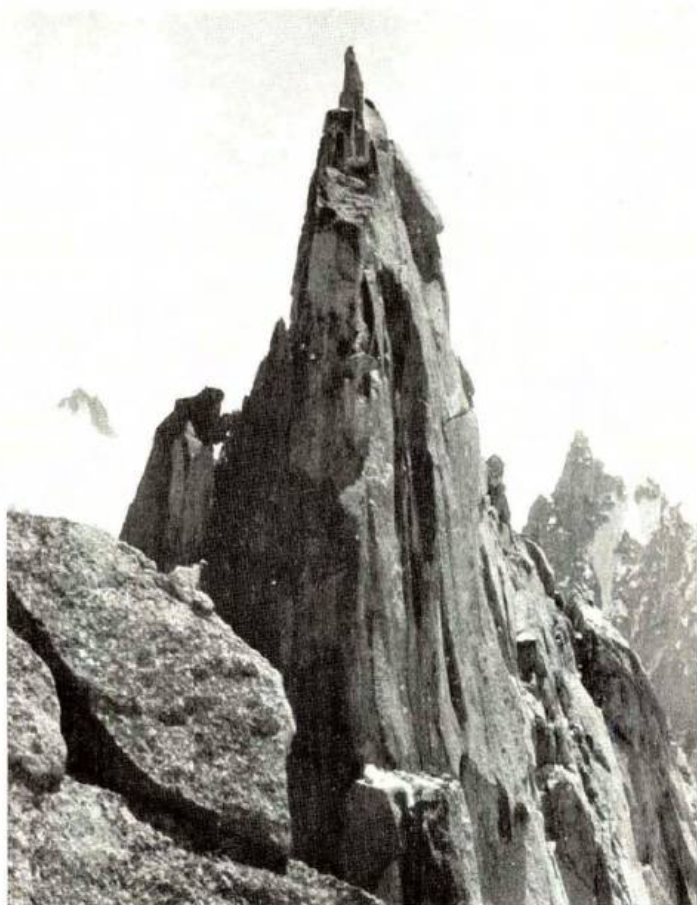
We were now on a broad slabby ridge bounding the water courses on the left ; the route follows up this ridge to a point where it sharpens and narrows into a horizontal neck of rock, with a deep narrow gully on the left. Here one has to rope down about 50 feet into the gully, and traverse out the other side. All this time the Aiguille de Roc was towering on our left ; from now on we were to climb alongside it, its fantastic leaning spire apparently growing in height as we climbed. Not till we reached the summit ridge of the Grépon could we look down on it. We found ourselves on a great buttress rising for perhaps 600 feet, broad and vaguely defined at the base, narrowing to a sharp crest higher up. Above the platform hereabouts, known as the 'Niche des Amis,' the rock stiffens and becomes more exacting. There were hard cracks, and one very hard slab where Joseph took a knee. The rock is the roughest imaginable granite, and since it is not a

polished highway such as the ordinary route up the Grépon, the original roughness remains and is a great help either to nails or kletterschuhe, though somewhat detrimental to the fingers. Much of the crack climbing consisted in using, as balance or pushing holds, flake edges, sharp and rough, running vertically up and down. Occasionally there were discouraging-looking cracks apparently constructed on vertical lines only, which on acquaintance revealed sloping or even horizontal inlets and edges. So far we had managed to climb in boots—inspired, as far as I was concerned, largely by the ignoble desire to avoid carrying them. We came, however, to the top of our long buttress, which ends in a narrow shoulder abutting on the summit wall. The second pitch on this wall was perhaps the hardest on the climb (always excepting the Knubel crack and the '60-metre chimney'); and having himself climbed it in boots with deceptive ease, Joseph suggested that we might put on our kletterschuhe. It was a short crack in a holdless slab, one leaf of rock overlapping another—a simple bold vertical line, and this time without any pleasant horizontal surprises. It had to be climbed by lay-back, with the great disadvantage that the wall or slab on which the feet pressed was in the same plane as the pull of the arms, not at right angles. Joseph's effortless progress up this in boots was to our mind a magnificent piece of climbing, though as we watched him go up we did not realise the difficulty. From this time on to the Grépon summit, the two of us who followed wore kletterschuhe, though Joseph continued in boots up to the Brèche. Above the short but severe crack pitch there comes the 60-metre chimney, where Joseph Knubel climbed a hiatus of holdless slab by nicking the point of his axe into minute cracks. We looked up at it as we passed along the detour to the left, the route now ordinarily taken, quite hard enough to be interesting, but simplicity itself compared with the chimney. It seems strange that this turning movement, along an easy traverse and up broken rocks round a corner, did not suggest itself to



G. G. Milner

GRÉPON
from Requin



Geoffrey Barratt

GRÉDON
from Grands Charmoz

that first party. The chimney itself, however, looks possible enough, till one studies the wicked-looking little overhang at the top, and realises that there are no holds at all for several feet above the overhang.

We were now climbing with boots in our sacks, except on those few pitches where they were hauled up. Joseph was always ready and willing to do this, but the process took up time, and also the energy of the leader, which should be husbanded, so we tried to do so as little as possible. We soon found out the paralysing drag of heavy sacks on raised arm muscles, and their devastating effect on balance.

Above the 60-metre chimney there are some almost vertical chimneys one above the other, hard but short, which led us at last to the Brèche Balfour-Grépon on the summit ridge, at 11-45 a.m.—seven hours after leaving the hut.

There now remained the route up to the summit, the 'purest' and most direct being the famous and fearsome Knubel crack on the Mer de Glace face. Steuri, whose voice we now heard above us, had traversed on to the Nantillons side and taken the comparatively easy Dunod chimney, which is probably the custom for most parties. It would have been asking too much to expect Joseph to lead the Knubel crack after leading the two of us by himself, carrying a heavy sack, and several times hauling up sacks with boots. But, as the other party were already on top, Joseph climbed it with a rope let down from above as safeguard. He took hold of the rope once, as far as we could see, for one step. The crack is in two sections, the bottom one being really a slab with an overhanging leaf of wall on the left; it is almost holdless, and the crack under the overhanging wall, which provides the only handhold for several moves, is often too small to get in one finger. In the top section the rock bulges outwards, and one has to emerge from under an overhanging roof either into a sort of monolith crack, hopelessly smooth, or onto the vertical face to the left. The whole height of this Knubel crack hangs over the whole mountain side below—the wall

immediately under the summit is vertical and the crack itself is shallow, so that one looks down the 4,000 feet to the glacier with very little in between. G.R.S. went up the first part in most workmanlike style, then lost contact for a moment when getting out of the overhang. I struggled up, utterly insecure, as far as the steep face on the left of the crack, and there fell off, thoroughly, with all four limbs, as far as a tight rope would allow.

For this grand climb we had perfect weather ; also a warm night and early morning, invaluable when one has to begin with bare fingers on difficult rocks at four or five o'clock.

DAWN IN THE HILLS

Here in these inviolable sanctuaries
tread the stately measure of our dance.
Music from their endless symphonies
the winds shall play for us, and chance
draw back the curtain of the sky to show
that miracle of dawn, the herald glow.

Alone with the sun and his nativity
earth takes on a new divinity.
Swiftly the light wings over many hills,
Olympian splendour all the mountain fills,
Here is the face of God not far to seek,
His shadow is the lighted glory of the peak.

Marjorie Scott Johnston

REFLECTIONS ON EVEREST

N. E. Odell

In the last number of this Journal the Editor, our President, remarked: ' . . . given a succession of five or six fine days the supreme struggle for the highest summit on the earth's crust may at last be brought to a happy and final conclusion ; with Everest climbed Himalayan exploration will then settle down to a long period of peaceful progressive expansion.' Unfortunately we failed because the necessary five or six fine days, accompanied by favourable conditions on the upper rocks of the mountain, were not granted to us.

As is well known, this expedition, the seventh to visit the mountain, broke very considerably with the past in the matter of its resources and organization. Instead of a large and somewhat expensive expedition, the doctrine latterly advanced principally by Shipton and Tilman was adopted—a doctrine successfully put into effect in their summer travels on the southern Himalayan slopes especially. This in the main implied a small party, travelling light, with a minimum of stores and equipment, and prepared on occasion to live off the country.

Although comparisons are sometimes irritating, yet it would seem that in several ways we had this year almost more bad fortune than any of the previous expeditions. In spite of an earlier start from India by almost three weeks, we were delayed by heavy falls of fresh snow on the passes over into Tibet ; and then after an earlier arrival at Rongbuk by six days than any previous parties we fell a prey to various ailments of which the worst was so-called ' influenza,' which put four members largely out of action for a time. But it was not illness that prevented our making a full attempt on the North Face of Everest—then comparatively clear of snow—at this time, but the low temperature and cold winds

which we found prevailing high up, and even below the level of the North Col (23,000 feet).

It would certainly seem that the chances of an early party finding conditions in these respects, in late April and early May, suitable or possible for a successful attempt on the summit, are extremely remote. Our decision this year to retreat to the Kharta Valley was in the circumstances justified, for all of us but one returned to the mountain in mid-May in such fettle, and so well acclimatized, that in a 'normal' year, meteorologically speaking, our chances of success would have been very high indeed.

Something is to be said in favour of a larger party, capable of making the early attempt and expending itself high up despite the frigid conditions, as well as having the reserves if needs be to launch later attempts. It is in that respect that the small mobile party cannot hope to cope, with any degree of certainty, with such a fickle giant as Everest. In a meteorologically fortunate year the small light party has perhaps as much chance of gaining the summit as the larger one, but we know that such years are few and far between. No doubt the small party can operate under optimum conditions on the southern side of the Himalaya, where accessibility to India provides for most emergencies. But these Everest expeditions are, by reason of the remote position of the mountain and the long approach, in quite a different category. An Everest expedition operates for anything up to six months, from a period of real winter in Tibet to relatively genial summer conditions, and consequently the extreme cutting-down of spare clothing and articles of equipment as practised on this year's expedition, is unwise and apt to be highly risky. I have myself travelled too far in the arctic and elsewhere not to appreciate what the loss of an important garment, for instance, may mean! Improvisation is perhaps a desirable expedient for the aspiring explorer of Everest, or any other remote region, but it has its safe limits.

Frankly our more compact and smaller party of this year was a success as a party, and much of our equipment may have been reasonably sufficient, but in other respects the cult for lightness and mobility was in my opinion carried unnecessarily far.

As to the important question of the provisioning of this year's expedition, I believe that we could have achieved more at times than we did, and some of us might have returned in better condition, if our supplies had been more ample and more suitable. The surplus stores which had been left at Rongbuk Monastery by the 1936 Expedition were a veritable godsend to our party, and it was amusing to observe the relish with which these 'luxury' foods were demolished by all members of our party, particularly those who in theory held the view that such foods were not only unnecessary but to be avoided! Personally, I am no believer in the necessity for, say, truffled quails (1922) and champagne (1922, 1924, etc.), though nearly all of us regretted the refusal of a generous offer of champagne, but I do believe that for a sustained sojourn in really high altitudes, a carefully selected and varied diet is essential, and that some alcohol has its uses after a particularly exhausting day. As most people know one's palate and appetite become very capricious at high altitudes, and it is not to be expected that badly cooked porridge, or an inferior brand of pemmican, or a single rasher of bacon for breakfast, is enough to keep the body and soul of even the most devoted Everest climber together. The mountaineer on a protracted campaign is apt to suffer at times from staleness as much as any other athlete who is kept in training for lengthy periods, and some means ought to be available for combating that demoralizing condition. Valuable advice in respect of diet should be expected from the medical officer accompanying an expedition, but unfortunately ours was not consulted before our departure.

Then again the doctrine of living off the country is definitely inapplicable to, and undesirable to try to practise

in Tibet. For one thing local supplies of food are non-existent in some places or hard to come by in others, and where purchase from the peasants is possible it only involves them in inevitable shortage, even to the point of famine, during the succeeding winter. It should be remembered that one of the great objections of the Lhasa authorities to these expeditions is their tendency to upset the internal economy of the country. Indeed, on more than one occasion when local headmen have been asked the reason for their objections to Europeans entering their country, they have given the cogent reply that they believed money and Western civilisation could do nothing for them but promote unhappiness, and we should, as privileged visitors from that somewhat debatable civilisation, respect this point of view.

Finally, I am not satisfied that dispensing with a transport officer, as we did this year, has as much advantage as disadvantage. He can become an actual member of the climbing party if necessary, when his duties of transport to the foot of the mountain are completed, an arrangement which in several instances earlier expeditions to Everest have made. It seems unnecessary and even undesirable for the leader to bear the onus of responsibility in this respect. Certainly the rôles of interpreter and transport officer should be kept distinct.

A party to Everest will be better advised to adopt a compromise between the lavishness of some earlier expeditions and the frugality of this year's. I still consider that the expedition of 1924 was a model for all time, for if the cost of the unsatisfactory oxygen equipment of that year were deducted, the total expenditure was by no means excessive, and the actual accomplishments of that particular expedition have never so far been surpassed.

As to scientific researches on Everest expeditions, no encouragement was given this year to such work. Continental expeditions to the Himalaya never fail to include scientific specialists, either as such or as climbers, so that full advantage

can be taken of the opportunities given to visit unknown or little known areas. As far as Tibet is concerned, with due tact and care one can avoid offending a people unenlightened in these matters. However, the question of native prejudices has often been unduly exaggerated—especially in regard to my own pursuit—geology; actually at various places in Tibet this year, lamas and others were offering for sale fossils and other odd rock specimens! What they had done with the devils which, in their belief, had in their collecting been released from the ground, did not transpire!

I may add that I was able to accomplish this year a fair amount of geological, glaciological and meteorological research, by which our knowledge of this fascinating and, scientifically, still largely unknown Everest region should be extended.

In spite of differences of outlook and opinion as here indicated, our party this year was a very harmonious one, for we all intended it to be so. Divergences of opinion regarding expeditionary methods, which must always tend to be present in any such group of individuals, especially if many of them have already had the responsibility of leadership, in no way ever passed into expressions of personal feeling or animosity even under the trying conditions of really high altitudes. A great many other expeditions—not to Everest alone—have given rise to much controversy, but this nearly always has led to some improvement in technique or management.

Once again we had to leave the great mountain unclimbed and the happy and final conclusion envisaged by our President seems indefinitely postponed. As far as the main objective is concerned, nothing more has been accomplished than by previous expeditions, except perhaps the 'technical' achievement of having crossed the North Col from west to east—incidentally the highest pass in the world that has as yet been traversed.

As to the future, Everest can and will be climbed; and it is to be hoped, of course, that it will be climbed by a

British party, since Britons have already expended so much energy, not to speak of lives and money, in the many attempts to date, in the same way as our German friends, for instance, have done upon Nanga Parbat and Kangchenjunga. But given an amply experienced and well organized party, two conditions are essential to success: one, the customary special permit from Lhasa to enter the country, which few seem to know, is by no means readily come by and is only given on particularly important occasions: and, two, a sufficiently long interval in May and early June, between the cessation of the winter winds and cold and the arrival of the heavy monsoon snows, which last, as was fully demonstrated to us this year, make the upper rocks and summit of Everest inaccessible.

George Basterfield

We were sitting in restful comfort round the most hospitable hearth on earth, pipes smoking peacefully, when out of the cold dark night there drifted in to the inner warmth and calm reminiscent quiet, the vocal strains of an old hunting song. Faintly audible at first, the quaintly pleasing sounds of both lyric and melody increased steadily in volume, indicating the gradual approach of the singer.

'Awe throe lile Furness tha chassed 'im full 'ard
 Bold Reynard wer mekken throe 'Ossack churchyard
 'E lissend the music so sweetly did play
 But the time o' the service he cudent well stay.'

At this point of the song 'sneck lifted,' 'dower opp'nd,' and 'Owd Jim' lurched into our midst with:—

'Tally ho, tally ho, tally ho! 'Ark forrard gud 'ounds, tally ho.'

At Jim's entrance we rose as one man and joining riotously we ended and repeated the chorus before resuming our seats.

'The Drunken Drake,' some couple of miles distant over the hill, had evidently discharged its patrons, for 'Owd Jim,' although he always *walked out* of that place within the meaning of the act, 'he nivver reckoned to quit afoer t'owd clock in t'bar telt 'leven on 'em.' Aye, Jim was a full-timer, and could carry as much as t'next man, 'an' wot's moer, nivver mist a day's work i' 'is life throe drinken.'

Yes, he could carry his whack could Jim 'na doot.' One could visualise him leaving the old inn, swaying now right, now left, then in a circle, as though on a pivot, his body regularly and inevitably assuming the perpendicular between each resilient movement. Aye, Jim 'wer nivver narn ta chew t'mud.' One could only conclude that not only were his legs hollow, but his feet also, when he entered the portal of the 'Drunken Drake,' and at 'leven on 'em tha mun 'a bin fair brossen wi' beer' else whence this wonderful balance; top

heavy he certainly was, 'yit 'e soer wer moer weighty below.'

Down he comes, through the stile, over the rough fells, through sundry fields, along the narrow wriggling trod half-way down the steep banks of the long and deep tarn, on down through the deeper darkness of the woods, threading its twisting uneven track down to the beckside, then more stiles and fields and finally the narrow humpty backed bridge spanning the beck. This was Jim's bewildering road home, two miles of it, to 'Rosemary Cottage' from the 'Drunken Drake' on the winter's night I speak.

No doubt he had sung, on his way down, many of the countless verses of the old hunting song, bellowing into the stark night the tallyho chorus between each verse, meantime heedless of the many formidable obstacles that lay in the path, any one of which would have sufficed to benight a perfectly sober person. Not so Jim, 'e wer ivver narn ta git yam afoer clock struck twelve an' up betimes i' t'morn. Aye, afoer brekfast an' awe.'

And so at last in he lurched and standing with his back to the log fire he continued to regale us with his song. Jim soloed on and on whilst we entered at every chorus and tallyhoed until we could tallyho no more. Rhythm was perfect, both sound and movement, for the while he sang he swayed fireward and forward, and elsewhere, at such dangerous angles that we all rose in unison to save his apparent risk of instant cremation or a cracked skull threatened by each momentary orientation, resuming our seats together again as he inevitably assumed the alternating vertical. His swaying form thus became a human baton as we rose and stooped to the slow measure which was rendered true to style in a long-drawn-out-drunken-drawl interspersed with loud and prolonged tallyho's. Exhausted, at last Jim sat down amongst us, receiving our unanimous applause in silence, elbows on knees and face buried in his hands. We all held a deep regard for 'Owd Jim.' He was one of the last of a school that

is fast becoming extinct. A sturdy hard-headed son of nature full of a droll yet subtle humour that lurked in and about his many quaint yarns, every one of which he vouched were 'dead true, may a nivver stir fra t'spot as I live.'

Curly, who was a native of the district, could speak the dialect well, and this night as on previous occasions, he set Jim off yarning by an inquiry concerning a new gun.

'Na Jim, na' thas gitt'n "Squire Sands" off thi chest, let's be narn 'owe t'noo gun's doen' on, 'asta gitt'n ote yit wi' it?'

'Gitt'n ote did ta saa, Curly? Aye, nit 'afe, moer an a cud git yam wid yance er twice,' saying which, Jim rose and thrusting his right arm up into the flickering gloom, above the hanging lamp, produced a brand new double barrelled sporting rifle. Sitting again, he placed the gun across his knees and allowed his gaze to pass slowly from one end to the other, caressing it the while with fond pride of ownership. 'Aye,' he repeated, 'moer an a can git yam wid an' owny 'ad t'weppen a week cum' t'morn, Sunda' ta bi soor.' Thars a weppen ta swank on; trubel is, tha nars Curly, sic a weppen mak's job verra near nowt nowadays, partickler fer chaps sic as missel as can shut, nivver narn ta miss yer nar, nit ivver, nit even wid t'owd gun as still 'angs oop aboon, jelles as blazes o' this yan.

'Yer mun kna' chaps, in t'owden days sic like guns wer nit ta be 'add, why bullet's yam' awmost afoer trigger's pult wi' a weppen o' this crackter. Aye, in t'owden times foak git set oop wi *gert*, *lang*, *thin guns*; nit far off as lang as a gradla larch, owny nit sa thick, aye, I reckon yan on em wud nobbut aboot git thru into this 'ere spot an git doer shut on't; aye, m'app'n jist aboot manish ta git it in,' he added, glancing round the roomy kitchen with measuring eyes. 'Aye, *gert*, *lang*, *thin guns*, tha' wer, yit tha' wer a'reet ta be doin' wid i' them days. Oop ta daet i'ther time yer nar.'

'Na Jim, tha's fair bustin' to git summat sed aboot thy ancestors an t'roed tha' 'andled *gert*, *lang*, *thin guns* in t'owden

days, sa git thissel gaen wile thi mouth's 'ot.' This from Curly, who knew the moment to strike.

Jim was full ripe for yarning, and after a general charging of pipes we settled back for the feast of 'truth' that we knew would flow 'fra yan as nivver t'owd a lee.'

'Well, chaps, I mind mi fadder yance tellen' ma on 'is gert granfadder, chap syam nyam as ours an' a crack shut jist syam as missel, sa wer fadder an awe, nivver narn ta miss. Well this gert—gert-granfadder o' mine as mi fadder tells on, carrit yan o' these *gert, lang, thin guns*, an' yan day 'e bethowt 'issel' ta ga duck shuttin' away oot on t'mosses. Well nar suner 'e gits ta t'mosses w'en by gock! cuppel o' ducks reet oot in t'middel ot moss! Thowt 'e'd 'ave a shut. Sa 'e begins ta git 'is *gert, lang, thin gun* riddy. Sa round 'e gars scrafflin fer a dry fagget an afoer many minits 'e fynds yan that'll mak' shift. Well, 'e leets oop fagget an' 'e leets oop gun, taks aym an' pulls trigger. Well, 'e thowt charge wer a lang time cummen down t'barrel, sa ligger' butt end on t'grass 'e gars reet along ta t'muzzle end an liftin' it oop taks a luke down t'barrel ta see if ote wer doen on. By gock aye, charge wer cummen' oop a'reet, sa ligger t'muzzle end on t'grass 'e gars along back tull butt end an' gitten gun well oop t'll 'is showder 'e taks syam aym as afoer an soer enuff afoer lang 'e spots charge trav'len' t'll ducks. Well, ducks 'app'nd ta be stannin behint yan anudder, sidyways like, an' bein' off their g'ard fer time bein' tha' nivver spotted bullets cummen. Well, true as am tellen on yer, if charge did na plew' its ru'ad reet throe baith on 'em, aye, na doot it wer gud judgment. Mind yer, it mite 'a bin along time agen afoer 'e git a cuppel o' ducks stannin' behint yan anudder in sic a fashion an' takken na notice jist as bullets wer riddy ta strike, 'owivver mi gert-gert-granfadder 'e gits 'is cuppel o' ducks a'reet an' 'e gits 'em stuffed an' framed, aye, yan 'e framed 'issel an' t'other wer framed bi mi gert-gert-granmudder, aye, yan apiece, an' baith claymed 'em gud eatin'. Mind yer, i' them days speed wer nowt ta crack on, charge wer nobbut slaw

cummen', but thar mun a bin a deal a power in t'charge cummen fra sic a weppen. Aye—aye, yer ken tak it fra yan as kens, foak mun 'a' kep' ther eyes skinned i' them days ta keep gaen wi' sic weppens, o' co'rse, cummen forradder a'wile manniferers git moer ginger int'll syam guns as am tellen on, aye.

I mind mi fadder yance tellen on 'is granfadder gaen bi t'syam nyam as oors mind yer, wile am thinken on, aye, an' 'e git 'issel fitted oop wi yan o' these *gert, lang, thin guns* as 'ad bin 'otted oop wi' a bit o' kick in 'im. Tha' do say as t'owd feller wer' an awd skinflint gaen bi t'nick nyam o' "Nivey Joe." Aye, yer nar chaps, t'owd farmers i' them days wer oop agin 'ard nater', oop i' these 'ills an' dales, an' tha' mun scrat pritty 'ard ta git a livin'. Aye, 'ave 'eard mi fadder tell on, as 'ow, w'en t'owd lad wer oot shutten 'e wud ivver bide 'is time, aye, 'ours an' 'ours on end, sa as ta git a reet gud bag wi' yan shut, yer see, chaps, time wer cheap ta be doin' wid an' powder an' shot mun be bowt dearly. Well, yan day t'owd lad gaes oop t'dale wi' a notion o' gitten' an odd partridge or so. Well, 'e wer trapsin, idel like, oop t'beck-side wen 'e spotted, awe of a suddin, summet like thirteen partridges grazing ower on t'uther side o' t'watter. By gock! 'e thote 'e'd 'ave a crack at 'em, an' sa, ta git 'odd on as monni as 'e cud wi' yan shot 'e med oop 'is mind ta 'ang on a bit, sa fust 'e laites a dry fagget an' thin liggs down on 'is stomic behint a gert staen an' wotches an' wotches. Well, 'e liggid thur snaykin' aboot a nower an a 'afe, an' slarly but soerly a'wt thirteen birds git thersels straggled oot inta summet o' a line, sa 'e begin ta git *gert, lang, thin gun* riddy. Sune fagget wer leet an' gun wer' leet an' by gock! Na suner wer aym tuk an' trigger pul't w'en, b'leeve it er b'leeve it not, a chitty-wood-hen flew o'ert beck reet i' front o' t'partridges, an' wot's moer, tak it or leave it, a pike rose fra' t'beck ta git chitty-wood-hen, an' it's God's Awmitey trewth am tellen yer, t'owd divvil bagged t'lot, aye, thirteen partridges, chitty-wood-hen an' pike an' awe, an' wots

moer . . .' Here, though Jim's lips continued to move in rapid motion, the sound of his voice was lost in the loud chorus of doubt that greeted this 'tall' unburdening. Jim, however, soon overcame this noisy interruption, quelling it by raising his voice to a still higher pitch of excitement, and with arms outstretched, commanding silence, he bade us, 'odd yer wisht, will yer, w'ile a git yer tel't finish on't. '. . . wot's moer, an' may I nivver speak agen if a lee, na suner 'ad charge left barrel w'en yon *gert, lang, thin gun* kicked, and stunned a hare as wer rizzin' fra' cover jist behind 'im, aye, sum hare it wer an awe. Aye. Now it mite 'a' bin a lang time agen afoer a hare wud be liggin' reet behind a chap as awriddy git sic a bag. But there it is jist as mi fadder tel't on, an fadder wer nivver narn ta tell lees jist as soer as 'e wer nivver narn to miss.

'Aye, t'owd lad git yam that time a'reet an' it's ivver bin t'syam reet oop t'll this verra day, wen t'nyam wer reet, shutten wer reet, ax enny yan yerva mind i' these parts an' yerl git syam tale, aye, ivvery time.'

Curly, who was still hankering, questioned this unerring history of Jim's forbears in a manner that produced the desired result.

'Na' Jim, doesn't tha' think if tha' gaes back a bit tha' mite rake oop yan o' thy relations as wer nit reet oop ta t' mark. Ya na, Jim, tha's nit gitten' away awetagidder wi' this 'nivver-narn-ta-miss-bizness,' if tha'll own oop t'll yan mistack wi' yan or tudder on 'em wiz moer likely ter believe rest o't bledder as tha' cums oot wi'.'

'Tha' nivver sez, dusta,' Jim returned. 'Well, ef it'll 'elp tha' ta b'leeve trewth al gi' t'show away for t'first time. It's jist cum t'll mi mind as mi fadder yance telt on a gert-grand-uncle as kind o' let us down a peg. Aye it wer away, away back a monni yars sin' now. Mi fadder t'owd mi wi shame on t'mistack an' exed ma ta ferget it. But now tha's brote charge a mite as well git it off ma chest.

'This 'ere gert-grand-uncle o' mine, as I speak on, nivver

'eld our nyam tha siz Curly, an' this na doot is t'reason o' t'mistack. 'E wer nobbut 'afe brudder t'll owd "Nivey Joe" an' carrit anudder nyam awetagidder, wot nyam it wer is na consarn now, enuff to nar as it wer nit syam nyam as ours. Well, wedder er nit, t'owd divvil wer in t'farmin, syam as wot our chaps wer, an' naterally 'e 'andled yan o' these *gert*, *lang*, *thin* guns, them bein' aw't ga wi' foak reet threw t'dales at time I speak on. Well, yan neet, this 'afe wit-nit gars oot int'll yard an' fynds 'afe a scoer on 'is lile round stacks awe moowed oop wi' gert rats, aye, there tha wer, scooten round an' round like owd 'arry. Well, na suner 'e gits seet on 'em w'en in 'e gaes an' gits 'is *gert*, *lang*, *thin gun*. Thote 'e wud 'ave a bit on a shut like, an' git rid. Sa snatchin' oop a bit o' dry kindlin' 'e leets it oop, leets oop gun an' takkin' aym, pulls trigger. Well aym wer 'app'n awe reet, yer ken, owny rats, insted on 'em runnin' i' strate lines, tha' kep' scrafflen round t' stacks, muttrin' ta thersel's, "'Ere we gar rount mulberry bush! Ha! ha!" Well, nat'rally, gun bein' sa lang, an' stonnin well oot beont stacks, rats git away wid it ivvery time. Sa t'owd lad 'e git ta thinken a lile bit, an' nex' morn 'e gaes down ta t'blacksmiths an' 'as t'barrel on 'is *gert*, *lang*, *thin gun* shapen round, summet syam as 'afe a 'oop, yer nar, like wot gaes round tubs, sa as ta mek it fit round stacks, sista? Well, neet cum an' int'll yard 'e gars chucklin' i' 'is whiskers on't trick 'e wer garn ta play on t'rats. Well, soer enuff rats wer up an' doin' on, playen ring-a-ring-a-roses round stacks syam as neet afoer. "Recto! mi lively lads," churtled t'owd lad, "'odd on w'ile a git fagget an' al' bi wid yer." Na suner sed an' it wer dun, fagget leet, gun leet, barrel rount stack, aym tuk, an trigger pult, jist as 'afe a scoer er gert wackers scraffled fra seet roun' t'sack wer gun wer fit, by gock it wer nit 'afe a bang ider. 'E git weppen rare loaded, 'oping ta git a gay lock wi' yan shut. Well I mun tell yer chaps awe 'is trubble went for nowt nivver a rat did 'e git. Sa about six week later, w'en 'e wer louzed fra t'ospittel, fust job 'e git dun wer ta ga an' git

parrel straten'd oot agen. Aye, na doot 'e wer luken forrard t'll time w'en ligger an sitt'n wud cum as easy as afoer 'e ganged ta t'blacksmith wi' 'is *gert, lang, thin gun*, ta git barrel bent. Mind yer, as I tel't on at start, 'e wer nit syam nyam as us, 'er gun wud nivver a cum t'll 'is mind i' case o' rats ; nay, rats want nowt wi' guns, let alacn *gert, lang, thin 'uns*. Nay, nobb't a dog or tew, a bit a barken' an' squeecken, an' that's end on't.

'Aye chaps, awe tugidder seprate fra that yance as I jist tel't on reet bi ginnerashun ta ginnerashun, oop t'll this, nyam's nivver bin narn ta miss, an' t'reason 'e mist wer, nyam wer nit reet, sa counten 'im oot we ma yit ga forrard wi'oot bodderin about sic foolin as yon. Aye, we ivver git yam, aye, soer as ivver trigger wer pul't quarry wer ours. Why I mind yance i' mi ain lifetime, w'en I wer just a lad i' mi teens, stannin yan day on t'doerstep on t'farm as mi fadder kep', w'en mi fadder git three gert birds on t'wing wi' yan shut, aye, an' a blynd shut at that mind yer ; by gock it wer a gert risk ont'nyam's repitashun, but fadder git yam areet. Aye, yer see it wer this roed on. Fadder 'app'n'd ta be in t'kitchen tittyvatin an mukken about wi' 'is gun. Nay, it wer nit yan o' t' *gert, lang, thinnuns*, nar, it wer reet slap ooptadate i' patten an' bran' new at time as am tellen' on, but it wer nit sa lang it barrel as t'owd soert, nit be a bit. Well, it wer sabbath morn, an' nowt mukkle doin' on an me wi' mi 'ands stuck inta mi flops gurnin about na weer i' pa'ticlar, w'en awe on a suddin a spotted summet movin' ower'ead cummen oop dale. Aye, I mind it wer a girt 'ite, wot wer cummen oop, it mun a bin about a mile 'igh, I guess. Well, as thing a spotted git a bit claeser I med it oot ta be wild geese, aye, three on 'em soer enuff, fleein' i' arrer fo'mashun, yer na, yan i' front leadin' an' twa follerin' on, yan eeder side o' t'leader. "Gert gardin stuff!" I sez ta missel, "'ere's a bonny mess oop. Fadder in t'kitchen wi' t'gun maist likla awe i' lile bits, wile sic a bag gits away wid it." Well, enyroed, a thowt ad git back on fadder wid it, sa teasen on 'im, I

slews round an' 'ollers down t'lobby, "Fadder, flock o' geese cummen oop dale, mekken fer ower t'farm, by gock ther 'ere na, reet ower'ead, jist garn ower t'roof an reet 'igh oop." Well chaps ad nobbut git tale tel't on 'im w'en a 'eard a ter'ble bang i'side t'ouse, follered be anellova rattle. Aye, as tha 'ell wer scrafflin ta git louzed. By gock, a thowt ma time 'ad cum, er mi fadders, er baith on 'em. Aye, yer can tak' it fra me, fear o' God wer in ma, a thowt it wer a herthquake a'reet, t'owd farm fair dithered wi' t'shock. Well, i' less time as am tellin on farm quit shakken. Sa reet i'side a rushed an' met fadder cummen fra t'ingle nuke wi' gun i' yan 'and an tudder arm thrust forrard fer silence. "'Odd thi whist lad," 'e whispered, jist as a wer aboot to ex wot 'e wer oop t'll. Well, 'e wer na suner sed w'en ther cam anellova bump on t'roof, makken t'owd 'ouse shak' as tha it wer struck wi' palsy. Wot struck it nivver git threw tha, gert yak rafters an staen slates stuck it a'reet. Well fadder an me med fer t'door 'ellforledder an jist as we git clear ther cum sliddering off t'roof a gert 'eap o' fadders an' wings an' legs awe skewered tagidder wi' a lang brass rod. Fadder 'e gars oop t'll 'eap o' stuff an' gitten' 'odd o' t'rod turned t'lot ower an' laffed like 'ell. "Well Jim mi lad tha 'ollered jist i' time. W'en a let fly I nivver thowt 'ad git moer na yan, but 'as gitten three on 'em. Aye yer see Jim it were this roed," sed fadder, "a wer jist rammin' charge yam w'en tha 'ollered an' ther wer na time ta tak rod oot o' t'gun. Na suner I git wot tha wer tellin' on w'en a chased forrard an' clipped barrel oop t'chimna an let bang, at syam time 'opin' fer t'best."

"By gock, fadder," a sed, "tha tuk a chance didenta? 'Owivver did tha manish ta bag awe three on 'em, fleein i' arrer fomashun an' awe, sa as ta git em skewered i' sic a fashun?"

"Well, Jim, tha siz, maist likla wot 'app'nd wer, w'en t'geese wer jist aboon chimna, t'arrer fomashun as tha tells on wer awe moowed oop wi changen on t'lead, an' awe three on 'em fer time bein' wer yan a'top o' tudder, sizta Jim lad?"

Well, reet on t'jiffy oop gars thi fadder's ramrod an' gits 'em awe on t'hop."

'Aye chaps it wer a gert bag, an' a mind well mi fadder at time sayen as 'ow it mite 'ave bin a lang time agen afoer three whackin geese flew ower that 'ere chimna i' that fashun an changen lead jist aboon at time o' passin'.

Yer nar, chaps, it mebbie wud luke a bit o' a mirrackel ta yo foak as lives i' town ta 'ear o' sic goin's on as am tellen on ; Aye, w'en yer think on t'geese fleein at sic a gert 'ite, yit it med na diffrence, nyam wer reet, an' as a think 'ave sed yance afoer, chaps, 'oddin t'nyam wer nivver narn ta miss. Aye, sic welters tha wer an' awe. Aye, biggest yan ivver clap't eyes on—awe three on 'em, by gock, chaps, 'ave kenned buzzards wi' a six foot spread but yon three geese git buzzards licked ta a frazzle. Aye, na doot it wer yan o't best bags our chaps ivver landed.'

'An wot 'app'nd t'll geese, Jim? Wer tha gud eaten? Ga on an' git thi tale finished w'ile thi tongue's 'ot.' This again from Curly, as a final prod, in the hope of getting some convincing details that might help to satisfy the general and justifiable incredulity of a much bewildered audience. Jim hesitated, scratching his head the while.

'Nar, Jim,' continued Curly, 'git it off thi chest, wha ett birds, an' wot cum o' t'fedders? Ther mun 'a' bin a gert pile on 'em.'

Jim quit his scratching, having raked out his answer.

'Well, Curly, tha siz it wer this way on, flesh wer terbel tuff ta be caten on an' mudder fair rounded on fadder fer wasten gud powder an shot on sic mak o' stuff an' t'owd 'im ta git 'em on t'll muk midden afoer tha begin ta git lively. Aye, mudder git 'im telt a'reet. "Clutterin' place oop wi' sic like." Nivver-the-less fadder git lads gaen plucken on yon birds an' ended oop wi enuff fedders fer a cuppel o' beds afoer t'midden git flesh. Aye, an' a mind as most wer med o' t'flesh fer putten on t'land. Aye, it wer a gert crop as cum on it. Aye, by gock! Taters!! Sic clouters!!! As nivver

wer sin afoer er sin. Yer can tak' it fra yan as sin 'em. Aye, wot wi' beds and taters cummin on fadder git back on mudder a'reet. But thar it stans, wimmin mun ha thar say wotivver cums ar gars. Aye, aye, chaps, thar's nowt sa queer as foak, spechally wimmin foak,' concluded Jim, yawning and rising from his seat, then taking his bran' new weapon, that had rested across his knees all through the recital, he restored it to its resting place in the flickering gloom above and with a 'Gud neet, chaps,' he made a perfectly sober departure by way of an unlatched door and an old narrow twisted stair to the visionary land of hills and dales where 'gud shutten wer nar doot i' plenty,' leaving us 'chaps' to muse and argue out the possibility of 'sic like 'appenings as 'e tel't on that neet an' monni anudder lang afoer.'

MONS ASINORUM

There was yance a girt man on Girt End,
Whose epitaph varra near got penned :
 ' After twa hoors' main pull, he
 Cam' unstuck in Cust's Gully—
An' took twa seckints mair to descend.'

Ascensor de rupe Cumbrens' us-
-qu' Ere-BUMP-aene venit immensus.
 Namque funis se veste
 Liberavit funeste :
Perfacillimus inde descensus.

G.S.

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

New climbs made during the year confirm the opinion generally held, that the standard of climbing has risen considerably during the last ten years, and indeed the proportion of severe and very severe climbs published during the last few years would seem to bear out such a conclusion. It would be interesting to ascertain whether these climbs, made by small groups of experts, are frequently repeated by other and more numerous groups of climbers—members or their friends. Members are therefore invited to help by recording their climbs in the climbing books provided at Club centres, in order to make possible some reliable estimate of this important part of the Club's activities.

WASDALE

SCAFELL Very severe throughout—considerably
EAST BUTTRESS harder than Central Buttress. There
MAY DAY CLIMB ring-spikes were used as belays—not
as climbing aids. Leader needs
120 feet of rope. The Climb starts

up the slab 20 feet to the right of the Overhanging Wall.
R.J.B., C. H., C.R.W. 1st May 1938.

- (1) 60 feet. The second leads to a sloping three-inch ledge, some 15 feet up the slab, above where is a piton belay. Combined tactics will be usual to overcome the severe slab ahead. Piton for running thread belay. Traverse delicately towards the right for some 25 feet. Piton belay.
- (2) 50 feet. Ascend the very severe scoop, which overhangs slightly at its commencement, then traverse left across a slab to thread belay in corner. Friction stance.
- (3) 40 feet. Traverse left round overhanging corner and ascend slab to grass corner and belays.
- (4) 25 feet. From left corner ascend crack for a few feet,

then traverse delicately left, then round corner on to steep slab which is climbed mostly by friction. Belay round top of crack.

- (5) 110 feet. Climb scoop directly above belay on good holds. The large slab, which is harder than White Slab on Overhanging Wall, is climbed on small holds to a grass ledge at the top of the crag.

GREAT EASTERN ROUTE 50 feet. Very severe. This variation, VARIATION START although as hard as the original route, avoids the difficult overhang of pitch 2 with its doubtful rock. The start is made from the middle of the easy walk of pitch 1. H. Pearson, L. Kiernan, 2nd August 1937.

- (1) 25 feet. Ascend broken rocks and a short slab on the left to a large grassy ledge. Belay and poor stance a little higher on the left wall.
- (2) 25 feet. Continue up steep rock to the left to a large flat rock platform. Descend the extreme left corner for about 3 feet and traverse to the crack of pitch 2 of the Great Eastern Route above the overhang and just below the belay.

EAST BUTTRESS GIRDLE 820 feet. Very severe. Leader needs 120 feet of rope. The Climb starts in Mickledore Chimney, from the grass ledges at the right-hand side of the main slab of Mickledore Grooves. R.J.B., L.M. 7th August 1938. Time 4 hrs. 30 min.

- (1) 120 feet. Very delicate traverse, rising to the grass ledge at the start of Pitch 3 Mickledore Grooves, and so up Mickledore Grooves to grass platform. Belay.
- (2) 30 feet. Round corner on right, ascend wall for 10 feet, then traverse left to crevasse. Thread belay.
- (3) 60 feet. Descend for 6 feet, traverse left horizontally

- for 50 feet to groove with chock belay at the top of the groove.
- (4) 30 feet. Descend groove to grass corner and chock belay.
 - (5) 20 feet. Ascend corner on left to belay in 10 feet.
 - (6) 110 feet. Cross and descend the large slab (Pitch 5 Mayday), down easy scoop to belay at top of crack.
 - (7) 15 feet. Traverse left to Overhanging Wall Chimney, descend to grass ledge and belay, overlooking the White Slab.
 - (8) 25 feet. From belay descend 5 feet, then traverse delicately over nose for 20 feet. Thread belay in corner.
 - (9) 60 feet. Descend to White Slab and ascend White Slab to large square block in its centre. Belay round block (White Slab Variation, Pitch 2).
 - (10) 70 feet. Traverse easily to left, then along platform to corner, traverse left a few feet and ascend wall for 25 feet to crevasse at top of Pitch 6, Great Eastern Route. Belay.
 - (11) 40 feet. Descend Pitch 6 Great Eastern Route, to flake belay.
junction with Yellow Slab Variation.
 - (12) 35 feet. Descend Pitch 5, Great Eastern Route.
 - (13) 30 feet. Descend Pitch 4 on G.E.R. to belay. (Junction with Yellow Slab Variation.)
 - (14) 110 feet. Ascend the Yellow Slab and its following strenuous crack to belay. (Owing to Yellow Slab being in a very wet condition, the leader preferred to make this one pitch as the stance at the bottom of the crack is very poor.) A running thread belay (of 6 feet) was made over the chockstone at the foot of the cracks above the Yellow Slab.
 - (15) 65 feet. Pitch 6. Great Eastern Route, Yellow Slab Variation.

TRICOUNI SLAB Very severe. Tricouni nails. It is very doubtful if either clinkers or rubbers would be of any use on this climb. A very interesting example of nail technique. A. Mullan, L. Mack. 18th September 1938.

The climb lies between Botterill's Slab and the Keswick Brothers Climb, up a slab similar in appearance to Botterill's but not so big; the last pitch leads across to the top of Keswick Brothers, where it ends.

- (1) From the Rakes Progress climb a few feet into a recess sheltered by an overhanging wall and climb the smooth slabs on the left to a loose block belay about 25 feet up. This operation is facilitated by means of a somewhat greasy groove for the right hand and foot providing rather unsatisfactory holds, and a tiny knob for the left foot. Higher up a very thin perpendicular crack will accommodate one nail of the left boot, while the right shoulder and hand work on the inside wall. The initial 20 feet of this route are very hard indeed. The block belay seems safe enough if used with care.
- (2) Step on to the block and climb the slabs above which here get much narrower. In about 40-50 feet a visit is paid to Keswick Brothers climb, for a belay.
- (3) Coming back to the top of the slabs a delicate traverse is made to the right, across the top of the recess. In about 12-15 feet the wall overhangs and the route is taken straight up for a further 20 feet until it finishes out on Keswick Brothers once more.

**TOWER BUTTRESS
THE RAMPART** Severe. Rubbers. Starts about 50 feet down the scree to the right of the Tower Buttress Climb at a cairn in a grassy corner below a groove. 16th April, 1938. S.H.C., H.M.K., A.M.N., C.J.A.C. (avoiding the groove,

pitch 5). 1st complete ascent, 14th August, 1938. S.H.C., A.T.H., C.S.S.

- (1) 25 feet. Climb the vertical rocks on the immediate right of the green groove and then make an awkward traverse right to a good shelf and excellent belay.
- (2) 15 feet. A sensational traverse is made round the projecting wall on the right whence a short ascent leads to a grassy corner with very poor belay.
- (3) 60 feet. The slab on the left of the corner is traversed on an ascending line of holds, then the face on the left is crossed horizontally and an entry is made into a grassy gully with block belay.
- (4) 25 feet. The dirty and rather awkward corner is followed to a projecting belay just below a rock ledge at the foot of a steep groove.
- (5) 40 feet. The groove is climbed, it is best entered by an upward movement from the left and is continuously difficult. The exit is to the right ('ware loose rocks), and a belay can be arranged round the sloping shelf.
- (6) 45 feet. Fairly easy rocks leading across to the left are climbed to a belay round a flake below an obvious cave.
- (7) 60 feet. Traverse into the cave on the right, cross to the left on a sloping shelf, continue across the face to the left, and easier rocks lead to the large terrace below the 9th pitch, the Gallery of the Tower Buttress, cairn.

GABLE 250 feet. A mild severe. Runs up
BRIMSTONE BUTTRESS the slabs on the right of Tophet
Bastion, overlooking the left edge of
Tophet Wall. Leader needs 70 feet of rope. Starts at a
steep right-angled corner on the immediate right of Tophet
Bastion. Cairn. 28th August, 1938. A.T.H., S.H.C.,
(alternate pitches) R.E.H., J. J. Heap, A.M.N.

- (1) 20 feet. Climb the corner and at the ledge at its top cross to a good nook on the right. Belay.
- (2) 30 feet. A slightly overhanging crack in the corner is climbed to a sloping rock ledge which is traversed to the right to a grass-floored nook and large belay.
- (3) 25 feet. Fairly easy rocks ahead are climbed to a juniper ledge below a sweep of slabs. Belay.
- (4) 60 feet. From the belay work up and right to the edge and climb direct, finishing by a steep shallow scoop where holds should be chosen with care. Stance and belay.
- (5) 60 feet. The ridge ahead is followed for a short distance and then rocks on its right are climbed to some blocks where a move is made left to a large shelf and belays.
- (6) 55 feet. An easy-angled arête is taken and then a traverse is made left below a projecting rib. After a step on to a block on its left the flanking slab is climbed direct to a ledge and cairn.

PILLAR

THE SOUTH WEST
BY WEST

Very severe. Leader needs 80 feet of rope. The Climb begins a few yards to the right of the New West

(Cairn). A. Birtwistle, W. K. S. Pearson. Whitsuntide 1938.

- (1) 60 feet. Traverse to the left on to the rib which bounds the New West on the right and follow it to a belay on that climb.
- (2) 20 feet. A smooth rectangle of slab on the right is taken and leads to a horizontal ledge below another larger slab with a rounded crack on its left.
- (3) 60 feet. Follow this slab, the crack helps a little, until the rock becomes vertical, then step to the left to a good foothold, after which a few hard moves lead to stance and belay on pitch 6 of the Rib and Slab.

- (4) 40 feet. Traverse to the left into the easy groove and ascend this to the New West Traverse. A more difficult alternative can be made by traversing right and ascending in between the Rib and Slab and South West to the end of the New West Traverse, which is reversed to join the other route.
- (5) 20 feet. Move a little to the left and follow a grassy groove which lies to the right of the Route I groove. Belay just below the large overhang.
- (6) 40 feet. The overhang can be turned on either right or left wall, of which the left is the easier but the right gives the best climbing, the chief difficulty after the overhang being a small triangular mantelshelf.

PEDESTAL WALL— A much better but harder start than
 NEW DIRECT START the original one. Leader needs
 70 feet of rope. 10th October 1938.

F.G., M.W.G.

The climb begins about 12 feet to the right of the original start, up a thin crack. After a few feet, traverse to the right on to a light-coloured bulge, and continue up to a platform at the foot of a stepped groove. (This platform had evidently been reached before by a traverse from the top of the original crack).

Ascend two short risers in the stepped groove (at this point the scratches stop again), and take an awkward and very high step on to the rib on the left. Then move across and continue up the last 20 feet of the original second pitch.

BUTTERMERE

BIRKNESS COOMBE Severe. The climb lies on the steep
 EAGLE CRAG right wall of the crag and starts up
 THE HALF-NELSON the scree from the toe of the buttress,
 CLIMB about 60 feet. S.H.C., H.M.K.,
 A.M.N., C.J.A.-C. 19th June 1937.

- (1) 30 feet. Wall climbing leads to grass and bilberry ledges. Doubtful blocks for belay.
- (2) 35 feet. Step right and up into a triangular niche. The route afterwards goes slightly left to a bilberry ledge. A fairly large block leaning against the wall can be used as a belay.
- (3) 30 feet. Bear left and then right via bilberry ledges. Flake belay.
- (4) 40 feet. Traverse left across a large niche. The pitch finishes with an awkward sloping rock platform. In a few more feet is a large grassy terrace and the Western Buttress route.

THE DOUBLE-CROSS CLIMB Very severe and exposed. Lies on the same crag as the Half-Nelson but starts at the foot of a ridge at the right-hand end of the wall, and on the left of a large bay with impressive overhanging rocks. S.H.C., H.M.K., A.M.N., C.J.A.-C. 19th June 1937.

- (1) 30 feet. Moderate ridge climbing.
- (2) 40 feet. Descend slightly to the left on to the main face. A short hand traverse follows at once. Better holds are soon available and small ledges lead to a more comfortable one and a belay at a level slightly higher than the start of the pitch.
- (3) 70 feet. A narrow and exposed steep chimney. There is a possible belay about half way up but the stance is very restricted. The Western Buttress route is joined about 20 feet higher than the finish of the Half-Nelson Climb.

GREY CRAGS Severe even in rubbers. The climb
THE SLABS—DIRECT lies up the narrow indeterminate
START crack running directly up to the
 obvious block-belay of the first pitch,
 ordinary route ; its merit is that it could be taken with the

Very Severe Finish, making it a very good climb throughout.
C. W. F. Noyce, T. R. Noyce. 1st October 1938.

Route :

40 feet. Straight up the crack, easy at first. 12 feet under the block a move is made to the right, and one lands on the nail-scratched holds just above and still two feet or so right of it.

CONISTON

DOW CRAG 150 feet. Very difficult. Leader
CROCKS CRAWL needs 60 feet of rope. Starts about half way up Easy Gully at a large detached flake, and runs up the slabs to the right on the wall of a buttress. A.T.H., S.H.C., R.E.H., A.M.N. 25th July, 1938.

- (1) 50 feet. From the top of the flake make an ascending traverse to the right over mossy rocks, an awkward movement straight up is then made and the traverse continued to a long grass ledge under a vertical wall. Belay below a slanting groove running from left to right.
- (2) 40 feet. Climb into the groove at its lower end, and follow it up to the right until excellent holds above the overhang allow a pull-up to be made to small ledges. Traverse to the left into a cave with thread belay.
- (3) 60 feet. The crack in the left wall of the chimney rising from the cave is climbed to a good ledge which is followed back to the right. An easy pull-up to an open scree-filled gully finishes the climb.

DOW CRAG Climbers are recommended to sample the little known but extremely interesting Necklace Route on Dow Crag, an account of the first ascent of which appears in the *FELL AND ROCK JOURNAL* of 1925. When climbed in boots on 25th July, 1937 by J.D. and A.V.M., presumably for the first time, as no scratches were found. The route proved consistently interesting right

to the finish, although the most formidable pitch, the wall between the first pitch of Trident and the Arête, was thought to be rather easier in nails than in rubbers. The climb gives seven pitches and, apart from the Girdle, is probably the longest on the crag.

ELIMINATE A	In Boots. 15th August, 1938. R.J.B., L.M., T. Nicholson.
ELIMINATE C	In Boots. R.J.B., G.W.
NORTH WALL	In Boots. By direct finish to Jones' Route. A. Mullan and W. Higginbottom. 28th August, 1938.
NECKLACE AND TIGER TRAVERSE	In Boots. R.J.B., C.W.H., J. Williams, T. Nicholson. 23rd October, 1938.

LANGDALE

GIMMER	(Connecting the top of ASTERISK and 'D' Climb). Very severe even in rubbers, exposed traverse. A. Mullan, G. Parkinson. 17th April 1938.
HYPHEN	

From the top of ASTERISK 60 feet of severe climbing brings one to a fairly good-sized grassy stance immediately beneath the big overhangs. The last 6 feet of this pitch are the hardest, and a large loose block just before the landing should be treated with respect. The belay consists of a large flake to the left (line sling to be carried).

From here the next pitch is a delicate and exposed traverse, upwards for a few feet, and then to the right round the corner, on to a small horizontal grass and moss ledge.

Follow this ledge carefully across the mossy face until it peters out on an uncompromising, bulging corner. This is climbed on small holds, finally bringing the climber to rest at the belay at the bottom of the 'forked lightning crack' on 'D.' A spike of rock near the end of the ledge is useful for a snap-ring to safeguard the leader while making

the difficult move around the bulge. The Finish is either up or down 'D' (a fitting conclusion to Gimmer Girdle Traverse).

DOVEDALE

HARTSOP 320 feet. Very difficult. Leader
DOVE CRAG needs 75 feet of rope. Arête to
WING RIDGE immediate right of gully begins
30 feet below a large boulder.
C.R.W., M.M.B., D. Twiddle, Joe
Bell, Nan Hamilton.

- (1) 40 feet. Easy rocks bearing right to a belay on rocking stone.
- (2) 60 feet. From top of the rocking stone step round corner on small holds, then traverse right over steep slabs and bilberry ledges. Belay on sky-line.

Severe Variation :

Round corner, ascent to pump-handle, 10 feet from corner, step left to arête and up to ledge. Continue to belay.

- (3) 40 feet. Climb to sloping stance. Belay round corner.
- (4) 25 feet. Step left and climb crack with good holds. Belay on ridge.
- (5) 50 feet. Ascend small wall to right and climb left up grassy slab to belay. Cairn.
- (6) 70 feet. Ascend wall above cairn. Traverse left to corner, then right to large grassy ledge. Belay.
- (7) 35 feet. Climb wall above bearing slightly left to cairn and small belay.

DOVEDALE SLABS 280 feet. Very difficult. On the right above the last gate on the way to Dove Crag. Very conspicuous. Main route to Perch on summit. G.W., M.M.B., C.R.W., N.E.G.R. (all led in turn).

- (1) 50 feet. Climb centre of slab to grass ledge with belay. (Bird Cage Walk).

- (2) 20 feet. Bilberry ledges to the foot of main slab.
- (3) 110 feet. Main slab. Belay at summit.
- (4) 90 feet. Scrambling to Perch.
- (5) Climb Perch.

Right-hand Variation :

Severe. Begins at right end of Bird Cage Walk.

- (1) 40 feet. Overhanging chimney. Exit on left, up rib, traverse right to arête and up.
- (2) 25 feet. Cross gully to left and climb steep wall.

FLAKE BUTTRESS 170 feet. Difficult. Starts at lowest point of slabs. G.W., M.M.B., C.R.W., N.E.G.R. (all led in turn).

- (1) 60 feet. Easy slabs to Bird Cage Walk.
- (2) 100 feet. Climb steep wall on left of flake, or up flake itself. Continue up slabs to left of Great Slab.

Variation :

A through route can be made up the back of the flake by very thin climbers.

INACCESSIBLE GULLY 300 feet. Very severe. The right branch of the obvious gully on the south side of the crag. Leader needs 100 feet of rope. 21st August 1937. G.W., C.R.W.

- (1) 35 feet. Awkward climbing to block belay.
- (2) 15 feet. Ascend to platform. Poor and doubtful flake belay.
- (3) 65 feet. The Wall. Combined tactics necessary. The second can steady himself on the platform with a vertical right handhold. Leader steps from sloping right side of slab to knee and then shoulder ; followed by 5 feet of delicate climbing when good holds are encountered. Traverse left and ascend left scoop (always wet). Up Gully to belay in the bed (sheep belay !) The rope must here be made fast enough for the second to use it.

- (4) 40 feet. Ascend gully to large chockstone. Traverse left and ascend left wall to belay.
- (5) 25 feet. Ascend right wall to hook belay out of gully.
- (6) 100 feet. Scramble up bed of gully to foot of wall.
- (7) 25 feet. Climbed on left.

THE TARSUS BUTTRESS Severe. 270 feet. Starts in gully
ROUTE TO WING ARETE fifty feet below the Inaccessible Gully.
Cairn.

- (1) 50 feet. Awkward rocks are climbed to grass ledge and belay.
- (2) 20 feet. Traverse left. Block belay.
- (3) Climb straight up over two flakes. (Severe.) Awkward finish. Block belay.
- (4) 60 feet. Traverse Right, up slabs to large blocks. Junction with Wing Arête. Wing Arête exit.
R.J.B., M.M.B., N.R. 25th July, 1937.

Key to initials :

M. M. Barker
R. J. Birkett
C. J. Astley Cooper
S. H. Cross
Fergus Graham
M. W. Guinness
C. W. Hudson
H. M. Kelly
L. Muscroft
A. M. Nelson
Gilpin Ward
C. R. Wilson

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

The Buttermere meet was favoured by good walking weather and large parties of friends set off on the Grasmoor-Causey Pike round and the High Stile ridge walk. The absence of snow on Pillar tempted many others to begin the year well by making it their first climb of the season, and one other member followed the President on Chorley's rope up the North over the Nose. A very happy crowd, swelled by all those who had come in from their neighbouring quarters, enjoyed the usual round of party games until late.

Sunday was clear and cold and provided another splendid day for extended ridge walks for several parties. And an important sub-committee on constitutional problems held its meeting not far from the top of Melbreak. Some good climbs were done in Birkness Coombe on Monday in fine calm weather.

Greatly to the regret of those who had for many years enjoyed the famous Grasmere dialect plays, there was no play in February and instead C. Paget Lapage led an informal meet of ten at Capel Curig. The weather was very cold, but fine and sunny, and there were parties climbing on Tryfan while others explored the Carneddws and Glyder Ridges and found the change of venue attractive and worthy of being repeated another year.

Fine weather and clear skies greeted the early arrivals at Langdale on the 12th of March and Gimmer was climbed in perfect conditions. Bowfell on the following day was climbed in similar conditions.

Again at Easter the luck of the weather held and climbing parties were to be seen on all crags, but it was on the whole too cold for severe climbing near the 3,000-foot levels. The second ascent of the Pedestal climb was made and later Tophet Wall was climbed on a cloudless day which was made memorable by the wonderful display of Northern Lights witnessed from the hotel that evening. A number of

parties at Brackenclose did much hard climbing on Scafell and Pike's Crag.

Buttermere Meet in May brought a small party of members together who chose High Crag and found much amusement and exercise in the well-watered recesses of Gatesgarth Chimney.

The Whitsuntide Meet at Borrowdale began with a showery day spent fell-walking but Sunday broke fine, and Pillar became almost crowded with climbers on all routes, until later, when the weather showed signs of the return of rainy conditions. A steady downpour on Monday caused floods everywhere and considerable discomfort among the numerous tent-dwellers at Thorneythwaite and elsewhere. A keen wind dispersed the rainclouds overnight and Tuesday being fine several climbed on Pikes Crag. On that occasion the collapse of the matchstick on the Grooved Arete removed one of the dangers on that interesting ridge climb.

A few days later, on June 11th and 12th, there was a meet at Brackenclose which was well attended and good climbs were done.

Coniston at the beginning of July was attended by nine members and a good deal of climbing was done on Dow.

Brackenclose, July 30th to August 8th, brought several members together and all crags were worked in turn.

On July 31st, sixteen members and friends started on their journey to Falleralp where the Fourth Alpine Meet had been arranged. L. S. Coxon's account of the meet appears on page 289.

The Eskdale Meet began in bad weather which did not lift until the afternoon, when one party which had gone over Beckhead to Gable Crag followed Bentley Beetham on his new climb, Barny Buttress, at the eastern end of the Crag.

T. R. Burnett describes the Windermere Meet in detail.

Very good weather in November helped to make the Langdale Meet most enjoyable for the many members who had come to climb on Gimmer and the crags near the hotel.

Windermere Dinner Meet, September 30th to October 2nd. (T.R.B.)

The fine weather on Saturday accounted for a large number of ropes on Gimmer and many fell walks were done in all directions.

When the Crisis was at its height, it appeared that the Dinner like all ordinary fixtures would be cancelled. In the middle of the week, provisional arrangements had been made under which either the whole function would be abandoned or on Saturday morning a modest repast could be prepared for such members as were then able to signify that they would attend. To the many who put such large store on our great annual function the Munich Agreement therefore brought a special measure of satisfaction and relief.

A considerable number of regular attenders however, had found themselves obliged to cry off and were not able to alter their plans at the last moment. In consequence the numbers were reduced to 140, and while the absence of many a familiar face caused regret, the added elbow room was appreciated by those who were present.

The menu was up to the best Hydro tradition ; the staff excelled themselves and the company was in the best celebrating humour.

The number of speeches was limited to four, and all were made by members, a restriction which was generally approved. Two time-honoured customs were duly observed, namely, the silent toast to absent friends at 9 p.m. and an original song (one of his best) by John Hirst, with the President as its theme. It was felt that on this special occasion even more Absent Friends than usual would be turning their thoughts to Windermere knowing that they were remembered and missed by their assembled colleagues.

To Professor Chorley was entrusted the principal toast which this year included the President as well as the Club, and the job could not have been placed in more competent hands. Under the first heading the speaker took the oppor-

tunity of referring to the excellent report on the first year's working of Brackenclouse and gave timely first-hand information regarding the preservation of the district. It must have been welcome news to many that a reasonably satisfactory working agreement had been reached with the Forestry Commissioners and that the Lakeland Farm Estates Company (of which Chorley himself was a founder) was acquiring Lakeland farms as they came into the market and securing them against undesirable development. The President's qualities are so well known and his activities so numerous and intensive as to preclude their elaboration in an after-dinner speech, but appropriate reference was made to him not only as the recipient of the Club's premier distinction but also as an outstanding editor of the Journal, as energetic secretary of the London Section, as a distinguished climber at home and abroad, and, by no means least, as a man and a friend.

In his reply the President, as is his wont, belittled his title to the eulogy—which everyone knows was fully deserved—and quite casually announced his gift to the Club of the beautiful bronze model of the Needle which stood on the table before him. Even in alluding to this he passed on the appreciation to the artist, Miss Una Cameron, to whose outstanding effort the Club is indeed deeply indebted for its most appropriate mascot.

General Bruce was responsible for proposing the Guests and Kindred Clubs a duty which he discharged in his own inimitable manner.

The task of replying fell to our honorary and honoured member Odell and he performed it with his usual ability. His references to Everest and Nanda Devi were of absorbing interest especially coming from one who is as eminent in the world of science as in that of mountaineering. He placed the company under a further debt of gratitude on Sunday night when he gave an illustrated talk on some of his Himalayan experiences.

The whole evening passed happily and quickly and long after the party had broken up with the singing of 'Auld Lang Syne' groups chatted in the corridors postponing retiring with the pleasant thought that, thanks to Mr Willett, they would have an extra hour in bed.

On Sunday a downpour from early morning until late in the afternoon damped ambitions, so much so that only one party was seen on Dow ; but a fairly large party set out for Kentmere in the torrential rain, and lunched at the sheepfold at the head of the valley, before returning to the alluring comforts of the Hydro.

THE YEAR AT BRACKENCLOSE (A.T.H.)

The first complete year at Brackenclouse has proved a complete success. It is interesting to look through the log-book and observe the popularity of Scafell compared with the other crags. Practically every climb to be found in the guide and several more besides are listed. Gable, of course, comes next in order, with Pillar a long way behind. Evidently our climbers are becoming unused to walking.

October 17th, 1937, the first official meet was attended by only nine members and graced by moderate weather.

From January 2nd-9th, 1938, the hut was lent to the Imperial College Mountaineering Club, twelve of whose members enjoyed practically continuous rain. In spite of this a good deal of climbing was done.

The high spot of the year was Easter, twenty-eight members and friends used the hut over the week-end, which was fine but cold. Many fine climbs were recorded, including a new ascent on the Scafell Shamrock.

June 11th-13th, the week-end after Whitsuntide, found thirteen members and eleven friends at Wasdale, so the hut once more was filled to capacity and good weather blessed the meet. The people were humbly thankful. Record was made of a new climb on Pillar just to the left of the South-West Climb by two M.U.M.C. members staying at the hut. About this time too, C. R. Wilson and R. J. Birkett and

friend made ascents of all the climbs on the East Buttress of Scafell, Birkett leading a new route between Overhanging Wall and Mickledore Grooves. Four ringspikes were used as belays only, and even then the climb was of more than ordinarily 'Very Severe.'

August Bank Holiday was ushered in by the great flood—Lawson Cook was alone in the hut on the Friday night when a terrific rainstorm blew up and the flooded beck washed away part of the bank from Lingmell Ghyll, taking two of our oak trees with it and carried away the road by the second concrete bridge and covered an entire field with debris. Fortunately the hut suffered no damage beyond a severe battering of the rose which feeds the water supply from the ghyll. Altogether a very trying experience for Cook, who incidentally, in order to get his car back on to the road beyond the useless bridge, had to traverse the extensive beach of loose gravel which bounds the head of the lake.

THE FOURTH ALPINE MEET

The meet was held this year in the Oberland, at Fafferalp, a hamlet with only two Hotels in the lovely valley of the Lonza. It is reached in a four-hour walk from the Railway, or if you prefer, you can make the journey by mule. Looking up the valley from it you see brightly against a blue sky the snowy concave of the valley head, a luring gateway to the solitude of the high glaciers that flow down to the Concordia Platz, to join in the majestic Grosse Aletschgletscher.

Our arrivals and departures at the Fafferalp Hotel on different days gave trouble with the manager Herr Graf, and he grumbled ' I cannot keep up with the amount you eat ! You each eat as much as two men. I bought a hundred kilos of butter last week and I am short again. The good Doctor, why she eats more than a man . . . ' His food, indeed, was good, and was not stinted, but we were not loved by Herr Graf.

We had two guides, Kilian Ritler and Stephan Bloetzer, and for part of the time a porter, who acted also as guide. Sixteen members and friends attended the meet. They were : Dr Arning, Dr Brocklehurst, H. R. Carter, L. S. Coxon, R. A. Fanshawe, E. W. Hodge, C. Leighton, W. M. T. Magan, F. C. Mayo, P. Markbreiter, Miss J. and Miss H. Markbreiter, P. Nock, M. P. Picard, R. Sargent, and C. S. Tilly.

In relating the activities of the meet I can give an account of only those expeditions in which I took part. I will begin by describing some of these and follow with a diary of events.

An hour's talking had failed to induce our guides to go to a Hut on the day after our arrival at Fafferalp. We must first, they said, practise on the glacier, to show them how well, or ill, we behaved ; but we remembered that in the evening there were to be celebrations in Fafferalp, the day being the 1st August ! So under blazing skies Stephan took seven who refused to go on the glacier up the Telespitzen. From its snowless debris we saw the others practising coolly on the ice slopes below. We did not complete the traverse but hastened down the south side to the Schwarzsee where some bathed, in silk scarfs and other makeshift drapings.

That evening we shivered at dinner out of doors, trying to warm ourselves with coloured candle-cups and wine, while our discomfort was prolonged by speeches. We were asked, even, to belie our feelings by cheering some remarks in one of them, that referred to England.

The next morning Tilly, Mayo and I rose at 3 a.m. to attempt without guides the North East Ridge of the Tschingelhorn. Our breakfast was interrupted by the last of the night's revellers, among whom was Kilian Ritler. Though our guides had said that the climb was difficult, that we should need rubbers, and that it had been climbed only nine times during the past twenty years, we found it easy enough, but because of the

crumbling rock, not suitable for a large party. It was enjoyable, and to be preferred to the ordinary route.

The Tschingelhorn is a stump of rock, capped with snow which rises gently from the South and East, where lies the ordinary path. To the North and West is a vertical snow cliff, a hundred feet high at the North-West corner, from which huge slabs appear to break away, and which curls over at the top in a cornice. After climbing the North-East Ridge of the mountain one follows the Northern edge to the summit, but from the ordinary path the cliff is not seen.

From the Bietschhorn Hut on Saturday a party of twelve with two guides set off at 1.40 a.m. for the North Ridge of the Bietschhorn. A few of us left a minute or two before the guides. The stars challenged the tiny lights of Kippel as we climbed the never-ending rock and scree of the Schafberg, where we missed the path and wandered about narrow ledges that might have seemed foolishly dangerous by daylight, and our candles went out, and the lights of the guides came up the path a little way off and passed us, and we suffered silently. Sparks from a rock-fall which almost reached our tracks across the couloir startled us. As we climbed the snow arêtes of the North Ridge bright clouds swirled up on our left, though the valley on the right was still in shadow. We descended the West Ridge, whose rock is loose, and hard and smooth. At the bottom an attempt by a rope of three to start a glissade on ice was unfortunate.

We planned to spend three or four nights of the second week at Huts, and on Monday the whole party went to the Hollandia Hut. The next morning the guides, with ten of the party, after some ado at the icfall, surmounted the face of the Sattelhorn across the Loetschenluecke from the Hollandia Hut, and continued up the West Ridge of the Aletschhorn. The descent by the Hasel Rib was over broken rocks relieved at the top by a few short stretches of snow-covered ice. We neared the glacier in its foot in rain, and thunder rumbled in the mass of cloud that hid the Loetschenluecke. It was a slow day of fifteen hours.

We slept at the Concordia Hut, and though we wanted to do the Finsteraarhorn the next day the guides did not wake us early, because early, they said, the weather was bad. We thought they also had found Tuesday tiring. After a late breakfast five of us crossed the pass to the Finsteraarhorn Hut while the others went back to the Hollandia Hut or to Fafleralp. The day was fine, and a happy afternoon in the sun at the Finsteraarhorn Hut was almost recompense for the loss of a day's climbing.

Hopes we had held of climbing the South Ridge of the Finsteraarhorn were flouted by the weather, and we had to toil up the ordinary way. When we reached the Hugiattel clouds had blown up and there was a biting wind. We made a dash to the summit over rocks that were becoming glazed by the freezing mist, and a quick descent brought us back to the

Hut at half-past-ten. We ate again, and trod our yesterday's tracks back to the Concordia Hut. Here light refreshments put us on our mettle for a race up the glacier to the Hollandia Hut, a guide and two amateurs on one rope against three amateurs on the other. The latter, with Fanshawe leading Tilly and me, snatched ten minutes start. By taking too northerly a course we had to pick our way at first through snowy swamps. Nevertheless, up to the last mile, we maintained our lead. The glacier steepened and rain began to fall. The guide's party quickened their stride and began to close on us. Gasping up the final steep slope to the Hut they were on our heels, but too late to pass us. Thus was avenged last year's defeat on the Strahlhorn of the amateurs by the guided party!

Snow fell during the night and was still falling the next morning, which was Friday, and we perforce descended the glacier to Fafleralp. On Saturday the weather seemed to have broken altogether. In rain we left Fafleralp, bought chocolate at Blatten, had tea at Kippel, high tea at Goppenstein, and came to earth in the suffocation of hours of travelling.

DIARY

Sunday. July 31, 1938. Arrivals.

Monday. Two ordeals—the Telespitzen and the glacier.

Tuesday. A first taste of Alpine delights, by three parties, one up the Tschingelhorn by the North-East Ridge, another by the ordinary route, and the third crossing the glacier to the Mutthorn Hut.

Wednesday. A pleasant day on the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn by the main party. Three climbed the Tschingelhorn.

Thursday. Most of us had a day's rest. Brocklehurst, Nock, and Picard went to the Bietschhorn Hut.

Friday. Those at the Hut climbed the Wilerhorn. Those in the valley ascended to the Hut while clouds promised a downpour.

Saturday. Dr Arning climbed the Wilerhorn. Twelve others traversed the North and West Ridges of the Bietschhorn in eleven hours. The rain came during the afternoon.

Sunday. A day of rest. Nock, Leighton and Miss H. Markbreiter climbed the Telespitzen.

Monday. All went to the Hollandia Hut.

Tuesday. Four climbed the Ebnefluh, and ten the Aletschhorn.

Wednesday. An easy day crossing to the Finsteraarhorn Hut or returning to the Hollandia Hut or Fafleralp.

Thursday. Dr Arning climbed the Ebnefluh, Leighton went to the Mutthorn Hut, four others found some rock-climbing in the valley, and the five at the Finsteraarhorn Hut climbed the Finsteraarhorn and returned to the Hollandia Hut.

Friday. Those at Huts returned to Fafleralp.

L. S. COXON

THE AMENITIES FRONT IN 1938

In the corresponding article for 1937 some account was given of the formation of Lake District Farm Estates Ltd. This group has made progress during the year and has so far been able to preserve three important farms from the dangers of building development and of afforestation by the state. High Wallabarrow, just below the Duddon gorge, was mentioned last year ; to it there have now been added Skelwith Farm, at the foot of Great Langdale, and Rannerdale Farm, on the shores of Crummock Water, and all the farms are now under restrictive covenants with the National Trust. Skelwith farm is an important part of the landscape seen by those going up to Langdale from Clappersgate and Ambleside ; the fell land was threatened with purchase by the Forestry Commission, which has refused to exclude the district between Coniston and the Brathay valley from the area in which it desires to carry out commercial afforestation, and there was a threat of building development on some of the lower land. This farm is pleasantly wooded and commands magnificent views.

Rannerdale farmhouse has been well known to visitors for a long time, and the Company has improved the accommodation there by a better water supply and by providing indoor sanitation and a bathroom, since one of the aims of the Company is to provide in its tenants' houses good accommodation for visitors. It is visitors who help the Lake District sheep farmer to pay his rent, and it may be added that visitors are now taken at High Wallabarrow farm above mentioned ; Seathwaite-in-Dunnerdale is a most beautiful position for a holiday period. So far some £8,000 of capital has been subscribed for Lake District Farm Estates, and it is estimated that in the next half-dozen years some £50,000 can be profitably expended in buying farm lands and houses for protection and for good agricultural management. There are plenty of farms which could be bought in this way if the required capital were available, and members who can help in this work are invited to apply to the Company's solicitors, Messrs. Arnold, Greenwood & Son, solicitors, Kendal. The share capital is issued in units of £5 with a maximum limit of £200 for one person ; debentures, without any limit of amount, are issued at 2 per cent. for terms of 5, 10, 15, or 20 years. The debenture holder may alternatively receive, instead of interest, a premium at the date of repayment—the amount of the premium being £7 on £100 of debentures where the term is five years, and £18 where the term is ten years. Debentures are also issued free of interest, if the subscriber is so willing.

Vigorous propaganda has been conducted through the year by the Friends of the Lake District for making the Lake District a National Park. A travelling exhibition of photographs illustrating both the beauty of the district and the dangers to which it is subject was shown during the year

in the larger towns of the north of England and also in London, and there is no doubt of the greatly increased interest in this topic which is being shown in the national and provincial press. The C.P.R.E.'s Standing Committee for National Parks, which contains several members of the Club, has in hand the drafting of an actual Bill, to which it is hoped that the Government may be persuaded to give attention. All members of the Club who are plagued by the virtues of public speaking or of writing in the press can find opportunity to lend their aid and to push the cart a little further up the hill, which has a rather steep financial gradient at the present time.

Opposition to unnecessary schemes of road widening and road construction in the Lake District have occupied much time and energy during the last year. A letter from the President was published deprecating the Cumberland County Council's scheme to widen a mile of road at the foot of Crummock Water to an over-all width of 40 feet. Strong opposition to this scheme, which threatened eventual widening right into the head of the Buttermere valley, was organised by the Friends of the Lake District and in the final issue the Cumberland County Council for the first time gave a hard rap on the knuckles to its own Highways Committee and threw the scheme out on financial grounds. Shortly before Christmas the Cumberland County Council made public a scheme for five miles of new road on either side of Keswick—a newly constructed loop road on the south side of the town between the lake shore and the house, and a newly constructed loop road to the north of the town on the Latrigg side of the railway. To a modified and more discreet form of northern loop road support was given by the Club, in conjunction with the Friends of the Lake District and the C.P.R.E. and the National Trust, all of these bodies appearing at the public inquiry at Keswick in thorough-going opposition to any southern loop road between the town and the shores of the lake. For the Urban District Council of Keswick, which led this opposition, R. S. T. Chorley was briefed as Counsel; the result of the public inquiry will be known in a month or two.

The Lancashire County Council has also been on the war-path with a sweeping scheme to widen the lake-side road north of Lowick, and south of Torver; this very beautiful piece of road is for the moment reprieved, but the alternative scheme has not yet been put forward by the County. An illustrated pamphlet on 'A Road Policy for the Lake District' has been published by the Friends of the Lake District (Midland Bank Chambers, Ambleside) and can be had for sixpence; this pamphlet covers the whole problem of roads in the Lake District, and it contains much useful technical information in the course of its argument for a sane road policy in the district.

Ullswater is being badly discoloured by the silica silt from the Greenside Lead Mines, which are working on an enlarged scale and discharging thousands of tons of finely powdered silica into the waters of the lake. The law is weak against 'pollution' until this can be shown to contain some chemically dangerous constituent, but it is hoped that the persistent efforts which are being made to remedy this damaging disfigurement may be successful. Serious injury is being done to the fishing as well as to natural beauty.

The steel-lattice pylons of the grid have reached Staveley from Kendal ; they may be seen as an unpleasant element in the landscape from the level crossing or from the train. But thanks and congratulations are due to the Windermere Electric Supply Company, to the Central Electricity Board and to the S. Westmorland R.D.C. in that from Staveley to Windermere and Troutbeck the supply from the grid has been brought by underground cable. In the vale of Keswick the old threat of steel pylons has been once again renewed by the Central Electricity Board, and wayleaves were requested from the foot of Bassenthwaite lake under the flank of Skiddaw into Keswick. Opposition was organised both among private persons who were in a position to refuse wayleaves and so to take the Central Electricity Board to a public inquiry, and also among all the societies interested in preserving the Lake District. At the minute it seems probable that the scheme will be withdrawn, and that the supply to Keswick from the grid will be brought in by the already existing line of the Mid-Cumberland Electricity Company, which runs on wooden poles mid-way between the main under Skiddaw road and the east shore of Bassenthwaite. If this comes about, then among others to whom thanks are due is the Rural District Council of Cocker-mouth, which on this occasion opposed the plan for an addition to the growing tangle of overhead supply lines.

The dam at Haweswater is nearing its last stages ; it should be finished in eighteen months and Manchester Corporation has given a definite undertaking then to remove its little-admired hamlet, which for the last dozen years has been seated on the fell side at Burnbanks. 'My heart,' wrote J. M. W. Turner the painter, in a reflective poem composed in 1808 during one of his many visits to the Lake District,

'my heart a polished tablet of consent
to all that can irradiate by truth.'

It is to be hoped that all members of the Club will do what in them lies to make that truth which irradiates from the fells and lakes and dales still visible to the inner eye without which man is a poor and debilitated creature.

H. H. Symonds.

IN MEMORIAM

DUNBAR USHER

The death of Dunbar Usher, a printer of Keswick, on Stand Crag, Great End, on the 7th May, 1938, has a far-reaching effect. Not only were his activities so varied—there were representatives of nineteen different associations ranging from the Town Council to the Keep Fit Council, at his funeral at Crosthwaite Church—but he was known and respected both in the Lake District and indeed all over the country as one of the safest of climbers, and the most sociable and open-hearted of men: his first-hand knowledge of climbs was at the disposal of all; and in addition Dunbar had that rare gift of being able to entertain without apparent effort. Those who have had the good fortune to spend an evening in his company listening to his remarkable repertoire of recitations—of which the works of Geoffrey Wyndrop Young were his favourites—will remember him as well as they can visualise his neat and unhurried progress up a severe and exposed climb.

Investigations show clearly that a flake of rock which he was using for a pull up to surmount the nose on the third pitch came away, and it is highly probable that after his foot slid and hit the shoulder of his second he swung outwards, and his neck was broken by contact with the rock face close to the ledge from which he had climbed: had this not happened he might not have been hurt, for the total fall is barely 40 feet and the landing is on grass.

A fitting epitaph is the following extract from a letter of a friend who had climbed with Dunbar in the Alps as well as in the Lake District:—

‘When I read in the newspaper the account of Dunbar’s death the words looked very strange and unreal for I have always looked upon Dunbar as one of the most safe and careful climbers that I have ever known. Nowadays when so many

people climb for notoriety, and other false motives, one must expect accidents to happen, but Dunbar, more than anyone I know, climbed for the best motives and I still find it difficult to believe that one who loved the hills so genuinely should be claimed as a victim.

‘ I am afraid that Dunbar’s death will have been a great shock to all your crowd and moreover an irreparable loss. Most of us are rather inarticulate in our feeling for the hills and Dunbar had the great ability to capture and pass on some of the poetry and beauty that we feel. Personally the Lakes will always be associated for me with Dunbar’s personality, and I can imagine how it must be for all you who knew him so much better.’

C.E.A.

ACCIDENTS

The Club's comparative immunity from fatal accidents in recent years was unfortunately ended last spring, when within two weeks in May two good climbers, one a non-member, lost their lives. The latter, Miss Eva Baily, of Edinburgh, after having climbed Moss Ghyll Grooves on Miss N. Hamilton's rope, expressed a wish to climb the Pinnacle Face by Jones' Route via the Waiting Room and that they should take alternate leads. Leading out of the cave on to the overhanging roof, a very delicate balance movement is needed to raise oneself up a small triangular mantelshelf to a standing position, and presumably at this point Miss Baily overbalanced and, falling backwards, dropped a clear 250 feet to the foot of Steep Ghyll. The rope broke against the sharp edge of the cave as soon as it had run all out, jerking the second round, although she was tied to the 'line' loop of the threaded belay. An effort by two other climbers, who had arrived a few minutes earlier at the Waiting Room, to stop the running out of the rope was unsuccessful. Miss Hamilton displayed great fortitude when immediately after this deeply distressing tragedy, she made the severe descent down Jones' climbing on L. Muscroft's rope; he with a friend had crossed over from Pinnacle face to help.

As every accident ought to make others from the same cause less likely, it must be borne in mind that however great the severities of Moss Ghyll Grooves, the strain upon the leader's muscles and especially on his nerves in climbing the Mantelshelf is even more severe, and therefore many will decide to climb the harder of the two courses first, when body and mind are at their freshest and best.

Little over a week later, on May 12th, calamity overtook Dunbar Usher while climbing Stand Crag on the Corridor Route, half-way between Skew Ghyll and Piers Ghyll. Having reached a ledge 50 feet up, Usher, unable to reach a handhold on the right, climbed on his second's shoulders; after much effort he succeeded in grasping the small rockspike, but it snapped and he fell backwards, breaking his neck on the grass ledge 50 feet below. (See obituary notice, p. 00.)

The failure of a hold on the traverse of the Chantry Buttress is thought to have caused the fall of Miss Joyce Houcher when leading a member, Dr. P. Dunsheath, on her rope on that very difficult climb last June. Fortunately the second was well belayed at the top of the first pitch, so that when, having climbed on about 30 feet above him, she fell clear through space and past him, he was able to stop her 60-foot fall and she escaped with severe concussion. The lady who is now Mrs. P. Dunsheath made a complete recovery—congratulations to both upon so happy a dispensation.

The breaking of a handhold on the traverse very nearly caused a similar accident last year, and it will be remembered that that great climber C. D. Frankland lost his life on the same climb and from the same cause.

The number of climbers on all routes has increased many times over during recent years and the ceaseless and vigorous kicking of heavy boots against small holds or flakes, possibly already fissured by frost and thaw, may have something to do with the constantly increasing failure of rock-holds ; greater caution than ever should be used in testing all holds, especially on severely exposed routes.

THE LONDON SECTION

The activities of the Section were confined to outdoor meets in 1938 as it was felt that indoor meets should not be resumed until the Gallery of the Alpine Club, so generously placed at our disposal as soon as ready, was again available.

Throughout the year the attendance on the walks was very satisfactory and never too large to make accommodation at small outlying tea places or inns difficult.

Eighteen walks were organised, taking in every district around London that had not been made useless by the ever-encroaching suburbs.

A start was made with walks in the Godalming and Oxted districts, and later Sunningdale and Brookwood provided an excellent walk in the open country over the Chobham Ridges, which was followed a little later by a favourite walk from High Wycombe to Marlow.

In May it was decided to repeat the highly attractive excursion into the Cotswold country. T. M. Hardwick again led about twelve members, who were reinforced by our good friends, the Westmorlands, home on leave from Canada. A well-planned route took us through Notgrove to Bourton-on-Water over unspoilt, peaceful stretches of trim, well-tended country, and we returned home late, determined to renew our acquaintance with these pleasant hills at the earliest opportunity.

Bishop's Stortford and Westerham were next visited, and on the 22nd June, Prof. and Mrs R. S. T. Chorley, after taking us an eight-mile walk around Stanmore, whence we had started at 7 p.m., invited the numerous party of friends to their charming house where refreshments were provided.

A thoroughly enjoyable walk from Henley to Risborough was followed in September by one from East Grinstead to Gatwick, led by those loyal friends of the section Mr and Mrs R. P. Mears.

Tring, Groombridge, and Caterham were visited in succession and give a good indication of the variety of districts selected in order to give equal facilities to members in all parts of London.

The 19th Annual Dinner of the London Section held at the Connaught Rooms on the 3rd December owed a great deal of its unqualified success to the influx of friends from all parts of the country, many of whom stayed over Sunday and joined the walk arranged for that occasion.

Many guests had been invited, chiefly representatives of their respective clubs, and to Miss M. Scott Johnston fell the pleasant task of proposing their health, which she did with admirable wit and discernment. Then H. W. Tilman replied for the Everest Expedition of 1938, and Miss Nancy Price, the well known writer of most charmingly intimate books on Lakeland country and people, replied for the guests and appealed for greater individual sacrifice to safeguard the sequestered beauty which brought so much

physical and spiritual sustenance to workers from the towns. George Anderson proposed the Main Club and the President in an entertaining speech to which the President briefly replied. S. J. Audrey then very gracefully proposed the London Section and its Chairman, Dr C. F. Hadfield, who replied, at the same time dealing with the business of the section by getting the Committee, himself and the Secretary re-elected for another year.

In the absence of a pianist, Darwin Leighton found no difficulty in sounding the right note, and led the Club song in fine style. Finally, Will McNaught arrived in time to strike the right key for launching 'Auld Lang Syne,' thus bringing another very happy Fell and Rock gathering to a harmonious conclusion.

On Sunday the 4th December, over thirty members and friends walked from St Albans to Harpenden. On the way Mary Glynne, who led the walk, gave us an opportunity of inspecting several most interesting departments of the Rothampsted Experimental Station and brought all in good time to Bankcroft where Prof. and Mrs L. P. Garrod had spread a tea of truly Cumbrian proportions for the delectation of the party, which all enjoyed to the full !

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the 'Fell and Rock Journal'

SIR,

DOVE CRAG

On the last day I was in the Lake District after coming back from Switzerland, I had two hours' scrambling on Middlefell Buttress with Miss Fitzgibbon and Miss Nancy Ridyard.

During one of the snatches of conversation, apropos of first ascents, I suggested that there were still two branches of a gully which so far as I knew, had not been climbed, namely the great Y-shaped gully on Dove Crag, in Dovedale, Patterdale. Miss Ridyard then told me that she had been with a party last year, I think, which had climbed one of the branches of the gully and had also climbed the buttress and face route. They were under the impression that both were first ascents, and had recorded these climbs in the Climbing Book at Coniston, but she had seen no transcription from that record to the pages of the Journal.

The buttress and face climb was not the first ascent, because on the 3rd October, 1910, three of us made the first ascent of Dove Crag beginning on the buttress and then continuing by the face above, after having failed to climb either of the branches of the gully. I therefore thought it might be of some interest to send a photograph of Dove Crag under separate cover, showing the two branches of the Y Gully and showing the approximate route of our ascent in 1910, a brief account of which appeared in the pages of the F. & R.C.C. Journal No. 4, of that year, and in the back of later editions of Jones's 'Rock Climbing in the English Lake District.'

As happens so frequently in first ascents, the climb seemed hard—more difficult than the direct finish of Moss Ghyll—and we had an exciting moment in the last sixty feet. John Mounsey and W. A. North were on a narrow ledge and I was leading up a slab which formed one side of a gable-shaped rock abutting against the overhang of the cliff; as I climbed carefully up this slab, the portion I was on, about the size of two large tombstones end to end, slid outwards, and as Dove Crag overhangs twenty feet in three hundred or so, the prospect was at least exciting. However, after moving outwards about four inches, the slab for some reason came to a stop and I was able to go on without dislodging it, and finished the climb. Only last year I asked North to help me to pick out our route and he mentions (and includes an amusing sketch of) the incident in his letter as follows: 'I remember a hair-raising slip of a slice of gable-shaped rock with you on it while Mounsey and I were on a small ledge below; it was where the right-hand traverse ended and we went up vertically with the path to

glory obscured by heather and bleaberries.' George Abraham took the photograph for me a year or two ago by telephoto lens.

Halifax, N.S.

October 26th, 1938

Yours very sincerely,

H. WESTMORLAND



To the Editor of the 'Fell and Rock Journal'

SIR,

THE COLOUR OF WASTWATER

I presume that I am not peculiar in that I have always regarded Wastwater as a lake of dark indigo colour. My surprise can therefore well be imagined when, during the third week of August 1938, I noticed that the water was of a bright, light, green tint. The approach on this occasion was made by the road from Nether Wasdale, and the phenomenon was strikingly apparent just after passing through the gate. My companions were old frequenters of the Dale and they were unanimous in confirming my observation. For ten days I was in the neighbourhood, and I had many opportunities of examining the lake from different angles and heights, and in all sorts of weather. The green was always present, but was particularly apparent when the waters were viewed in sunshine and from above.

Naturally I soon began to look for a cause, and I conceived the idea that it might in some way be connected with the great flood which did so much damage during the August Bank Holiday week-end. While arriving at no definite theory, it seemed just possible that an unusual quantity or quality of suspended matter brought down by the flood might be responsible. Some confirmation of this surmise was provided from an independent source, for on 3rd September when I was in the kitchen of Wasdale Head Hall Farm, I remarked quite casually 'What about the colour of the Lake?' and the prompt reply was 'Aye: it's been green ever sin' t'flood.' I took home with me a sample of the water for examination. Seen in a tumbler it looked bright, clear and colourless, but viewed through a length of two feet in a glass tube it showed a distinctly *brownish* tint—about half as dark as Dumfries tap water. Beyond this no peculiarities were noticed.

If the flood theory is correct, one would expect the water gradually to revert to its normal colour as the contents of the lake are changed.

Doubtless many others must have noticed the phenomenon—though they may have hesitated to admit it—and it is hoped that they will now have the temerity to compare notes and to record impressions.

I would appeal to readers of this letter to communicate to me or to the Editor their observations on the subject, and particularly to report if possible (1) Whether the Lake was of normal colour up till the beginning of August 1938.

- (2) Whether and at what dates subsequent to the flood any particular colouration—and especially a lessening of the green—was observable, and
- (3) Whether there is any previous record of the Lake appearing green, and if so at what dates and whether following floods.

I hope that the interest of the subject will be deemed sufficient to justify this trespass on your space, and that combined effort will lead to a complete explanation of the observed facts.

Dumfries
September 15th, 1938

Yours, etc.
T. R. BURNETT

EDITOR'S NOTES

The introduction of Graduating Membership in the past year should be productive of nothing but good. It is at all times difficult to gain climbing experience, particularly for those under age, and the new rule aims at the removal of that difficulty, with the goodwill and active assistance of the sponsors of graduating members.

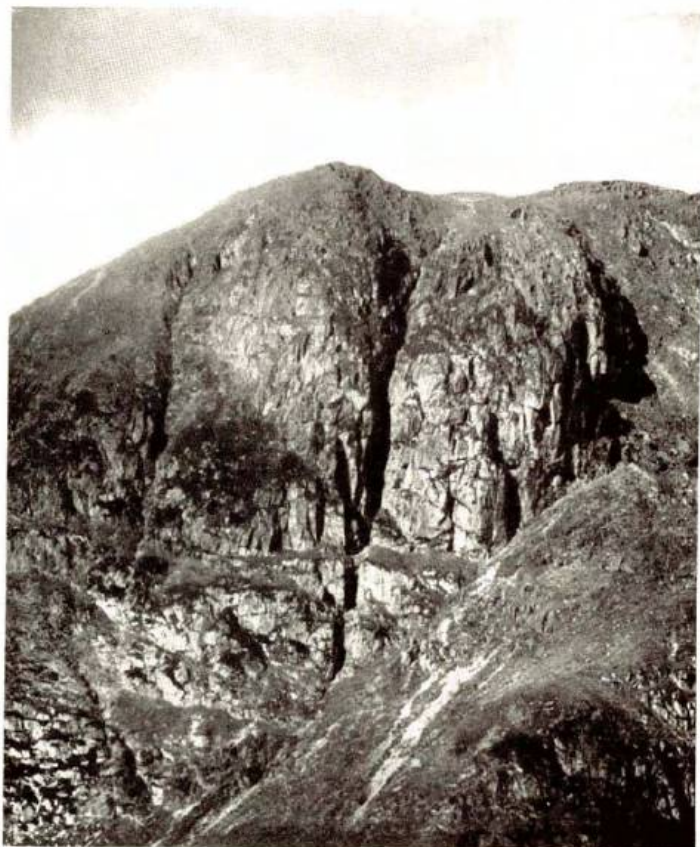
In offering this great encouragement to the younger generation the example of three much older clubs of distinction was followed, and, as in their case, this extension of the scope of the Club will no doubt produce satisfactory results.

Brackenclose, inexpensive, friendly and helpful, will more than ever justify its existence in the way in which it was primarily intended that it should. How greatly its usefulness is appreciated by kindred clubs as well as our own members is borne out by the fact that already during the first year it has been nearly self-supporting ; the revenue was insufficient to provide a surplus for a sinking fund, but that will come, and with it the ability to reduce fees by degrees.

Torrential rain during the great thunderstorm in August did much damage to the banks and the road at Brackenclose. Large boulders were carried down and piled up against the concrete bridge, diverting the stream and the new bed of the beck is now crossed by means of a new wooden bridge.

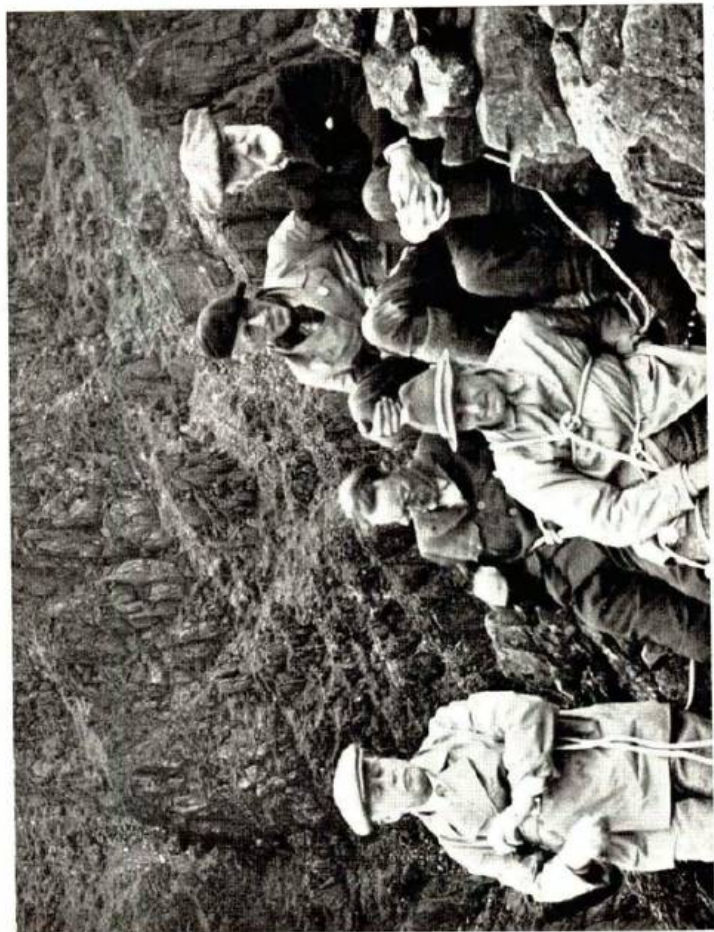
Where the beck runs alongside Club land some deepening of its bed, as well as the building up of the left bank, will be necessary to protect Brackenclose land from further and possibly more serious encroachment.

A letter from T. R. Burnett draws attention to a very pronounced discoloration of Wastwater. It was noticed by several members and lasted for some considerable time after the thunderstorm. Further observations by other members may explain the cause of this rare occurrence and



G. P. Abraham

PENRITH GULLY
Falcon Crag, Dollywaggon Pike



Sheila Macleod

PILLAR :
G. A. Solly's
70th
Anniversary

any interesting letters on the subject will be published in the next issue of the Journal.

On the 21st April the Club's Past President and honorary member, G. A. Solly, celebrated the 50th Anniversary of his first ascent of Pillar Rock in 1889 by leading his companion on that occasion, the Rev. Edmund Freeman of Whitehaven, up the Slab and Notch Arête ; with him on the same rope were the President and R. S. T. Chorley, Horace Westmorland and two young friends. The cheerful ease with which G. A. Solly, now in his eightieth year, accomplished not only the climb but also the long walk back to Wasdale Head gave ample proof of his undiminished enthusiasm and energy. A framed enlargement of the photograph, shown here, has been added to the Club's collection to commemorate this notable achievement.

The Friends of the Lake District in their well-produced brochure entitled, 'A Road Policy for the Lake District,' are drawing attention to the danger which threatens Lakeland from the ceaseless process of widening and lengthening of roads, which in many cases destroys the very things innumerable motorists go to the District to find—peace and seclusion. In that effort to inform public opinion they are entitled to look for the fullest support from every lover of the Lakes ; and especially should members of this Club help, since the peaceful enjoyment of its climbing ground may become seriously impaired if indiscriminate roadmaking is allowed to go on unchecked.

The Club is indebted to W. P. Haskett-Smith for the gift of Ellis Carr's ice axe. Years of treatment with linseed oil have given the shaft a high polish, bearing ample testimony to the infinite care and attention earlier mountaineers bestowed upon their equipment. It will now find a permanent resting place at Brackenclose.

Wordsworth's birthplace at Cockermouth has been saved from destruction by the efforts of the National Memorial Committee, which collected £1,600 for its acquisition and transfer into the safe keeping of the National Trust.

Members have again sent in a very satisfactory range of photographs from all climbing centres. The number of plates in this issue has had to be reduced to thirty-six ; it was intended to publish a number of action photographs but in proof they failed to satisfy. In future in a special section of the Journal, photographs of rock climbs both old and new, preferably of hard and severe routes on exposed faces will be reproduced. From these slides will be made to add to the Club's collection.

In 1938, Himalayan Exploration reached another high level of intense effort, if not achievement. Wind and snow again defeated a very determined Everest party which had spent over two months on the mountain in a vain hope that a few fine days might favour their final attempt on the summit ridge. Odell contributes some observations on this subject in this issue.

The American Alpine Club Expedition under C. S. Houston to K₂ (28,250 feet) reached 26,000 feet on the N.E. ridge when an approaching storm drove the two high-climbing members back to Camp VI and then back to the base camp, on the way narrowly escaping obliteration by a huge rock crashing down from the Abruzzi ridge and past them.

The Munich Expedition under Dr Paul Bauer to Nanga Parbat were forced by bad weather to abandon their attempt ; two parties each of two climbers who had bravely stuck it out in their tents at Camp V (about 23,800 feet) during a snowstorm, hoping for eight fine days needed for their dash from Camp VI to the summit, on August 4th broke camp and reached base camp on August 6th.

A private party, which included three of our members, Prof. T. Graham Brown, Lieut. J. O. M. Roberts and R. A. Hodgkin, together with Capt. J. B. Harrison and J. Waller, set out last March for the Karakoram to climb Masherbrum (25,660 feet), reaching base camp on May 16th.

Though dogged by bad weather throughout, they managed to establish Camp VII at 24,600 feet on the lower lip of a crevasse. From there, Hodgkin and Harrison were driven down by a blizzard which buried their tent on June 18th and they spent a day and night in a crevasse, until, on the 19th, they reached Camp VI, badly frostbitten, and eventually, on June 22nd, base camp. Only the great spirit shown by members in the face of intensely severe conditions could have brought them back alive.

In Africa, Miss Una Cameron with her two Courmayeur guides climbed three peaks of the Ruwenzori Mountains (Mt Baker by a new direct route) and later climbed both Mt Kenya and Kilimanjaro.

The Grandes Jorasses, Pointe Walker (13,800 feet) by the North edge were climbed by three young Italians, Cassin-Esposito-Tizzoni, in 40 hours (August 4th-6th in three bivouacs) for the first time. Severities, if not as great as those of Piz Badile N.E. face, lasted much longer in individual pitches and made the climb the hardest yet done by them.

The conquest of the Eiger by the N. (Eigerwand) face by the Austrian guide A. Heckmeier and Voerg, Harrer and Kasparek on July 20th-24th, according to the *Oe.A.Z.* 'completes exploration in the Alps': and curiosity is expressed in it as to the nature of the new ideas and methods mountaineering of the future will develop! In spite of the unquestionably magnificent effort of these climbers, most mountaineers will continue to consider that kind of route unjustifiable, as are all routes where success depends not only upon the best that good climbers have in them, but also upon their being nine-tenths lucky with the weather, and escaping the steady rain of stones and, if required, being

rescued by men who would not willingly go anywhere near so treacherous a face.

Dorothy Pilley Richards, home from China, received a warm welcome at Windermere. Together with her husband she explored the Yunnan Mountains near the Tibet border and made the first Ascent of Gyinaloko, a 20,000 foot peak. Alone and on foot she then made the 300-mile journey from Talifu to Bhamo on the Irrawaddy, returning by another route to China. On her way home she and Ivor Richards climbed in the Bugaboo Range of the Selkirks and made two new ascents, Peak 1 and 12 each of about 11,000 feet.

An interesting new and direct finish of the South face route of the Ober Gabelhorn was made last August by G. R. Speaker and Alexander Graven, accompanied by Miss M. Scott Johnston and Felix Julen.

The Club Library is growing rapidly, thanks to the steady flow of gifts and review copies, and equally gratifying is the increased use that is being made of books and maps. Additional book-cases are to be provided and sooner or later the problem of housing the Club collection more suitably will have to be dealt with.