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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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**No. 39**

VOL. XIV  
(NO. II)

*Published by*

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1945

CONTENTS

PAGE

Vergil Knew. . . . .	<i>E. Banner Mendus</i>	79
Climbs at Bude . . . . .	<i>E. M. Hazelton</i>	86
Rainbow Mountains . . . . .	<i>M. R. FitzGibbon</i>	89
The Ullswater Fells Round the Turn. . . . . of the Century . . . . .	<i>H. Westmorland</i>	97
How Accurate is the Altimeter ?... . . . .	<i>R. A. Thyssen-Gee</i>	104
58th Parallel . . . . .	<i>J. R. Cottrill</i>	107
Some Early Guide-book Writers and Travellers to the Lake District . . . . .	<i>Ernest M. Turner</i>	114
Etna: . An Excursion, from Duty. . . . .	<i>Philip H. Weston</i>	120
Raw Head . . . . .	<i>S. H. Cross</i>	124
Forty-eight Hours . . . . .	<i>R. B. Conn</i>	129
A National Park for the Lake District . . . . .	<i>A. B. Hargreaves</i>	132
N.F . . . . .	<i>Anon</i>	143
Climbs Old and New. . . . .	<i>Wm. Peascod</i>	145
The Year with the Club . . . . .	<i>Mary Cockerton</i>	152
In Memoriam : Rev. W. T. Elmslie . . . . .		155
N. Forsyth		
C. D. Yeomans		
Dr J. J. Brigg		
Wm Taylor-Jones		
C. G. Bull		
R. H. Coulthard		
E. Charlton		
Norman Daley		
M. H. Donald		
Commander Duncan		
J. Graham		
Charles Hargreaves		
W. Ingall,		
C. B. James		
J. C. W. Hawkins		
W. D. Litt		
R. E. Sargent		
Miss J. Orr-Ewing		
Miss H. C. M. Winch. . . . .		
Editor's Notes . . . . .		160
Club Notes . . . . .		163
London Section . . . . .		164
The Library . . . . .		165
Reviews . . . . .		167

Whatever may be the truth about a young man's thoughts in springtime it is certain that in winter a climber's thoughts turn to gullies ; no doubt on the principle that if one is obliged to get wet one may as well do it thoroughly. True, there are some slab and face enthusiasts who eschew gullies in all circumstances and conditions, who regard the climbing of them as a kind of perversion, akin to potholing, and ' the gully epoch ' as a discreditable chapter in the history of climbing ; a backstairs method of ascending crags. But although we tend to neglect gullies nowadays in the enthralling pursuit of steeper and steeper faces and smaller and smaller stances, yet for most of us a good gully climb is a memory to be cherished and worthy to take its place with its peers the face climbs ; and it is an odd but undeniable fact that the wetter and more uncomfortable the gully the more we cherish its memory. " Perversion ! " says the purist triumphantly. Yet '*Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit.*'

For one climber at least, 1944 began and ended with gullies ; *Yew Crag Gully* on New Year's Day with the wind striding ' like a good giant ' through Honister ; at the end of the year *Toreador Gully*, blackly defeating our attempts to climb or swim up the long pitch, and beating back Bill's repeated efforts in the press of falling water ; and finally, *Lorton Gully*, as a winter pastoral, producing an appetite worthy of the hospitality of Buttermere and another New Year Meet.

Between these extremes and in their rightful place came the face climbs with dry rock and even sunshine ; spring and early summer days on Castle Rock of Triermain, primroses and bluebells in the woods and on the ledges, the friendly southern face of the Rock and the forbidding northern precipice where a little ledge with bluebells brought a gasp of relief to nerves strung taut by the endless outward thrusting rock and spectacular exposure of *Overhanging Bastion* ; then, high summer in Buttermere, where my companion and I rediscovered the delights of the Birkness Moderates (surely as pleasing a collection of moderates as possessed by any crag in the Lake District), until it grew too hot even for the walk up to Birkness and bathing in becks became the Only Ultimate Good ; this, while Bill, who is made of sterner stuff, was in Wasdale using the perfect weather to make the coveted ascent of ' C. B. '

The autumn brought rain and storms, strenuous days on other crags, and rumours of fresh exploits by the indefatigable R. J. Birkett on Esk Buttress.

But looking back into 1944, for one party, a gully is the best remembered climb. For those of us whose first climbing literature was O. G. Jones and George Abraham, the Screes Gullies retain their fascination and the aura of endeavour which surrounds a 'classic' even after we discover that a few worth while climbs have actually been made since those days ; so it was to remedy a notable omission that Bill Peascod and I decided early in February to climb one of the Screes Gullies.

When we made up our minds, there was some snow and much ice on the mountains, and we eagerly anticipated an exceptionally fine snow climb and went armed with ice-axes. But in the train while it was still dark we realised that the thaw had come overnight and it was raining when we arrived at Drigg ; close misty rain that quite effectively hid the fells so that we might have been cycling in lowland country. The ice-axe strapped to my crossbar seemed incongruous.

Soon we were fairly wet and becoming conscious that the weather was not so mild after all, but our intentions were still fixed on one of the Screes Gullies. We decided that conditions, though unpleasant, were rather in our favour than otherwise and Bill even had a fanciful notion of ascending one gully and descending the other—an idea which events were to prove even more far fetched than it seemed at the time.

We sought shelter from the cold driving rain while we changed at the farm, and there we met kindness and polite discouragement. Perhaps our questioner had fears of a rescue party, for our climbing experience was called into question and we were repeatedly assured that the cliffs are rotten and not at all like 't' crags' at Wasdale Head, that there are 'great big hang-overs,' and that few people come to climb them and then only experts. We remained resolutely cheerful until the final shot—"Well if you must climb the Screes, you've chosen a bad day for it." The proposition seemed so sound that we assented. Then : "Yes, a very bad day—rain after frost" . . . There was a pregnant silence as our friend's meaning sank in ; then he added "No, I haven't heard any rock falls yet, but there always are after a long frost." We departed thoughtfully.

In the last field before taking to the mountainside we crouched in the lee of a wall and tried to pierce the wall of mist and rain above us. Through a rift we saw a waterfall gully near the end of the crags. It was white with ice from top to bottom. Bill went back to the farm to fetch an ice-axe while I waited and shivered.

Half an hour later we were slithering about on the scree below the crags trying to identify the gullies in the mist-blurred outlines

of the crags, and still debating whether we would try 'Great' or 'C'. Eventually we made out two gullies which I maintained were 'C' and 'Great.' Bill said the right hand cleft was nothing and the left hand was 'C'. As we were at least agreed that the left hand was one of the famous pair we decided to try that and dispose of the invidious task of choosing between them by giving them each an equal chance of being the one we could see.

We made our way up to its foot and decided that the 'long approach over boulders' agreed with the *Guide* and that this must be *Great Gully*. The pitches receded between tall black walls hung with fringes of enormous icicles, and there was the roar of much falling water. Seen through driving rain it looked overpowering and the ascent seemed hopeless, but I remembered that the first duty of a second man is to nurture the leader's morale ('a plant of tender growth' according to Mummery) and when Bill asked "D'you think we'll get up?" I tried to combine honesty with encouragement by promptly replying "No, but we can try," and in that slightly irresponsible mood we started the climb.

The first three pitches went quite well after the thick, rotten ice had been hacked away from the holds. But it was cold, we had not bargained for this combination of ice and falling water, and the climbing was hard enough to make it difficult to avoid the water all the time. After the first pitch we were wet, after the second very wet, and after the third we were too wet to care. The third pitch was a good deal harder than the first two and when we had cut a way up a steep corner we had a feeling that it would not be altogether easy to return. But the idea did not trouble, for we were climbing fast to try to retain some warmth and there was little time for reflection.

A great wall of light coloured rock draped with ice now barred direct ascent, and our way lay to the right into a small branch of the gully, bounded on one side by a rib, and on the other by an enormous black, overhanging wall. The rock here was free from ice, and on small holds we made our way into the narrow branch gully. For the first time the climbing was technically hard enough to make the ice axe and rucksack encumbrances. From the branch gully we had to climb up and over the rib on the left, and back into the gully proper above the impasse. The only belays were poor, so Bill traversed out on to the rib to a small sloping stance, where I joined him with some difficulty. The belays were badly placed, and I was uncomfortably conscious of some six-foot icicles suspended precariously from the overhanging wall a long way above my head, and also there was an absurd feeling that the wall

behind me might collapse on to the rib ; so I was relieved to see Bill climb quickly and neatly up the difficult rib and cross by a narrow, and most unstable-looking, grass traverse into the main gully ; and still more relieved when my turn came to follow.

The gully now became narrower and we scrambled up its rocky bed which was thickly sheeted with ice until we reached the shelter of some great boulders at the foot of a series of ice walls. I demanded a rest and a smoke ; but it had to be interrupted, for Bill was impatient to get on, and we were both beginning to realise that the climb was becoming a race against time now that we were up the rib and retreat was less desirable than advance. " Only eleven more pitches to go," remarked Bill cheerfully and set to work on the next pitch. Although we were able to climb the **waterslide** pitches fairly quickly considering the conditions, we realised by the time we were climbing the third of them that being deluged with icy water soon ceases to be amusing when there are holds to be cleared of ice, and numbed fingers do not grip so securely.

It is difficult to tell at what stage we ceased to look upon the climb as a lark and recognised it as a serious struggle with the issue no foregone conclusion. We had no watches, but by the time we reached the *Amphitheatre* we seemed to have been climbing for hours up endless ice walls. The lake, framed between the retaining walls, seemed a very long way down, but we knew that we still had a long way to go. We were tired, soaked through and through and half-frozen. We tried to wring some of the water out of our clothes and laughed at the squelching sound in our boots as we walked.

The *Amphitheatre* was darkly magnificent ; a place for calling up spirits. The gully had opened out, and above was a vast, gloomy cirque which troubled us because we could not see which way our gully went. The wind was strong and cold, and mist raced across the crags in the folds of the grey curtains of rain. I remembered Mummery again—'grim and hopeless as the cliffs may sometimes look when ebbing twilight is chased by shrieking wind and snow'—and shivered. I wondered if his 'but brave companions and a constant spirit will cut the gathering web of peril' also applied, and vaguely felt the humour of so presumptuous a comparison.

Though we were hungry, it was too cold to stop for long, and we pushed on up the *Amphitheatre* trying to decide which was the gully proper and which the branches to be avoided. At first we went too far to the right, but returned and discovered Pitch 11.

The back of the pitch was choked with ice and we went up back and foot between ice walls, having to hack the ice away from a chockstone in the face of yet more water before we could emerge. Again we went wrong on the next pitch, going too far to the right, and again we had to return. Perhaps this was because Pitch 12 sounded harder in the *Guide* than it proved to be ; perhaps we were careless, but the 'awkward traverse' back to the bed of the gully presented no difficulty.

Pitch 13 is alleged to be 'the simple bed of the gully' and Pitch 14 'the same,' so we advanced with rising spirits. Probably the ice changed everything, for these were the hardest pitches we climbed that day. The only safe stance was in a pool of water over the boot tops, but that was a minor discomfort. We stood in our pool and howled like dervishes while we tried to beat some life back into our hands. The howling had a more warming effect than the beating. From our stance the gully bed rose steeply in a narrow corkscrew to a big bulge of black ice, which apparently hid a chockstone somewhere inside it. The water was pouring over the bulge and shooting down the corkscrew. There were no degrees of wetness for us then ; but there were still degrees of coldness, and we were reluctant to face more falling water compared with which the water filling our clothes was relatively warm. Bill tried to make a way up the right wall ; but the rock was rotten and he had to return, dropping the last few feet, and landing with a splash in the pool beside me. The speed with which he eventually went up through the water was quite remarkable, as were his gurgled comments, and having reached a ledge below the bulge he withdrew to its right-hand end to get away from the water. Having reorganised himself he set to work on the bulge with the axe, and I dodged flying masses of ice. After clearing a few holds out he tried to get up, but right on the bulge it was necessary to make a long stride to the left through the full weight of the water to a small hold. After several unsuccessful attempts he spent a long time trying to turn the bulge on the right before he returned and suggested that I join him to help him up the bulge. We realised later that the bulge was actually Pitch 14, but the ledge had seemed small, there was no proper belay and it did not occur to him that it was a stance.

I welcomed the opportunity of getting out of the pool even though it meant more water from above, and I scrambled up the corkscrew to the ledge which proved to be sheeted in ice and a rather uncomfortable place. The bulge was slowly reduced with the axe ; but to get at it one had to stand half in the waterfall, and Bill could only work in spasms. Finally by combined

tactics and, be it confessed, a little desperation, the bulge was surmounted and I followed Bill up the waterfall.

With only three more pitches to go, we felt that at last the top was coming within reach. We walked up the gently sloping gully-bed which now went deep between high close walls of rock, hoping that the next pitch would not be very hard as we no longer felt able to cope with extreme difficulties. We came to the foot of Pitch 15 and saw at once that it was hopeless. A great boulder is jammed between the walls forming a chimney, but chimney and boulder were buried deep in a vertical wall of hard ice with the inevitable water spraying over the top. To clear the chimney of ice would have been a long and arduous task and we did not even consider it. We climbed up on rotten rock, behind a curious natural arch on the left wall, for shelter, and to see if a way could be made up the side of the pitch away from the ice. Bill wanted to try, but the wall was slightly overhanging and looked rotten. Also we could see that if we got up this pitch and failed on the next there was no possible way out of the gully. "So what?" said Bill with a wealth of expression. "Break out further back," I replied hopefully. "Jones says—" It is useless attempting to escape from the gully," said Bill, probably misquoting but no doubt getting the principle right. However we decided that the heather} left wall had not looked too bad just above the top of the last pitch, so we retraced our steps and it must be confessed took a shameless delight in the prospect of getting out of the gully.

The wall was steep, and thickly covered with heather and grass, and Bill soon discovered that the rock underneath was as rotten as the vegetation. He progressed slowly, mostly by driving in the pick of the axe and hoisting himself on it. Just how he maintained the *status quo* while he drove the axe in higher up is, for me, another of those unsolved mysteries. Every other tuft of heather he stood on gave way beneath him, and it was a very long time before, with most of the hundred feet of rope out, he reached the top of the wall.

After warnings that his belay was poor and that he could not help me much, I started. The axe was being used as an extra belay and I had to rely on hands alone to get a grip on the vegetation. The rope ran diagonally at first and was little help in a disintegrating world. It was a case of digging frozen fingers into the earth and pulling until either a foot was gained or something gave way, and one slid back again. There were places where a mouthful of heather was thankfully used as an additional support. It was not climbing, and it was not magnificent, but it was terribly exhausting after all that had gone before.

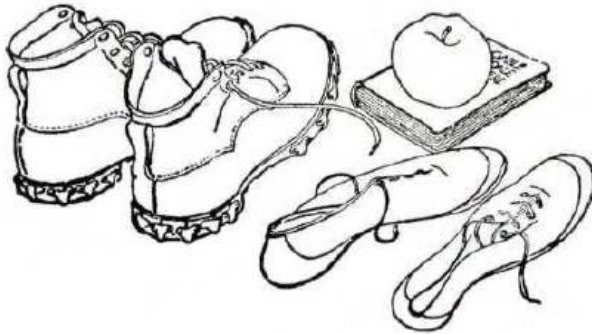


Above, only easy scrambling and walking along the top of the buttress remained, but we kept the rope on, being in a state nearer complete exhaustion than either of us had experienced before, and we even found ourselves cutting steps up easy patches of snow. We had some uncharitable things to say about the 'walk up grass' (it was ice), that 'leads to the pleasant summit plateau' (thick mist and driving rain!).

A couple of hours later in the train we slept fitfully with pools of water collecting on the floor around our feet.

As I crept homewards I came within the beam of enquiry of a policeman's lamp. There was a startled exclamation, then: "What *have* you been doing, sir?" "Climbing," I replied shortly and passed squelching into the night.

The speech of Aeneas to cheer his companions in their misfortunes comes to mind again—'Perhaps we shall find pleasure in remembering even *these* things one day.' Vergil must have known the feeling although he was not a climber!



## CLIMBS AT BUDE

E. M. Hazelton

Having been for a time evacuated to Bude I have been looking over the local rocks and I am sending in these notes on them in the hope that it may make the path of duty more acceptable to those members of the Club whose families demand that Father should take them to the sea and not go rushing off to his old mountains.

There is little at Bude to gladden the heart of the rock climber, indeed it would not be easy for any ordinary member of the Club to find words sufficiently abusive. The cliffs are friable, treacherous and end at their summits in yards of bare soil. Nevertheless, difficult as it has been to sing the songs of Zion in a strange land, oases of happiness have been discovered.

The coast runs due north and south and is notable for its crumbling cliffs and its opportunities for surfing. Its quantities of sand would overpower the most unemotional of Walruses and Carpenters. The rock-strata chiefly stand up vertically. The shale rots away between slightly firmer layers. Walking north along the sand as the sun lights the cliffs before one, their colours are superb. On clear evenings as the sun dips his final green 'flash' lasts into a momentary glow. Such occasions are appreciated as solaces for the poverty of spirit shown by the rock faces.

Compass Point is the nose of rock which juts out from the coast at the south corner of Bude haven. Its headland with the tower forms the central feature of the view and on the downs there across the haven on still summer days the air is fragrant with the smell of wild thyme. The climbs can only be easily reached from below when the tide is more out than in. The rocks here consist of vertical sheets, like four mammoth playing cards standing on edge, each one being six or eight feet thick and sometimes separated from its neighbours by chasms of about that width.

*Compass Point Arete.* Straight up the seaward edge the whole way. The last fifteen feet are most simply completed by breaking on to the south face; continued direct this would provide the only seriously difficult part of the climb. The climb is in one pitch and needs 75 feet of rope. The friable nature of the rock may encourage the climber to have the rope lowered by a friend sitting astride the rib and looking out to sea. This is a superb spot.

*Compass Point Face.* Wander up the south face: you will probably prefer a route about 20 feet from the edge: one pitch only, height about 70 feet. It is an unbroken sweep of flat rock.

*Compass Point, South Climb.* This lies on the south outermost one of the set of flakes. The centre of this face stands out from its

background and rises as a triangle. It is clearly distinguished from the coast-guard cliff opposite it. If a rope is lowered from above the source of this comfort sits straddling the apex of the triangle. Rope 90 feet, if done in one pitch. Start for 35 feet up the left edge of the triangle to the left of a sentry-box formed by the disappearance from the wall of a circular patch of 'facing.' Traverse the 10 feet from the edge into this sentry-box. The early part of the pitch is on blistered rock of the egg-shell variety but the traverse is across a slab grooved criss-cross and lacking good holds. The sentry-box offers a stance but you will probably prefer to continue. Cross right on rotten holds under an overhang and out on to the outermost face. From here two routes are possible (a) 15 feet along a little ledge rising steeply to the right or (b) straight up the face (20 feet). The face is a rough steep slab 2nd the leader is open to receive any encouragement that is available. This climb is a glorious one if the sun is out. The face is full in the eye of the sun and looks across to Pentire Head and Trevoise Head twenty to thirty miles away down the coast. When I first climbed it my spectacles came adrift beneath the overhang and went tinkling down the 30 to 40 feet of rock to the bottom. Being short sighted I had to climb the final slab finding by sight such hand-holds as were near but relying on faith for the footholds.

Northcott Mouth is a mile and a half up the coast from Bude. There is a large projecting rock-face about 400 yards south of it facing north, looking up the coast and to Lundy Island in the distance. The face contains a prominent crack which can be climbed or the face itself may be taken. The rock in the crack is good but that on the face is veneered with bubbly spongy crumbly excrescences. Height 50 or 55 feet.

*The Unshore Rock.* This stands conspicuously alone on the shore some 300 yards south of Northcott Mouth. It is a vertical sheet of rock, about 30 feet square and three to six feet thick, and constitutes an undeniable challenge. It is easily ascended by the seaward edge, a rope may then be lowered to protect a man coming straight up the vertical eastern edge. The situation is conspicuous and St. Simeon Stylites would have viewed it with approving eye. The rock though better for recent cleaning, leaves much to be desired.

Sandy Mouth is 2½ miles up the coast from Bude. Just north of it stands a pyramid of jumbled rock and beyond this are two conspicuous isolated rocks, one a square block and the other a pinnacle landward of the block.

*The Square Block.* You can mount this most easily from the north side. You will be rewarded on top by a dry flowery mossy exalted platform, grand for sun-bathing, sleeping or a gramophone.

You will certainly be alone and may serenely contemplate the sand and waves beneath you or Lundy Island to your right and Tintagel Head to your left. America will be further away in front of you. From this perch you may watch your companion perform three enjoyable climbs. The situation invites the prone position.

(a) *Straight up the South Face.* 60 feet. Starts from bottom right-hand corner and the rock on the whole is unusually sound and beautifully dry. The last half takes a shallow ledge rising steeply to the left and sloping 'the wrong way.'

(b) *S. W. Corner.* Here is a right-angular vertical groove of not more than 30 feet with an overhang at the top. It is sunny, intimate and engrossing, the standard is mild-severe up the left wall and more tricky up the right wall. From it there is a fine view of the Atlantic Ocean and the setting sun.

*Sandy Mouth Pinnacle.* From the headland opposite and south of Sandy Mouth the Pinnacle to the north appears as a tapering flame of rock. It rises cleanly from the shore and the height I should estimate at 100 feet. Attack it from the S.E. corner up rough-hewn rock and a fairly open chimney (55 feet) to a flat gang-way at the base of the summit rock. This is cracked and at our first ascent it housed in its recess a brown animal with staring eyes. The situation was unexpected and our leader's ejaculations were vivid as this odd looking rabbit resolved itself into an owl which flapped out past his face. The summit block is sound. It may be embraced with outstretched arms or climbed at the crack with a lay-back action. There is room for three on the summit, and a satisfying situation it is.



*S. H. Berk*

KEEN KNOTTS BUTTRESS

## RAINBOW MOUNTAINS

*Mary Rose FitzGibbon*

Rainbow Mountains ; they have been that for nearly six years now, snowy Alps seen across a rainbow bridge of memories between the old world and the new. But it is good to know that in all the turmoil of the present the Wetterhorn still sweeps up towards eternity from the meadows of Grindelwald and that up on the Croix de Fer, above the Chalets of Charamillon in sight of the snows of Mont Blanc, the great trumpet gentians will be blooming again this June, spreading their carpet so thick that even a mountain goat could scarcely put his foot between them. We have such vivid memories of our Alpine holidays, we can go over them day by day almost hour by hour. So let us get away from what Homer called the wide mouth of bitter war for a while into the past ; into a world of hot sun and crystalline air, of green lakes fringed with red roofed chalets and flower strewn pastures set against tall pine trees. Then high and far and almost incredibly beautiful the snow mountains piling up to heaven peak upon peak and range upon range, filling us with an almost unbearable longing to be up there among the snows and the rocks, to know again the splendour of dawn and sunset high above the world, to live once more through all the wonder of an Alpine day.

It seems almost unbelievable now that we ever strolled down the Continental platform at Victoria to catch the four-thirty with half an hour to spare. A leisured journey with a breath of sea air to give you an appetite for dinner on the French train. Then there were the familiar landmarks of the journey. The Battersea Bridge Power Station which to me—possibly quite wrongly—always seemed to be a poem in brick. The orchards of Kent. The delightful tangled mass of steel that the French call a railway engine. Then across the flat golden cornfields of Somme and Aisne, slipping past dark woods and little osier bordered streams, all covered with that gentle mystery which at morning and evening pervades the land of France. Somewhere in the night the train wheezes to a stop. It is Chalons or Chaumont. If you have the window shut it is too hot. If you have it open it is too cold. You try to sleep, but always you are thinking " to-morrow I shall see the snows."

Again there were those days on the way to the Alps. Days in Berne or Bale or Grenoble. On one of them in Paris we started from Andre Wahl's bookshop through the dim glory of Notre Dame across the Seine to look into the trays of old books along the Quais. Then to Fischbachers to add to our collection of guide books and maps of the Alps, and down the Rue St. Jacques brow-

sing in the windows of the old shops. I know I have always regretted a set of what appeared to be First Empire fire-irons, and my friend who is given to having strange things about the house regrets a dog-kennel, or was it a bee-hive. It was a large rounded object painted in the Imperial Yellow of the Ming Emperors, adorned with Chinese motifs in a clear blue. The only place it could possibly have looked at home would have been Pillnitz, that fascinating Chinese-Baroque Schloss near Dresden, built when the Germans must have had some sense of humour.

Then those Swiss hotel rooms ; the bare scrubbed floors, the blissfully comfortable bed, the inevitable table which you immediately cover with coils of climbing rope, spirit cookers, aluminium egg boxes, fat candles, glacier lanterns, all the necessary paraphernalia of the climber. In through the open window steals the scent of pines hot in the sun, and down from the pasture rings a carillon of cow-bells.

Ella Maillart says " . . . Happiness is the intoxication produced by the moment of poise between a satisfactory past and an immediate future rich with promise. . . . " If this is not an altogether satisfactory definition of that elusive state known as Happiness, it nevertheless describes very well one's feelings on an Alpine day.

In the Alps the day is bounded only by the old measures of time, sunrise, noon and sunset. Free as the birds from hours, you eat when you are hungry and towards evening you come down from the mountains. The artist cannot tell how his finished picture will turn out, neither can the poet his poem. To the mountaineer each day is a blank canvas to be filled with light and shade and colour, with laughter and friends and beauty and all the other things that the mountains have given him, the finished picture remaining always in his memory. It is not always a large canvas, nor yet the view from a high peak. More often it seems to be a joyous little vignette, or some human contact which is the central theme of the picture. You are so conscious everywhere of the exuberant life of the summer Alps. Even on the summit of a high peak there is no silence. The wind is singing in the rocks, or there are avalanches falling somewhere. The *choucas* intrude noisily after crusts or the lucious remains of sardine tins. It is all so alive you feel that like the glaciers the mountains are moving. On the glacier water is dripping, a piece of ice falls into the cool green depths with a hollow tinkling crash. Down on the pastures there is the sound of the torrent, the wind in the pines, a jangling of cow-bells.

But there is so much to remember. You can crowd so much living into a short Alpine day. Perhaps we have spent a day idling up to a hut, stopping under the last larch trees to make tea and to pick

wild strawberries. We have greeted the cows on the pastures and crossed an alpine lawn starred with the vivid beauty of tiny flowers and finally plodded up a steep dusty moraine to the hut near the edge of the snow. Between the making of tea and soup we go outside to look at the evening. It is already night in the valley far below but here the last light lingers on over the mountains. . . . Then comes the intangible pause of twilight, that moment between dusk and dark when the Earth seems to stand still, silently waiting for something—then slips suddenly into darkness.

And the morning. In the soft velvet of the Alpine night slowly we follow the lantern up the gravel of the moraine path. We go slowly because it is the hour at which life is at its lowest ebb, but presently we see grey shadows over the snow, the light grows quickly and our mountain looms ahead. Dawn amidst great peaks is not like a slow English dawn where the mists hang sleepily over the water meadows until the bird chorus awakens the sun. But high among the snows above the birds and the mists and the slow sounds of Earth, as the dark rim of the world turns swiftly into the sun, the morning bursts over the mountains in a shower of light and sparkle. The universe awakes to a new day and the amazing vitality of the Alps takes hold of us again.

All through the heat of the day we climb. We know the joy of sunbaked rock hot to our touch, of the scrape of bootnails on granite slabs, the narrow snow arête and the feeling of achievement on reaching the summit of our peak. Then we go down to the welcome longer shadows of the afternoon, leaving the hot glacier for the flowers and the fresh coolness of the meadows, to descend to the valley through the tangle of the cow-bells and to the music of the grasshopper's singing.

And so at the far end of our rainbow bridge we see again the snows, faint on the horizon like summer clouds at evening ; we see the surge of cornices cloud-curled, the beauty of the gleaming snow wind driven and frost riven, moulded, fluted, curved, hammered, beaten to an alchemy of wonder. There is a fairy tale which tells us that if we can only reach the foot of the rainbow there we will find a crock of gold, and so we cross our bridge of golden memories to find our mountains again, even though they may be cloud mountains, only seen in dreams.

For me it started on the day—before I was a mountaineer—when I looked up from the golf-course at Mandelieu and saw the Argentera over the grey foothills above Grasse. I thought ' What is this wonderful pointed peak so far up in the sky ? Can it be the Matterhorn ? (of course I had heard of Whymper) How I should like to climb it!' That day stands out against the rather insipid social



background of the Cote d'Azur—although in the twenties it was an interesting relic of the Edwardian Age—because it was the day on which the snows first lit a flame. But driving back to Cannes through the warm February dusk something else happened which is bound up with that vision of the Argentera. The Riviera peasants have an enchanting habit of using Chinese lanterns as rearlights for their carts, the concertina coloured paper kind that we used to have on Christmas trees before they were modernised by strings of electric light bulbs. My mind was filled with the Argentera and, passing cart after cart each with its sleepy peasant huddled up inside and its lighted lantern hung on to the back, it seemed that that vision and the Chinese lanterns were almost too much to happen on the same day.

How they come back these memories. A moving picture of Alpine holidays, fast and furious and vividly alive. First of all there were the Little Mountains. The Alps of Uri where I did my first climbs, and which are perhaps the loveliest of all the mountains of Switzerland. The Maderanertal with its waterfalls and brilliant Alpine flowers. Stein and the Funffingerstocke with their fascinating little horseshoe shaped glaciers and fantastic fingers of rock. The rock-girt juniper fringed bathing pool where Conrad the chef would catch blue trout when he wanted to give us a special dinner, and the calves which played with the cow-dog on the lawn. One morning we had started from Stein for the Sustenhorn. We had started too late, the weather looked unpromising and we sat too long on the moraine waiting to see if it would clear. If we had gone on we would have added another easy snow peak to our collection but we might never have known the beauty of a glacier stream in the dawn, the silver coloured water flowing swiftly along through grey glacier mud, catching the first radiance of the morning where the stream slowed into little lakes and swirly pools, while above, day swept over the Gwachtenhorn to turn the Tierberge into rose-coloured glory.

The next year I met Joseph Georges—called *le skieitr*. That great buccaneer who has a place among the most famous mountaineers, and has made some of the most difficult first ascents in the Alps.

It turned out that he had four days free between his engagement with my friends and his next one. Would he climb with me? (in his own province Joseph is a king and can climb with whom he likes). He would. Did I not come from the *pays du lacs* and was I not a member of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club! With this passport to paradise a new and fascinating vista opened up. I had regarded the Grépon as being something much too far above the likes of me,

but on the day we did the Grepon, we traversed the Charmoz too, thus doing four Chamonix Aiguilles on three of the days, perhaps a reward for having approached the Grepon in a spirit of proper humility—spending the third in going up to the Requin hut. I wonder if the giant Bournet family are still there as guardians. Maman, tall as a house, who made delicious omelettes *au petit s pois*, the giantess daughter, and Papa ; who always filled me with a vague sense of disquiet when he tried—mostly unsuccessfully—to do me out of my Ladies' Swiss Alpine Club reduction. One always felt that with his huge untidy frame and his knitted fisherman's cap with its long tassel he was of the stuff which stormed the Bastille.

Then there was that first sight of Italy. Three of us with Joseph had left the Montenvers after breakfast. By afternoon we were crossing the plateau above the ice-fall of the Geant Glacier. All the peaks were hidden in fog and the steamy heat afflicted us with that utter weariness of soul and body known as 'glacier lassitude.' Going up to the Col des Flambeaux Joseph's elephant broke loose again.<sup>1</sup> She usually does on long snow slopes. To-day she was very anxious to get on to the Torino hut where she knew there was some Asti waiting for her and an omelette and some *haricots verts* for supper. Cheered by Joseph's elephant we gained the crest of the Col and as we staggered down the snow slope on the far side we came out into brilliant sunshine. A cool little wind blew into our faces and there was Italy spread out before us. Seven thousand feet below lay the Val d'Aosta and the houses of Courmayeur, and blue mountains broke in waves as far as we could see.

In 1932 Joseph went to Ruwenzori with the Belgian Alpine Club, and I shared a large guide named Alfred Streich with Dorothy Thompson. It was the beginning of September and we had a fortnight of perfect weather climbing the Oberland from end to end. We always wondered what we should do if Alfred fell into a crevasse, there seemed no hope that we would ever be able to get him out again. Staying up in huts for so long created a food problem which

<sup>1</sup> I should explain that once there was an American called Haliburton who wanted to do all the things the ancient heroes did. Swimming the Hellespont like Leander and crossing the Alps like Hannibal. So he borrowed a lady elephant called Fifi from the Paris Zoo and started up the Petit St. Bernard in what he thought were the footsteps of Hannibal. Somewhere near the top Fifi got tired and wished to return to Paris so he had to come all the way down again. This story was echoing round Mont Blanc when J. G. and I were there and so tickled us that since then we have had a stupid joke that Joseph has an elephant which he forgets to bring, or sometimes he does and /' *elephant* falls into a crevasse or gets stuck in a crack—there are no end to the things that can happen to an elephant in the Alps. Anyway it is a silly game which has served to beguile many a weary snow dwager. This is a true story.

Alfred tried to solve by bringing along a large piece of some part of a pig, which before long we grew to loathe the sight of. Whenever we said 'What is there for supper, Alfred?' he would reply cheerfully '*Bacon!*' and the wretched thing would be put on the stove to boil. One night at the Concordia when we asked the usual question, as a treat he replied, 'Mice,' which rather startled us, but it turned out to be only polenta. When at last we got down to the Rhone valley and were saying goodbye to him on the station platform he asked did we want the piece of bacon. 'Oh! *No* Alfred,' we said hurriedly, so as he thought it was a pity to waste it, it went home with him.

In 1933 Joseph was available again, and a dream was realised—the face of the Scheidegg Wetterhorn. We did not laugh much on that day. We were too aware of the grey clouded sky and the urgent necessity for haste, but it is a day that stands out with one other later one above all the other Swiss climbs. A few days afterwards from a bivouac at Bonern we traversed all the peaks of the Eiger Hornli to the Mittellegi hut, climbing a new chimney on the lowest point—our one and only small new route.

The next year found us at Zermatt, where we only saw the Matterhorn once for a moment; it was shrouded in cloud all the time. But we climbed some of the other peaks. I have always had a heretical suspicion that the mountains immediately round Zermatt are only tourist mountains, although there seems to hang about the Monte Rosa Hotel something of the charming atmosphere of an Alpine Club tea-party. With better weather we crossed the Col d'Herens to Arolla, as we had our eye on two long mysterious rock ridges there. We did one of them, the traverse of all the Dents des Bouquetins from the south in a long day, descending with the dusk the north face of the North Peak, on which the snow was in appalling condition. There is one very difficult step on the S. to N. traverse which for years Joseph was the only man who could lead, but I believe that someone else has succeeded in leading it since the war started.

1935 was a good year, The traverse of the Drus the right way round (otherwise you abseil down all the best bits), the North face of the Aiguille du Geant, and the other Alpine day which stands out with the face of the Wetterhorn—Ryan's Route on the Aiguille du Plan.

I was attracted to Route Ryan by the mystery surrounding it. V. J. E. Ryan with the Lochmatters did some of the best climbs on the Chamonix Aiguilles but never wrote anything about them. He made his ascent of the East Ridge of the Plan in 1906, but until 1". S. Smythe and J.H.B. Bell did the second ascent in 1927 nothing

was known about it except that it was a magnificent climb with good holds. When we climbed it I was impressed not so much by its difficulty, although this is continuous, as by its magnificence. Great stretches of reddish granite leaning back against a fierce blue sky, a receding crescendo of crack and slab and wall, culminating in the two very difficult chimneys at the top.

We had several tries for Route Ryan, always foiled by bad weather. I remember sitting under a rock on the Mer de Glace one day with G. R. Speaker (whom I had invited to join us with his guide Camille Tournier) wondering when the raindrops would find us out and eating raw carrots, then Speaker's favourite food. They were meant either to enable us to see coming down off the climb in the dark or to waft us up to the top in an hour or two. I forget which, but I remember the look of amused incredulity spreading over the guides' faces as they did their best to join in the fun. Eventually the weather cleared and we set off once more for that dog-kennel of a hut the Refuge Bobi Arsandaux. Going up the Glacier d'Envers de Blaitiere we suddenly became aware that another party was coming up behind us. Now, this glacier is not the sort of place on which anyone would be found towards evening unless they had designs on Route Ryan, or so we thought. We thought then that we were going to do a third ascent of the climb and here was another party coming to butt in. I'm afraid that various most uncharitable remarks were passed round during the next few minutes. 'Us marchaient comme des pompiers' exclaimed Joseph scornfully. To him the lowest depths of comparison. However, it turned out to be the G.H.M. climber Raymond Leininger who had made a first ascent of the E. face of the Crocodile a few days previously, and had come back to collect some material. We spent a delightful evening discussing climbs ; it was he who led the first ascent of the N. face of the Petit Dru two days afterwards.

Then we went on to Zermatt, where we got the Matterhorn at last, up by Zmutt and down the Italian ridge. That year finished with the Fell and Rock Alpine Meet at Arolla. (F. & R. J. No. 29)

Another year brought Dauphine ; Les Iscrins, and the Pic Nord des Cavales by the W. arete, a superb granite climb of entrancing difficulty. We met a Professor from Lyons on the summit who told us we had probably made the fifth ascent. And the Meije ; after lunch with General Bruce (who had blown in for the day) we started for the Promontoire hut, our last sight of La Berarde including General Bruce's magnificent mahogany coloured torso enjoying a sunbathe by the turn in the path. We had a glorious day for the traverse of the Meije, on which we took Casimir Rodier—the only time I have ever been the complete *Alpiniste sandwich*, between two

guides. It is usual to go down to La Grave, but Casimir had to descend to the Iftancons valley in order to meet a fresh party that evening, so they brought me down from the Brèche Joseph Turc ; a horrid descent which is not often done. There is a sixty foot free abseil where you spin round and round like King Robert's spider—which I always dislike doing very much—and below we sped down scree slopes, looking up for stones, and scuttling under a rock if we saw any coming down. I had my revenge by dragging them down the glacier at breakneck speed. J. G. enjoys this sort of thing and always plays up, but once on the moraine Casimir turned rather wearily to climb back up to the Promontoire hut again. Joseph and I found a cool grotto where the young river slid silently over cold grey stones and made tea. And then while above the evening lay around us on the mountains we went down the valley to the tune of our favourite song, which in its simplicity has kinship with the snows, with mountain huts and flowers and cows, with mountain friends and the people who live among the hills . . .

Aimons nos montagnes  
Not'r Alpe de neige  
Aimons nos campagnes  
Que Dieu les protège  
Et chantons en choeur le pays romand  
De tout notre coeur  
Et tout simplement.

## THE ULLSWATER FELLS ROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

H. Westmorland

When the Editor of the Journal asked me two years ago to write some recollections of my early years in the Lake District it seemed incredible that I should have reached an age when my early memories could be of interest to anyone. And yet on reflection I found that my fell walking went back half a century, and my early rock scrambles only a decade or so less. Perhaps these figures make me eligible.

We lived in Penrith. My father, his brother Ned and his sisters were strong fell walkers, enthusiastic campers and did some rock scrambling, when they encountered it. For instance, after camping at Red Tarn they back packed their camp equipment and food straight up the 'mighty brow' of Helvellyn as the beginning of their walk to Upper Langdale. It may be remembered that Mary (May) Westmorland, one of the sisters, was the second lady to reach the summit of the Pillar Rock.<sup>1</sup> I have always been sorry that my father did not adopt the use of the climbing rope, although the fact of being unroped adds to the daring of May Westmorland's ascent. Had that party of strong Crossfell born hill walkers taken to rope technique a still greater bond would have been found between them, and certainly the joyous exploration of countless virgin crags awaited them. That they were joyous is evidenced by their habit of bursting forth into 'God Save the Queen' and 'Oh Who Will O'er the Downs so free,' on their triumphant summits.

Concerning his sister's ascent of the Pillar my father wrote :

<sup>8</sup>' A lady's name now graced the list  
We added ours, there in the mist,  
We stood erect with May between,  
And proudly pealed " God Save the Queen."

Another memorable day they had was one on which they skated the full length of Ullswater from Pooley Bridge to Patterdale and back to Hallsteads at Watermillock. My father and his brother considered the view from what is now known as Westmorland Crag on Great Gable to be the finest in the Lake District, and in order to attract others to the same view-point they, assisted by two friends, built the Westmorland Cairn. This was in 1876.

These incidents cannot be early recollections of my own because at that time I did not exist, but they are those of a tale oft-told and reveal to some extent the spiritual joy my parents found in the

<sup>1</sup> In 1873 (F. & R.C.C., Vol. XII, No. 33, p. 233.

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the lady who made the first ascent.

hills and the atmosphere of my home so near the Cumberland and Westmorland fells. An atmosphere to which I owe so much happiness in my life and in which my sister and I were taught on our family camping, rowing, sailing, fell-walking and rock scrambling expeditions the invaluable lesson of enduring the minor discomforts of rain, cold and fatigue as stoically as may be expected of children and to be as self-reliant as our limited powers permitted.

Perhaps fortunately for the fortitude side of this training, our first big fell walk was one of those mountains in which successive benches raise false hopes of the summit time after time. It was Crossfell in the Pennines rising directly above the beautifully geometric village green of our yeoman forebears, the village of Milburn. My sister was ten and I was eight years of age and we learned the lesson of false crests on that day. In the same year, 1894, we had a much more exciting expedition—Helvellyn by Striding Edge, and on that high level scramble love of climbing was born.

Each year we spent the summer holidays camping on the shores of Ullswater our nearest lake, once on Norfolk Island, then for some years near Howtown and later at the foot of Place Fell opposite Glenridding. During the Howtown days there was something incredibly lovely in waking up on a still morning and seeing through the open door of the tent our black-hulled yacht lying at anchor in the mirror-like bay. Over a dry wall near our camp site led the path to Patterdale and behind us the little fell Hallin. Along the Patterdale path was Geordie Crag where we used to fish with worms as bait for perch. My mother's fishing technique was simple, effective and amusing. When she got a 'bite' with a strong double handed grip on the rod the unfortunate perch was heaved as far up Hallin fell as the line permitted. Then we had to find and disentangle line and fish in the bracken. Further along, quite close to Kailpot, the bracken grew six-foot tall and when the dark stem near the root was cut the 'oak tree' within the stem was very clear. Frequently in rowing past Kailpot we went in close and looked in the cauldron because once we found pennies in it.

The wood behind Kailpot furnished dry firewood from the wind-fallen branches and one of the first outings each year was gathering a boatload of these branches for our camp fire. The camp fire was contained in a home-made well-designed sheet iron grate with hobs and cowl and four legs, all in one. The chimney, of the stove-pipe pattern, went up through an asbestos-lined hole in one of the gores of the kitchen tent. This was an army bell tent lifted by means of a lengthened pole and a high canvas 'wall' added. Increased

draught was induced in the fire by a sheet iron front with a handle which we called the 'blower.' All the cooking was done on this cheerful open fire and on wet, cold days the kitchen tent was a very comfortable and popular resort. We used two of these enlarged bell tents and both were double with a sleeve a couple of feet long on the apex of the under one to provide a space between the outer and inner coverings. The marquee in which we ate our meals was single and bright after the dimness of the double tent.

Both the Howtown and Place Fell camp sites lacked anything better than steep, narrow, grassy fell roads into them and the hay-cart with body and raves piled high with camp equipment was dangerously top-heavy ; only by members of the party hanging on to the upper side was overturning avoided. One year the camp horse and cart were being driven into the Howtown place by a youngish Penrith carter who was new to the route. When the most tilted stretch of track was reached the carter was asked if he thought he could manage it all right. He asked 'Has anybody iver browt a horse and cart ower it ?' On being given an affirmative he stoutly replied, 'Then ah can gang,' and did. Several years later when a similarly laden cart was negotiating the same kind of thing in leaving the Place Fell Camp, horse and cart overturned. A girl cousin, who had evidently heard previously of the good effects of sitting on the head of a horse which is down, promptly sat firmly on the unfortunate animal's head, with a proud look of consciously doing the right thing, until the harness was unbuckled and the horse helped to his feet unhurt but with weary brow.

We rowed and sailed and walked the fells. Each summer added to our list of 'expeditions.' They were called by that rather high-sounding word because most of them entailed a combined operation of sailing or rowing as far as the water of the lake would take us then bicycling as far as a road led and then the real work of fell walking. Swarthfell by Swarthbeck Ghyll, High Street and its Roman road, Kidsty Pike, Long Crag and Placefell, St. Sunday Crag, Fairfield, Helvellyn and Catchedicam, Dollywaggon Pike, the Dodds and the rest. On one of these walks my father took us to the edge of Dove Crag and we lay on our stomachs on a ledge near the top to look down the forbidding overhang.

It was on another of these expeditions, after walking up Grisedale, to picnic at the Tarn, that I first saw, and met, four real climbers with ropes—one of them, J. W. Robinson, my father knew and they joined us. I sat as a boy of eleven or so at the feet of the mighty. They were a strong party, for the remaining three were Ellis Carr, Geoffrey Hastings and the conqueror of the Napes Needle, Haskett Smith.



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and anchorage appeared impossible until I saw a little stone wedged in the crack. Soon the rope was threaded, Mounsey came up and after a few exposed steps and a struggle up the crack the big gully of Tarn Crag was ours, it was climbed, and had changed its status in our minds from challenger to friend.

In these years of war and life in military camps access to journals is not possible and therefore I cannot quote references, but within the last half dozen issues of the F. & R.C.C. Journal there was published an account of the second ascent and it was of great interest to me that again the leader felt enabled to go on only by finding the little stone and using it as a thread belay—it is thirty-four years ago but my recollection is that the stone is about the size of a marble. Years afterwards in Canada I thought that I would like a photograph of Tarn Crag and George Abraham was good enough to climb St. Sunday Crag to take it for me by telephoto lens. He also from another distant eminence two valleys to the south took a telephotograph of Dove Crag.

The memory of Dove Crag with its overhang was vivid from our visit to it as children. I did not think it possible to climb it but about that time, 1910, Dr. Wilkins of Patterdale suggested that we go and try. We were the same party; John Mounsey was hefty and strong but had a football knee which handicapped him in leading, Arthur North was short and light but with exceptional strength of arms and fingers—when climbing he looked as if he was taking chances and so we didn't like him to lead. Yet in all our climbs together he never came off, nor for that matter did any of us, when climbing as a party. On one occasion, I was perhaps fifteen or sixteen, Arthur North and I decided to scramble up Place Fell from our camp site in a direct line. No obstacle was to be allowed to turn us aside. There are bands of steepish rock here and there across the fell, generally thirty or forty feet in height. As we climbed one of these a few feet apart but abreast, I reached the topmost rock, a grand hold, and swung up with an arm pull only to find myself in the next instant falling with a large block in my arms. I pushed it away and scraped and fell the thirty feet to the slope below, suffering nothing worse than abrasions and at the same time gaining a very valuable lesson in the desirability of testing holds and using feet instead of arm pulls whenever possible.

On the way up to Dove Crag we thought, being in the seaweed-minded era, that perhaps we could climb the Y gully on the left, if not by one branch by the other. Actually we failed to get up either branch, although it has fairly recently been climbed. We left the gully and had another look at the crag from the bottom and decided that as we could climb neither the overhang nor the gully our only

hope lay between where a mild buttress led some distance up the cliff. The most difficult part of the climb was the stretch above the buttress. Mounsey was leading but at the most awkward step the position threw the wrong strain on his faulty knee and we changed places. It was a difficult bit as I remember it, at any rate in boots. Above it we did a bit of traversing to the left and then to the right. The only unlooked-for excitement occurred when we were all three on a ledge under an overhang. We had decided that the key to the overhang was to climb the yard-wide steeply-tilted slab of a narrow gable which abutted against the overhang to within a few feet from the top. There was no belay and as I climbed the slab it gently slid outwards about four inches with me clinging to it. It was nice when after four inches it stopped and very delicately I could go on to the little three foot roof-top, stand on it and with an arm pull get over the overhang to a ledge.

A note about the climb in a local newspaper recorded our friend Wilkins' presence below in the cryptic sentence, 'doctor was present at the foot of the crags,' an optimistic thought from a medical aid point of view. This climb was not repeated until, if I remember **rightly**, 1937. The little cairns we built at two or three points on the route had either disappeared or went unnoticed and the party deem it a first ascent named it *Wing Ridge* or *Wing Buttress*. It is evidence of the poor rock of the Ullswater District that nearly thirty years elapsed between the first and second ascents of two climbs of three and four hundred feet in the 'very difficult' bracket.

When seventeen and fifteen years of age respectively, my father took my sister and me—unroped in the family manner—across the slab, round the notch and up the little chimney to the top of the Pillar, thirty-six years later I greatly enjoyed accompanying, at Speaker's suggestion, the late G. A. Solly when he led five of us across the slab and over the notch on his jubilee ascent in 1938. It was Solly who, in 1911 gave me a letter of introduction to Mr. A. O. Wheeler, the Director of the Alpine Club of Canada. A letter which led to a very happy association with that club in the Canadian Rockies. Climbers, like air travel, reduce the effect of distance, bringing mountain regions closer. Last September I took my Orderly Room Corporal and my jeep driver to the top of Mt. Athabasca at the Columbia Icefield. It was a strange and nice feeling to remember that he who first climbed far-away icy Athabasca had also cut the Collie step in Moss Ghyll in our home fells.

The worst part of this business of growing old is the thinning out of the ranks of one's climbing friends and friends of other interests, too. I knew an old soldier who, like all old soldiers, had a favourite group photograph, taken during a particularly happy period of his

service. When I knew him he had struck individuals out as one by one they died until only he and one other remained. By that time I think that he had developed a competitive point of view about living long enough to strike out the image of his only surviving comrade. He did not live to do so.

Now the sight of the mountains recalls so many, Rennison, Oppenheimer, Darwin Leighton, Solly, Speaker, who it seems only yesterday asked me for these notes, and in the Canadian mountains Conrad Kain, MacCoubrey and Christian Hasler—what a brief span life is, when it is lightened by the joy of climbing.



## HOW ACCURATE IS THE ALTIMETER?

*R. A. Thyssen-Gee*

Probably many amateurs, when they first acquire an altimeter, announce proudly that they are only a hundred feet from the summit of their mountain as they are nearing the end of their climb, and have to admit later, when the top is still above them, that according to their precious instrument they are well above the top. This happened to me on Snowdon some years ago and the error was mainly due to an approaching depression which was accompanied by a 70 miles an hour gale. The glass would, however, rarely fall more than a fifth of an inch during a four hour climb, and the resulting error in the height would not exceed two hundred feet from this cause alone assuming that a rise of one thousand feet is normally accompanied by a fall of about one inch in pressure.

The calibration of the altimeter is, of course, based on the fall in pressure of the atmosphere that takes place, under average conditions, as one goes higher above sea level. Unless the instrument is a very cheap one, it will record the height with considerable accuracy provided the sea level pressure does not alter. No instrument is perfect and, even with the finest surveying instruments, the error from friction and imperfect temperature compensation may be over fifty feet at an altitude of three or four thousand feet and will be somewhat greater with a pocket instrument. Nevertheless even with the best of instruments, and when no change in the sea level pressure takes place in the course of the day, substantial errors in altitude are possible when the temperature and sea level pressure differ to any appreciable extent from normal.

The atmospheric pressure at any point is equal to the weight of the air directly above the observer and when a barometer is showing 30 inches it means that the weight of the air above a given area of ground is equal to the weight of a column of mercury 30 inches high whose cross section occupies the same area. Now consider the position three thousand feet up first on a warm day and then on a winter's day, assuming that the pressure at sea level is the same in both cases.

On the cold day, the air below the three thousand foot level is denser than on the hot day (as air, like everything else, contracts when it is cooled) and so on a journey in the winter to the summit of a mountain a greater weight of air is left below the climber than on a warm day. As a result, in cold weather the pressure at the top will be lower and the apparent height greater than in summer if the sea level pressure is the same. The altimeter is calibrated to show a correct height under average conditions namely a sea level pressure

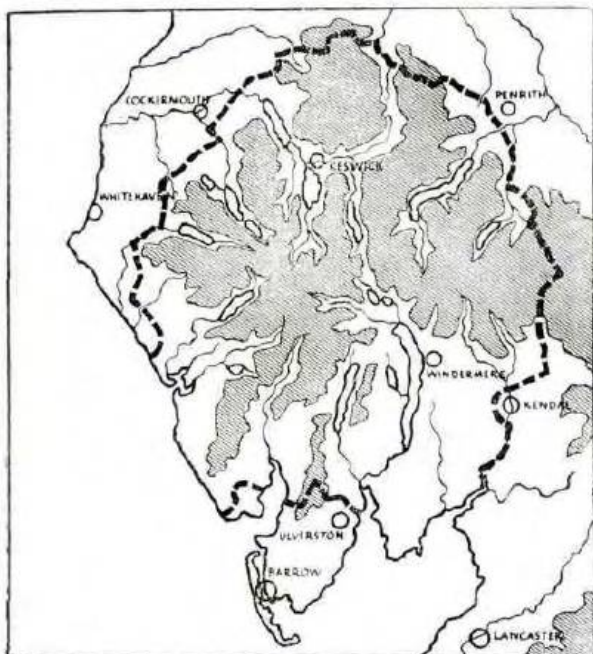
of about 29.9 inches and an average temperature of 50° F. If the conditions differ from these, the result will be inaccurate. Fortunately, in this country the conditions of temperature and pressure are seldom sufficiently different from normal to affect the instrument badly, and this, coupled with the relatively modest heights of our mountains, means that an error of three or four hundred feet is exceptional.

Let us consider in further detail the possible error on account of temperature. The instrument is calibrated to give a correct reading when the average of the temperatures of the top and the bottom of the mountain is 50° F. A lower temperature will cause the pressure to fall more rapidly as we go up and so the apparent height will be too great. The error is about 1 per cent, of the height for every five degrees that the average temperature differs from 50° F. If we go up Ben Nevis in the winter when the average temperature is 25° our error will be 5 per cent, of 4,400 feet or 220 feet. A colder day than this will not often be encountered in Great Britain and so this error, caused by extreme temperature will seldom be exceeded. In the same way a temperature of 75° F. will make the apparent height too low by the same amount and we seldom have a hotter day than this in this country.

A barometer pressure at sea level which is very different from normal will also make the altimeter give inaccurate readings. The ratio of the pressure at any particular height to the sea level pressure does not vary so long as the mean temperature between the two heights is constant. As a result the drop in pressure is greater at a given height when the barometer is high than when it is low. As the altimeter is calibrated to show a fixed rise in height for a given drop in pressure, it will be apparent that as the pressure will fall more rapidly with a high glass, the altitude as shown by the altimeter will be too great when these conditions prevail. The error is not very serious and, with a rise in height of 4,400 feet, would only amount to two hundred feet if the sea level pressure were 31 inches instead of the normal 29.9 inches. Smaller barometer departures from normal and lower heights would produce proportionately smaller errors. As the sea level pressure is nearly always between 28 inches and 31 inches, the error from this cause on Britain's highest mountain would seldom exceed two hundred feet and only the very hardy are likely to go in search of 3,000 foot peaks when the glass is well below 29 inches.

Our altimeter will show its greatest error when the pressure is high and the temperature low or vice versa. The former conditions might be experienced in winter and it is possible for the reading to be three or four hundred feet out on the highest peaks of Scotland

though this would be exceptional. The reverse effect would be rarer as high temperatures would seldom be encountered when the glass is at its lowest. All these errors are based on the assumption that the sea level pressure does not alter during the day. When weather forecasts are heard again on the wireless we shall know more about the probable future changes and it will be easier to say whether the instrument is reading high or low. It is, of course, advisable to hold it in the same position, preferably horizontally, whenever a reading is taken.



The clerk inscribed both the red and the green tickets with zigzag lines, I doubt if he'd heard of Lairg, Sutherland, before, but no matter, I was soon on the evening train to Derby where the party was completed by F., B. and D. Proceeding towards Crewe we studied our documents on the Assynt district, 1-inch O. S. map (excellent), J-inch O. S., S.M.C. *Guide* (Northern Highlands), and an 1885 *Baddeley* (very interesting) ; we were to stay at Inverkirkaig, a little south of Lochinver itself. At Crewe we caught the 10-43 p.m. through to Inverness (first stop Perth) and two of us spent an agreeable night in the corridor lying at full length on the kit we found there, and it was delightful indeed to watch the vividly moonlit landscape continuously unrolling behind the window of our magic carpet ; the setting moon and clouds like Shelley's seen through curls of pipe smoke made an enchanting picture. Dawn came at Perth, where all you can buy is a cup of ' tea,' then we had a quiet run through the Central Highlands whose summits were all in mist, to Inverness, where you can bag seats in the Wick and Thurso train before adjourning for an hour or two for refreshment.

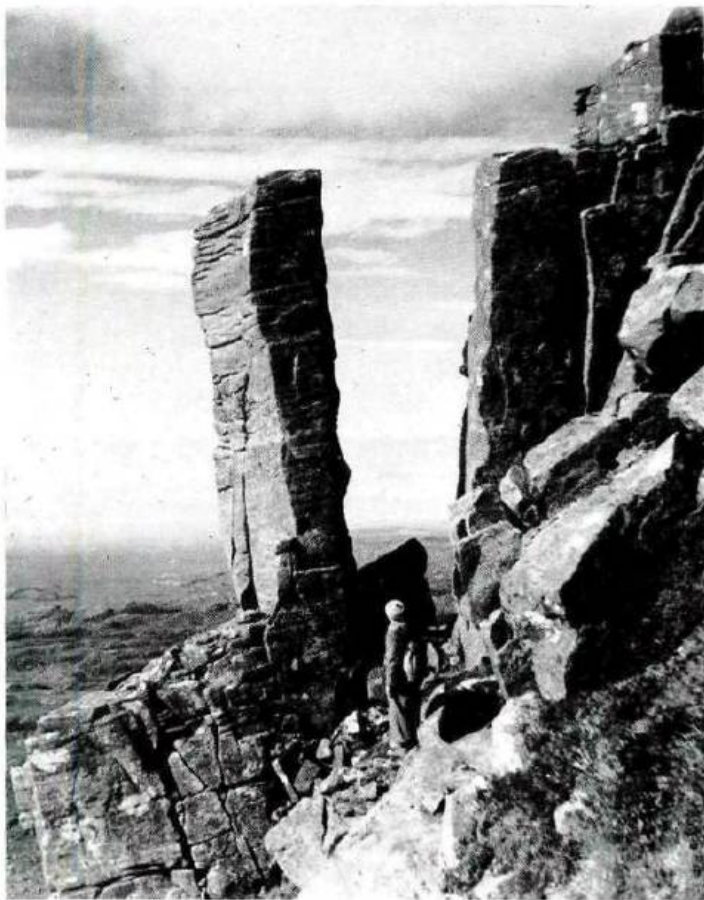
In due course we reached Lairg, where Angus, the driver of the Lochinver bus, looked very dour at the prospect of four bicycles on his roof, but as we stood considering the forty mile ride he relented, so we installed ourselves and the bus moved to the post office where an hour's stop was made for first tea. We left at 4 p.m. and went through stormy showers to the Oykell Bridge Inn (second tea stop), thence over the bleak central moorland to the Alltnacealgach Inn (not tea). At Inchnadamff Inn another halt was made, during which the sun came out, and the magnificent route from here to Lochinver was traversed under fairing skies. Some things are far more impressive than any pictures you have seen of them, Telford's bridge at Menai, the Colosseum at Rome, and so it was with Quinag and Suilven which we saw from many points as we went along; and so after a final two miles of cycling and walking we came to Inverkirkaig, 27 hours and 600 miles from home.

By general consent we set out for Suilven, armed with the *Guides* and maps, all of which leave one with plenty of finding out for oneself. We went off up the well-engineered stalker's path beside the Kirkaig River, which forms the boundary between Sutherland and the largest piece of the old county of Cromarty. The *Guide* instructs one to follow this path to Fionn Loch, but on



reaching the Kirkaig Falls we broke away over a low saddle to the north-east and came out at the stepping-stones at the mouth of Loch Uidh na Ceardaich ; this is a real time-saver, though a little boggy. We then followed what Baddeley calls the Elphin track (closed to the public in 1885) for a mile, quickly catching the mountain up, till a steep dyke in the amphitheatre indicated a pleasant way of gaining the upper platform from which Suilven springs. From a large perched block up here, which forms a good signpost in silhouette against the evening sky when returning, you can see that the bold cliff and buttress of the mountain has one apparent weakness—a grassy rake looking fairly steep but not too bad ; we didn't know till later that this was the ' sort of shallow gully at the south-west angle of Caisteal Liath ', and is the orthodox climbing route up the west end. To reach the start we scrambled up a breach in the lower cliff and gained a delightful shelf which runs between the upper and lower cliffs along the south-west face. After a little prospecting in luscious vegetation and bits of wet rock we decided to continue our walk instead since it might have taken a party of four rather a long time to ascend this route, and we hadn't left Kirkaig Hill till nearly 1 p.m., B.D.S.T.,—working to G.M.T., at our hostess's request. We therefore followed the shelf—a real High Level Route—until easier ground led us steeply up near a deep gully to come out on the ridge just below the main summit ; this route avoids the toilsome stone-shoot up to the Bealach Mor mentioned in the *Guide*.

Owing to the rapid fall of the ground from the summit of Caisteal Liath, I received the impression of being air-borne ; the view is distinctly aerial in character. There seemed to be a strong blue, purple and white coloration about the scene, blue because there are hundreds of lochs scattered all over the Lewisian platform, purple the heather, and white because the Lewisian gneiss often weathers out to a very light colour ; the white appears again on the tops of Canisp, Quinag and elsewhere because part of the Cambrian quartzite is that colour. My companions found it wild and desolate, treeless, and with no bird or animal to be seen, nor human habitation—well, it's a matter of taste, for you *can* see green cultivated ground at Elphin and on a later visit we saw both deer and eagle (we like to believe it was *Aquila Chrysaetus*, and we obtained one of his feathers to prove it). The day's fun was not over yet, though. We descended from the Bealach M6r down the north side and ultimately reached the stepping-stones above Fionn Loch, but could see not the smallest trace of a broad highway shown in the old *Baddeley* to be running N.W. by W. to Strathan, between Lochinver and Inverkirkaig; these old maps



*J.G. Ritsan*

STAC POLLY

show many routes now apparently lost. However D. and I looking for a sporting 'direct' route, decided to continue along the natural structure line which has come all along Loch Veyatie and Fionn Loch. The Lewisian topography consists of low hillocks and modest crags, Cnoc This and Cnap That, and they usually terminate in small cliffs standing in little deep-water lochans; the main structure is obscured by the general 'knobbliness' of the terrain—rapid reverse curvatures in all planes. And anyone who thought that the region is treeless would have changed his mind after traversing the birch wood fringing Loch Bad na Muirichinn. We made good progress till we came to this wood, which extended up to higher and vexatious ground on the left, and came down to the water on our right. We fought our way through sometimes on the ground and sometimes above it and at one point, looking down through the branches we saw blue water below; we were evidently crossing a little bay in the loch. Further on, the trees thinned out and were replaced by giant heather, shoulder high most of it. I'm afraid I couldn't help thinking about the tales in the books about expeditions to the Mountains of the Moon and you-know-where in the Himalaya.

On Sunday we did a *Baddeley* trip to the hamlet of Clachtoll, about ten miles to the north of Inverkirkaig, a delightful mixture of walking and cycling, marred only by the many deserted crofts and cottages. The coastguard told us that the population was still steadily falling and he felt that in fifty years' time the district might be uninhabited; already, the tide of settlement has ebbed not only from St. Kilda but from several nearer Hebridean isles, and it has certainly receded from most of the remoter mainland glens. Now that people live less and less by the produce of croft and fishing they must live by going elsewhere to work; the man who sat by Loch an Ordain in Baddeley's time to make the echo sound for the entertainment of the tourist is not there now, nor is the miller at the primitive watermill on the stream coming down from Loch na Creige Leithe; the tiny mill is a ruined disintegrating memento of a vanished way of life.

At Clachtoll is the green *machair* and pale yellow sand and here some of the party bathed whilst I smoked a pipe and reflected on various matters, one of them the presence of a small rubbish dump (including the inevitable rusty motor-car chassis) which spoils the corner of the bay. Later, we walked up to Cnoc Poll on whose crown the coastguards keep watch. We admired the fine panorama, for this viewpoint is a paragon. 'There is no wilder or more magnificent part of the coast of the Scottish mainland than Wester Sutherland,' says Seton Gordon in *Highways and Byways in*

*the West Highlands*, and we could well believe it. Foinaven and Arkle of great remoteness shone whitely in Reay Forest: should we write Foinne Bheinn and Arcuill ? Are we defending an unsatisfactory cause if we support Gaelic spellings ? Were they devised by pedagogues, and was it really necessary to devise silent consonants like /A? Yet the sounds are good, and D. loves to roll them out suddenly while he polishes his glasses.

We ascended Quinag on the only wet day of the week ; we left the bus at the Allt na Doire Cuillin, a couple of miles short of Skiag Bridge and struck straight up the great red terraces of Torridonian arkose until we came to the buff and grey Cambrian quartzite and the clouds. Then up the ridge to a bold crag with cairn (Creag Mhor), slightly left down a few feet and up some small 'boiler-plate' slabs and steeper ground till we reached a summit with a flat top of a dozen yards or so and several cairns ; this would be Spidean Coinich (2508). With the 1-inch O.S. map you can select the proper ridge by compass and contour-studying and so in dense cloud descend to the W.N.W. across a bealach with small pool (marked on map) and so up to summit 2306, a very narrow ridge (cairn). From here there is a rough and steep descent to the Bealach a' Chornaidh on which there is a fairly well-trodden route, a cairn like a 'man'—in the Cumbrian sense—and shelter from the wind and the rain. After lunch, and fortified by the keenness of the feminine member of the party we set off upwards again over steep and shelterless ground, but easy going, to point 2448, thence across a wide mega-tessellated saddle to point 2653, the highest summit. We could see nothing, so happily abandoning what would have been a long viewless trudge westward to Sail Ghorm, we went back to the Bealach and down to the top of Gleann Leireag by a steep mud and heather shoot leading to some particularly wet ground. But there was a good path from the glen down to Tumore on Loch Assynt and the road, on which we walked about a mile before getting a lift on the back of a lorry laden with comfortable sacks of cement.

The following day we cycled from Inverkirkaig southwards, a most picturesque route, until we came to the top of the Druim Bad a' Ghail which is the westerly continuation of the ridge on which Stac Polly stands. We left the cycles and walked easily to the foot of the impressive west end of Stac Polly ; there is a water supply on the south side of the ridge a few hundred yards west of the buttress. After refreshment we advanced on the latter, and scrambled up pleasant rocks for some distance to a bold pinnacle which can be seen (if my memory is correct) from Suilven. Here one should rope up, the way to go is the only

likely-looking one and there are faint traces of traffic. The *Guide* remarks that not many hitches are available, but we found a sufficient supply, and the climb might be described as 'terminal arete, difficult.' The rock is yellow-grey, like gritstone, and most of it looks sound enough, yet on the way down in the evening passing below the north-west corner we noticed a gully which has been swept by a stone-fall of terrifying proportions—some of the blocks which had come to rest on the level ground further down had a volume of twenty cubic yards and might well scale over thirty tons. That this fall was very recent was indicated by the freshly cut turf, and as we looked up we could see the great yellowish scar on the crag ; perhaps we ought to have gone for a closer look, but we didn't. The *Guide* says that on the east as well as the west the summit ridge is terminated by steep cliffs but this is not true at the east end for here you can just walk off.

It was inevitable that we should return on another day to Suilven to traverse the ridge, over a mile and a quarter in length, so at 12-40 p.m. we left Kirkaig Hill and walked up by the Kirkaig River route—I ought to mention that earlier in the week we had prospected the Glen Canisp path so far as the ruined habitation called Suileag ; we could not see the footbridge over the Amhainn na Clach Airidh which might be difficult to ford in wet weather. Beyond it is a strenuous couple of miles through a multitude of lochans. The path from Suileag to Little Assynt is in excellent condition and there is a bridge over the river Inver but you have to ford the Allt an Tiaghaich. At 3-20 p.m. we reached the terrace below the main cliffs of Suilven and had lunch. It's about equal to walking from Seatoller to the cave at the bottom of Deep Ghyll. We then prospected the west edge of the buttress where the north-west wind was strong and cold. We remembered that no eminence intervened between ourselves and the five-thousanders of Iceland 550 miles into the eye of the wind ; it was odd to think that home and Hekla were equidistant. We found the very steep sort of shallow chimney mentioned in the *Guide*. It seemed the only possible place on the nose of the buttress and we saw what might have been the remains of a cairn at the foot ; unfortunately there was no sign whatever of a belay which would be essential at this very exposed spot. All the same I think if I'd given D. any encouragement he would have started off up this formidable place, but I didn't, and we retired to the south side again out of the wind and in the sun. At 4 p.m. we started up the orthodox route, a very steep rake of vegetation and rock steps with rare belays and moderate stances ; it was an interesting climb with a long scramble in the upper reaches bringing us to

the summit cairn at 6-20 p.m. with a superlative circum-prospect. We traversed the ridge to Mheall Bheag in an hour; there is no climbing, but two fine porphyry dykes are passed. The altimeter read 2400 feet on Caisteal Liath, and it gave 2000 feet on Mheall Bheag ; these figures agree with the Survey but the 1885 *Baddeley* says that the difference is nearer 40 feet than 400 and this is precisely the impression you get whichever of the two peaks you are standing on.

By 8 o'clock we had scrambled down the south-east end of the ridge and turned for home and as we moved along below the south face the walls of the mountain were lit by the setting sun in vivid brown and green—philatelists will get the right tint if I say marone and bronze green. Our progress homeward may be described in Dr Johnson's words, 'Mountainous countries are not passed but with difficulty, not merely from the labour of climbing . . . but because that which is not mountain is commonly bog, through which the way must be picked with caution.' The light had almost gone by the time we crossed the stepping-stones west of Fionn Loch and it was dark when we arrived at Loch Kirkaig so that we couldn't even see the potholes in the road. We reached base that evening pretty late, barely beating the postman who brings your letters in this place at about 11 p.m.

This second trip to Suilven was our last operation in the hills of Wester Sutherland. We had done only two rock-climbs and only three mountains, but we'd had a memorable week because this district has so many things to offer beside climb-ticking-off and peak-bagging. One of them is exploration ; it would be an adventure to get a canoe up to Boat Bay on remote Loch Sionascaig (*anglice*, 'Skinaskink') and go out to Eilean Mor in its centre, perhaps untrodden by human foot. It was decided to go by cycle back to the east side of Scotland so D. and I set out from Inverkirkaig southward again to the Druim Bad a' Ghail and continued down to the Loch, where the route divides. To the right you can get round to Achiltibuie and visit the Coigach group from there, but no vehicle can be taken round the coast south of Ben More Coigach ; to the left you go by Loch Bad a' Ghail and Loch Lurgainn to join the Inchnadamff-Ullapool road. Seton Gordon (*loc. cit.* 1934 edition) seems to imply that a car cannot escape south of Lochinver, but the road along Loch Lurgainn is quite good and there was a sound temporary bridge over a stream which had recently swept away the original structure ; on the roads in the region except Lairg to Lochinver there is no tar and progress by car should be calculated at the rate of 10 to 15 m.p.h. and by cycle about half this value—gradients steeper than 1 in 7 are

numerous. The *Guide* mentions the cottage (now uninhabited) at Linneraineach as a starting-point for Cìl Mor and Cùl Beag and it certainly looks the right route with good hopes of some interesting mountaineering. From the south-east end of Loch Lurgainn we observed a good line to the remarkable buttress of Sgurr an Fhìdh-leir—the Fiddler's Peak (*fh* silent ?)—well seen from here, and on which an impressive climb has been recorded (*vide Guide*). We cycled on, looking at the Teallachs away ahead until we came to the estuary of the Kanaird River where you get a wonderful view of the Coigach hills ; then over the corner and down to Ullapool and its palm-trees and a stop for the night.

Next day on a good road we continued up Loch Broomside, noting the *Wellingtonia* trees at Braemore gardens, until we came to the ravines below Braemore Lodge. There are two magnificent falls here, the upper one close to the Lodge and the lower about 400 yards downstream and reached either by a gate from the road or by an overgrown path through the plantation from the upper fall. The lower one plunges into an astonishing canyon which is crossed by a frail suspension bridge over sixty years old with several pieces missing, 'erected,' says *Baddeley*, 'by the liberality of the proprietor.' These falls seem to be called both Corriehalloch and Measach. A magnificent cycling route took us through the Dirrie More, An Teallach visible for many miles and the Fannichs looking less impressive than they are ; we nearly tried to have a go at Beinn Dearg from the summit level of the road near Loch Droma—you will see the deer-path mentioned in the *Guide* by a small plantation—but we should have been pressed for time so instead we sat back and glided for miles to the Aultguish Inn (no Telephone, but open to receive guests), finding here tea and the Librarian. After a pleasant hour we pushed on to Garve for the night, thinking we might proceed by the early train ; instead as the excellent weather continued, we cycled to Dingwall and entrained for Inverness where we secured comfortable seats (corner) for the all-night journey home. Our last taste of the hills was to see the Cairngorms brightly lit by the evening sunlight as we came to Aviemore, **not** a cloud **in** the sky ; there were small ribbons of white stuff on Braeriach which we took to be snow. The train pulled out and slowly the light faded, and **I** can **think** of no better way to end a northern holiday than to be borne swiftly away in a fine carriage until the darkening and receding hills are indistinguishable from the night.

## SOME EARLY GUIDE-BOOK WRITERS AND TRAVELLERS TO THE LAKE DISTRICT.

Ernest M. Turner.

Appreciation of mountain scenery for its own intrinsic merits is something of quite modern growth. English people, it is true, have long been known for their love of the countryside—a monkish musician showed this so long ago as the 13th century, when he wrote down that immortal round, 'Sumer is i-cumen in.' And yet the right natural background for all earlier English verse and song is to be found in the quiet pastoral landscapes of southern England. The top of Scaffell is hardly the haunt for the dainty nymphs and shepherdesses of Elizabethan verse ; and Shakespeare himself is most characteristic when describing the features of his own quiet Stratford countryside. Once or twice he makes reference to the Alps as repellent objects where strange things happen ; though once too, in a matchless sonnet, he describes the sun rising on a mountain top :

" Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye  
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,  
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."

It is, however, a bare two hundred years since men of taste and education first began to visit the 'English Alps' for their scenic attractions, and to set on record the impressions that the mountains made on their minds. And very entertaining it is to read how these early travellers reacted. Their descriptions, of course, bristle with epithets expressing fear and surprise—'horrid,' 'stupendous,' 'awful,' 'awe-inspiring'—these and like adjectives became the stock-in-trade of the literary tourists who commenced to invade the Lake District about the time that Wordsworth was born. A well-known example is provided by the poet Gray in his description of Borrowdale ; and another good example is given by Dr John Brown in a letter, published in 1770, describing the 'vale and lake of Keswick.' He writes :

' On the opposite shores (of Derwentwater) you will find rocks and cliffs of stupendous height, hanging broken over the lake in horrible grandeur, some of them a thousand feet high, the woods climbing up their steep and shaggy sides, where mortal foot never yet approached (*sic*). On these dreadful heights the eagles build their nests ; a variety of waterfalls are seen pouring from their summits, and tumbling in vast sheets from rock to rock, in rude and terrible magnificence ; while on all sides of this immense amphitheatre, the lofty mountains rise, in shapes



as spiry and fantastic as the very rocks of Dovedale ' (inept comparison !).

This style of writing became immensely popular. Perhaps some of the writers were really frightened by the hills, though one sometimes suspects that they enjoyed being frightened ; and quite often the author seems bent only on creating an effect.

But if it was awful to approach the base of the hills, how much more horrifying was it to ascend one of them. Thus Mrs Anne Radcliffe, the 'Terror' novelist, was so bold (in 1794) as to make the ascent of Skiddaw, and from her description you would think that she was ascending nothing less ambitious than one of the Himalayas or the South American Andes. 'Having engaged a guide,' she writes, 'and with horses accustomed to the labour' (we notice that the writer prefers four legs to two !), 'we began to ascend this tremendous mountain by a way which makes the summit five miles from Keswick.' There follows quite a hair-raising account of the ascent, in the novelist's best 'horrid' manner. The travellers climb up behind Latrigg by 'a narrow path' which 'wound along steep green precipices, the beauty of which prevented what danger there was from being perceived.' As they ascend, the authoress gives detailed descriptions of the views, and then, as the party draws near the summit, comes this vivid impression of the hazards they underwent :

'Leaving this view, the mountain soon again shut out all prospect, but of its own valleys and precipices, covered with various shades of turf and moss, and with heath, of which a dull purple was the prevailing hue. Not a tree nor bush appeared on Skiddaw, nor even a stone wall any where broke the simple greatness of its lines. Sometimes we looked into tremendous chasms, where the torrent, heard roaring long before it was seen, had worked itself into a deep channel, and fell from ledge to ledge, foaming and shining amidst the dark rock. These streams are sublime, from the length and precipitancy of their course, which, hurrying the sight with them into the abyss, act as it were in sympathy upon the nerves, and, to save ourselves from following, we recoil from the view with involuntary horror. Of such, however, we saw only two, and those by some departure from the usual course up the mountain ; but everywhere met gushing springs, till we were within two miles of the summit, when our guide added to the rum in his bottle what he said was the last water we should find in our ascent.

'The air now became very thin, and the steeps still more difficult of ascent ; but it was often delightful to look down into the green hollows of the mountain, among pastoral scenes, that

wanted only some mixture of wood to render them enchanting. —About a mile from the summit, the way was indeed dreadfully sublime, lying, for nearly half a mile, along the edge of a precipice, that passed with a swift descent, for probably nearly a mile, into a glen within the heart of Skiddaw ; and not a bush nor a hillock interrupted its vast length, or, by offering a midway check in the descent, diminished the fear it inspired. The ridgy steeps of Saddleback formed the opposite boundary of the glen ; and, though really at a considerable distance, had, from the height of the two mountains, such an appearance of nearness, that it almost seemed as if we could spring to its side. How much too did simplicity increase the sublimity of this scene, in which nothing but mountain, heath, and sky appeared !—But our situation was too critical, or too unusual, to permit the just impressions of such sublimity. The hill rose so closely above the precipice, as scarcely to allow a ledge wide enough for a single horse. We followed the guide in silence, and, till we regained the more open wild, had no leisure for exclamation. After this, the ascent appeared easy and secure, and we were bold enough to wonder, that the steeps near the beginning of the mountain, had excited any anxiety.'

They reach the summit of the mountain, and the authoress expatiates at length on the view thence—a description which was frequently used by the guide-book compilers. To do the good lady justice, she had a nice eye for landscape, and her descriptions of the panorama, both during the ascent and from the summit, are very good.

On the return, the writer notes how only a short distance from the top ' a great difference was perceptible in the climate, which became comparatively warm, and the summer hum of bees was again he?rd among the purple heath,' whereas on the summit ' the air . . . was boisterous, intensely cold, and difficult to be inspired.'

The writer appropriately concludes : ' We reached Keswick about four o'clock, after five hours passed in this excursion, in which the care of our guide greatly lessened the notion of danger.'

To some apparently even the crossing of a pass had its unpleasantness and dangers. The writer of the *History of Cumberland*, Hutchinson himself, is usually very temperate in his descriptions, but sometimes he too writes extravagantly, and those who know the reasonable gradients of the well-engineered Whinlatter road to-day, may smile at this description of the pass 150 years ago :

' The steeps and Alpine passes of Whinlatter form an ascent of five miles, by stupendous heights, by a winding path. . . . In some parts you catch the prospect of small recesses, where



*From an Old Print*

STICKLE TARN FROM PAVEY ARC

some cottages stand in a solitude romantic and highly pastoral : in other parts you look down from such tremendous precipices, on whose brink you are travelling, that, from the windows of a carriage, the aspect and situation are alarming.'

This notion that travelling amongst the mountains is something essentially dangerous died very hard. Otley's *Guide to the Lakes*, in the 7th edition, 1843, can still describe the ascent of England's highest mountain in the following way :

' Scawfell-Pikes may be ascended on foot from any of the adjacent vales, but most conveniently from Borrowdale ; yet the distance from a place of entertainment, the ruggedness of the ground, and the danger of being caught in a cloud—to which, from its situation, it is more subject than its neighbours—altogether conspire against its being visited by any other than by hardy pedestrians : and stranger? should so calculate their time, that night may not overtake them in such places ; to be enveloped in a cloud is of itself disagreeable, cloud and night together would be dreadful.'

What a hardy fellow the old-time fell-walker must have been, or was expected to be !

As for guide-books proper, these came to be published in ever-increasing numbers from the end of the 18th century, and in this short essay only a few of the more popular can be mentioned. West's *Guide to the Lakes*, first published in 1778, was the best-known, and reached a tenth edition in 1812. Others were, Housman's *Descriptive Tour and Guide*, 1800 ; Green's *Guide to the Lakes*, 1818, referred to by Wordsworth as ' a complete magazine of minute and accurate information ' ; Jonathan Otley's *Guide*, which went through numerous editions ; and Leigh's *Guide* (2nd edition, 1832). All these early Guides have much in common, giving careful itineraries, the charges for coaches and post chaises, the names of ' places of entertainment' (obsolete sense !), saying very little indeed about the mountain-tops save the inevitable Scawfell-Pikes, and Skiddaw, and Helvellyn sometimes, warning their readers of the difficulties of travel among the hills, and quoting liberally from previous writers. Some of those Guides contain interesting maps, usually delightfully out of scale ; and here and there in their contents we frequently come across amusing details—thus West recommends that ' To render the tour more agreeable, the company should be provided with a telescope, for viewing the fronts and summits of inaccessible rocks, and the distant country from the tops of the high mountains Skiddaw and Helvellyn.'

So much for these early guide-books, written for the most part in rather a journeyman style, and yet full of details which even to-day

have more than just an antiquarian interest. One Guide however we have not yet mentioned—perhaps the finest Guide to the district ever written, not because it is an account of places to be visited (judged on this score it would have many shortcomings), but because it is a deliberate attempt to describe and convey in words something of that natural magic which is the charm of the district. Moreover, the writer of this Guide was no cultivated dilettante from the outside world, but a native, born and bred in the district itself, none other than the poet Wordsworth himself, who wrote a *Guide to the Lakes* that was first published anonymously in 1810 as an introduction to a volume of ' *Select Views*' It was republished in 1820 with the *Sonnets to the Duddon* and other poems ; and then followed three separate editions, the final one in the poet's lifetime appearing in 1835.

Wordsworth's book is certainly calculated to appeal to the man who loves the Lakes in their many moods ; and it is remarkable how enthusiasm for his subject transformed the poet into a fine and sensitive prose writer of the first order. Various writers before him had commenced to show genuine appreciation of the Lakeland landscapes—Gray, in many parts of the *Journal* of his tour, as for instance in his description of UUswater or the most happy picture he draws of Grasmere in its peaceful vale ; Arthur Young, the agricultural writer, in his ' *Six Months' Tour through the North of England*' (1770), a really charming and sympathetic writer when not discussing agriculture ; and the scenery-loving cleric William Gilpin, in ' *Observations, relative to picturesque beauty, in several parts of England, particularly the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland*'—all these pointed the way for Wordsworth's *Guide*. And yet no other than Wordsworth could have written with such affection and loving intimacy of a district which he felt formed a very part of himself. How sympathetically does he write of the natural features of the district, noting with the sureness of an artist's eye how weather and climate and ' skiey influences,' and the attractive and lovely forms of the hills themselves, all play their part in moulding and adding constant variety to landscapes which are among the richest and most graceful in the world. As Wordsworth himself puts it :

' I do not indeed know of any tract of country in which, within so narrow a compass, may be found an equal variety in the influences of light and shadow upon the sublime or beautiful features of landscape.'

With Wordsworth's guide we take a worthy leave of our subject, for Wordsworth was one of the first really to appreciate the companionship of the hills, and to understand what living amidst scenes

of great natural beauty could mean in a man's life ; and because of all this our debt to him is great indeed.

' His daily teachers had been woods and rills,  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.'

The lines are taken from *The Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*. They might be fittingly applied to Wordsworth himself.



## ETNA—AN EXCURSION FROM DUTY

*Philip H. Weston*

The idea first occurred to us on the evening before the Sicily landings. Standing on deck just after sunset we looked northwards and saw, forty miles away, the flat conical top of Mount Etna, apparently floating on a bank of rapidly darkening cloud which stretched right round the horizon ; gradually it became lighter towards the west, where were still a few small rosy reminders that the last day of anxious waiting was over. As we were both keen mountain-lovers we said at once ' we must go up there ' ; but we did not feel like speculating as to when that might be possible.

It was a little more than a month later, ' the military situation having been clarified,' that we began to think more seriously of our first somewhat vague project. We opened out our maps once more and studied the many routes which appeared to lead so easily to the summit. Naturally we ignored the obvious way which enabled a vehicle to be taken within about 4,000 feet of the top ; and eventually we decided to make our base the small village of Z——, standing some 2,500 feet above the sea.

Bearing in mind the Army motto ' time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted,' we paid a visit to our village, and at once had a piece of luck. We found an Italian who spoke good English, and as our knowledge of the native tongue at this time scarcely extended beyond *Buon Giorno*, this was certainly fortunate. He gave us much useful information, and ended by directing us to a small white-washed inn perched on the steep wooded hillside and reached by a tortuous cart-track.

Here we were met by the inn-keeper and his wife—a cheerful young couple—who told us many things and introduced us to two Americans who were sampling the local wine and who insisted on presenting us with autographed Dollar bills. We also met—and this was of practical value—a Sicilian, named Balbo, who offered to accompany us and show us the short-cuts in the lower reaches of the mountain. An inspection of the ground from the inn, showing dense woods and many deep gorges, suggested that a guide would be invaluable, particularly as we should have to walk for three hours by the light of the waning moon. So we accepted the offer ; nor did we later regret the decision.

Two days after this we returned to the inn in time for dinner and an early bed. At 2 a.m. our guide called us, and half-an-hour later, fortified by hot coffee and rolls, we were ready and outside. Here we were somewhat taken aback to discover that Balbo had brought a mule with him. Owing to our strictly limited Italian, we were

unable to point out that it was not our custom to take such a companion when walking. But Balbo's suggestion that our packs containing food and warm clothing should be lodged on the pack saddle seemed reasonable enough ; and later we were extremely thankful for our four-legged porter.

So off we went, with almost 8,000 feet of continuous climbing before us. We followed the road for a time, but soon we were taking short cuts and crossing the road only occasionally as it zigzagged laboriously upward. Then we left it altogether and entered a seemingly dense jungle, whither the moonbeams did not penetrate. Fortunately our mule clinked his hooves on an occasional stone, our only clue to the right direction ; and thus we proceeded upwards in single file, stumbling here and there, but making good, steady progress on the whole. We blessed the presence of our guide, too, for without him we should almost certainly have become hopelessly lost in the first hour.

Gradually the ground became more open ; now we were clear of the trees and above us the stars were undimmed. To our right the Plough was resting on the horizon. Our path twisted along, occasionally skirting a tiny hut, the home of a woodcutter or shepherd, sometimes on the level, more often uphill, but never descending, it seemed. Soon after 5 a.m. we paused beside a well of the most beautifully clean, cold water, refreshed ourselves, and looked eastwards, where the sky was beginning to lighten. For a brief space we watched the birth of another day ; then, glancing in the other direction, we caught a glimpse of our objective, seemingly continents away and utterly remote, and hastily got to our feet and continued upwards.

So far the going had been good, with grassland or peat underfoot but now we began to climb more steeply and found ourselves on cinders. At first they were as large as a man's head, and firmly embedded, but as we went higher they became smaller and more shifting. After an hour of this the muscles in our calves and thighs began to have things to say about our lack of training, and when these protests appeared to have reached the absolute climax we stopped for breakfast beside a ruined stone shed adorned with many names of previous climbers. We were soon on our way again, and there followed a most gruelling two hours of continuously steep ascent, hot sun, and a very uneasy footing. At the end of that time we reached the disused, but still intact, Observatory, situated 1,000 feet below the summit.

The sky, which had been cloudless at dawn, was now full, and even overloaded, with heavy masses of cumulus ; but, although some of the lower peaks were veiled, our own was still aloof and



clear. Undoubtedly, though, we must push on, and only another thousand feet. But what a finish to an already more than strenuous climb ; one thousand feet at an angle of sixty degrees, on cinders so fine as to be almost dust and as shifting as quicksands. We spent one and a half hours over that stretch, and as we neared the top our knees felt weak, our heads light and scarcely our own and our stomachs most unsettled ; all of which we attributed to the altitude.

Still, it was the top, and, after seven and a half hours walking, it seemed to us very good. Almost the first sight which met our eyes was a large notice-board bearing the legend : ' Danger—Crater Ahead.' We recognised it at once ; it had been handled there two days previously by a group of enthusiasts belonging to a unit well known to us, whose signs, giving warning of craters and other hazards, had been our constant companions along the roads for the past month. True enough there was a crater barely three feet beyond the board, but such a one as to make the mightiest effort of man appear futile by comparison. The rim seemed to be fully a mile and a half in circumference, while 500 feet below was the floor, scored by deep cracks, from some of which were issuing jets of steam and sulphurous smoke. The sides were practically sheer, and in many places of a variety of hues caused by deposits on the rock faces of blue, green, red and yellow. Over all there was a strong smell, not unlike a giant brazier on a cold day, while the air temperature fluctuated continuously. When the breeze blew the steam in our direction we felt pleasantly warm, but when it blew the other way we were soon chilled by the keen air. We tried sitting down on the rim, but only for a couple of minutes, the cinders there being more than a trifle warm.

The more distant views were now completely blotted out by cloud so, with a final look around, we began the first stage of the descent. On the way we passed a series of clefts in the ground, not unlike small pot-holes, which seemed to be generating plenty of steam. At one time, we learned later, this steam had been harnessed and used to heat the Observatory, and no doubt it had proved most effective. We looked into the building and found a Visitor's Book dating back several years. In more recent times, many German and Italian soldiers had added their names, while the last half-dozen pages were filled with British names. Having added our own we were joined by Balbo who had been awaiting us. After a snack, we continued our descent.

The cinders, which until then had been our worst enemies, now became the closest friends, and with their help we dropped some 7,000 feet in two hours. Our only pause was to gaze down at the

course of a larva-stream—such a landscape as might well have been found on the moon. Everywhere there was a total deadness and a lack of life and vegetation of any kind—a veritable Valley of Desolation. The floor and sides were pock-marked with miniature volcanoes which, owing to their colour, had the appearance of being still red-hot, while the course followed by the larva stretched away into the distance to be lost finally amid the abundant vines.

A strange incident occurred as we neared the end of our journey. We were approaching a small farmstead when a group of peasant-farmers appeared and confronted us solemnly and rather menacingly. "Germans?" they asked. "No," we assured them, "English"; and added through our guide that there were no longer any Germans on the Island. This statement was received with amazement and almost incredulity, but Balbo again reassured them, and we quickly became one big happy party. They overwhelmed us with such hospitality as they could, pears picked from the tree under which we were standing and the inevitable wine. In due course we passed on after much hand-shaking and well-wishing.

Soon we were back at the inn and, a little later after a change of clothes, we were sitting down to a meal with that pleasant feeling of well-being that comes after a day in the open and the fulfilment of one's plans. And so back to the Army at the end of another day. It had been a splendid walk and a complete change; but we would rather tramp for ten years among our own beloved hills than spend another day on those cinders. Perhaps we are prejudiced. Certainly I am.

Many people must have discussed the idea of a second Club Hut, our party I am sure were not alone. Around the fireside, slogging up Brown Tongue, Rossett Ghyll, or lazing in the sun, we talked of a new hut. But one can tire of talking and yearn for action. This was the stage at which we arrived in August 1943, and decided to act at the next Committee Meeting ; this to be held at Ambleside at the end of the month.

In the company of friends it is surprising how nervous one can feel when putting forward a suggestion, or, shall I say how nervous I felt, on that 26th day of August, when I sat through the Committee gradually working myself into a wreck over the thought of what I would say and how I would propose the new hut. I had cycled to Ambleside from Kendal and en route gone over and over my piece. Oh yes, I was full of confidence on my cycle, but in committee !—' ANY OTHER BUSINESS '—Silence—A.T.H. looked across at me.

That night cycling to Borrowdale to spend the weekend with Bentley Beetham I tried to sum up the result of the new proposal and decided a seed had been sown, a very tiny one.

Next came the A.G.M., but nothing more happened, then the Langdale meeting and this was the turning point. The proposed new hut was on the agenda. I was asked for the full scheme. It was very cold in the room, I was pleased it gave some excuse for my shivering. Briefly the proposal was a second Club Hut, plans to be started now, so as not to suffer a time lag and when material and labour was released to be in a position to act. Everyone seemed to agree that Langdale or Borrowdale should be the centre, the discussion broke up with Lawson Cook saying ' Bring us Something Concrete.' To quote the minutes. ' The subject of a possible Club Hut in Langdale or Borrowdale was introduced and the matter deferred until something definite turned up for discussion.'

A fortnight later A.T.H. and Ruth were in Langdale and in the course of conversation with Mr Bulman learned that he had bought Raw Head Farm. A.T.H. suggested the farm house would make an ideal hut for the Club ; the answer was favourable. The Hargreaves came to see A.M.C. and me that night, still in climbing kit, to give the good news. It was proposed that I should 'phone Mr Bulman next morning and get some definite agreement—this I did—the reply being ' Yes, the Club can have Raw Head for Headquarters, and I will let you have a written agreement by post tomorrow ! ' Splendid, here was ' something concrete.' A.T.H.



*Arthur Robinson*

**RAWHEAD**



*B. Z. Simpson*

THE OPENING OF RAWHEAD

was stationed just outside Kendal ; we made a highly excited pair gabbling over the 'phone. What now ? How do we start this ball rolling ? This was at 10-30 a.m. 11 a.m. we were putting Raw Head to L. W. Somervell. 11-30 L.W.S. was speaking to Lawson Cook over the 'phone. 11-33 an emergency meeting had been called to be held at Buttermere on December 30th.

Eighteen Members attended the Emergency Committee Meeting at Buttermere, January 1st, 1944. To refer to the minutes : ' The President reported Mr C. J. Bulman had purchased Raw Head Farm, and after being approached by some members had professed his willingness to let the Farm House to the Club for use as a hut. After a full discussion in which all present took part, it was un-animously agreed that a sub-committee consisting of G. Anderson (Convenor), A. B. Hargreaves, A. T. Hargreaves, L. W. Somervell and S. H. Cross should as soon as possible negotiate with C. J. Bulman.'

The sub-committee soon got to work, its first meeting being held at the Fleece Inn, Kendal. A.B.H. then went up to Langdale to discuss the Lease with Mr and Mrs Bulman. In the next few months several meetings were held at Bleak House, in fact Bleak House became through the kindness of Mrs Leighton the hub of all Raw Head activities. Lists were drawn up of equipment needed to furnish the new hut ; that was quite a simple task in comparison with the problem of how and where to get these essentials. Bunks and bedding being our greatest worry, it was thought we might have to ask various members living in different towns to try to purchase one or two blankets each, but due to the hard work put in by George Anderson in obtaining permits this complicated method of acquiring equipment was avoided—not before G.A. himself had been seen going the rounds of the local shops and joyfully displaying one pair, the result of his search.

By the Langdale Meet, March 11th, the sub-committee were in a position to say we can furnish Raw Head—all we need is the word go ; it was given, also power to co-opt other members. Negotiations over the lease were going ahead at the customary lethargic pace ; that side of the business was now in the hands of the legal expert members of the Club. We now had the task of getting Raw Head equipped and liveable in as soon as possible ; Lyna Kellett and Mary Leighton joined the committee. Bunks, blankets etc., were ordered at once. It was at this stage that J. Blackshaw did great work for the Club ; it was he who made it possible to furnish Raw Head so well—in fact he seemed always to have something up his sleeve.

Early in May Raw Head became vacant, the workmen moved in

and work commenced. L. W. Somervell very kindly gave and loaned many items of furniture to make the place habitable for working parties ; these were delivered within a fortnight. By the Whit Meet in Borrowdale the committee was able to report that negotiations with Mr Bulman re the lease had proceeded smoothly and had been in the hands of the solicitors for some time past.

Raw Head was badly in need of a few easy chairs also tea-pots. The Brackenclose Warden and committee were approached for help ; this was willingly given and 6 chairs and about the same number of tea-pots were promised, the difficulty being how to get them round to Langdale. Joan Tebbutt suggested a Brackenclose party would carry to Esk Hause to be met by a Raw Head party, where we could have a meeting, sit in the chairs and drink tea from the tea-pots—the idea would have been grand. Unfortunately neither side managed to get a team so the articles made the journey by road and rail. Almost every week-end now saw activity at Raw Head.

Early in July the blankets and underlays arrived, the airing of these provided much work dodging the showers.

Stripping the walls of old paper, one person counted half a dozen different layers, a needle was found under its covering of paper. One bulge provided great speculation, would we find a photo of Grandpa beneath the paper ? however it was just another weakness in the plaster, another hole to fill. It was on such a day that Miss Greig and a friend arrived for a week's holiday ; the floor was covered with paper and lime, I felt sorry that they should have such a welcome, but my fears were soon put to rest. Without waiting to take off macs, they attacked the walls with their finger nails, deriving great satisfaction from the task. These two people did most valuable work and have the honour of being the source of Raw Head's first revenue.

The Committee now decided to circularize members giving the information that Raw Head was open to a limited number and also asking for gifts. Joan Tebbutt was asked to make a small sketch of the hut which would be printed on the folder ; this she agreed to do at very short notice with admirable results.

The wording of the circular was decided upon, not without some amusement, the first attempt reading very much like an Estate Agent's letter. ' This 17th Century Farm House situated in the beautiful Vale of Langdale.' However, the result you are familiar with. Circulars were posted at the end of July and the response was very good. A.M. and I spent August week in Langdale, several members stayed at Raw Head, and the place improved considerably. Walls were distempered, the paint and varnish

brushes were wielded with great vigour, too vigorously at times. All the bunks were erected by J. Kenyon, a very noble feat. At this stage we were confident the place would be absolutely finished for the opening by the end of September—a couple of months to go. As the time went on, our confidence diminished, and in the last month frantic 'phone calls and interviews with Mr Jennings the builder became a daily occurrence. He was most helpful, but despite his willingness to work late on the job the weather was the deciding factor and Raw Head was not complete when the opening took place.

If the members had worked hard in the summer months, their efforts were re-doubled in the last fortnight, when the order of the day was work and more work. The day of the A.G.M. curtains were fitted and the last distemping done ; in the evening a happy crowd gathered around the fire. One member who had journeyed from the South was very popular—he had sent by post a huge box of apples ; with these in the centre of the circle we just sat and ate.

Sunday, the day of the opening, dawned fine, floors were scrubbed, paint-work given a final polish and all doors locked to guard jealously the interior. By an early hour members began to arrive and it soon became obvious that the ceremony was going to be witnessed by a large gathering. The weather which had promised well in the morning turned showery, and a happy if not crowded company ate their lunch in the small room where a roaring fire and ample supply of tea helped to make the wait more tolerable.

Promptly at 2 p.m. Geo. Anderson with a few appropriate words presented the key to Mrs Lawson Cook to perform the opening ceremony. I did not witness the actual opening, being kept busy helping the brewing of tea and cutting of the Christening Cake. There was one moment of great excitement when the tea decided not to brew ; we had omitted to get a tea bag, so made use of a clean pocket handkerchief—this however proved too small, the tea was not allowed to expand, and the water hardly discoloured. However, the day was saved when one person plunged the carving knife into the tea bag—the tea brewed, the key turned and the crowd surged in. I think upwards of a hundred cups of tea and pieces of cake were served. The people serving even found time to please those people who liked their tea milkless, sweetened, strong, weak or just a slight discoloration, and served the children with milk. This team, Lyna Kellet, Mary Leighton, Joan Tebbutt and A.M.C. worked this task of feeding the multitude admirably.

The interior of Raw Head was well and truly examined by the members ; good suggestions were put forward ; praise was given and as one person who had scrubbed the floor earlier in the day



remarked " S'truth its like a shambles." The floor certainly was in a filthy state, with the amount of people who had been through, but we were quite pleased to see it so. A well satisfied company sat down for their evening meal. The feeling was that Raw Head had been given a good start for over 60 members had attended the opening despite the great difficulty of transport.

To a few of us Raw Head is more than a second hut, it is the realisation of an idea. But we are the fortunate ones who live in the district and have time to spare. Many members who would have given great help, and like us have got some satisfaction for their labours in seeing the place take shape, were prevented by being in the Services or on war work. However, Raw Head is there complete in its material form, it awaits the spirit which can only be put there by keen members, a spirit of friendship and closer relationship between climbers which grows better and richer in hut life.

Being ashore in Greenock gives a great incentive to go away as often as possible. Besides I had promised Brian, in Italy, a report on Raw Head. Now, as it happened, Derek Maling was back from Italy, and the meet was a good chance to kill two birds.

The journey down was sufficient to discourage future attempts, having five changes, with a few miles of hitch-hiking to remind me of better days. In the end, Langdale appeared, on a cold sunny morning. It wasn't thrilling to see flooded fields instead of the expected snow, but it was good to be there at all. There were vivid memories of going out after supper and doing Middlefell Buttress, in the days before we'd done any climbing and hardly hoped ever to possess a rope. It sounded a suitable project for people who hadn't climbed anything for two or three years ; moreover my partner of the above initiation was to be at this meet. But the hut was empty. Hunting round for Hut Standing Orders wasted a few minutes ; I made sure that every visible tap near the boiler was ON before lighting a fire. It wouldn't burn, and I became even more soured, but viewed the oven gluttonously in the hope that the women would make pies and puddings, which they subsequently did. Unfortunately, the menu had been calculated assuming that there would be bread and potatoes for the scrounging, so I swore, piled coal on the sullen sticks, tucked my wee bag under one arm, and found that it takes seventeen minutes to walk to Chapel Stile Co-op, and less than that to forget the check number. Life seemed better by the time I got back, and the dense smoke round Raw Head when it re-appeared produced a glowing domestic feeling. Inside, jets of flame shot up the chimney and made a comforting noise ; little trails of smoke trickled along between the ceiling beams. So I had lunch and settled down with coffee, cigarette and the C.C.J. This merely confirmed a horrid suspicion that I wasn't nearly so energetic as I used to be. The weather was attractive enough to go somewhere. Just as I was rousing myself, full of virtue, Sid appeared. He told me that a fellow-Geordie named Raleigh was coming, too, but as I had received letters from this mythical person for some years, a discussion on calligraphy followed, and one member was called " Railing " or ' Paling ' for the rest of the meet.

Then a weird figure appeared in the road, huge and undecided. We hauled him in. He wore a Partisan Red Star in his cap and carried a German Alpine Division sack. This apparently came from a sprog mountaineer who hadn't had time to wear it very often.

Under the outer layers was a khaki battledress. Sid had to endure a Service reunion. All the time I was wondering how much truth there is in the remark in last year's *Journal* about a sufficiency of 'marginal experience' of life as a cause of reduced hut attendances. Derek had just come home after finding himself, one morning, surrounded by a parachute in an Austrian field; and here he was, thirsting for some climbing. A couple of years before, after a distinctly marginal few hours swimming out of a detached destroyer, I was very hopeful about an air passage home from Argentina to join a New Year meet. (This is beginning to sound like a horrible line, but I give the only two examples known to me which are anything if not ordinary.) The only margin which really *does* give trouble is the narrow time margin. But perhaps, as a Northerner, I'm being uncharitable to the Southerner who has had his home destroyed, or is expecting it to be destroyed at any moment. The point I want to make is that there is all the difference in the world between fighting flesh and blood, and fighting something abstract, Nature, your hopes and fears, or whatever, on a mountain. Anyway, things going bump in the night have never inspired in me the same feeling of physical or moral exposure as stepping up some rocks which I felt were a little too good for me.

The evening situation was very different from that of the forenoon. Twelve of us were settled in and feasting variously. Two voices were shooting uncouth Slav names at each other and being all reminiscent. Miss Wright and Derek were marching over common ground, it appeared, and correlating the fruits of very different circumstances. Later on Lyna got us round the fire and Derek was made the soloist. He took us from the time cannon shell came mysteriously through the deck to his collapse on an Austrian doorstep, and the subsequent hundreds of miles through Yugoslavia to an Allied airstrip and his return to Foggia. We met a 'wretched type named Josip,' who poured peroxide on open wounds, and the inhabitants of a little village who went night after night to see the same films. It was a fascinating hour and a half. My attention at the beginning was distracted by Heidel, tiptoeing back and forth with enormous loads of food and a terribly apologetic expression.

There was some talk, when we went up top, about getting up at half past seven. A waking glance at a watch which showed nine o'clock dispelled any thought of an early start. Anyway, it was cold and wet. This was a good thing, because the first meet became a house-warming party and a very friendly one, too. Criticism and suggestions flew round, though quite probably they didn't reach the executive authority. (The Warden, by the way, did a

most praiseworthy amount of brainpicking during the weekend.) I have an immense enthusiasm for the lovely big sofa in the small room. Hot water from the tap was still an amenity at the end of the meet, because the bottom of the boiler had not burnt out on Saturday. The possibility and desirability of electric lighting was mentioned ; as a barn inhabiter of long standing, this struck me as just a little too pansy. Sid then conscripted a labour gang to deal with interior decoration. A ceiling was whitewashed, delicately avoiding the beams. (Don't wear navy-blue battledress for a job like this.) A wet journey for some cigarettes was the longest expedition of the meet, though quite a number of people had walked a long way to reach the hut at all. This was more worthy than getting a bus to the door. Sunday seemed a long day, fully employed ; then the first people to leave were a reminder that this was a weekend at the hut and not a permanent, idyllic transfer from a less civilised life. It was a reminder, too, to think about what we could do to make the second Raw Head meet even better than the first. Its excellence so early in its career surprised me. Of course the house has obviously been lived in for years which makes a big difference. The comic geography is very charming and you really sleep better after curling up a staircase to your bunk. The bus service is a mixed blessing ; half the attraction of Bracken-close is the familiar and ever-fresh climb over Sty Head and the quiet final mile down a dark dale head. On the other hand, after a few years in the Fighting Services, Derek and I aren't nearly so fit as we were.

## "A NATIONAL PARK FOR THE LAKE DISTRICT."

A. B. Hargreaves

We are now well into the Year of Victory and it is at last 'officially permitted' to look forward beyond 'the end of next week' to the period of general re-settlement and return to peace time conditions of living ; to the demobilisation of the Services, the relaxation of controls, the reorganisation of industry, a general re-building, and a surge forward in many ways under the pent-up energy generated by years of repression.

Let us consider how all this is likely to affect the English Lake District, with which this Club is so much concerned.

Our Members (and large numbers of other people) will be coming to visit the District, to climb, walk, cycle—or rest—and those who provide accommodation, the hotels, guest houses, hostel organisation and farmhouses are making preparations to meet a huge demand, which is likely to continue for years. All these visitors will want to find this beautiful country unspoilt, and kept so. Those who cater for them will want preservation too because it is the unspoilt scenery and the general freedom of access to the hills which attract their visitors. But others, both inside and outside, have their eyes and thoughts on the Lake District—with ideas of development which may well run counter to the interests of climbers, fell-walkers and cyclists, and also to those of the accommodation industry and the farmers and most of the other permanent inhabitants. There are, for instance, the Forestry Commission, the Central Electricity Board and the Electricity Supply Companies, those interested in the impounding and distribution of water, the Mining and Quarrying companies, the Post Office Telephone Department, those interested in shooting and fishing, the authorities responsible for the roads, the public service transport companies and the motoring interests, the Board of Trade with its Distribution of Industry Act to administer, and maybe some of the Service Departments with a desire to secure open spaces for the purpose of personnel training and testing material. Then there are the owners of land which in their view is suitable and ripe for development—for building, etc., and the local authorities with their increasing responsibility as to the provision of public services, and the need to make ends meet on a limited revenue.

*What a boiling pool of cross currents and under pulls !      What a  
case for Planning and Control !*

Of course, most of these conditions existed here before the War but in nothing like the state of aggravation that is likely to arise in the near future. And even before the War things were going the wrong way from the point of view of the *majority* of those who lived and worked and spent holidays in the district. During the war this progress has been accelerated in many important directions. It seems clear that unless the Government decides on a certain line of policy as regards the Lake District (and other areas where conditions are similar such as " Snowdonia " and the Peak District) and sets up some new organisation to carry it out we are faced with a prospect which it is no exaggeration to describe as extensive spoiling of the district, even of the central part with which this Club is most concerned.

Are we to have the Forestry Commission adding to its already large holdings, with consequent restriction of access and detrimental effect on the scenery ?

No one can object to afforestation as such but the central Lake District is not the place for the planting of conifers on a commercial scale which has so far seemed to be the settled policy of the Forestry Commission, though it is true that they have provisionally agreed to restrict their operations to the South West corner of the district, for the time being.

Are we to have the Central Electricity Board ' gridding ' the District ; and the Supply companies and the Post Office running rows of pylons and poles up beautiful valleys and making a hideous network of wires in villages when it could all go underground ?

No one can object to the extension of the Electricity and Telephone services even to the most remote places *but* in the Lake District National Park area overhead wires should be the exception and not the rule. The extra capital cost of burying the lines should, in the national interest, be incurred ; in any case the relative costs level out over about 20 years because of the comparatively negligible maintenance required by underground cables.

Are we to have the Western Lakes dammed (and damned) to supply heavily fluctuating demands for water for industry in quantities far beyond the present need of existing industry and population ?

No one wants to have the further distribution of water restricted, nor, by putting a limit on what may be drawn from Ennerdale, Crummock and Wastwater, to starve existing industrial consumers—but would it be in the national (as distinct from purely West Cumberland) interest to turn these lakes into " Thirlmere's " ?

Are we to suffer severe restriction of access to the fellsides surrounding those lakes and tarns which already are reservoirs ?

This is what may conceivably happen under the new Water Act unless a National Park Commission is available to apply checks.

Are the extractive industries to be allowed freely to open new workings in the central part of the district without obligation not to mess up fellsides, streams and lakes ?

No one can object to development of mining and quarrying—traditionally staple industries of the district—so as to provide work for the local people *but* (a) each proposed extension should surely be considered from the planning point of view, and be subject to sanction and, if permission to proceed is given, (6) there should surely be provision for the proper disposal of spoil and effluent and for the workings to be carried on with the minimum of detriment to the scenery, also for clearance and restoration when eventually the undertakings close down.

Are we to have chemical plants so near the high hills and crags that they pollute the air as well as offending the eye, not to mention spoiling rivers and the coast line with their effluent ?

Are we to suffer the owners of large areas of mountain land to prohibit or restrict access, so that a few may enjoy shooting or fishing ?

Not that this is likely in the Lake District—but the legal right to do so is there.

Are the road making enthusiasts to be allowed to 'improve' existing roads beyond the real needs of the inhabitants and visitors staying in the district and without regard to preservation of the amenities, and shall they drive new roads to 'open up' the district ?

For example would it not be against the national (and local) interest to have a motor road over Styhead Pass or for the Kendal-Keswick road via Dunmail Raise to be widened for use as a main trunk route ?

Are the 'bus companies and the motor coach proprietors to be allowed to use minor roads running round lakes, over mountain passes and to valley heads without effective restriction ?

Before the war there was a strong tendency towards unnecessary extension of such services, inevitably resulting in demands for road 'improvements' notwithstanding the controlling powers possessed by the Regional Transport Commissioners.

Are we to have noisy, oily speed boats, with rows of sheds to house them, on the unspoilt lakes such as Coniston, Ullswater, Ennerdale and Buttermere ?

Are motorists (including motor cyclists) to be allowed to use bridle tracks or take their machines on to the open fells, whether for 'pleasure,' testing, or competition in driving skill ? 'Jeeps' on Skiddaw and despatch riders training on Stake Pass are all very well in War time but must we be subject to this sort of nuisance permanently ?

Are we to have the War Office establishing permanent hutment camps or appropriating Common land for testing of fighting vehicles;

the Air Ministry and the Admiralty setting up bomb and gun ranges ; the Ministry of Supply creating dumps and building ' nucleus ' munition factories ?

To the official mind, sitting in London and looking at a map, much of the Lake District may seem attractively open for these purposes.

Is every owner of property wherever it may be to be free (subject only to the restriction of the existing feeble Planning Acts) to develop it as he thinks fit, for the maximum profit—to build, or sell land for the building of houses unsuitable to the district, unsightly bungalows, roadside cafes and petrol filling stations—without effective control in the common, or national interest ?

Now all these things are *possible* and many of them probable developments and under the law as it exists there is no protection against some of them and little against most of them. Some of these projects may be very necessary from the national point of view, and if their necessity, when compared with the interests of such people as ourselves, is judged paramount, then they should be allowed—but as things are, *who* is to judge ? There is no central authority to whom such questions can be referred and in practice the organised ' developer ' or ' exploiter ' or ' improver ' most often gets his way against the comparatively unorganised ' preservers.'

There are, on the other hand, many improvements and developments which *need* to be carried out and which, under the present law, cannot be.

A case in point is the deplorable and desperate need of many of the hill farms for better water supplies and for repairs and improvements to their buildings, walls, fences and gates, and for drainage of their ' inside ' land.\* As things are not many of the owners can afford to carry out such work to the extent necessary nor can the tenants (despite the sheep subsidy) afford to do their share. As it is clearly in the national interest that the hill sheep farming industry should be protected and assisted, and those fine people the farmers enabled to improve their standard of living, this expense should, some of us think, be found, wholly or partly, out of taxes, *not* local rates. There is also the larger question of the need for amalgamation of some of these hill farms into bigger units and of the need for the extension of mutual assistance arrangements between hill farms and low country farms.

*What then must we do to be saved from this prospect of confusion and spoiling ? How can the innumerable conflicting interests as to the development and use of the Lake District be reconciled*

\* N.B. See report on Hill Sheep Farming published by Ministry of Agriculture (Cmd. No. 6498. January, 1944. Price 9d.)



*and the principle of ' the greatest good of the greatest number ' be made to prevail ? How can preservation as distinct from sterilisation be secured, along with all necessary improvements ?*

It is clear that if the problem is left simply to the goodwill and mutual understanding of all the interested parties—and to the local authorities with their limited powers—chaos is likely to be the result.

The best answer seems to lie in the National Park idea. This is no new thing for it has been much discussed amongst an increasingly large body of people for more than fifteen years, and it has now been sufficiently well worked out and boiled down to an understandable scheme to have become ' practical politics.' From the fact that the Minister of Town and Country Planning has recommended the application of it (in his White Paper on the Control of Land Use published towards the end of 1944) it does seem to be officially accepted as likely to work, not only in the Lake District but in other comparable areas.

Incidentally, there are quite a number of members of this Club who have shared in the heavy work of preparing this scheme, some from so far back as 1929 when the Lake District National Reserve Committee was set up. This Committee (which in 1934 provided the nucleus for, and became merged with, the Friends of the Lake District) had official support and representation from this Club, as has the present ' Standing Committee on National Parks ' of the Councils for the Preservation of Rural England and Wales. It should be only necessary to mention in this connection such well known ' statesmanlike ' names as those of T. R. Burnett, A. W. Wakefield, R. S. T. Chorley, J. C. Appleyard, Mrs. K. C. Chorley, H. C. Broadrick, C. F. Hadfield, G. R. Speaker, to dispose effectively of any such ideas as that this National Park scheme is the half-baked, incomplete work of impractical idealists or unbalanced cranks. Also, two other members, H. H. Symonds and John Dower have had much to do with drafting in its original form and in settling with other Clubs and Organisations the pamphlet lately published by the Standing Committee entitled ' National Parks, their Creation and Administration ' which is a full and detailed account of the problem and gives a proposed solution.

I do not propose to use much space going over the ground covered by this admirably clear and comprehensive document (see copy issued with this Journal by financial arrangement with the Friends of the Lake District) which should surely be read by all members of this Club even those (if any still think that Country Planning is not a proved need) who are on principle against ' Planning ' and

' Controls ' generally. The following however, are some of the salient points concerning the Lake District:—

*What is a National Park ?* The pamphlet begins with a short definition. The following fuller definition is taken from the Report on ' National Parks in England and Wales ' by John Dower (presented to Parliament by the Minister of Town and Country Planning in May, 1945. Stationery Office reference Cmd. 6628, price One Shilling.)

' A National Park . . . an extensive area of beautiful and . . . wild country in which, for the nation's benefit . . . the characteristic landscape beauty is strictly preserved, access and facilities for public open-air enjoyment are amply provided . . . wild life and buildings and places of architectural and historic interest are suitably protected . . . established farming is effectively maintained. . . . "

It is obvious that the Lake District comes within the general description in these definitions of areas suitable to be made National Parks, and it is also obviously desirable for the Lake District to be preserved and made even more accessible than it is now, subject to the qualifications of the definitions.

To define and adequately describe the machinery required to create and administer a National Park is a much more difficult matter. The pamphlet is an expression of opinion on behalf of the Societies, Clubs and Organisations represented on the Standing Committee and it makes concise proposals as to the framework of the necessary Act of Parliament. Part II of the Dower Report issued by the Minister of Town and Country Planning ' for information and as a basis for discussion ' goes into more detail. Although there are differences on a number of points (notably as to who is to have the last word in any dispute as between a National Park Commission and other Government departments, or the Local Authorities) there is general agreement between the two statements of policy.

Then there is the question of the area to be covered. This is not gone into specifically in the pamphlet but it may be taken that what is in mind for a National Park for the Lake District is quite roughly the area enclosed by thickly dotted lines on the map on page 106. At any rate that is the idea of the Friends of the Lake District, the Society which has given most thought to the matter, and it is much the same territory as suggested in the Dower Report. No very much smaller area would be suitable because the outer ends of the valleys, especially on the West Side, are just as much in need of preservation as the Daleheads ; and the High Furness and Black

Combe districts, along with the Westmorland country east of Windermere are truly part of the ' Lake District.'

As to the relationship between the proposed National Park Commission and the various Government Departments interested (such as the Board of Trade with its special responsibility for the West Cumberland Development Area) the idea is that the Commission should have a definite power of restraint, taking any matter which could not otherwise be settled, if not to the Cabinet at any rate to some established procedure of appeal for settlement. Only so is there any hope of curbing the activities of powerful departments and of resolving inter-departmental conflicts by application of principle instead of by power politics. The Commission itself would be appointed by the Minister of Town and Country Planning who would be answerable to Parliament for its actions and would budget for its annual expenditure.

The relationship between the Commission and the local authorities, is the thorniest part of the local problem. No fewer than three County Councils and eleven smaller authorities are concerned in the area suggested for a Lake District National Park. It is proposed, in effect, that ONLY the *planning* powers of these local authorities should be limited by those of the Commission. As to how ' planning '—the control of land use—should be dealt with by this combination of authorities there is some difference between the views of the Standing Committee and those expressed in the Dower Report but they do agree that it could not be left entirely to the local authorities, even when acting jointly ; co-ordination and ultimate control of planning by the Commission would be essential. It should be noted that it is NOT proposed that ' Whitehall ' should take over the Government of the National Park area in place of the local authorities ; that would obviously be absurd and unworkable. Nor is it proposed to set up a new local authority to take over the area from the existing authorities ; that would be equally absurd because it would involve most complicated adjustments of boundaries of representation and of services, and the resultant new units would be unbalanced both geographically and financially.

The vital point in the scheme is the combination of the planning powers of the local authorities with those of the Commission. Such proved liability as there may be to compensate owners of land for restrictions on the right to develop would be transferred from the local rates to the national taxes. Under the existing Planning Acts rural local authorities are heavily handicapped in dealing **with** applications to be allowed to develop land in ways which they do not really approve, because they have not the

financial resources to provide the necessary compensation ; furthermore, and for the same reason, they are bound to be influenced in their dealings with an application say to build by the knowledge that, if they grant it, increased rateable value will result.

Naturally some members of these local authorities will tend to resist any such curtailment or sharing of their powers, but once they understand that they would also be freed of a heavy liability and would always be consulted by the Commission before any decision affecting them was made it seems likely that they will support the scheme and co-operate willingly in giving effect to it.

As to statutory undertakings such as the Forestry Commission and the Central Electricity Board, and outside local authorities (such as Manchester) with Acts of Parliament granting them power to draw water from the Lake District, it is fundamental in the scheme that the Commission should have effective powers of restraint. Speaking generally, these statutory undertakings tend to exploit the Lake District and their power to do so should be brought under control of the Commission with its duty to balance national interests, one against the other, as well as national interests against local interests.

' Existing ownerships of the land . . . will be continued unless for some local and exceptional reasons public purchase . . . is found advisable in special cases, e.g. for securing access on the open country.' That is the proposed policy as regards the ownership, and where there have to be purchases for securing access on to open country such as moors and mountains—and there would only be very few such cases in the Lake District—the cost should be borne by the Exchequer.

As to the particular case of the farmers, whether they be owners-occupiers or tenants, it is made clear in the pamphlet that there is no intention to give all and sundry the right of wandering over farm lands, but only to secure the legal right of access to uncultivated land such as hill grazings and uplands, over much of which access is at present only ' by courtesy.' Further the good development of land and additions to buildings for the purposes of agriculture would be encouraged. No Lake District farmer need fear that the setting up of a National Park would affect him adversely. On the contrary the farmers would tend to benefit from the encouragement given to the tourist industry, which would be one of the main results of the Commission's work.

The pamphlet also corrects common misunderstandings in a section headed ' What National Parks are NOT.' For instance the Duddon and Eskdale ' National Forest Park ' created by the

Forestry Commission is not by any means a National Park within the meaning of the pamphlet or the Dower Report ; it consists mainly of that part of the estate which is not to be planted, and access is subject to restrictive by-laws. Moreover it is on a very small scale indeed. Nor, on the other hand, is it intended to create anything like the vast Reserves in Canada, South Africa and the United States, which for the most part consist of ' virgin ' country, practically unpopulated. Finally, it is not to be supposed that the Lake District National Park, or any part of it, is to be enclosed with iron railings, or plastered with ' keep off the grass ' notices, or be studded with ' fun fairs ' ; nor will any fell paths be concreted or fitted with steps or handrails ; and the colour marking or excessive cairning of tracks will not be permitted. And we shall NOT have to queue up at a turnstile at the foot of our climb and pay an access fee or insurance premium !

This article does not pretend to be more than a brief summary of the Standing Committee's pamphlet, and those interested might care to refer also to the Friends of the Lake District's News Letter for the year 1943-44 which deals in some detail with the same topic; copies may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, H. H. Symonds, Pennington House, Nr. Ulverston, Lancashire.

Incidentally, the work of the National Trust, and its rights in property, would in no way be made redundant or be superseded by the setting up of a National Park Commission. In fact the objects of the Trust and the Commission would be so much the same that complete co-operation and mutual assistance would be simple ; in many ways the Trust's hand would be strengthened. This matter is not referred to in the pamphlet but is very well covered in the Dower Report.

In my view this scheme for the preservation and controlled development of the Lake District well deserves the support, both financial and otherwise, individual and collective, of this Club, one of whose constitutional objects is :—

*' To protect the amenities of the District and to guard and promote the general interests of mountaineers.'*

Assuming this view is agreed with, the question arises just how best can the Club, and its members individually, give support. The answer it seems to me is to subscribe to, and otherwise assist the ' preservation ' Societies generally and the Friends of the Lake District in particular.

The ' Friends ' society, whose membership now is roughly 1,500, has had as its principal object from the beginning ' to win

support for the policy laid down in the Report of the National Park (Addison) Committee (1931) in so far as it concerns the Lake District, and in particular to press for a unified policy for the Lake District as a whole.'

This object it has pursued energetically for over eleven years and it is quite largely as a result of its propaganda, and the work of its Secretary, that the Standing Committee's scheme has reached the present practical form, and that the Dower Report was commissioned by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning.

To crib a famous phrase—'give us the tools (members and money) and we'll finish the job.'

But besides pursuing this main object the 'Friends' society has other claims to Fell and Rock support. I do not propose to go into much detail about the other useful work it does but would just refer interested Club members to the Secretary for copies of the last Annual Report. I think I might mention, however, that but for the work of the Friends of the Lake District the Forestry Commission would never have made the concessions it has done in regard to its properties in Eskdale and the Duddon Valley, nor would it have agreed to refrain from acquiring and planting any more land in the centre of the Lake District. But for the Friends Ullswater would still be polluted unnecessarily with silt from the Glenridding Lead Mine. We have also in friendly co-operation with the National Trust and others secured for all time the natural beauty of many hundreds of acres of Lake District land, mostly by means of buying out development rights and obtaining restrictive covenants on the land, at a cost of some £3,000.

The Society's more public activities through propaganda on a wide scale have been restricted by the war, but much has been done already and there will be the same scope for action when our principal object is achieved and there is a National Park for the Lake District. For this work what is needed is not only funds but *more members* so that the society can not only give support to good causes such as the work of the National Trust, Lake District Farm Estates, Ltd., \*and the other preservation societies, but speak with authority as representing a great number of people when it comes, as it frequently does, to tackling Government Departments, local authorities and statutory undertakings such as the Forestry Commission.

\* For some information as to the objects, financial structure and operations of this Company see previous numbers of this Journal (1937, 1938, 1942).

Briefly, it was formed under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts with the general object of enabling friends of the Lake District to co-operate (by *investing* money—at or without interest—in a corporate legal entity, able to hold land) in the work of preservation and, in particular, maintenance

The Friends of the Lake District are duly grateful to the Club for supporting them as an affiliated organisation paying a subscription since 1934, and also for the services of those many Club members who have served on their Committee or as Officers (at the present time approximately one third of the Friends' Executive is composed of Fell and Rock members) but on the other hand the support received from the main body of the Club members has been disappointing because out of over 900 of you only about 100 subscribe to the F.L.D.

Speaking as an experienced member both of this Club and of the Friends of the Lake District, I have not yet seen any instance of serious conflict of interest and I cannot see that there is ever likely to be any. Therefore, I feel justified in asking Club members individually to join the Friends of the Lake District soon—NOW—in good time to help them to deal with the numerous dangers facing the Lake District and, in particular, to help to bring about this National Park scheme.

and development of established farming. It is empowered to operate within a radius of 20 miles of Langdale Pikes (roughly the proposed National Park area) and is under obligation to put all property acquired under restrictive covenants in favour of the National Trust. It now owns farms (managed on its behalf by a local Chartered Land Agent) at Skelwith Fold, at Nether Wasdale (Gill and Buckbarrow) at Buttermere (Rannerdale), in Ennerdale (Mireside) in long Sleddale (Stockdale) and in the Duddon Valley (High and Low Wallabarrow and Pannel Holme.)

Its Capital at present consists of about £8,000 on Shares and £8,800 on Debentures ; more is required, either on Debenture (at 2 per cent p.a. or without interest) or in Shares (paying so far 3 per cent. p.a. dividends limited by constitution to 5 per cent, p.a.) so that further properties may be acquired and managed in accordance with the objects.

The Committee of Management (elective : honorary) includes representatives of the National Trust, the C.P.R.E. and the Friends of the Lake District. The following Fell and Rock members are on this Committee Sir William Ashcroft, R. S. T. Chorley, R. B. Graham, A. B. Hargreaves, H. H. Symonds.

Further particulars may be obtained from :—

The Secretary C/o Arnold Greenwood and Son, Solicitors, Kendal.  
or The Vice-Chairman, H. H. Symonds, Pennington House, Near Ulverston.

N.F.

Anon

Four months ago  
You died. Though I accept the fact  
I can't believe in it ; it's natural  
Still to include you in plans, to think next Easter  
We'll come here with you, as we should have come  
Last. That chance went by, and now  
You'll not climb here again.  
Something's missing for good now  
From our life, something  
To grow old with happily  
As the years passed, and hours  
Grew calmer, less needing to be snatched at.  
To say *I miss you* is meaningless ;  
But I've come through the storm  
And where each ridge and gully was your friend,  
I stand imagining the good design  
For ever incomplete.

Up there you fell—  
No use to ask what happened ; no use to wonder  
If you felt sudden anger, or surprise,  
Or even a shock of fear, or only knew  
A jerk, a fainting exhilaration of speed,  
A painless blow, and light.  
You fell ; you've gone somehow, leaving us  
The broken ruin of your body (that  
Which we knew supple, hard, reliable)  
And some possessions—books, maps,  
Climbing gear—which we use thankfully,  
Remembering you, and how you stood  
One day, and what you said  
While tea was making, and that you were  
Always as sure and true as the hills' selves.

I shall go back  
To that different life into which  
You sometimes came ; but for a long time yet  
I shall expect to meet you on the dark  
Road by Mirehouse, or see you knitting  
Vigorously in the cold dining room  
At Dungeon Ghyll, or fill your cup  
When you arrive from Carlisle hot and tired,  
And talk with you of good far places  
Where in some happier season we may go.



And always, I believe,  
 When—on whatever errand—I approach  
 The sixth milestone towards Windermere,  
 Or the tall birch past Rosthwaite, or  
 The gap behind the Arrowhead,  
 I shall be seized with a certain numb surprise  
 That if I turn my head I cannot see you.

There wasn't much  
 That I could ever give you—only love  
 For your friend, and for the hills you loved  
 And rocks—and I suppose  
 This winter-offering of words  
 Would only half amuse you, if you lived,  
 And, if now somehow you're aware of it,  
 Will not come very near you.  
 But, while I stand here  
 Below the snow-streaked crag on which you died,  
 I send you thanks  
 For all the days I knew you, for your friendly  
 Acceptance of me, your encouragement,  
 For your steady, calm example, for  
 Your presence, strong and homely as an oak tree.  
 Good-bye. You were good to know.

*Allt a' Mhuilinn, January, 1945.*



## CLIMBS, OLD AND NEW

*Wm. Peascod*

### ENNERDALE

GABLE CRAG 130 feet. Severe. The climb lies on the isolated buttress nearest to Windy Gap, and starts at a cairn at the right-hand end of the buttress.  
WINDY RIDGE

1st ascent : A.R.D., C. Smith, J. Skinner. 7th September, 1944.

- (1) 15 feet. Climb an open grassy groove to a good belay.
- (2) 30 feet. The steep wall on the right of the belay is ascended with difficulty to a very sloping ledge. Belay on a broken ledge on the right.
- (3) 40 feet. A slightly overhanging groove immediately above the sloping ledge is ascended (loose holds being avoided). Scrambling follows for a few feet to a belay for line.
- (4) 45 feet. The slab above the belay is climbed from right to left, again some holds are doubtful.  
25 feet of scrambling finishes the climb and the buttress is easily left at this point by following a grassy terrace to the left to where it gives on to the scree.

KIRK FELL 1st ascent 10th April, 1944. L.K., J.E.B.,  
KIRK FELL GHYLL C.F.D. A further visit was made on 30th May, 1944 by L.K., C.F.D. and B.G. in order to make the following notes. The climb starts from the point where the ghyll would be crossed en route for Boat Howe via the top of Black Sail. Circa 700 feet, including 400 feet of scrambling. Very difficult. Care needed on account of doubtful rock at one or two points. Leader needs 60 feet of rope. Scrambling, mainly on the left of the ghyll, for 150 feet is followed by a short wall on the left to the foot of the first pitch.

- (1) 50 feet. Belay on right. An ascending traverse of the wall on the left leads to a grassy groove which is climbed to a stance and belay on the left.
- (2) 80 feet of scrambling to the foot of the waterfall. Belay on left.
- (3) 30 feet. Climb steep broken blocks on the right and traverse to top of chockstone. This pitch needs care on account of doubtful rock and can be avoided on the left. Chockstone belay below mountain ash.
- (4) 40 feet of scrambling leads to a deep pool, followed by the ascent of grass to a shelf on the left. Small belay high up.
- (5) 60 feet. A descending traverse to the right to the foot of the waterfall, which is ascended on adequate holds to stance and belay on the left. The difficulty of this pitch will vary with the quantity of water present.
- (6) 15 feet. Climb continuation of waterfall and over chockstones. Belay.
- (7) 80 feet. Scramble up ghyll to foot of impossible groove. Climb steep grass on right, traverse on grassy ledges, and regain bed of ghyll.
- (8) 40 feet. Cross poo! to boulder, step up wall on left, traverse right for 15 feet, step down to regain bed of ghyll, and climb ghyll to stance and belay. This traverse is delicate.

- (9) 25 feet. Climb very difficult crack on the left, identifiable by thin column of water, on small sloping holds, to stance and belay on the left. A good handhold is found in the right-hand crack about halfway up.

130 feet of scrambling follows, interspersed by mossy slabs at an easy angle.

The ghyll may be followed to its source between the twin summits of Kirk Fell or alternatively may be quitted and the scree strewn fellside traversed back to the top of Black Sail.

## WASDALE

- OVERBECK** An interesting and possibly new little climb on the buttress between *E* and *C* Chimneys was done by D.W.J. and J. Wilkinson, 22nd July, 1944. The climb is mild severe with the last pitch very severe. Start immediately to the right of the foot of *E*. Traverse a mantelshelf from left to right and climb the arfite to the first stance in *C*. Traverse the wall to the left under a large triangular overhang to the stance in *E*. Ascend *E* for 3 feet then traverse back to the right above the overhang and climb directly up the middle of the very steep wall on improving holds to the top of the buttress. (The last pitch was done on a rope).

## LANGDALE

- SKEW GHYLL CRAGS** These crags are on the Styhead side of Great End, and are easily reached from the beginning of the Corridor Route. The climb commences from a cairn built at the bottom of a scoop between a large grass glacis and a grass gully. 1st ascent 22nd October, 1944. R. J. Birkett, C.R.W., L.M.

**REUNION CLIMB** Very difficult. 165 feet.

- (1) 30 feet. From cairn bear slightly right and ascend wall to corner with belay on right wall.
- (2) 45 feet. Traverse left across top of scoop, then up steep slab for 30 feet to awkward stance and flake belay.
- (3) 90 feet. Climb slab above belay, make an upward traverse to right until foot of groove is reached. This is climbed to top of crag. Belays.

**GORDIAN KNOTT** Second ascent 26th September, 1944. R. J. Birkett, T.H.

**COPT HOWE** This hill is a lower eminence of Silver Howe, and is approximately 750 feet high. Half-a-mile up the dale beyond Chapel Stile, the open Fell meets the road. Climbing the Fell for 300 feet a cliff is encountered. To the left of a holly bush is a 15 foot corner (moderately difficult) leading to a wide grassy ledge. Above this is 50 feet of Slabs (moderate or difficult according to route taken); then 20 feet of scrambling to tumbled blocks. Now, traversing the Fell for some 50 yards and ascending slightly, the foot of a 50 foot rock Face is encountered which gives good climbing (moderate) to the top of Copt Howe. First ascent T.F.O., F.S.A.

## UPPER ESKDALE

ESK BUTTRESS 700 feet. Very severe. Rubbers. Start: at the left side of the main buttress, at the foot of a subsidiary rib (cairn) and some 120 feet below a

large grass ledge. First ascent 23rd July, 1944. J. R. Birkett, T.H., G. Dwyer.

- (1) 120 feet. Moderate climbing to the large grass ledge.
- (2) 80 feet. Traverse over grass to the right hand edge of the ledge, small cairn and belay.
- (3) 20 feet. Climb the wall on to a rib and into a corner.
- (4) 25 feet. Keep moving right round another corner and on to a slightly higher ledge, then traverse to the foot of a steep wall. Belay.
- (5) 60 feet. Start up the right hand side of the wall and at about 15 feet traverse left a few feet then straight up on good holds to a grass ledge. Good belay on a rock ledge 6 feet above the grass ledge.
- (6) 55 feet. 'The Red Wall.' From the grass ledge traverse right a few feet then climb the steep wall, on to the rib on the right ; this move on to the rib is made from below an overhang and is delicate and exposed. From the rib ascend steep but easier rocks to a grass ledge. Good belay.
- (7) 45 feet. Up the short crack above. Traverse along a juniper ledge to a large rock ledge with good belay above.
- (8) 40 feet. Descend the chimney below for 10 feet then traverse right on good holds to a prominent block.
- (9) 45 feet. The Abseil. A loop is arranged round a knob of rock some 10 feet to the right of the block. A 40 feet abseil is made from here, bearing slightly right and over a steep bulge, landing in a grassy corner immediately at the bottom left, of a steep slabby wall.
- (10) 85 feet. The wall is ascended starting a few feet to the right of an angular corner, the pitch inclines to the right till the overhang is reached. This is climbed direct on adequate holds. Belay on a small grassy ledge above.
- (11) 40 feet. Straight up rather broken rock for 20 feet, then an upward traverse right leads into a large grassy corner. Belay 6 feet above.
- (12) 35 feet. The wall above is ascended, some 20 feet and to the right a conspicuous cube of rock is reached, a difficult step is then taken to the right then up into a corner. A 5 feet traverse (delicate) left leads to the top of the pitch and at the foot of a V-chimney on *Bower's climb*. Good belay. (This pitch appears to be Kirkus' variation of *Bower's climb*).
- (13) 30 feet. Pitch 7 of *Bower's climb*.
- (14) 60 feet. Pitch 8 of *Bower's climb*.

ESK BUTTRESS 2nd ascent 6th August, 1944. G. Dwyer  
GIRDLE J. App Hughes.

ESK BUTTRESS 410 feet. Very severe, rubbers. First ascent  
THE SERPENT ROUTE 13th August, 1944. R. J. Birkett, T.H. A wall (overhanging in places) leads down from the foot of the Esk chimney (left wall of left chimney). The climb can be identified by following this wall down almost to the toe of the buttress, cairn.

- (1) 40 feet. The route goes up a slabby ledge and then up a broken groove to a fine belay.

- (2) 80 feet. Climb the rocks above the belay, very severe for 45 feet, **the** angle then eases, over grass for 35 feet to a large belay.
- (3) 35 feet. Up to the overhang above the belay, then make a very difficult step to the right, up the corner and on to a mantel-shelf. Flake belay high up on the left.
- (4) 25 feet. The crack which slopes diagonally right is followed until it is possible to step left to a rock ledge, easier rocks above lead to a stance and belay.
- (5) 100 feet. Climb the rib slightly to the left to a point quite close to the crack on Bower's route, then bear right up very steep rock to a ledge with a belay to the right of the steep corner.
- (6) 40 feet.
- (7) 30 feet.
- (8) 60 feet. Finish as for the Girdle.

ESK BUTTRESS 225 feet. Very difficult. Boots. First ascent 17th September, 1944. R. J. Birkett, T. H. The climb follows the rib on the right-hand side of the left

Esk Chimney.

- (1) 90 feet. Up the rib, steep at first but eases at 50 feet when easier climbing leads to a stance and belay where the rib steepens again.
- (2) 40 feet. From the belay climb straight up to a juniper ledge 40 feet above. Small belay high up.
- (3) 25 feet. Steep rock climbed slightly right to another juniper ledge. Block belay a few feet to the left.
- (4) 40 feet. A steep groove at the right-hand end of the ledge is climbed to a small stance with a perfect flake belay.
- (5) 30 feet. Climb the obvious groove to the overhanging blocks which are climbed on the right (good holds) finish on a boulder-strewn ledge.

Scrambling leads to the top of the buttress.

ESK BUTTRESS 330 feet. Severe. First ascent 10th September, 1944. R. J. Birkett, T.H. To the left of the

FRUSTRATION central pillar is a deeply cut chimney. The climb starts directly below the chimney at a cairn.

- (1) 45 feet. Steep rocks are climbed to the foot of the chimney. Belay low down on the left.
- (2) 55 feet. Climb the chimney until it is possible to step left to a good ledge and belay.
- (3) 55 feet. The rock above is climbed starting at the right and working leftwards until a grass ledge is reached, a few feet higher is a rock stance and belay.
- (4) 30 feet. Up over rock and grass to a juniper bush. Belay in the corner just to the right.
- (5) 20 feet. A step up and to the right on to a rock gangway which leads back leftwards to a belay at the foot of a steep crack.
- (6) 20 feet. Down a rock staircase and to the left for 10 feet, then round the corner to the left and down again to a grass ledge and belay.
- (7) 40 feet. A grassy, heathery ledge leads leftwards to a rock pinnacle which is dangerously loose. Traverse well below the pinnacle and then round the corner into a shallow grassy chimney. A few feet up the chimney is a bilberry ledge and belay.
- (8) 25 feet. A rising traverse left leads in 25 feet to a bilberry ledge with a juniper belay.
- (9) 40 feet. Up a crack for a few feet until level with the top of a small pinnacle on the left, from here traverse right for 10 feet, then straight up to the top of the crag via a small mantelshelf.

## BORROWDALE

SYBARITE ROUTE 100 feet. Severe. Leader needs 80 feet of rope.

*Situation* : The climb lies up the small buttress 40 yards left of the Bowderstone Road and 150 yards beyond the gate as approached from the Keswick end. The buttress is topped by a fine fir tree.

*Start* : By the sycamore tree in centre of crag and immediately below fir tree. Cairn. A good climb on sound, dry rock, full exposure for size of crag, and of even standard throughout.

- (1) 40 feet. The steep wall is climbed on good holds to a niche, then up by corner to excellent stance and large belay.
- (2) 60 feet. From stance bear slightly right, then left, working up to rib on left, which is climbed on good incut holds.  
Belay directly above climb and below fir tree.

The above description kindly supplied by T. E. Dutton suggests that this climb coincides with an unrecorded route on the crag made by B. Beetham several years ago.

## BUTTERMERE

GREY CRAGS 75 feet. Moderate. Rope 60 feet. A pleasant  
CROZIER RIB scramble. 1st ascent, 30th July, 1944. E.B.M.,

E.J. *Start* : at the foot of a conspicuous rib about 30 yards to the right of *Bishop's Arête*. The rib is the last continuous stretch of rock at this end of the crags.

- (1) 25 feet. A small nose is climbed direct and the rib above followed to a stance and belay.
- (2) 50 feet. The rib is followed keeping to its crest until the last block which is climbed on its left face.

## THIRLMERE

CASTLE ROCK OF 225 feet. Severe (mild) This route traverses  
TRIERMAIN the southern crag starting at the wall to the right  
SOUTHERN TRAVERSE of the foot of No-Name, and finishing up the wall  
to the left of the finish of Scoop and Crack. The  
route is very pleasant with good situations. 1st ascent 22nd April, 1944.  
E.B.M., W.P.

- (1) 25 feet. A rising traverse left crossing No-Name to a stance behind a holly tree.
- (2) 35 feet. Cross the top of the slab, delicate, and the ribs on the left to a small rock ledge and pointed belay on a steep wall.
- (3) 40 feet. A descending traverse on rough slabs to the yew tree on the climb of that name.
- (4) 15 feet. Descend to a rock ledge and flake belay on the left of a slabby scoop.
- (5) 60 feet. Traverse delicately left, then down a short incipient crack. Continue the traverse crossing the Direct Route and finishing with a semi-hand traverse to a small stance and belay.
- (6) 70 feet. Straight up the wall above to the second of two narrow ledges, then traverse left to the top of a corner. Large ledge and tree belays.
- (7) 20 feet. The wall above.

## CONISTON

BLIND TARN CRAG 140 feet. Very Severe. The climb is on the, 'CINDERELLA' crag above Blind Tarn some ½ mile south of Dow Crag. Starts at a cairn at the toe of the buttress. 1st ascent R. J. Birkett, T.H.

- (1) 20 feet. From the toe of the buttress climb diagonally left to a perched block. Stance and belay.
- (2) 45 feet. The slab above is climbed bearing slightly left until it is possible to step left to a sentry box and belay.
- (3) 25 feet. Exit from sentry box by way of a very steep rib on the right, climb this for 8 feet when it is possible to make a very long stride to the left to a horizontal rock ledge which is followed to a belay at the foot of a steep crack.
- (4) 15 feet. Up the crack.
- (5) 35 feet. Easier climbing up a rib leads to the top of the crag.

## KEY TO INITIALS

F. S. Airey	J. E. Blackshaw
C. F. Dee	A. R. Dolphin
B. Greaves	T. Hill
Miss E. Jenkins	D. W. Jackson
Miss L. Kellett	E. B. Mendus
T. F. Oldham	Wm. Peascod
C. R. Wilson	L. Muscroft

(Non-members names are given in full in text.)

## NOTES.

A variation to the second pitch of the *Buttonhook Route*, Kern Knotts, was made by Jack Greenwood and J. Ball on 12th April, 1944. They ascended the ordinary route to the pedestal at the top of pitch 1 but instead of following the 2nd pitch to the left, traversed along the crack, above the pedestal, to the right and so to the sentry box on *Kern Knotts Crack*. Stepping back to the left from the Crack they ascended the wall to the pinnacle on the edge of the buttress at the top of the 2nd pitch of the *Buttonhook*. The ascent of the wall as given is part of *Kern Knotts Chain*.

The pitch is classified as severe.

Notes on 'Sector,' Pikes Crag, by J. R. Cottrill.

"re pitch 10 of *Sector*. The original account in the 1940 Journal, page 406, says 'Descend into a dirty corner to a point where a convenient line of holds enables the rather smooth slab to be crossed.' No line of holds which could be called convenient could be found, nor indeed any passage. An upper traverse was therefore taken at a level about 3 or 4 feet above the belay at the end of pitch 9. This has an interesting swing on a handhold in the middle of the slabs so that a distant low foothold can be reached. Rock and grass lead to quite a good belay a little higher in the grassy corner. From here pitch 11 follows much as described."

The above notes refer to an ascent on May 28th, 1944 with D. C. Ritson (Rucksack Club.)

The classification of *Sector* is given as 'somewhere between *Woodhead's* and *Upper West Wall Climb*.'

The same party also visited Birkness Coombe and climbed, amongst other things, *Suaviter*. This may be the 2nd ascent of this little climb. It was thought to be slightly harder than *Oxford and Cambridge Direct*.

*The Citadel*, Pikes Crag, was ascended, presumably for the 2nd time, by the writer and Lyna Kellett, on Whit Sunday, 1944. The crux of the climb, a short steep, crack was overcome without resorting to combined tactics. This crack may be one of the places where the short man definitely has the advantage over his taller companion.

It was found that whilst purchase could be had on the lip of the small overhang on the right wall—the left leg working in the crack—it was very difficult to straighten out the left leg because of a bulge on the left wall. For a climber with long legs this straightening out process would be increasingly difficult. A very strenuous ascent of the crack then follows, utilising a handhold on a chockstone in the crack and, when reached, a small sharp handhold high on the right. The left leg is jammed where ever it can be in the crack and the right foot flails the walls to the right of the climber and behind him. Up to the end of pitch 6 on *Citadel* the climbing is both steep and good ; from here it becomes more broken and vegetation covered and veers off to the right. If it were possible to continue the ridge above the belay at the end of pitch 6 the former steepness and high quality would undoubtedly be maintained to the top of the crag.

*Jacob's Ladder*, Deep Ghyll on Scafell, is a route with considerable character. The climbing is continuously steep with good ledges and belays. It follows an obvious line up the steep right hand bounding ridge of the *Great Chimney*. The 3rd pitch, a vertical crack in a corner, will give food for thought when wet, and the 5th pitch, a steep wall, gives a delightful zig-zag traverse on adequate hand holds but not such satisfying footholds. The views out on to the Pinnacle add further enjoyment to this pleasant route. The standard of difficulty of the climb is thought to be about the same as *Jones' from Lord's Rake* though not as exposed as this latter.

Those who have enjoyed the friendliness of the South Crag of Castle Rock of Triermain may be interested to know that a girdle traverse, led by E. Banner Mendus, was made in April, 1944. The route, the longest on this face, gives some very interesting situations for a crag of such size. It is pleasantly severe and is to be highly recommended. The second traverse was made three weeks later.

The fine batch of new climbs led by R. J. Birkett arrived too late for detailed comment in the Notes.

W.P.



## THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

Mary Cockerton

The year 1944 will go down in the annals of Club History as the year of birth of Raw Head Hut. This important event has been the hub of all activity and the constant and persistent hum running through the buzz of conversation at meets. The story of this healthy infant's first year is told elsewhere, and what follows may serve as a background to that exciting tale.

*1st-3rd January. Buttermere.* The emergency Committee Meeting was well attended. The weather was cruelly cold and wet. Rannerdale Knotts proved a tough proposition for a number of struggling people who were quite ignominiously buffeted and blasted on the ridge, and scurried before the wind on their return to the village and the celebrated Buttermere teas. The hardy annuals went to Pillar and introduced two novices to the monarch's icy holds. The weary trudge homewards in the dusk made the warm firelight and evening meal doubly welcome. T.R.B. succeeded in lighting the inevitable camp fire with soaking wet wood in the disused hut on Fleetwith. There were many holes in roof and walls and the smoke, bullied by the wind, failed to escape by any one of them, so that the assembled company crowding round the defiantly spluttering flames to warm their icy fingers were reduced to chanting tearfully 'Smoke gets in your eyes'. We didn't have smoked salmon for lunch, but it was definitely smoked something. Once outside on the ridge the tune changed to 'Blow, blow thou winter wind, thou art not so unkind as Burnett's smoky fires!' Here let it be said in fairness to the stoker, many are the times his fires have been enjoyed in fair weather and foul by his faithful followers. Our journey from the valley was a complicated business of mountain traverse and lifts to Keswick; the secret valley is very lovely and desirable, but almost unattainable at present.

*11th-12th March. Langdale.* About twenty members came to Dungeon Ghyll and were made welcome by Mr and Mrs Bulman. Minor expeditions only were undertaken owing to the lack of time, energy and inviting weather. There was a considerable amount of 'hut talk' and plans for improvement were taking shape. The Pikes looked truly magnificent through breaks in the storm clouds.

*1th-12th April. Wasdale.* The Easter Meet brought about a dozen members to the hotel, and the same to Brackenclouse. Climbs were done in variable weather on the Napes and Pillar and Scafell. Unfortunately a cloud was cast over the Meet by the fatal accident to Miss Winch who fell from *West Wall Traverse*. There was a cosy atmosphere in the smokeroom and of course G.B. was there

with his evergreen ' teals of Cumberlan,' causing merry chuckles and twinkling eyes. Esk Hause was the main escape route for unwilling travellers from that happy mecca of climbers. Threatening clouds were only just avoided and later came tumbling in waterfalls down the windows of the 'bus on its way down Langdale.

*lith May. Brackenclose. 21th—29th May. Borrowdale.* Whitsuntide is cuckoo time in Borrowdale, and camping time and chatting time and chanting time. New songs creep into the repertoire and if the music fits you can sing, if it doesn't, well you just chant the words anyway and everyone's happy. The President has his shirt sleeves rolled up, the poker baton is in evidence, there is a golden sunset glow on our cheeks and on the fir trees against a clear sky ; we've had a dip in that cold, clear green pool in the ghyll on our way down the mountain, and enjoyed a good supper. The Jopsons' unflinching hospitality envelops us and Thorneythwaite casts a spell over us so that we're happy even in the absence of so many who would like to be there, for surely they know we are thinking of them and looking for the day when they will be with us again. Glaramara and Allen Craggs were favourites as usual, also Gillercombe and of course Gable. The Committee heard good news of the developments at Raw Head.

*24th—25th June. Eskdale.* After tea on Saturday ' the meet ' walked over in a party (of one) to Brackenclose, where a few members were found and a suitable entry made in the Visitor's Book. Sunday was spent scrambling on Scafell. The railway timetable and a late start left no opportunity for serious climbing, but a couple of hikers marooned on Broad Stand were roped down the ' big step ' and shepherded round the corner to ' fat man's agony,' to their evident satisfaction and in belated justification of the rope which ' the meet ' had seen fit to carry around all morning like a chain of office. The weather, although mostly dull, was fine throughout the weekend and, just before leaving the valley, the sun was shining brilliantly from a cloudless sky.

*5th—1th August. Brackenclose.* A lovely hot weekend ; warm rocks and cool pools. About six people came to Wasdale and several climbs were done. Some fell by the wayside in Langdale, lured by the apparent friendliness of Raw Head, and put up for the night en route from Windermere to Brackenclose. Next day they found themselves entangled with working parties hammering and plastering and toiling half naked in the heat of a real summer's day. Three of the ' workers ' took a day off on Sunday and enjoyed frequent dips in a ghyll under Blisco ; true bliss, this.

•C.E.F. Dee.

*26th August. Ambleside.* Committee Meeting. Preparing for Annual General Meeting, and much talk of Raw Head.

*30th September. Windermere. Annual General Meeting.* **Our** new President, Graham Wilson, had a warm welcome from the forty-eight members present. F. Lawson Cook (the retiring President) and other officers were gracefully thanked for their labours by T. R. Burnett: special reference being made to A. B. Hargreaves who had given up the Treasurership on medical advice, having put in a tremendous amount of hard work on the Club's finances, and kept a weather eye on Government moves *re* National Parks, for which the Club ought to be profoundly thankful.

*1st October. Raw Head.* Official Opening Ceremony. *6th—11th October. Brackenclose.* *2nd—3rd December. Raw Head* First Meet.

We look forward with confidence to another year of useful activity. We who come to the mountains should learn to recognise the real happiness which springs from associating with the higher things of life, and which can be constantly expressed through the medium of individuals.

## IN MEMORIAM

THE REV WILLIAM THORBURN ELMSLIE 1921—1945

The Rev. W. T. Elmslie who was killed in an 'incident' in February, 1945, leaving a widow and two children came up from Birkenhead School to Christ's College, Cambridge in 1913. He served abroad with the Y.M.C.A. throughout the war. Then he was one of the remarkable group of students at Westminster Theological College on whom Dr. John Oman had such a profound influence. After work in unattractive spots in Lancashire and Durham, he was called to an important church in Leeds : and finally to be General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of England, where his work was vastly other than the routine office job it might easily have become.

His rock climbing began in a Wirral quarry with a clothes line. A school exercise (when about 13 years old), 'An ascent of Moel Sych,' survives to point to his love of the hills, also his remarkable eye for country. This was shown, for instance, on Jebel Serbal where with a highly inadequate map and a couple of sentences' description of earlier ascents he was triumphantly right, against his two companions. He finished his collection of the 2,000 footers of England, and, nearly, of a bathe in every Lake District tarn.

His rock climbing is assessed elsewhere, but a layman can recall the enthusiasm and care which made the Bowfell *Cambridge Climb*, or the gusto with which some revolting chimneys nearby were claimed as first ascents. The arduous conveyance of such laymen never seemed to teach him that companions might lack his skill or stamina ; indeed with him the weak were often strong and the fearful sometimes brave.

Thirty years of friendship on the hills and off them will not go into 300 words, and many of Elmslie's activities are not the special concern of the F.R.C.C. ; but his many and varied companions would agree on his skill and patience, his wide culture, sympathy and equanimity—in varied experiences over many countries in three continents I never saw him ruffled ; they learnt that to be out with him was a privilege and that firm footholds and good belays are valuable in life as on rocks. His heart was remote from his sleeve, but some knew that the Lord he so humbly and truly served was the same Lord whose voice he heard in the sound of many waters and whose majesty he saw on a thousand hills.

A. ST. G. WALSH

## N. FORSYTH 1935 — 1944

Nancy Forsyth was a fine climber and a splendid companion on the hills, very tall, with a swinging stride and beautiful balance. She had a keen sense of humour, and we have laughed our way up and down rocks and over 'Munros' for ten glorious years. We first climbed together on Pavey Ark at the April Meet in 1934 with C. Stuart, K. Ward and J. Brady. In those days the Dumfries car often flashed along Dr. Burnett's quick route to the Lakeland valleys. What grand Sundays we had. Our last climb together was also on Pavey Ark on August 26th this year. The following weekend a fatal accident on Ben Nevis ended a very fine climbing career for Nancy Forsyth and her companion Brian Kellett.

We usually led alternate pitches and had a most ingenious and effective system of combined tactics. We preferred not to stand on each other if possible, as Joan Tebbutt found. She proved a willing victim and placed a strong shoulder under our nailed boots. We three had many successful adventures in the lesser known districts. In April, 1938, we tried to find the Stepped Ridge on Slioch. We spent too long sun-bathing on the shore of Loch Maree and the 'well-marked cairn' at the start of the climb seemed to have vanished, but we found some interesting pitches—Joan was very useful and we had to make a hurried finish on to the summit in the dusk. Our attempt at the Coolin Ridge was not so successful. We had sixteen hours of sunshine as we wandered up and down the winding ridge. At sunset thick mist swirled around us and we spent a very black night sitting in the rain somewhere near the Tearlach-Dubh Gap, sipping Drambuie.

If it were 'all a matter of reach' Nancy would swing up easily, she loved 'the perilous cleanness of height.' But when we came to narrow chimneys, through routes and small exits up I had to go, receiving great encouragement from below. How pleased I was when the rest of the party had to struggle up a difficult outside route.

We shared the rocks as equals, but there was no doubt who was the leader on mountain expeditions. Nancy was a map-reader 'par excellence,' and an expert in mist with the compass. I can see her now, leaning to the gale, with balaclava and wind jacket encrusted with ice, flinging down the ice-axe and bringing out the compass, while I fished the map out of the front of my tightly zipped coat. It was grand striding down a long heathery glen in the winter twilight when it was almost impossible to see the shadowy figure in front. Sometimes she would wait, if there were a difficult side burn to cross, to help short legs to do a long jump. Suddenly, there would be a cry "Here's the road" or "Here are the bikes, we've got

flat tyres " and it would be a case of pump and pedal down the dark glen. It is hard to pick out special days, they were all good. When I could not join the party Nancy sent vivid detailed descriptions of her expeditions. She kept a climbing diary and it is fine to read it now for a few lines bring back a whole chain of incidents. Slabs and chimneys, walls and cracks, chockstones and bulges, blizzards and bathing pools, long trudges up scree and flying glissades—often involuntary sitting ones—all the things that go to make up companionable days on the hills.

Nancy was a committee member of the Ladies Scottish Climbing Club and the Pinnacle Club. She visited the Pinnacle Club Hut in Cwm Dyli several times before the war and she had one or two seasons in the Alps. Unfortunately bad weather and the outbreak of war cut short a good programme at Chamonix. With J. H. Bell and B. Kellett she did some good first ascents on Lochnagar and Ben Nevis.

The last weekend Nancy was down we stayed at Raw Head. What a cosy evening we had drinking Ovaltine in the parlour with L. W. Somervell, T. R. Burnett and J. A. Kenyon. On Sunday we went to Gimmer to meet Joan Tebbutt, but the rain came down so we crossed to Pavey Ark, did the Great Gully and got down early. After tea, we parted at the top of Red Bank and Nancy cycled off to Carlisle in the pouring rain as she had so often done before.

Nancy was a fine mountaineer at the peak of her strength. She will never know the sadness of failing powers. She will not see the inviting crags and be unable to clasp them, nor look up at the black crest against the blue sky and be unable to reach it. This is the only philosophy for those who are left, but it is poor comfort. ' Dear, quiet, steady, reliable Nancy.'

N. RIDYARD

#### C. D. YEOMANS 1908 — 1944

There is much evidence to show that C. D. Yeomans was indeed a great lover of the fells. He joined the Club in 1908 and was a regular visitor to the Lakes before and since that date. He first climbed ' Pillar' in 1895. He was a very active member of the Derbyshire Pennine Club and past President and Secretary up to the time of his death. As Honorary Financial Secretary of the National Trust's Longshaw Estate Management Committee he did a lot of good work and in 1936-37 raised £7,000 for the Surprise View Appeal Fund.

Many Sheffield climbing parties were introduced to our district by him and what jolly parties they were ! ' Doug,' as his friends

always called him, was the born joker. There was the famous incident when he collected pennies from a charabanc party in Wasdale for opening a gate. Hat in hand and a disreputable appearance proved irresistible.

There are many farms he never passed without calling and one could be sure of ringing laughter before he left.. To think of his jousts with those jolly ladies the Mrs. Whiting and Mrs. Harris brings back pleasant memories of strenuous days and merry evenings.

It was a great pleasure to him when the Club made him an Honorary Member ; an honour well deserved for consistent love and service over a long number of years.

The writer spent an evening with C.D. only 8 months before he died and though obviously frail he seemed to enjoy the talk about old climbing days. No one could visit his Sheffield home and be in any doubt about where his interests lay for it contained a wonderful panorama of the finest Lakeland views.

W. G. MILLIGAN

DR JOHN J. BRIGG, J.P., L.L.D. 1914-1945

John Brigg, who was born in 1862 and who died on February 1st this year was the eldest surviving son of the late Sir John Brigg, M.P., etc., of Kildwick Hall, near Keighley in the West Riding of Yorkshire. His twin brother, William Anderton Brigg, also a mountaineer, died a few years ago. Both brothers were original members of the *Yorkshire Ramblers' Club*, joined the *Alpine Club* in 1894 and were members of the *Fell and Rock Club* since 1914. The lives of the brothers were very closely knit, both in the sphere of their public work in the West Riding and in their mountaineering. John Brigg played a considerable part in the educational world locally. He was both Chairman of the Magistrates for many years and also Chairman of the Governors of two important Skipton Schools. He received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws at Leeds University in 1936. His interests were wide, including a membership of the Bronte Society, and a genuine passion for all antiquarian matters. It is fitting here to mention that some years ago he and his brother William purchased the fine mediaeval hall of East Riddlesden, near his home and gave it to the National Trust.

He wrote to me only a short while before his death . . . ' I began to climb in 1891 at Wasdale, and there of course I was a junior to such big wigs as Robinson, C. E. Matthews, Solly, the Hopkinsons, Pilkingtons, your Father, etc' He and his brother were climbing in the Alps from 1891 for at least twenty four years, sometimes

with guides, but more often with the late Eric Greenwood, Alfred Holmes, Hastings, Haskett-Smith and Slingsby

He remained active in mind and body till the end, a tremendous lover of his native hills and of all open air life. He was at all times and throughout my life and memory a charming and rather original host and friend.

ELEANOR WINTHROP YOUNG

WILLIAM TAYLOR-JONES 1927 — 1943

During the Whitsuntide of 1927, when a Fell and Rock party was staying at the Scafell at Rosthwaite, there came into the room a man and wife, who immediately attracted my attention by bringing out the most battered and rain-soaked *Baddeley* that I ever saw. The man turned out to be 'T.J.' a Manchester solicitor. They were evidently keen hill-walkers and at the suggestion of our party they joined the Club in the same year. Since then I believe they have attended every Whitsun meet at Rosthwaite and every dinner at Windermere. They were always excellent companions on the fells, ready for any hill at any distance. They were very interested members, and after she unfortunately lost her husband about the end of 1943 Mrs T. J. told me the Club had provided many of the happiest memories of their lives.

H. E. SCOTT

c. G. BULL 1943

R. L. COULTHARD 1944

E. CHARLTON 1919 — 1944

NORMAN DALEY, R.T.C. 1939 — 1944

*Killed in action in Italy in May 1944*

M.H.DONALD 1930 — 1944

COMMANDER DUNCAN, R.N. 1940— 1944

J. GRAHAM 1919 — 1944

CHARLES HARGREAVES 1937 — 1944

W. INGALL 1926 — 1944

C. B. JAMES, R.A.F. 1939 — 1944 *Killed in action at Tripoli*

j. c. w. HAWKINS 1939 — 1940 *Killed in action at Dunkirk*

w. D. LITT 1913 — 1944

R. E. SARGENT 1943 — 1944

MISS J. ORR-EWING 1933 — 1944

MISS H. C. M. WINCH 1934 — 1944



## EDITOR'S NOTES

Since these will be my last Editor's Notes, I should like to begin by saying 'thank you' to all those members who have given their help to the *Journal* in one way or another during these difficult war years. In particular, I want to thank Molly FitzGibbon for the pains she has taken over the Reviews and for a happy comradeship of combined efforts ; then Bill Peascod for his invaluable advice on the 'climbing side' and Gerald Lacey for his help with the illustrations ; and lastly but assuredly not least, George Anderson who took that thankless task the making of the index off my hands in the last number. It should be noted here that his name was omitted by error as the author of the In Memoriam notice of Darwin Leighton in the last number.

Tailpieces are again by Joan Tebbutt ; I am grateful for her patience in producing and discussing them.

During the past year, the outstanding event in the mountaineering world has been the formation, under the auspices of the Alpine Club, of a British Mountaineering Council. This Council may be roughly described as a federation of affiliated British Mountaineering Clubs. Its function will be to provide a clearing house for information on matters of mountaineering interest and to speak for British Mountaineering as a whole with a more authoritative voice than any one Club can command. It will act in an advisory capacity on matters affecting mountaineering contacts with the country in general and it is hoped that it will come to be the body consulted by Government Departments when mountaineering and cognate interests are in question. It is expected that it will also foster mountaineering education through the production of pamphlets, etc., and it is already in process of producing a book on technique.

I should like to draw members' attention to the pamphlet enclosed with this number which is the work of the Standing Committee on National Parks ; also A. B. Hargreaves article. "The Lake District: A National Park" may emerge from the realm of pious aspirations into the battle ground of practical politics at any time during the next few years and it behoves us all who are interested in its future both as a playground and as the home of a fine and traditional way of English life to know our stuff. The problems involved are not easy of solution but they can be solved given goodwill and determination.

Since the last issue, we have to record the deaths through climbing accidents of Nancy Forsyth and R. Coulthard. The last was a graduating member and was killed on Eagle's Nest. Our sympathy

goes out deeply to their relatives. C. G. Bull, another graduating member died on the fells during the Easter weekend. His body was found in Hollow Stones and it is likely that he was blown over during a severe gale and died either from head wounds or exposure.

Since many of us knew and liked him well and all of us know and have a warm affection for his mother, mention must be made here of the death of Waddy Eden-Smith. He was killed when his ship was torpedoed only a few months before the end of the war.

I should also like to remember Kenneth Spence who died in February, 1944. Few men have given more energy to the causes of the Lake District than he did during the years when he lived at Sawrey.

I will conclude these Notes with two letters. The first from the Custodian of Slides to which members' attention is requested, and the second which speaks for itself, from the late Rev. W. T. Elmslie.

KATHARINE C. CHO.;LEY

*To the Editor*

126 St. Andrews Road, South,  
Lytham-St. Annes.

Dear Sir,

I would like to draw the attention of members, particularly those who use the Club collection of slides, to the need for replacing the slide transit boxes. In the hands of the Railway Company's servants the best pre-war boxes are short lived, and the "war grade" edition is very flimsy. If any member has any substantial boxes which are not required I shall be pleased to accept them provided they are of the standard transit type.

It is proposed to publish a new list of slides in the Autumn and its preparation will require the withdrawal of the collection for repairs and renewals on and after April 30th. If any member has any slides of any mountain **area** or subject which he or she wishes to present to the Club for inclusion in **the** new catalogue, they will be gratefully received.

Yours faithfully,

FRANK H. F. SIMPSON,

*Custodian of Slides.*

November 28th, 1944

*The Editor of the Journal of the F. and R.C.C.*

Dear Editor,

In the 1933 issue of the Journal there appeared an article by me on 'The Two Thousand Footers of England,' with a list of 347 summits over **2,000** feet high.

Since that date I have received a number of letters from folk who were 'ticking them off,' and several suggesting that various additional summits should have been included. None of these, however, were covered by any of the four 'rules' laid down in my article; until on Midsummer Day, 1944, Mr Harry R. Preston of Hest Bank wrote to call my attention to a point about a mile east of the summit of the road from St. John's Chapel to

Allenheads. It is indicated by contours only, and is on the boundary between Durham and Northumberland. It should be included in Section VIII of my list, thus :—

" (iii) Summit above Allenheads . . . .—"

I ascended this hill on Saturday, November 25th, on my way from London to Newcastle ! After a particularly unpleasant night journey I reached Wearhead in the early morning in a steady gentle rain. The station master seemed somewhat surprised when almost the only passenger deposited with him a case, a rucksack, a hat and a neatly folded umbrella, and set off into the darkness. Some distance up the road the rain had become snow, falling with a steady persistence through the mist. The summit, however, was not difficult to locate, and I was back at the station three hours after leaving it. The train was about to depart, but I was fortunate enough to secure a carriage to myself ; and thanks to a record-breaking change of clothes the bedraggled hiker who entered the carriage at Wearhead had been transformed by St. John's Chapel into a highly respectable parson, rather sinfully proud (I fear) of having ' bagged ' the 348th two thousand footer.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM T. EMSLIE.

## CLUB NOTES

The Club now numbers (December 1944) 872 members of which 33 are Graduating. In 1944, 67 new members were elected, there were 4 resignations and the death of 9 members has to be recorded.

Congratulations to our Hon. Sec. Mary Leighton on her marriage ; she is now Mrs J. B. Cockcrton. Whilst congratulating Mary we must commiserate with ourselves, as she has felt compelled to resign the Hon. Secretaryship and we have lost an Officer who gave of her best to all and everything connected with the Club. Her place will be hard to fill.

The following births have been announced :

Lieut. and Mrs D. N. Boothroyd, a son.

**Lieut.** and Mrs G. B. Elliott, a daughter.

Mr and Mrs G. O. G. Leonard, a daughter.

Mr and Mrs G. A. Sutherland, a son.

The following additions to those serving in the forces brings the total up to 139.

Lieut. P. Bayly

Lieut. Commander G. L. Densham

2nd Lieut. G. B. Elliott

Capt. E. L. Furness

G. S. Greenhalgh

Major A. Gregory

J. Heaton

Sgn. Lieut. R. R. H. Lovell

Wing Cmdr. R. S. Peill

A. K. Rawlinson

W. E. Richardson

Capt. M. Williams

The Club has received several gifts during the past year. May we take this opportunity of thanking the following generous donors. Miss M. D. Smith £2 . 2 . 0 for First Aid kit in memory of Miss Winch.

For Brackenlose the rope, boots and ice axe belonging to the late N. Daley who was killed in action in Italy in May last. A complete First Aid outfit for Buttermere from two friends who wish to remain anonymous.

On October 1st the second club hut at Raw Head, Great Langdale was opened by Mrs Lawson Cook, wife of the President, in the presence of a gathering of about sixty members and friends.

News has been received that Waddy Eden-Smith was killed when his ship was torpedoed a few weeks ago. Many older members will remember him on the hills since he was a small boy. Our sympathy goes out to his wife and mother ; and also to the relatives of Rev. W. T. Emslie who was killed by a V Bomb whilst attending a Conference in London.

## BRACKENCLOSE

The Hut has been used even more than in the earlier years of the war. It is evidently a convenience and a comfort to members on leave from the Services, and several have used it—sometimes in happy conjunction with Raw Head—for holiday visits of a fortnight or so. The kitchen equipment is standing the strain, though the health of the Primus stoves becomes more and more uncertain. (We are grateful to J. E. Blackshaw for his untiring help with them and many other things.) There have been complaints that at busy times certain parties have done less than their share of the housework, but on the whole both members and guests have taken a hand willingly. Thanks are especially due to those who have given up half-days and days to scrubbing floors and cleaning Florences, or who have carried needed supplies over the Sty or up from the coast.

Considering the difficulty of getting food to Brackenclose it seems a pity that so much should go to feeding the mice. In spite of repeated injunctions people are still leaving food behind them in packets and open tins, or in the safe. We must have the co-operation of members in this serious matter.

An ice-axe, a rope, and a pair of boots belonging to Norman Daley, who was killed in action last May, have been given by his father to Brackenclose for the use of members. They are kept at the farm. They must be signed for when borrowed, and returned before the end of the visit. R. C. Edleston has lent his bicycle, often useful for emergency trips to Gosforth—or to the pub.

A. M. DOBSON.

## LONDON SECTION

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*Committee :*

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C. E. Arnison

H. N. Fairfield

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Mrs Milsom

Sir Leonard Pearce

R. Walker

*Hon. Sec. and Treasurer :* Mrs M. Garrod, 19 Douglas Rd., Harpenden.

*Telephone :* 230

Unfortunately we have very little to report this year. Walks have been kept going by a faithful few under the guidance of C. E. Arnison. These members and friends should be congratulated on the way they have met each month in spite of travel difficulties and buzz bombs.

The Annual Lunch was held again this year on December 9th at Brown's Hotel, 63 Members and Guests were present. We were particularly pleased to have the President of the Club with us and several other old members whom we had not seen for some years.

Dr Hadfield was in the Chair and gave a short speech followed by replies from Mr Graham Wilson and Prof. Chorley.

The Speaker Memorial Fund is still open, over £250 has been collected and we are hoping to build a packhorse bridge somewhere in the Lake District. Unfortunately it is impossible to start on any building until after the war but we continue to consider suitable places.

MARJORIE GARROD, *Hon. Secretary.*