

L. W. SOMERVELL
President 1947-1948

T H E J O U R N A L O F
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A WINTER WEEK-END

Peter Lloyd

February, 1947.

It seems in retrospect as if it had all been a question of ice—ice in many forms from the slush of the Glasgow streets to the two-dimensional crystals on the railway carriage window and the driven powder snow that scoured Ben Nevis and forced its way through every crevice into the hut. There was wind, too, throwing us off our feet as we walked up the Allt a Mhuillin glen, and making the whole train shake as it stood in the station at Bridge of Orchy, but that was intermittent while the ice, one way or another was there always.

The week-end started in London where there was slush on the pavements and the power cuts were getting more and more severe, but the Fort William train was running with its sleepers and dining car, nothing seemed to have been forgotten, and the prospect was fine. Nully was to meet me at the station next morning and, after laying in stores, we were to go straight up to the hut. The night journey went well enough in spite of the curious habits of my companion in the third-class sleeper, but at Glasgow there was an unexpected halt, for we had missed the connecting train and had to wait till afternoon for another. Here the snow was greyer even than in London save only where it lay, like a misplaced helping of white sauce, on the head and shoulders of James Watt's statue in George Square.

There followed the halting journey up into the Highlands with afternoon turning quickly to night and the stations, after we had turned north from the Clyde, becoming less and less recognisable. And quite suddenly the ice crystals which had begun to form around the windows' edge raced inwards across the glass shutting out what remained of a view and substituting their own feather and thistle pattern. One could rub them away with a warm finger, but not for long, soon though more faintly, the old pattern would come back.

There seemed no reason why the succession of lamp-lit stations should ever end, but at last came Fort William and, sure enough, Nully was on the platform. Supper had been ordered, stores bought, the hut opened up and all was provided, even a full moon, for us to go up to the hut that night. After my somnolent journey this was a sudden change of tempo—a quick meal of bacon and eggs with tea and a double rum to help it down, a flurry of packing and changing, a short ride in an inappropriately luxurious taxi, and we

were ready at the deserted distillery on the Spean Bridge road. It was ten o'clock and the moon was shining straight down our glen.

The powder snow squeaked as we trod it down and that, said Nully, proved how cold it was. But why does snow squeak and is it a question of cold? Is it the passage of the air through the interlinked crystals, or is it a vibration of the crystals themselves? We argued fruitlessly about it and found no answer. But it was certainly cold and the snow certainly did squeak; what's more, it was never quite so cold again and the snow seemed to become mute afterwards, though perhaps that was because the wind noises drowned it. Under the powder snow were occasional steps of black water ice, so slippery that no nail would grip, and it needed a sixth sense to spot them. Up along the single line railway track, then branching off at the second burn on to the heather and bilberry slopes, the soothing rhythm of the ascent gradually overcame the stimulus of the biting mountain air. There were a few interruptions as when we put up a sheep sheltering in the lee of a rock, when we crossed the burn at an ice covered pool with its needless 'No bathing' notice, and when one or other of us slipped suddenly on one of the hidden ice steps. Sometimes we talked, but for the most part we walked in silence watching the changing night landscape, but passively in a dreamlike way. And so we came to the next ice formation, the great frozen waterfall coming down from the Carn Dearg cliffs, and just beyond this on the next shelf of the valley were the dark boulder forms one of which must be the hut.

Next morning we took stock of our position. It was a grand little hut, solidly built, and with all the gear that we needed. The ever-present snow had made its way in through various cracks, but it was only in the lobby between the double doors that it lay deep. Here there was a foot-and-a-half of it which had cost Nully untold labours when he first made his way in. The windows had the accustomed frost patterns on them but laid on thick, like paint on a van Gogh canvas. We had food in plenty and fuel enough for cooking if not for heating.

Outside were the splendid Nevis cliffs, all new to me but partly veiled in snow flurries and with a high wind blowing off the crest. With conditions as they were we chose the easiest gully the guide-book had to offer and, having packed our piece and put on all possible clothes, set out. Before long the powder covering the lower slopes had changed to compacted snow lying on scree and then to something approaching a pocket glacier, fine solid cheesy stuff in which as it steepened the adze would cut a perfect step. We worked our way up into the mountain and as we climbed the wind bursts grew stronger, forcing us every now and again to lean hard

on our axes and flatten ourselves against the slope. We were on the lee side of the ridge in that unstable turbulent wake in which the wind can as well blow up as down a gully. The snow came at us in two ways, as fine wind-blown stuff ground to a powder of tiny crystals and as the heavier flakes of new snow, and watching it against the dark background of the steeper rocks we could tell its origin.

There was no difficulty, for in most of the gully the snow was perfect, and we hadn't roped. Even at the top where the angle steepened and where there might have been an overhanging cornice it was all straightforward, and soon we emerged on the summit plateau. But of view we had none, for the driving snow blotted out everything beyond a range of a hundred yards. And now we were in the full force of the gale as it came tearing up from the South-West, so it was no time to wait around. Leaning on the wind we pushed up along the line of the face, first to the well-marked head of the Tower ridge, then to the snow-plastered observatory itself.

Up to now we had been moving, and so warm, but here on the summit lurching in the supposed shelter of the observatory, fumbling with bared hands over the bread and cheese and chocolate there was a pinching cold. Maybe it was this same cold that numbed our wits, for now we went on to do two stupid things. First we decided to go down by the Carn Mòr Dearg ridge, fumbled for the map and, thinking of Bill Tilman's mishap in the same place, fumbled also for the S.M.C. guide and its rules for a foolproof descent. The wind was stronger than ever, and the compass card swung wildly from side to side making it a slow job to get a bearing. So when the ground began to fall away steeper and sooner than seemed right and when we thought again of an involuntary slither down a twisting gully into Coire Leas we prematurely gave it up, turning back to the known route and known qualities of our little gully. Walking back to the summit I noticed, what might have made all the difference in keeping our course, the arrowhead markings on the snow surface, with each arrowhead pointing faithfully up wind.

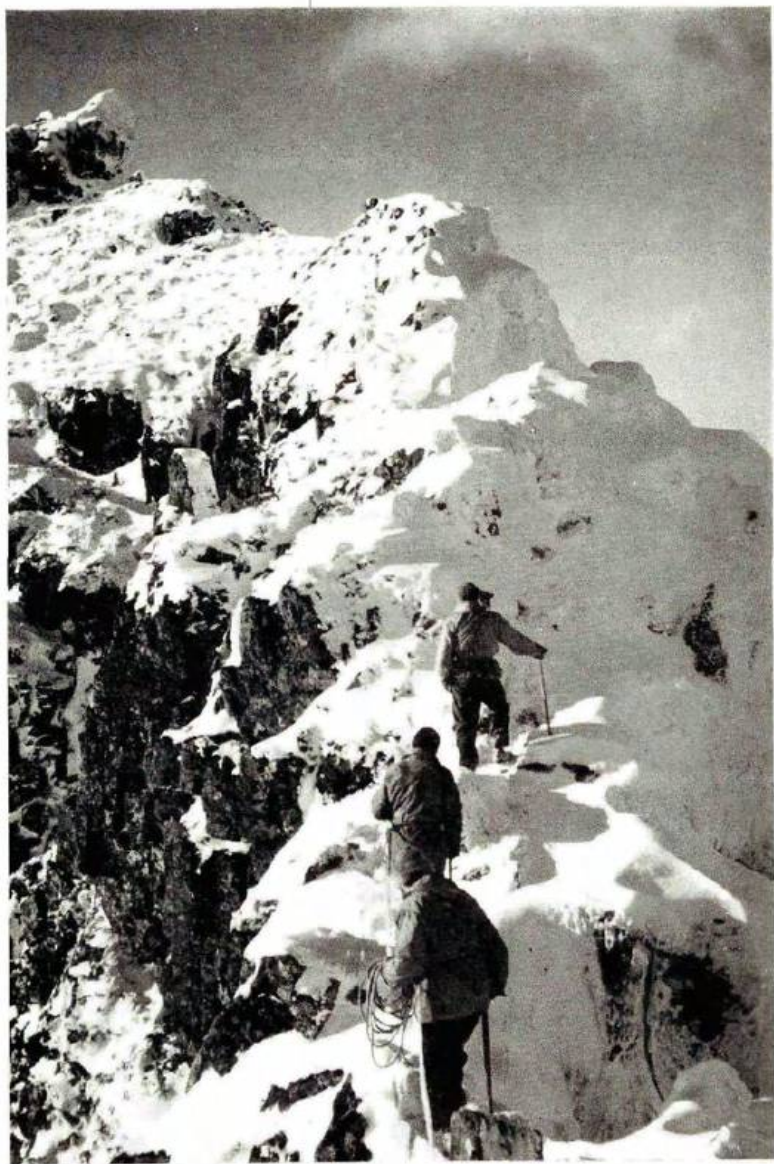
As we raced back down the ridge, with wind and gravity to help, our mounting tracks became indistinguishable in the irregular snow surface. And now we made our second and bigger mistake. We found our gully all right, roped up and started down. It too, had changed in the interval. The little cornice had changed its form, the steps which had seemed so ample when we came up seemed almost to have disappeared, and the whole rock background seemed subtly to have altered. I was doubtful whether we might not have mistaken the gully, but a quick look along the edge showed no

alternative, and the rock island dividing the steep upper snow slope was there all right. So we went on down, finding the snow surprisingly thin over underlying ice. But the differences became more and more evident and, finally, seeing that there was a sudden unclimbable step below us, we had to face up to our mistake.

Back on the ridge it all became obvious enough. A hundred and fifty yards farther along the face was the right gully, identified by many landmarks which we had thought obliterated, though the cornice had indeed grown by a yard since our ascent. But now the time was short, it was five, and we had barely an hour of twilight left. Even so, the gully was obviously preferable to a long trudge round over unknown fells.

The descent was, of course, simple enough, though the snow still had some tricks to play on us. Going down the first steep rope's length the wind eddy was blowing steadily up the slope and as we peered down into the dark to find the next step it lashed our eyes with snow. I had to stop twice on the way down and pull the gummy ice out of my eyelashes to keep my eyes from closing. Soon enough it became a glissade for we knew that we had a clear run down to the mock glacier. But it was a glissade with a difference, for in the half light there was no telling the changes in the snow or the ripples on its surface, so spills were frequent. We were down at the hut as the last of the daylight went, with more ice, this time glazing my ears which I had uncovered in the last ten minutes by pulling off my balaclava.

This was indeed an indifferent day's mountaineering, but on the succeeding days, when we might have been in better form, there was even worse to follow, for the blizzard blew harder than ever, limiting us to token expeditions. We scoured the Allt a Mhuillin glen for firewood, slithering from boulder to boulder on the black water ice of the burn and, when the wind was at its height, turned back from an attempt to reach the head of the glen and climb the Carn Mòr Dearg ridge. I had been blown off my feet before, especially once on the Ober Mönchjoch, where I was lifted out of my steps and dumped down a couple of yards away, but then it happened just once, this time it happened again and again. And in the stronger gusts as we lay prone on the valley bottom we needed snow belays to stop us sliding. All the while the snow clouds limited visibility, and it was not till the last day of all when I'd set a compass course for Fort William across the shoulder of Carn Dearg and Mheall an t' Suidhe that I saw what I'd come to see, the snow sprinkled hills with the black wintry loch dividing them. I stopped for a while to watch it, and it was well I did for the next hundred feet of descent destroyed it all with the ugly foreground of the Aluminium factory.



ON THE AONACH EAGACH RIDGE, GLENCOE

A. E. Wornell

It had been a strange sort of holiday, with no more than a distant glimpse of the great ridges we had hoped to climb, indeed with no rock climbing at all, and of the surrounding hills and lochs we had seen nothing. But we had found a new mountain, a place to which, sooner or later, we must return, and we had learnt a new respect for the highland winter. The contrast between mountain and valley had never before seemed stronger than when I changed again to everyday clothes and boarded the south-bound train.

At Bridge of Orchy the snow was piling up in drifts and the train waited long before it plucked up courage for the crossing. In London the slush was frozen again and the coal crisis was at its height.

Postscript.

Five months after this little excursion and the writing of this note Nully Kretschmer lost his life on Mont Blanc, on the old Brenva climb. He was not, I think, a Fell and Rock member, but many of the club must have known him and recognised in him a mountaineer of real distinction. A splendid rock-climber, he was yet no specialist, and could enjoy the fells as well as the crags when the day fell out that way. He was, too, a fine skier.

But his outstanding characteristics were perhaps a rare charm of manner and originality of mind. We shall miss his company.

A WALKING HOLIDAY IN THE PYRENEES

E. M. Hazelton

This account is of an ordinary walking—camping holiday. There was nothing meritorious in its performance. Neither my friend nor I knew much about camping or anything at all about mountaineering abroad ; this was the first of such ventures for us. In fact it is just because our circumstances so much resembled that of junior members of the club today that I am writing it.

We should have taken more trouble than we did to read about our district beforehand, and especially to obtain better maps. As it was, the only maps we could get out there were black-and-white shaded maps of the French Service Géographique de l'Armée published in 1862, revised 1900, scale 1 : 50,000. On the several sheets magnetic variations were printed to correspond to the years 1927, 1934 and 1936. Apart from this our equipment proved satisfactory. Our greatest deficiency lay in our lack of previous experience of rock-climbing. It is sad now to recall the unseeing eyes with which we viewed chimneys, cracks, buttresses and all the happy playground.

However, the little railway brought Percy and me to Caunteret one afternoon in August, 1936. We spent an hour or two refreshing ourselves and laying in provisions, then set forth up the valley west of the town prepared to enjoy everything that was to happen to us for the next twelve days. It was a gentle valley with springy turf. There were scattered sheep and a solitary fisherman beside a great rock at a pool, and the evening air bore the scent of hay and thyme. We pitched beside the torrent—*la Paladene*. These mountain streams, called *gaves* were to be with us on most days. The sound of running water was a restful lullaby, and there were pools for bathing. Sometimes salamanders were to be seen ; piebald yellow-and-black creatures, they looked self-conscious when caught idling there beneath the clear water. Around our tents at this, our first camp, sea holly sprouted from the turf. Its blue misty flowers were as entrancing to look at as they proved distressing to tread upon at night.

The morning sun rose merrily above the eastern side of the valley and we bathed in the *gave*. Here we first realised that the dew on our tents was liable to delay our start until eleven o'clock. By that time the sun had become hot and we found it sweating work when we left the track to scramble up the sides of a waterfall. Up the valley beside a lake we met our first shepherd, seated as usual on a rock. The weather had bleached his garments until they blended with the lichen on the rocks. These shepherds all carried long, straight staves with an iron ferrule. With their help they climbed

steep grass slopes with great nimbleness. Their dogs were strong, of the retriever build.

By the lake, a small party met us with a guide. They had come down from a pass above, and with binoculars had watched us bathing and breakfasting. Our prismatic compass and bergan rucksacks were inspected and pronounced 'très bien' but our packs were 'trop lourds', (we averaged 40 or 50 lb. each). This small lake was the *Lac Noir*; higher up that evening, we found its delightful companion, the *Lac Bleu* or *Lac d'Illeou*. From its head rose an arc of mountains dark against the sunset but patched with snow. On the right, a green slope was unnaturally bright in the horizontal light, and its reflection shone in the still water. To the left the mountain flank was aflame with red dwarf rhododendrons, a vivid undulating carpet. Looking back across the dark head of the lake, the shining water at its foot extended to a group of black rocks and abruptly disappeared there where it fell to the lower level of the valley. A thunderstorm began to mutter behind the mountains, so we hurried to pitch tents and gather rhododendron stems for our fire. We just had time to prepare an unusual meal of porridge and stewed bully-beef before the rain came down.

The ascent next day up to the *Col de la Haogade* was toilsome, for though the rain had stopped early in the night, the mist gathered during the morning and perplexed us among the rocks at the top. It was up here that we first met with that amiable companion of wanderers in the Pyrenees—the *gourde*, carried by a traveller whom we met. It consists of a pouch of dressed goatskin made with the natural hair on the inside. It contains wine and one refreshes oneself from it by throwing back the head, opening the mouth and squirting into it a fine jet of wine. From the col our route ran East and we kept to the ridge above the mist after an unsuccessful attempt to penetrate through it to the *Marcadau* below. A memorable incident was the finding of an alpine rose growing upon a rock; its intense colour and superb scent were enhanced by the unexpectedness of meeting so ardent a flower in such chilly circumstances. We finally dropped down into the valley about a mile up from the Pont d'Espagne. We came to the inn as the rain began to fall in a most downright manner. They offered bath, dinner and beds. What a relief from our forebodings of trying to camp and cook in the rain. It was a meal to live in the memory. After lingering in several courses we came to cheese of several excellent kinds, followed by fruit in syrup. The waiter, finding that we had expected the cheese last apologetically returned two or three courses, and served them again in the order we preferred.

The next day was one of 'clear shining after rain, a morning

without clouds'. We bought food for the next day or two, including large quantities of grapes and some aristocratic prunes to take the place of our Sunmaid raisins. We also provided ourselves with the local rope-soled canvas shoes which formed the common footgear in these parts. They were restful about camp, but for walking with heavy packs our feet needed the support of good boots. There was discussion at the inn about affairs across the border. We gathered that 'les rebelles' were in charge, but our waiter declared that 'ce n'était pas un de ses soucis.' That morning few people showed signs of care. As we struck up the zig-zag path towards the valley of the Gaube, we encountered columns of Frenchmen, mostly bearded, coming up on mule-back from Cauterets—a multitude that made holiday.' Hereabouts we found ourselves walking through what might have been a flying school for grasshoppers. There were hundreds of them along our path, red with blue spots, brown with green spots, yellow ones, black and red ones. Some were two or three inches long. They would flick themselves into the air and try to remain aloft, beating their gauzy wings so that they shone in the sunlight. Some rose to the height of our chests, others only a foot or two from the ground. They seemed unable to control their orientation, for on alighting each would shuffle round to face us, his bright black eyes shining with watchful inquiry. They were a fantastic, motley, primitive company.

At the head of the valley as we approached the snow and bare slopes above the *Oulettes de Vignemale*, the gradient steepened sharply and for the last two or three hours of the evening we ground our way over snow and rock to the *Hourquette d'Ossoue*. There was a glacier beneath us on our right. From it rose gullies deep-cut into the flanks of Vignemale. It was a good moment when from the cold darkening head of the valley we came up on to the col in time to see the sunset. The height was about 9,000 feet. A little further on below the ridge, squatted the *Refuge Baysselance*, a black tin shack, built in two sections, one part straight-ridged, the other curved. It was a startling and uncouth object, but the smoke from the chimney promised warmth and company. When we opened the door we were confronted by an animated company of men and women sitting at a plain scrubbed table lustily supping bowls of broth. We dropped our packs and stood watching to take in this new situation: our arrival did not interest them. A crowded little kitchen at the back attracted us at once; people went into it and emerged with seductive dishes. We mingled with them there and identified the moustached, gloomy guardian of the place. Yes, we could have broth and bread and cheese and other cooked food if we wanted it. Gratefully we gave our order and returned to sit on our rucksacks

and watch the noisy company round the table. We were already eating the supper of anticipation when a horrid thought struck us—money. Would he take English bank-notes, for we had only a few francs of French money? He said little, but he returned to their shelves our bowls into which he was about to pour our broth. Expostulation was of no avail, and he wanted to get on with the washing up. He parted with two rolls of bread, and sadly we returned to the room now emptying of people. In a corner we squatted with our backs to the company and upon the floor we heated with 'meta' tablets, a mugful of condensed milk. This was followed with a tin of indifferent salmon, then grapes, and our supper was ended. We soothed our spirits with a stroll outside. It was a grand night under the stars; the peaks gleamed. But it was cold, and 10 o'clock, so we returned to the hut. Everybody had disappeared. There were no stairs, so they could not have left the building, nor were they in the kitchen. This was mysterious. The caretaker appeared from his den with a lighted candle. He pointed to an iron ladder and motioned us to take up our belongings and follow him. We climbed up. He opened with his head, an iron trap-door. This revealed an entirely black space. He stood his candle inside and held open the door for us to pass in. We were assailed by a tremendous noise of snoring. We held up our candle and peered into the darkness. Before us upon a sloping platform strewn with straw, lay the sleepers side by side, their boots at their feet. In the centre reposed a giant German, and his snore was massive and reverberant. Some stirred in the gloom and muttered in their sleep. The atmosphere was stifling. Two smallish slight figures gave promise of little resistance, so I got into my sleeping-bag and gently inserted myself between them. I could detect that Percy was having more trouble with his burlier neighbours. What a night it was, of rustling and stirring and snoring and sweating!

In the morning, whilst still dark, the trap-door opened with a metallic clang, and through the hole rose a candle followed by a head and shoulders. The man shouted, and the night-noises stopped. As people sat up and began to put on their boots, the reason became apparent for the comparative tranquillity that I had had at my end of the row. My companions on either side were two French *alpinistes*.

Outside we found a sunny morning waiting for us. It was now easier to identify the peaks last seen in silhouette by moonlight. As we stood in the sun munching our (cold) breakfast, we fell to reading a posted notice about charges. We read it without enthusiasm and fingered our small change. But it finished with glad tidings, with tidings of great joy. For, if you belonged to the right

clubs, some of these charges were halved or even reduced to token payments. We showed our membership cards and jingled our cash and demanded a hot breakfast. But the fire was out and there would be no more cooking until evening. It was as well, for the day called us. We bought a bottle of wine and walked down towards the *Gave d'Ossoue*. On such a clear morning, the ascent of Vignemale must have been perfect.

The bed of the gorge was enlivened by gentians and cowslips on patches clear of snow. The valley proper was bare at first, but later we walked some hundreds of yards knee-deep amongst blue iris. We camped near the foot of the valley behind a ridge from which we could look down upon the Gavarnie road. A smiling lad left his cows to watch us, and later one of his charges provided us with milk for supper. Our fire was of juniper wood. Next morning we packed up in the company of lizards, grasshoppers, an inquisitive black redstart and (temporarily) a snake, and took the path above the road to Gavarnie. In the village through the one main street, jostled an endless stream of women in black shawls, trippers, mules, donkeys, abbés with boy-scouts and buses from Lourdes. We did not at this time go up to the Cirque, but instead set to work at our *raitaillage*, breaking off twice for refreshment at the inn. We also collected mail and effected monetary exchanges. It was evening when we left the jostling crowds and, laden with such comforts as bilberry jam, climbed the steep path eastwards, which brought us on to a plateau running along the side of the *Pic de Pimene*, some 3,000 feet above Gavarnie. Mist descended and for a time we wandered amongst large rocks strewn over the soft grass. We grew tired of picking our uncertain way in the cold amongst these ghostly giants, so in the falling light we pitched our tents.

The morning showed us to be a mile or more short of the lofty col which runs south from the *Pic de Pimene* to the *Mont Perdu* group. We were lazily packing and loafing in the sun when an athletic figure came swinging down towards us. He joined us and sat down to talk. He carried blocks of rock-salt to leave at the sheltering places most frequented by the cows. The sheep too, were short of salt. Sometimes, as we trudged along, sheep and goats would come running up to us and form a queue to lick our hands. Our cattleman was a vivacious, intelligent fellow, and read our map with understanding. He strongly recommended the 'refuge' and lake at *Tuqueroye* just on the Spanish side at the foot of *Mont Perdu*. He indicated the route and we liked the idea. It was, however, noon before we were on the col, the *Hourquette d'Alans*. The track lost its identification in the scree and snow. Late in the afternoon we were over the ridge and standing on a green promontory pointing

west (7,500 feet). Percy proceeded to pitch camp and prepare supper whilst I went up to the frontier to view the land. But on my way to the *Passage de la Tuqueroye*, I turned right too soon and came to the *Hourquette de Pailla*. There was now no time to reach the pass, so I scrambled and glissaded down and round the shoulder. The setting sun flushed the snow pink on the high slopes, and there below stood the two familiar tents with Percy stirring about.

Next day, instead of pushing on to *Tuqueroye* and *Mont Perdu*, we forsook the high passes and drifted down the broad valley of the *Etaoubé*. Like other valleys, we had seen, it showed strikingly the consequences of altitude and thorough grazing. Here were no seas of bracken to richen the colour and exasperate their navigator, nor were there bushes. Innumerable sheep dotted its shallow green bed and rocks stood up cleanly from the turf as from a lawn. The valley was 3 or 4 miles long and sheep followed us so persistently that we feared our redistribution of the population would annoy the shepherd who sat dozing on a rock in the sun. But he remained apathetic as we passed along; only his dog disliked us.

Héas, two miles east of the mouth of the valley, consisted of a few houses, a chapel amongst trees and an inn, the *Hôtellerie de la Munia*. Here by the *Gave de Héas* we camped and stayed a day or two, sometimes taking our meals in the inn.

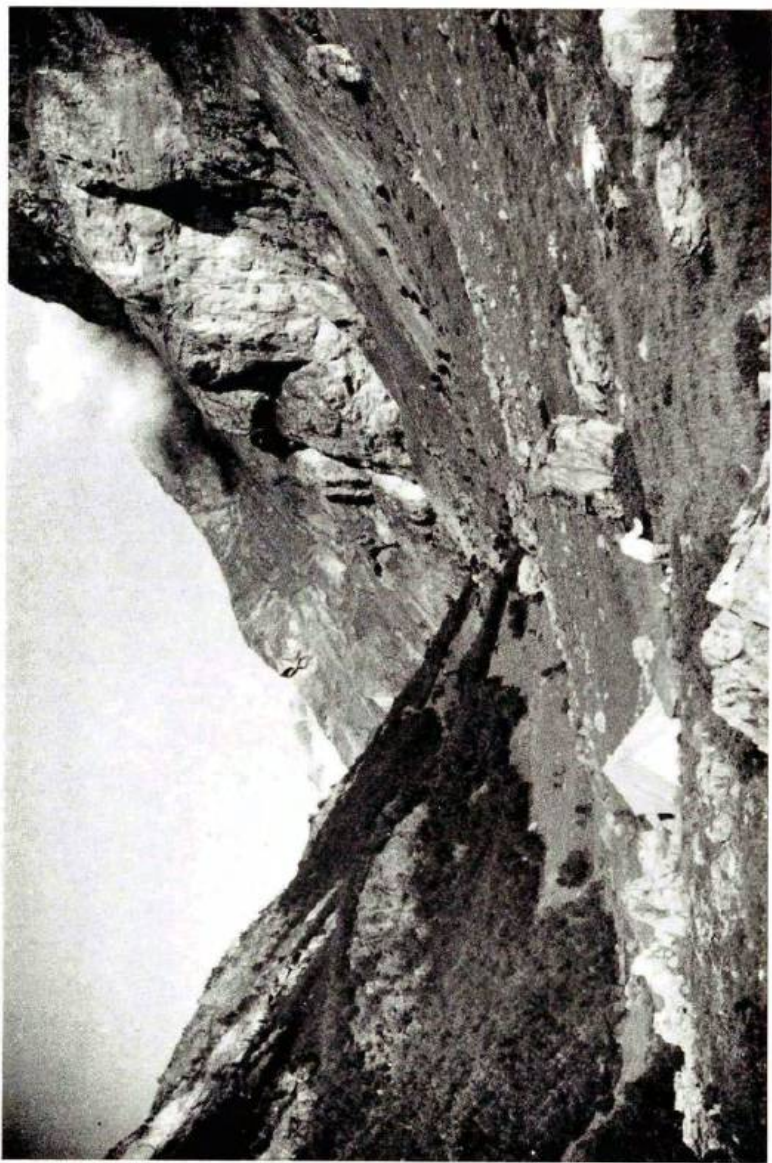
Across the stream on the other side all the long days there sat or walked a black-frocked girl among her cows, interminably knitting. She came at sunrise and left at dusk. Fit setting and subject, we thought for another vision of our Lady of Lourdes.

One day we spent botanising up in the *Cirque de Troumouse*. It was a fine, high place in which to wander. We found it more spacious but less dramatic than its famous counterpart at Gavarnie.

From Héas we went again to Gavarnie and inspected the cirque, for the guide-books rightly say that it is 'le site le plus réputé des Pyrénées: la visite est une promenade indispensable et d'ailleurs sans aucune difficulté . . . à pied, à cheval ou à âne.'

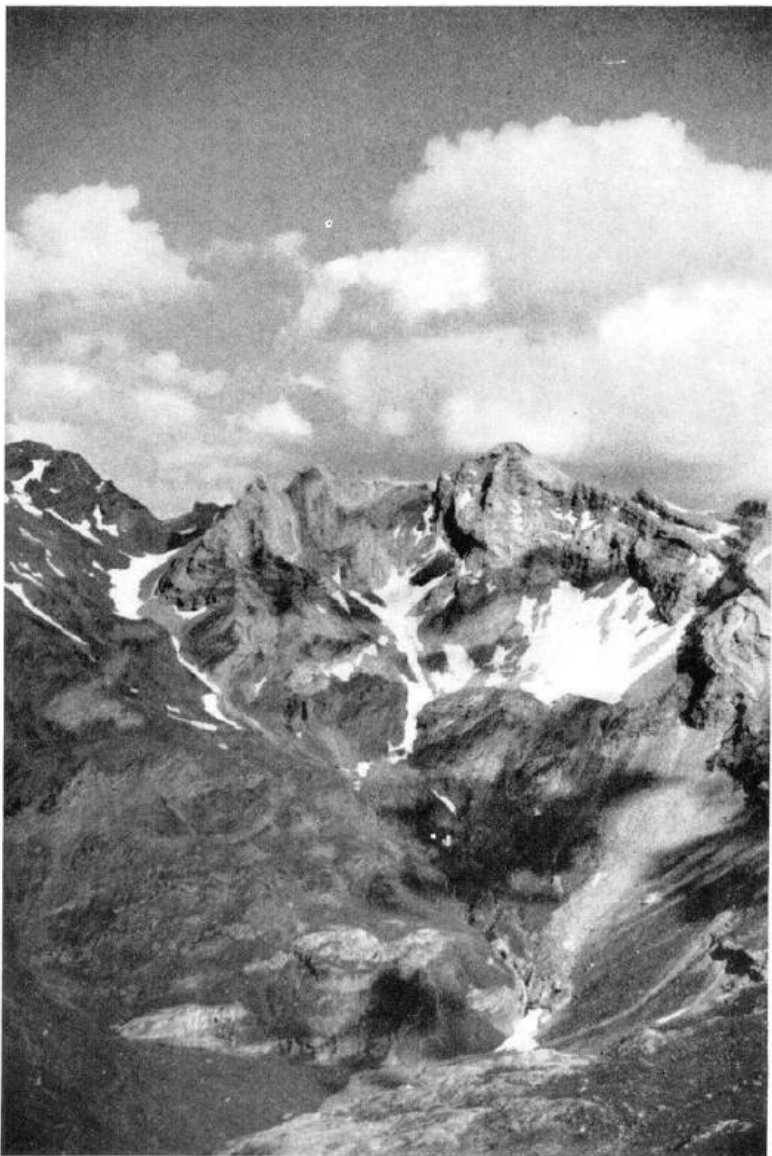
We finished the holiday at Luz, which was *en fête*. Vehicles were draped in flowers, and flower-covered cars and carts paraded, full of jolly little children; some of the girls had red roses in their hair, and black head-shawls frilled with white. The streets were filled with visitors and people in traditional costume or their 'Sunday best.' Across one street stretched a wire rope on which hung a wooden bucket containing water. Young men took it in turn to mount a hand-cart and be wheeled past beneath it by their companions running. As each passed he tilted at the bucket with a staff held like a tilting lance. Later from the rope hung other objects and youths were blindfolded and approached flourishing staves. Guided

by cries of 'Va ! Va !' from the crowd, they struck wildly in the air. One hit a hanging pot which broke and deposited upon him dust and ashes. Another broke a clay jar from which there fell a white rabbit. It was very much alive and the crowd gave chase. Elsewhere there was a greasy pole to climb with a ham and bottles of wine hung from the top on a hoop. This dangled from a pulley just out of reach of the struggling climber and retreated before him. The ham was reached by one who, at the cost of appearances, conquered the grease by rubbing dust from the road on his forearms, chest and trousers. From the central square could be descried up on the mountain side a group of three flags, a red, a white, and a blue. There was a race for these. It was an exacting course to race over. As we stood waiting for the first man home to appear at the end of the street, a tradesman came up to us and said quietly : ' Vous êtes Anglais ? Ah ! vous êtes nos amis.' He seemed to be trying to comfort himself.



E. M. Haselton

LOOKING UP THE CAVE D'OSSONE



PORT BIFIL SEEN FROM HOURQUETTE D'ALANS

E. M. Hazelton

THE LAND UNDER THE ICE

Norman Nicholson

PART I

First in the winter snow falls in the hills,
Feathers the tops, and roosts like flocks
Of wild sea pigeons on the sills
And ledges of the blue bluff of the rocks.

And frost lays level bone across the tarns ;
The birds are blizzards in the air ;
The snow takes flesh and hugs the cairns,
A growling mammal huddled in white fur.

The white fur moults beneath the April sun,
By the black peat where the sykes run ;
And whiter than the hair of snow,
The starry saxifrage begins to grow.

The thin sykes wriggle in the April light,
Between the granite's grudging thighs,
The shaggy tails of ferns, the bright
And wary bird-eyes of the bilberries.

The Statesman from the dalehead herds his sheep,
Gimmer and lambs, to summer heaf ;
And when the scraggy oats are ripe,
By walls of purple cobbles piles the sheaf.

But when December mists skulk in the pikes,
The snow holds out its bear-like paws ;
The bracken withers in the claws,
And dead stones skid along the rotting rocks.

And even in the spring the claws cling on
Clamped tight about the scar's bare edge ;
Nor can the coaxing of the sun
Raise but the mountain scurvy grass and sedge.

The bears of snow in combs of summer garth
Lie hulked as icy brutes of bone,
To forage down the cringing stone
When autumn slips the leashes of the north.

Then wakes the ice, and creaks and heaves its back,
And shakes the loose screes with its haunches ;
The slender spines of rowans crack,
And splitting stones startle the mountain finches.

The birches splinter beneath pads of snow ;
The gullies grind their grooves below
Porphyry crags, where fangs of ice
Prize out the hip-bones of the precipice.

Plainsward the Dalesmen flee with bairns and wives,
Leave to the wolves the frozen pass ;
The Shepherd fires the brakes, and drives
The starving herdwicks from the bitter grass.

Down the wide lobby of the dale they flee
To orchards of the southern shires,
Leaving the wheel, the scythe, the plough,
And hinges rusting on the gates of byres.

But still the Statesman waits and sees the teeth
Of the ice gnaw ancestral fields ;
A footstep at a time he yields—
His white beard wagging in the blizzard's breath.

He sees the huge hulk of the wolving snow
Stalk slowly down the dale, and crush
The cottage roofs and lintels, push
The funelled chimneys down, with fore-nails hoe

Up ashes, elms and sycamores, and sliver
Flagstones from flanks, as thunder-quakers
Making the hamlets change their acres
To slide along the quartz trail of the river.

And there the angular wild northern ice
Takes grip upon the shrunken land,
Creeps down the coast, and builds beyond
White seas of mountains mountains of white seas.

PART II

The lilac cloud-wrack of an Arctic spring
Skins through the sky like geese on wing ;
Grass grows in combs, and sphagnum moss,
Hectic with flowers, beyond the reach of ice.

In southern ghylls the Statesman feeds on shoots.
Of alpine cresses, sapped with rain,
The leaves of creeping willow, roots
And bitter berries of the tundra sun ;

Fishes through holes in ice, and hunts the seal
And legendary Arctic bird,
Of flesh and blubber makes his meal—
Raw blood and feathers glued upon his beard.

Poleward, ten thousand years, the Northern Lights
Stripe the sky with fiery bars ;
The ice peaks burn in the high nights,
And flakes of darkness float across the stars.

The Statesman climbs the stalagmitic rocks,
His body tanned like leather, bare
To the salt wind, his withered sex
Hanging about his haunches like grey hair.

The moonlight smokes around the icy spires ;
The belfries of the fell-tops peal ;
And frost tugs tight his thoughts like wires
That sing and whistle in his hollow skull.

And the bright polar star shines on his brow
And brands his eyes ; his eyelids feel
The glowing cinders of the snow,
And a white darkness blinds his selfing soul.

PART III

And now the cautious claws of snow draw back.
The glaciers dwindle. From the ice
Chill rilletts sweat ; a muddy beck
Bursts like a geyser through the dale's wide jaws.

The crags thrust up again, and sides of valleys,
Planed vertical, where waterfalls
Pour down from tributary gullies
Left hanging in the air like spouts on walls.

In hollows blocked by glacial drift, the snow
Melts into tarns and brackish moss ;
And noon by noon the lithe lakes grow
In gutters gouged from out the basalt's base.

Boulders and gravel, clay and mud and sand,
Are shovelled loose about the land ;
And marsh-grass oozes purple stains
Over the tumuli of low moraines.

Rushes and sedges sow themselves, and clumps
Of cress, and yellow marigolds
And water-lilies in the sumps,
And buttercups in flood in the wet fields ;

Grass of Parnassus, with wax Spanish combs
Which the green scum of duckweed smirches,
Devil's bit scabious with mauve domes,
And aluminium saplings of the birches.

Back goes the Statesman to his birth-right land
Under the crag's new gable-end,
And sees the chipped and chiselled stone,
A landscape unfamiliar, yet his own.

He gathers boulders and cleft slates and builds
A hut, a cairn, an intake wall ;
Hunts the wild cattle on the fell
And drives them to his milky-pastured fields.

And catches sheep and herds them into flocks
And breeds of tups of his own choice,
Sees fleeces blossom by the rocks,
And at the golden cloud-set lifts his voice :—

' O in the white night of the bone I've heard
The senile north gods howling loud and high ;
The wind-god, shrieking like a migrant bird
That drills the carbon blackness of the sky ;

The wheeling sun-god's drunken midnight groan ;
The dawn-god, crowing like a silver cock—
But always in the skull-pit have I known
The silent god within the silent rock.

The snow shall shrivel like an old man's skin,
The blistered leaves drop from the trees like hair,
The rind of soil shall peel and rot within
Till skeletons of Earth and Man are bare.

And ever to the true north of the rock
Is polarized the compass of the bone,
Pointing to time beyond the shifty clock,
Pointing to land beyond the feckless stone.'

Considering that the place was first made climbing-ground by O. G. Jones and in 1898, it is surprising that any room should have been left for new climbs in 1945 on what is commonly called 'Overbeck'—though the right name appears to be 'Dropping Crag,' and we shall stick to 'Yewbarrow.'

These notes summarise what has been done to fill in the gaps, and give additional new routes, followed by addenda and corrections to those in the *Pillar Guide* (pp. 82-4), which should be used for reference. As this is only a sketch for a revised guide, the old letterings of pp. 106-7 of the *Guide* will be kept to, since this makes location easy without detailed topographical reference.

A glance at Heaton-Cooper's diagram (p. 106) shows how the Overbeck Buttress climb (A) stands by itself, with a considerable stretch of rock between it and B Chimney. With one exception, the new routes all lie between the lines of A and B; the exception being 'The Curving Crack,' which is round the corner uphill and to the left of the Prominent Broad Slab (D). A North-to-South girdle-traverse joins this climb to the Buttress (A); and this will be described last, since it uses parts of the new routes.

Topographical.—To one's right at the top pitch of B Chimney is a huge smooth grey wall, slightly overhanging, which we decided to call 'The Central Wall.' Sloping down to the right across it is a biggish grass ledge, which we called 'Greenhaven,' to distinguish it from the lower 'heathery glacia' mentioned in the *Guide*, the corner of which is crossed by the A route. Prior to our meanderings and engineerings, there was no way from this glacia to the terrace at the foot of the chimneys; but now there is a decidedly scratched and scraped one. As the 'Central Wall' is unclimbable, the new routes either finish up its sides, or turn away to the right of it, above the slabs which lie to the left of the A route. On the right-hand side of the 'Central Wall,' at the top, is a large out-jutting undercut corbel or bracket on the skyline, which resembles a Gargoyle or an Anvil, according to your angle or your fancy. Below this Gargoyle, and to the right, in a recess beneath undercut walls, is an old battered and three-pronged Yew-tree, where two routes join at a belay. With these landmarks located it should be easy to follow any of our descriptions. The new climbs are given from right (or South) to left (or North). The first three lie between the start of A and a new cairn which marks at once the 'Central Climb' and an 'Easy Way Up' to the left end of the 'heathery glacia'; which Easy Way can be used as an approach to B Chimney, if one is tired of the usual one. It is a 'walk,' not a 'climb'; and was only produced

by Necessity ; otherwise, the vast amount of ascending and descending required before one new climb was sufficiently gardened to rank as more than a risky and rather prickly, botanic ramble on the nearly-vertical. (We remark, in passing, that all these new climbs were done from below, never on a rope ; the vegetable and geological problems being tackled later, sometimes by abseiling down, picking off obstructions *en route*.)

NEW CLIMBS

F. THE BOWDERDALE CLIMB 160 feet. Severe (in middle). Leader needs 75 feet. Starts 5 yards left of A, and runs parallel to it up the wall above the heathery glacia ; then bears away left, across mossed slabs, to finish up a wall round a sharp corner right-handed from the Yew tree.

- (1) 50 feet. From the (new) cairn flat against the wall, a zig-zag up to a bare white strip of rock on the glacia. Spike belay 10 feet up the wall ahead ; *or* (simpler) on a flake at the bottom of the 2nd pitch of the A route (where the *Guide*, p. 82, is wrong in saying 'No belay').
- (2) 70 feet. Nearly straight up the line of two parallel cracks, to a sentry-box with a spike on the right. Entry is tricky. Atop the spike, traverse left across shelving slabs for 15 feet, then up easier rocks diagonally to the Yew tree. Belay on tree, stance below.
- (3) 40 feet. Ascend till level with the Yew, find holds in its alcove, and then traverse right, round an awkward bulging corner, to a steep wall with a grass terrace at its foot. (Landing on this terrace is needless, and there is no belay there.) Climb the wall, in the middle, on small excellent holds ; and finish out to the left, on the edge, over a big undercut block. Belay on block.

FIRST ASCENT : A.P.R. and Barbara Bloch, 27th August, 1945.

G. THE GARGOYLE 110 feet (from glacia) or 190 feet (from foot). VS. at the finish. Rubbers. Leader needs 55 feet, and a length for a running-belay will make him happier.

Starts *either* from the 'white staircase' at the left end of the 'heather glacia,' using the Easy Way to get there ; *or* use the first pitch of 'Central Climb' (which see, H). Goes straight up to the Yew tree, thence about the Arête to the left, to finish over the Gargoyle. Several alternatives exist for turning the Arête.

- (1) 50 feet. The first pitch of the Central Route.
- (2) 30 feet. Traverse right, on slabs beneath the Slanting Chimney, to the foot of the crack above the 'white staircase.' Belay on spike in crack.
Alternatively. 40 feet. Ascend the glacia by the Easy Way, which starts from a large cairn and slants up to the right. Scramble to corner of the glacia, where the 'white staircase' is obvious.
- (3) 45 feet. Climb the vertical crack in the corner. (The apparently loose hold is not so, and comes in useful later. Only a fool will try to remove it ; and will quite possibly succeed.) The angle eases after a few delicate moments, and the way to the Yew and belay is obvious.

Alternative (cutting out the Yew tree corner) : Where the angle

eases, a step-across *can* be made to a flake on the Arête to one's left (the direct route). If this is done, go round the corner and belay as for Pitch (4) which you have cut out.

- (4) 30 feet. Traverse left from the Yew, on a ledge ; from which the Arête can be rounded either by an *ascending* traverse or a *descending* one. In either case it is best to belay at the bottom end of 'Greenhaven' (belay at floor-level, over the Slanting Chimney), rather than on the spike reached by the *ascending* traverse. Thus, if you take the *ascending* line, you must come down after rounding the Arête ; or the leader will be poorly guarded on the rather risky top pitch.
- (5) 50 feet (from Greenhaven) ; but 35 from the spike. VS. Climb the pyramid below the Gargoyle, working right to the spike, where a running belay can be fixed. Moving from the spike left, in slight constriction, get hands to the thin crack between the Gargoyle and the wall. Thence most of the weight is on the hands for 10 feet, the body lying half-back, with a toe jammed in the crack, till one can pull over the Gargoyl., using a good hold atop. Strenuous and exposed. Thence an easy slab-staircase (20 feet) leads to a spike-belay on the right at the top.

FIRST ASCENT : A.P.R., 7th September, 1945. (Top pitch from Slanting Chimney) : 24th September, 1945 (complete climb).

H. THE CENTRAL ROUTE

150 feet. VD. (S if wet or if descending.)
Leader needs 60 feet. Starts at a large
cairn (also marking the Easy Way) about

midway between the F (Bowderdale) cairn, and the D slab. The 'Slanting Chimney,' which is the second pitch, is very discernible from a distance, lying well to the right of the huge pale flake which walls B Chimney. Above this chimney, the route goes along 'Greenhaven' terrace, to finish up the wall at the upper end.

- (1) 50 feet. Traverse up and right from the cairn on easy ledges and climb the rib at the edge of the steep mossed wall above. A hard move left crosses the rib, which is then left for a broken face, passing a ledge with a holly on it. Spike belay and good stance, level with the foot of B Chimney.
- (2) 45 feet. Traverse right for 10 feet, and reach the small terrace at foot of Slanting Chimney. Avoid the directer way on (holdless, insecure) grass. From the chimney-foot, traverse out left on the slab, work up an edge, and then back to the chimney on sloping ledges. Finish up chimney and out to its left. Thread-belay at floor level in whitish rocks at the head of the chimney. (NOTE.—The chimney *can* be climbed direct, by boot-jamming ; but this is S, and never very stable.)
- (3) 30 feet. Walk up the terrace to the wall at the top end ; and belay your second in the steep crack on the right at the top.
- (4) 25 feet. Climb the wall, in the corner, starting with a lay-back. Finish up the cleft at the edge of the Central Wall. Block belay at lip.

FIRST ASCENT : A.P.R., 7th September, 1945. A.P.R. and B. Bloch, 5th January, 1946.

I. NORTH AND CENTRAL

155 feet. S. Leader needs 65 feet.
Rubbers best. Really a series of variants
on the Central Route, starting left of the

cairn, and keeping left of the Slanting Chimney. Top pitch the same as H (4).

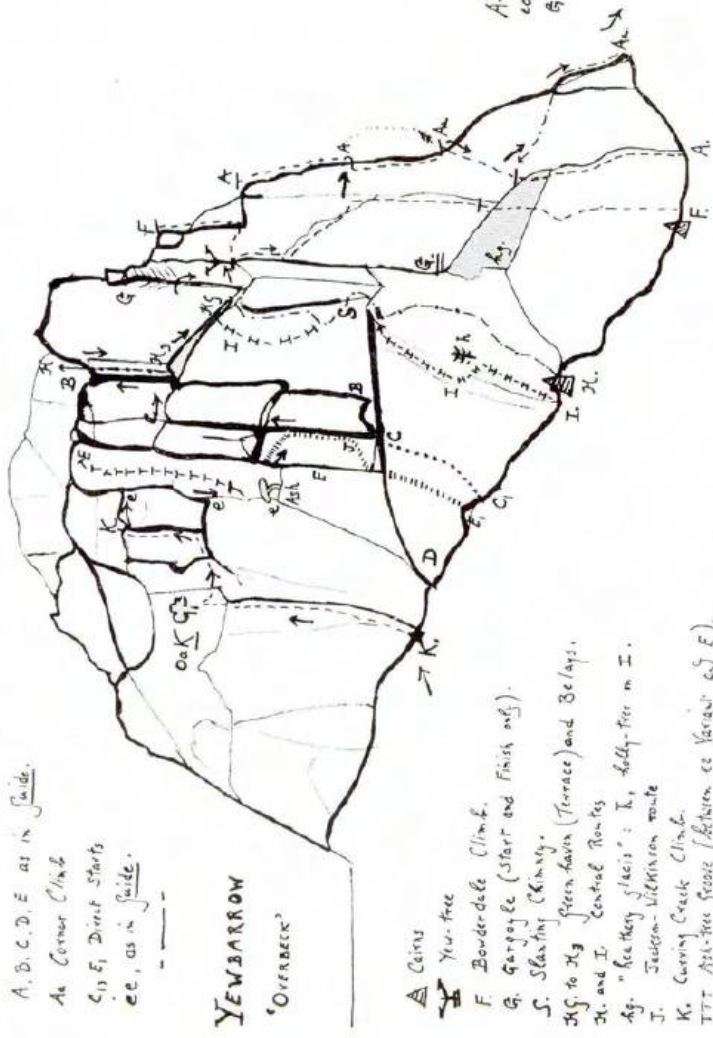
A, B, C, D, E as in Guide.

A_c Corner Climb

C, D, E, Direct Starts

ee, as in Guide.

YEWBARROW 'ORERBECK'



Arrows show connections of Guide (N-S)

A Crags

Y Yew-free

F Boulder-dale Climf.

G Gargoyles (Start and Finish only).

S Skinning (Skinny).

X, I to X₃ Green Haven (Terrace) and Belays.

X₂ and I Central Routes

Ag. "Acute" gullies: K, both-free in I.

J. Jackson-Wilkinson route

K. Curving Crack Climf.

TTT Yew-free Gorge (between ee Variants a, b, c, d, e, f).

- (1) 65 feet. Start at the big whitish step in a recess to the *left* of the cairn, marking the Central Climb H, and climb the awkward little chimney to a holly tree (35 feet). There traverse left on to the steep wall, and either straight up to the loose-looking blocks on the corner, or out to the edge, which is followed upwards to the same place, above the blocks. A traverse right, across slabs, leads to the spike-belay as in H (1). NOTE.—This approach can be used as a Direct Start to B Chimney, by going *left* instead of 'traverse right, across slabs, etc.' It is only VD.
- (2) 65 feet (including walking up Greenhaven). A tenuous route curving up the bulging slab to the left of Slanting Chimney. Severe (delicate). Traverse 10 feet right, and reach the small terrace at the foot of the chimney. Traverse left on to the steep wall, and out to the edge; but now, instead of moving back right, towards the chimney, proceed upwards and to the left, on small holds. A scoop is reached, where equilibrium is easier; and the bulge above it is surmounted by a highish step to the right, the hands pulling on a flake-edge. After this the angle eases, and one finishes on the Greenhaven terrace. Belay in the crack at the head of the terrace, on a jammed stone.
- (3) 25 feet. The top pitch of Central Climb.

FIRST ASCENT: A.P.R., 13th July, 1946 (chimney), and 28th September, 1946 (complete).

NOTE.—Future climbers (and guide-writers) may reasonably decide that these two climbs have evolved inartistically and that our Central Route (1) should properly lead to North and Central (2); thus giving a continuous slab-climb; while the other route was two chimney-pitches, viz., No. (1) as above, followed by the Slanting Chimney. The two routes would then cross at the belay.

J. JACKSON-WILKINSON See *Journal* No. 39, 1945, p. 146. Repeated
ROUTE by A.P.R. and Barbara Bloch in August,
1945, with the exception of 'the last pitch
. . . done on a rope,' which defeated us utterly.

K. THE CURVING CRACK

100 feet. S. Leader needs about 70 feet. Rubbers (if dry). Lies to the left of all the climbs in the *Guide*, round a corner next to the 'prominent broad slab,' D. 15 yards uphill from the slab and just beyond the second overhang is a reddish face at a high angle. The climb runs up the inside of this, another crack to its left, making with it a blunt V. Small cairn at foot.

- (1) 50 feet. Climb the crack facing right and leaning out on the hands for 10 feet. At 30 feet the crack bulges, and the edge becomes a rounded flake. A tricky move right follows, to a ledge-hold on a projecting and undercut bracket. Scramble up grass to Oak, and belay.
- (2) 25 feet. Descend to the rock again, and traverse right, round a corner to the foot of a small chimney, and :—
25 feet. Climb it with faith and friction, facing right; to finish on the block overlooking the finish of the Ash tree (variation e) route. Belay. NOTE.—The last two bits can be avoided by climbing a crack behind the Oak tree.

FIRST ASCENT: A.P.R., 2nd September, 1945 (crack). A.P.R. and

Barbara Bloch, 11th July, 1946 (crack and chimney).

GIRDLE TRAVERSE or 370 or 470 feet (to taste). VD. to S. ROOSTERS' RAMBLE Leader needs 80 feet. Can be done S. to N. or *vice versa*; the former is the easier, provided the descent of the Curving Crack (the extra 100 feet) is not included. Description here goes from South to North.

- (1) 40 feet. Start at the extreme right (or S.) end of the crack, round the corner right of the A route, and climb diagonally up to the belay on A.
- (2) 20 feet. Pitch (2) of the Buttress route A. Belay.
- (3) 25 feet. Instead of following the Buttress, take the easier line on the right, until level with the turning-move on the Buttress route. (Belay on ledge on right, if required.)
- (4) 70 feet. Traverse to the Buttress route and reverse the 'delicate movement' on the edge (*Guide*, p. 82), to traverse across to the Bowderdale Climb at the sentry-box (See F); and so across slabs to the Yew tree and belay.
- (5) 40 feet. Round the nose. Traverse left for 10 feet, and then round the Arête either by moving *upwards* or by a mantelshelf-move *down*. If *up*, descend on the Greenhaven side, to belay (thread, in floor) at top of Slanting Chimney.
- (6) 45 feet. Walk up the terrace (25 feet) and climb the top pitch of the Central Route nearly to the top.
- (7) 15 feet. Traverse left just below the top of the wall, till a long step can be made to the head of B Chimney.
Alternatively. Descend from the outer corner of the terrace to reach the jammed stones in B Chimney (cutting out Pitch 8).
- (8) 20 feet. Down the top pitch of B.
- (9) 20 feet. Traverse round to C Chimney below the top block, and descend C to beneath the triangular overhang. Spike belay on a corner.
- (10) 15 feet. Cross into E Chimney by Jackson's traverse (J). Belay on the spike at the last corner, or proceed to—
- (11) 10 feet. Reverse the (so-called) second pitch of E, across to the Ash tree and belay.
- (12) 50 feet. Ascend the left-hand Variation of E to belay and Finish.
But for a complete performance this may be added:—
- (13) 50 feet. Cross over the finishing-block on E (e), descend the small chimney, and traverse left for 25 feet to the Oak tree and belay.
- (14) 50 feet. Severe. Descend the Curving Crack (K).

FIRST ASCENTS: (N. to S.), A.P.R., 24th September, 1945. Complete S. to N., including 13 and 14, A.P.R., 13th January, 1946.

Alternatives.—(a) Nos. 8-10 can be simplified thus: Climb *outside* the summit blocks heading the chimneys, in a descending traverse left, till a large bracket in E is reached. Enter E Chimney, descend to the Ash tree, and continue as from (11) above. (b) Instead of (6)—making things harder this time—descend the Slanting Chimney to the ledges slanting to the corner of the slab; then follow Pitch (2) of North and Central to the 'scoop'; but there, instead of going up, proceed right, by tenuous holds, to reach B Chimney. Ascend to the jammed stones, and carry on at (9) above. This is certainly possible when going from N. to S.; but we cannot vouch for its reversibility, and it is tricky enough the easier way.

ADDITIONS TO, AND NOTES ON, ESTABLISHED CLIMBS

A. CORNER CLIMB. 110 feet. VD. A simpler alternative to the Buttress. 45 feet of rope.

- (1) 40 feet. Start in the stream-bed round the corner right of A, and work up diagonally to the corner of the glacis and belay (on A).
- (2) 20 feet. Second pitch of A.
- (3) 25 feet. Instead of taking the Buttress route on the face, climb the less steep rocks on the right, thus avoiding the 'turn' on A. Belay on ledge, right.
- (4) 25 feet. The wall above the 'turn' on the A route. Belay.

B. B CHIMNEY Can be climbed direct, outside the chockstone all the way. Face right. Pitch 2 can then be climbed on the *left* (not right, as in the *Guide*). Grade D, and a better climb than the old route.

C. CENTRAL CHIMNEY *Direct start*. 30 feet. VD. Starts with a ledge-traverse on a small buttress near a big embedded boulder. Work to the edge of the little arête under the left wall of C; and thence up the edge. (Found partly scratched in September, 1945, and possibly done before us.)

WARNING OR NOTE: The anatomy of C has undergone striking changes above the first chockstone, and the *Guide* no longer describes it. Two chockstones have descended two or three feet, and one has completely cap-sized, so that the scratches are underneath. This one seems not immovable, and is to be treated with circumspection. It has become almost inevitable to finish *inside* the big jammed stone at the top, instead of *outside* as formerly.

E. ASH-TREE CHIMNEY *Direct Start*. 25 feet. A 'mild severe.'

Runs up a groove slanting left, to the right of the corner of the D slab and in the same set-back in the rock face as the C *Direct start*. (A.P.R., 13th September, 1945.) A complete alternative route to E can be made of this by following Jackson and Wilkinson's route (J) to the E chimney proper, and then following the new route given below.

ASH TREE GROOVE. 50 feet. S. to VS. (according to height and reach). An alternative to the E Chimney route and the left-hand Variant (c in *Guide*) and lying *between the two*. From the Ash tree, proceed as for the left-hand route; but instead of going up left to the grassy ledge, go straight ahead up a whitish step into a corner with honeysuckle thereabout, facing an overhung and steep wall.* Up the corner under the overhangs till a move right can be made. Then face about, left, and proceed up the groove by jamming the left toe against the undercut flake, till a move left can be made on to a ledge. (The one running horizontally just below the top of the left-hand route (e).) From the extreme right corner of the ledge a high-up incut is reachable; on which pull up, and again on another beyond. Then move right on rather widely spaced brackets, to finish just at the head of E Chimney. The performance is strenuous and somewhat airy; and the leader should NOT belay at E, but directly above the tricky bit—10 yards or so 'inland' from the edge above the groove.

FIRST ASCENT: A.P.R., 2nd October, 1946.

* Also reachable by following a very thin horizontal ledge running straight across the left wall of E (true chimney). It gets thinner, and may well become impossible if the grass wears off it.

SHORT CLIMBS &c.

- (1) On arriving at the top of any of the chimneys, one reaches a pleasant heathery plateau. Standing with back to the climbs, one faces a short wall, continuing to the left, getting higher as the ground falls, and especially at the sharp drop where there is the short much-scraped chimney (10 feet) that provides an easy way to the top of the crag from the big gully on the North side. (The alternative Walkers' Way to the summit; the other being the stream-bed and scree to the right or South of the Buttress A.) On this wall are:—(1) A straight vertical route of 30-40 feet, about 20 yards below the little chimney; (2) A route straight up from the chimney itself, past a thick stub of rock sticking out of the groove; (3) A more delicate face-climb starting just above the top of the chimney (*i.e.*, on the lip of the plateau aforesaid); (4) An extremely difficult one in the middle of the red-brown wall between this and an Inclined Plane, sloping left, which can be slid down. (5) A pretty little vertical face-climb finishing just at the top angle of the Inclined Plane; and (6) A trick-climb of 20 feet just to the right of this, where the trick is to assume a 'lay-back' position facing left and lying against the wall. Yewbarrow being a 'shortened-day-by-rain' sort of place, these may come in handy. All can be done in nails. No real belays; but the edge checks the rope pretty well. All believed to be new, between 1943 (Nos. 5 and 6), and 1947 (1 and 2). A.P.R.
- (2) Beyond the stream right of A, there is an outcrop with two short routes on it. The right-hand one (scratched) is exacting.
- (3) **THE BOWDERDALE BOULDER.** Lies on the right bank of the Overbeck, as a prominent landmark in the valley. Two routes at the low (upstream) end are old established; the left (facing downstream) is the harder. Two new ways have been added at the high end, one on the right (facing as before), the other round the corner, on the South face. (A.P.R., 1945.) The latter is the harder.

CONCLUSION

With something over 1,000 feet of new climbing added, Yewbarrow should provide even more for days shortened by rain than has generally been assumed. Though the longest single climb is relatively short, the crag has a great variety of types of route, and may prove a welcome ground for those who are passing on the English climbing tradition to others less experienced.

A VISIT TO KASHMIR AND LADAKH

T. H. Tilly

In 1944 it was my good fortune to spend over two months trying to teach complete (and sometimes reluctant) beginners to climb at an R.A.F. Mountain centre amid the peaks of Kashmir, and as the district is, by Himalayan standards, not high and thus not subject to the peculiar problems which high altitudes set for solution, it forms an excellent training ground, particularly, as might be imagined, for mountaineering in the greater Himalayan ranges. The *locus in quo* was probably the most suitable which could possibly have been selected and the greatest credit is due to those responsible.

The Himalaya in the north-western Punjab and Kashmir consist of a series of roughly parallel ranges orientated approximately North-West—South-East. In the South, above Rawalpindi, is the first small foothill range, the Murree Hills, over which the motor road to Srinagar passes at an altitude of 6,500 feet. The road then swings North along the Jhelum River valley with the barrier of the Pir Panjal range to the East. The Pir Panjal 'fabled in hymn and story,' as the old phrase has it, is an off-shoot from the main range and is the longest of the subsidiary Himalayan ranges. It contains peaks of over 15,500 feet, is very snowy in winter providing excellent ski-ing, and has a few small glaciers. The range is renowned for its scenic beauty, both from the Vale of Kashmir to the North-East, and from the crest-line of the Murree Hills to the South-West. The river, and the road with it, eventually bends to the East and by tortuous ways through difficult country, reaches the Vale of Kashmir after 130 miles of splendid scenery. The Vale of Kashmir, roughly 90 miles long by 30 wide, is an ancient lake bed and is a fascinating land with its many lakes, long avenues of poplars, magnificent chenar trees and flowers of almost every kind found in the English countryside with variations seen only there.

North of the valley are the foothills of the main range of the Himalaya. The biggest, and on the whole the finest, of the several valleys running up to the watershed from the Vale is the Sind. Kashmir scenery is here seen at its most captivating and there is no end to the variety of Alpine loveliness and even, in particular areas, grandeur. A fine gorge 50 or so miles from Srinagar, forms the portal of the higher valley, and our base camp was placed on a delightful grassy alp just above the valley at 9,100 feet not far from the small village of Sonamarg. Amenities of the village included a post and telegraph office and a somewhat doubtful serai in which two of us stayed for a few days before the camp was established. Eleven miles farther on the historic pass into Ladakh, the Zoji La, which at 11,557 feet is the lowest pass over the whole range from

Nanga Parbat to Namcha Barwa, is a worthy conclusion of the main valley. Sonamarg can be reached by car and though the road is rough in parts it is seldom impracticable from May to October. The road is part of the 'Treaty Road' from Srinagar to Leh in Eastern Ladakh, but Sonamarg is, or was in 1944, the limit for cars.

A higher camp was set in a side valley, Thajiwas or 'The Valley of the Glaciers,' at a height of 11,000 feet. Here are six small glaciers lying roughly between twelve and fifteen thousand feet confined between precipitous rock walls of excellent greenish rock of igneous origin and the walls, the high rock peaks which they support, and the crags which buttress them, yield sound and enjoyable rock climbing. Two of the glaciers were very broken and difficult, in fact one remained unclimbed in 1944 but has since altered and provided an ascent. Some years ago it was said to be easy. Three of us, by a route carefully worked out in advance, ascended a considerable distance, but were finally stopped by a prodigious moat which split the glacier from one rock wall to the other. The other glacier, which we had fought rather shy of earlier in the season owing to danger from stonefall (two parties had narrow escapes from falling blocks), gave one instructor and three pupils a splendid ascent after autumn snows and frost had cemented the stones. This glacier was taken for the ascent of an attractive rock peak which we called 'Valehead Peak,' 15,528 feet, finishing up a couloir in horrible weather and rather late in the day after the earlier struggles on the glacier. Fortunately there was a reasonably easy way off, but camp was not reached until after dark after much barrack-room language on the two miles of scree slopes and moraines above the camp.

Three other routes, including the 'easy way' (itself quite a respectable Alpine climb) were worked out on this peak. Wilfrid Noyce, in addition to brilliant solo climbs on the lower rocks, pioneered two rock routes on the peak, both of great length and difficulty, but the weather and the day-to-day exigencies of instructing unfortunately precluded any attempt at repetition. Much other climbing was done in Thajiwas before it became finally necessary to evacuate in November, but the potentialities remaining, of the highest class, are limitless and a constant inspiration and challenge.

No other area was explored with the same thoroughness. We had a permanent camp at Thajiwas whereas our other mountain camps were necessarily mobile and some tent-less. None the less, three visits were paid to the limestone range on the North side of the main valley and a peak of 17,134 feet (called 'Adventurer's Peak') was

climbed. The enormous walls and shattered ridges in this district were unsound in detail and did not attract. An eighteen thousand footer and many lower peaks hereabouts remain unclimbed.

On the Ladakh side of the Zoji La and at Amarnath, South-East of the pass, a good deal of exploration and mountaineering was done. The best climb was an ascent of a splendid snow peak of 17,061 feet by one instructor and two very promising Australian pupils, one of whom has since been reported killed in action. This climb was a real adventure. Owing to defection of coolies, heavy loads had to be carried up to a tent-less camp at about 12,000 feet and the approach nullah was rough and difficult, entailing some step cutting in steep mud slopes. The peak was a long way from the camp, at the extreme head of another nullah, and the party spent the morning walking up this and examining *en route* a huge cave which Hindu pilgrims visit in summer in large numbers for devotional purposes. It was now mid-autumn and much too cold for the pilgrims. New snow covered the peaks, and the mountain, tackled after lunch, was in an unpleasant condition. The climb proved longer than anticipated and the ascent of the summit spire, while not really difficult, seemed rather unsafe owing to the conditions. New snow, for the most part of no great depth, overlay a substratum in which iced rock and scree and tongues of ice were cunningly, and apparently inextricably, intermingled. The view, of course, was stupendous and included the great peaks of the Nun Kun range to the East (23,410 feet). Snow squalls were about, but the peak missed them and the party was off the glacier before dark. The long walk back down the nullah, flood-lit by a full moon, banished fatigue in the vision of mountain grandeur disclosed. The brilliant summits, rising from invisible bases, seemed to be floating on a sea of darkness. The sense of unreality persisted until dispersed by the excellent meal prepared by the fourth member of the party.

Many other climbs were done or attempted in this district. A fine peak of 17,871 feet across a big glacier to the North of Peak 17,061 feet, was nearly climbed by two instructors, while one of them with a third climbed an easy peak of 17,150 feet (called 'Cumberland Peak') in very bad snow conditions. In addition, two easy peaks of about 16,500 feet were done, one by an instructor alone, and the other by the Peak 17,061 feet party the day before they climbed that peak. On this occasion the Nanga Parbat group was clearly visible far to the North-West.

Being due for a fortnight's leave, Gordon Whittle and I decided to drift gently along the Treaty Road eschewing climbing but taking

some kit in case we should (as one should always) gracefully yield to temptation. The first night, spent at Macchoi just over the Zoji La at 11,200 feet, cost me a badly damaged rucksack—the rats, attracted by the small piece of chocolate inside, taking the shortest way in. The fine Gamru valley was then traversed to Dras which we thought rather doleful, but which other travellers have admired. The miserable Dak Bungalow and unhelpful chowkidar may have had something to do with it as the scenery is quite fine. Dras lies high, 10,500 feet, and is apt to be cold and windy as it is situated at the junction of several valleys with the expanse of the Deosai plateau to the North. Two days down the great barren rifts of the Dras and Shingo rivers took us to Kargil, administrative centre of the district of Purigh and situated on both banks of the Suru river which drains the northern glaciers of Nun Kun. Two miles North of Kargil the road to Skardu and the Central Karakoram leaves the Treaty Road by a fine suspension bridge over the Shingo. The Indus is 20 miles North of the confluence of the Shingo and the Suru just past the bridge. Our way, however, led up the Wakka-Chu to the East, but we spent a day at Kargil exploring the bazaar, calling on the Tahsildar, the local magistrate, and walking on the extensive gravel flats admiring the views—a combination of sublimity and sterility usual on the northern side of the Himalaya. Nun Kun was magnificent but distant, peering over the flanks of the hills East of the Suru. A fine 19,000 feet peak in this group awaits a first ascent and indeed the possibilities are endless in the whole area.

The Wakka-Chu might have been, but for the glimpses of high peaks and the procession of village oases, a study in the Grand Canyon of Arizona. A 22-mile stage led to Mulbekh and the first view of the Gompa on its towering rock. Symbolism of this kind evokes strange emotions with which every mountaineer is consciously or unconsciously familiar. The next day a harvest festival was held in a small temple a mile up the valley which actually formed part of the internals of a huge chorten. Nearby was a pinnacle rising 150 feet sheer from the valley floor with prayer flags fluttering from a pole on the top. We were told that they were changed once a year by one of the Ladakhi villagers shinning up the pinnacle barefoot. Only one route was evident and was pointed out as the way taken, but an exploration in boots soon disclosed it to be severe and no place for the solitary climber!

One of the Lamas was a prophet who went into a trance and then foretold, at our request, the date of the end of the war with Germany. As, on 10th October, 1944, he said that Germany would be defeated



LOOKING EAST FROM AMARNATH PEAK

T. H. TIBB

in April, 1945, and Japan 'very soon afterwards' his 'information' must be accounted surprisingly accurate. We pressed him to give a date for the end of the war against Japan but this he resolutely refused to do. He did, however, reiterate what he had previously said, adding that both Germany and Japan would be completely defeated. We were impressed, particularly when Germany admitted defeat in early May, 1945, and Japan only three months later. I think few people 'in the know' at that date would have proved more accurate than this simple Ladakhi, squatting in a dark corner of the little shrine amid weird images, offerings of grain and vegetables, the scent of joss-sticks and butter lamps, swaying to and fro with a devil's mask on his head and grunting out short sentences in Ladakhi in between moans and streams of the Buddhist liturgy. Unfortunately, our Urdu was not up to standard and our cook and Sirdar, Noor Mahomet (who has a tremendous expedition record, including K2 and Nanga Parbat) had to translate into English. The Chowkidar of the Dak Bungalow, who wore a pugri and was officially a Moslem, but appeared to be a Buddhist in practice, translated from Ladakhi into Urdu. The ceremonies concluded, we were plied with excellent and refreshing chang, photographs were taken, and the party broke up with much good will. Later we faced the long climb up to the Gompa and returned to the pleasant Dak Bungalow by the river as darkness was falling.

The Mulbekh valley is, for Ladakh, relatively fertile and harvesting was going on with much jollification. The Ladakhis are delightful people, friendly and cheerful, both men and women. The friendliness of the women was a pleasant change after the purdah-ridden Indian female. They are completely self-supporting, weaving their own cloth on narrow looms and making the practical garments they wear to withstand the great cold of winter (rather like dressing gowns) without benefit of factory. Their systems of irrigation are a constantly recurring miracle. May they long be spared the 'civilisation' of industrialism, the public assistance committee, and the atomic bomb.

The North side of the valley consists of great slopes of scree and shale but on the South side are the lower summits of the barren Zanskar range—a row of orange-yellow 'dolomites' above conglomerate terraces, immense slopes of talus, and steep rock nullahs. To the South-West a long valley led towards a fine rock peak of 18,248 feet to which we devoted two days but should have allotted three. We reached 17,400 feet or so, but the distances involved were too great and we did not get back before dark. The last three

miles out of the fifteen were a trial, though the track was good. This was the highest peak in the district and we were sorry to miss it, but none the less thoroughly enjoyed the expedition in spite of a cold camp at 14,500 feet in the middle of October.

Next morning we turned for home and four days later left Dras at 4 a.m. and marched 30 miles on snow the whole way through a series of mild snow-storms to the cold and inhospitable Resthouse at Baltal. The passage of the Zoji La entailed some very hard work for the ponies. The following morning we walked down the nine miles to Sonamarg through deep new snow, and that afternoon motored to Srinagar. Thus ended perhaps the most enjoyable climbing season I have yet spent.

THE OTHER END OF INDIA

C. F. Rolland

When a mountaineer thinks of India he thinks of the North, the land of the snows, the Himalaya. And when I found myself on the way to Bombay, it was with the hope that chance would lead me to Darjeeling. That, however, was not to be. Instead, after an interlude in the region of Poona, that extremely disappointing home of the mythical 'Pukka Sahib,' I found myself in Madras Presidency, many hundreds of miles from the land of the snows ; at the other end of India. It may well occur to you that being in Madras does not give one an excuse to write about hills. It is not one of the browner parts of the map of India, but there are hills. Inland from the city of Madras, beyond the extremely dull coastal plain, there are some very nice hills. They are, I suppose, a part of the Eastern Ghats. That does not matter very much, but what is important is that they are pleasant, green hills with a generous proportion of rock, both light grey granite and a hard red sandstone, and that they rise up to about 3,000 feet from a fertile plain, which is much improved by the presence of several small lakes.

I spent six months among these hills in 1945-46, and came to find that they had many charms and that they supplied me with many happy days, spent both in rock-climbing and in fell-walking. Not quite the kind of fell-walking that one finds at home. There are no great stretches of rolling moors. The green slopes look innocent enough from below, but on closer inspection one finds that the dark green patches are composed of dense jungles of bushes, which rise to a height of about 12 feet. Vicious bushes they are, with sharp thorns two or three inches long and for variety they are mixed with Cacti, whose prickles, though they are not so long, are even more numerous, and with creepers and convolvuli, which do their best to trip and entwine anyone who ventures to wander amongst them. The light green patches, which one would expect to be lush grass, do not belie their appearance. Indeed, they exceed one's expectations. For grass they are ; but what grass ! It is thick. It is strong and it is fresh, but it is all about six to eight feet in height. And, moreover, for the unwary, it grows on slopes which are sprinkled with loose boulders and stones and complicated by exceedingly thorny, knee-high shrubs.

Beside these rather disturbing discoveries, one recalls that Cheetah and a few Leopards live on these hills and that snakes are common enough. The dangers from such fauna are probably very small, but to the newcomer they are unknown factors and a source of anxiety until time brings confidence. All this makes fell-walking

sound a rather inappropriate term, and perhaps it is, but I will describe some excursions and you may judge for yourself.

Sholinghur was my first station. I arrived there in August, a month which was hot, sunny and dry, although there had been considerable rain, which had filled the lakes and turned the hills green. The village is on the plain at the side of a lake, and through the palm trees and across the water, we used to look on to steep little hills, whose sides were dotted with enormous granite boulders, which made the Bowder Stone look like a chunky, and in places were bared to reveal great sweeps of uncompromising slabs. The highest of these hills wore a crown, a quaint little Hindu temple, which was famous chiefly on account of its extraordinary collection of obscene carvings and statues.

But the hill which interested me (for it was very hot) was the nearest. This was small, rising only about 300 feet above the shore of the lake, but almost all its upper half was a collection of great rock towers whilst the lower slopes were covered with boulders. It was only twenty minutes' walk from the hospital to the foot of the rock towers ; a picturesque walk, but spoilt by the variety of noxious odours which assailed one's nostrils. It led along the top of the ancient dam which retained the waters of the lake, and it crossed the outlet stream, a most depressing trickle of water, which was used by the village people for all the purposes for which man does use water, and in quite the wrong sequence. However, that was soon passed, and this is not a discussion of Indian village hygiene.

The rock itself was full of interest. There was a High Man and a Low Man. These formed the main mass and they had a good gap between them, from either side of which a deep gully ran down to the bottom. There were several lesser towers grouped around the back of this mass and a stretch of slabs, below and apart from it. The rock was a very hard, light grey granite and naturally the climbing was more or less limited to the chimneys and cracks. Of these there were several. The two gullies made excellent climbs of the 'very-difficult' standard, and they were neither damp nor mossy. One was very deep, full of chockstones and with some strange caverns leading from its depths. The only awkward pitch concerned a huge jammed block, which reminded me of the big block in Great Gully on Pavey Ark. The other gully was not so deep but ended by a complicated business of threading one's way through some closely packed chockstones.

Both the gullies led to the gap and there was a good pitch on to either the High or the Low Man. From the High Man there was an amusing route down the back of the rock. It cannot have been more than 80 feet in length, but it contained such a variety of features

that it was a very pleasant little climb. It went down a little slab, then a groove, then backwards through a window, the sill of which was the top chockstone of a little chimney. This made a good route down to a finger-and-toe traverse which led to a narrow ledge, from which there was a delicate step down a smooth slab to a fine rock bridge over a considerable chasm. A traverse along a broader ledge, and a small slab completed the descent. Apart from these routes there were a large number of shorter but often very intriguing problems, which occupied many evenings.

The most exciting route I did not climb. It lay up the great face of the Low Man and was christened 'Rhesus Route,' after the monkeys, who seemed to consider it a 'Moderate.' It consisted of an open groove running from the bottom to the middle of the left edge of the wall and an enormous flake, which ran from there, at first horizontally across the face, and then curving up till it was vertical and petering out near the summit. I could not get up the bottom, nor could I get down the top. And I could only get on to the side of the climb at the expense of sliding down a slab, up which I could not have retired. The only result of my efforts was to disturb the local Brigadier, who became extremely concerned for my safety when he saw me from the lake side. So I gave it up and left it to the monkeys, who are much better climbers than I. And, incidentally, they do not use 'mechanical aids,' unless a tail can be so called.

In November, when it was cooler, I moved to Karvetnagar, a tiny village in a pleasant wooded valley between some higher hills. From there, one Sunday, three of us went to climb Nagari Nose. This is the most impressive hill in the district, and I wish I had a photograph of it, but I have not and am no artist, so I will have to describe it. From above, the hill assumes the shape of an isosceles triangle. This plateau rises slowly from its base till it nears the apex. Here the angle increases rapidly, and the apex represents the summit of the peak, 2,870 feet above sea level. The plateau is guarded all round except at the base of the triangle, by red cliffs. These increase in height from about 40 feet at the base, to 400 feet at the apex. Below the cliffs, fall slopes of the dark and light green variety already described. If viewed from the apex of the triangle the hill appears as a great cone, with a large tower of red rock as its summit. From any angle it is a fine hill.

We started up the north face, following the crest of a narrow ridge, which ran down from what was, apparently, the only break in the crown of rocks. At that time we were unaware of the significance of light and dark green hillsides, but we soon learned. It took two painful hours to force our way through a thousand feet of dark

green, thorny jungle, and a very trying business it was for us and our clothes. There followed much thick and steep grass, which was relieved by 200 feet of clean and easy slabs. Eventually we reached the gap in the rocks, a very steep slope of long grass, precarious boulders and trees. We emerged from this on to the plateau, a weird, stony place dotted with small trees, a few dwarf palms, Prickly Pear cactus and large, yellow-flowered plants, which looked like Evening Primroses.

Sitting on the edge of the cliffs, we gazed down and were much surprised to see what looked like a path, running down a ridge next to our thorny one. To reach it we would have to descend through the gap we had just passed and traverse across a dried watercourse. We marked the top of the gap by finding a dead tree, and set off for the summit. It was easy going until the slope grew steeper and then we had to find a way through some large boulders to the top. There, instead of a cairn, we found a small green, stone statue of Ganesh, that strange God with a human body, an elephant's head and a profusion of limbs. At his feet were some inscriptions, carved in long distant days on the flat top of a boulder. There was a magnificent view of surrounding hills, all much the same structure, with green slopes leading up to great walls of vertical, red rock. And to the East the flat plains stretching to the coast of the Bay of Bengal.

The descent was easy apart from casting about for the particular dead tree which marked the route. We crossed the watercourse and found the path, a narrow way through the long grass, cut by Indians who grazed their goats high on the hillside. These beasts, true to form, found the thorniest bush to be the best meal. The path continued down the ridge and in and out of the watercourse to the foot of the hill. When we had crossed the paddy fields and arrived, thirsty and tired at the road we found that our African driver had given us up as lost and had failed to keep the rendezvous, so we had to walk a further three miles to borrow a truck.

The next Sunday I returned with another officer and four Africans from a Sierra Leone unit. We went up by the path, and came down the same way. It made a pleasant and not very strenuous day, and both we and the Africans enjoyed it. Except for one, the old man of the party, they were quite at home, having carried head-loads and built a jeep-road over many miles of the hills of the Arakan, during their campaigns in Burma. 'Old Pa,' as they called him, grew tired on the way up, and eventually, as he kept falling behind and complaining that 'Burma done poil me, Sah!' we left him on

the path. When we returned it was to find him lying fast asleep, surrounded by the refuse of three packets of K. rations (a whole day's ration). So he, too, enjoyed his day.

In December I moved to Nagari, which lies right at the foot of The Nose. The next mountain in the range is a flat-topped specimen with a very fine row of cliffs about 600 feet high and two miles long. Early in January three of us decided to look at the cliffs. We could find no path up this side, so we repeated the experience of fighting our way through thorns and inhospitable grass till we reached the foot of the rocks. Here, as before, we saw a path, which we had missed from below.

The rocks proved to be very steep and to have much more vegetation than we had expected. Before we found a possible way up, we had walked about a mile along the hillside. On the way, one of my friends found himself deep in a thorn bush. He had no idea how he got into it, but it was some ten minutes before a much scratched man rejoined us.

I started to climb a steep wall and got up about fifty feet on good holds. Then the troubles began. Cactus, grass and creepers grew on the ledges. I got Cactus prickles in my fingers but that did not matter very much. It was one hundred feet up the rock that I got the prickles in my tongue! This was very foolish and I still do not know how it happened, but they were very uncomfortable and too small to be pulled out. This, and the promise of many more farther up, made me descend.

It was just as well that I did descend, because I was just in time to finish the water that we had carried. It was a hot and thirsty day and we had a long way to go down. Twice I had to resist requests for a rest, because I knew that the longer we stayed the thirstier we would become, and to be without water on a tropical mountainside is a serious matter. However, we got down, had a most welcome swim in a deep and cool well, and arrived back in camp to find that the beer ration had been in just long enough to grow cold in the ice-box. Needless to say, it did not remain there for long.

After this it proved too hot to spend a day on the higher hills, so I found a heap of huge boulders on the lower slopes of Nagari Nose. They were granite, and they provided some very intriguing chimney and cave routes very like those at Dove's Nest Caves in Borrowdale. I had good times there until one day it grew so hot that I burned my fingers on the rock and had to retire blistered. Shortly after that I was posted to Madras City, where there was no climbing ;

but more appropriate to the time of the year, I was able to cool off in the Bay of Bengal.

They were good days on the Madras hills. Trials and adversities there were to be sure, but we usually got more fun than trouble from these very difficulties, and we really were in the hills, which was the most important thing of all. Nevertheless, next time I go a-climbing, I hope I shall find it necessary to laugh because my fingers are frozen on to icy holds on Needle Ridge, because I have to pass through a waterfall in Moss Ghyll, because the wind tries to blow me off the Nose on Pillar or because I walk into Stickle Tarn in a thick mist.



Gerald Lacey

CLUB MEET AT THORNEYTHWAITE

THORNEYTHWAITE

W. G. Pape

When the Jopson family left, and Thorneythwaite ceased to be the Borrowdale Headquarters of the Club, a long and happy association came to an end. It is the passing of the place, as well as the people, from the life of the Club which makes the break more felt. It is difficult to write adequately of the place of Thorneythwaite in Club history, but I must attempt the task.

Thorneythwaite Farm had housed the climber even before the foundation of the F. & R.C.C. ; Darwin Leighton, Braithwait, Andrews, Thompson and others of the 'ancients' stayed there in pre-club days.

Old Mr Jopson and his wife entertained the climbers from 1901 to 1923, the Misses Percy and Sally Jopson then took over the hospitality till 1927, and Mrs Fisher Jopson continued in a manner that cannot be equalled up to this year ; you have, therefore, an unbroken record of 45 years of unsurpassed hospitality.

Why then should the tradition of Whitsuntide at Thorneythwaite be broken ? Our regrets at losing Thorneythwaite must be modified by our sympathy for Mr and Mrs Jopson. The work of running the place fell more heavily upon them when their daughters married, left home, and when in due course, new members of the family appeared. Finally, ill-health added its troubles, and the burden became too great. Who shall say then that their retirement had not been earned many times over by a life-time of kindly hospitality ? I understand that they are living at Threlkeld, but have learnt with regret that Mrs Jopson has been in Keswick Hospital from shortly after leaving Thorneythwaite up to the present time. May she soon be restored to health, and may she and Mr Jopson enjoy many years at Threlkeld !

Change is so often sad ; but memory offers comfort, and there are so many memories tied up with Thorneythwaite—personal memories and club memories. So let us make memory hold the door for a while.

Thorneythwaite was known as 'The F. & R.C. Club Quarters' in 1908, when the first recorded meet was held there in August, and the tariff was five shillings per day.

The accommodation then was about half what it is today. The kitchen was where the dairy is now, some fed in the kitchen, and the conditions were truly rural.

Old Mr Jopson was a strict Sabbatarian and flatly refused to have his photograph taken on a Sunday, and turned his broad and uncompromising back on the camera.

Misses Jopson added a feminine touch by changing round the dining-room to the back of the sitting-room and reorganising the bedrooms ; the present dining-room was then a bedroom.

With most commendable enterprise Mrs Fisher Jopson changed the layout of the farm again, and added all the present amenities, and Thorneythwaite can now justly claim a high standard of accommodation.

The charm of the place has to be seen and experienced to be really understood ; in all the moods and conditions of weather, winter and summer alike, it has an atmosphere all its very own.

The old farmhouse and its out-buildings are uniquely situated in such a delightful setting among those giant trees and near the head of the loveliest dale in all Lakeland ; the river Derwent winds its way through the meadows close to the farm and the multi-coloured stones (peculiar to Borrowdale) glisten in crystal-clear waters.

And what can one say of that most superb bathing pool just across the field ? Can one ever forget those before-breakfast dips, or that exquisite 'peace-with-all-the-world' feeling after the evening bathe ; epilogue to a hot and exhausting day on the crags ?

Did I say 'Memory hold the door' ? Surely it rather throws it wide open when the magic word of Thorneythwaite is mentioned. The campers, the caravanners, the sleepers-out, the members from Seathwaite, Seatoller, Rosthwaite and, of course, the inmates of the farm all crowd into the sitting-room, or squat on the stones outside, for those never-to-be-forgotten sing-songs ; this memory is certainly peculiar to Thorneythwaite, and is perhaps the most popular.

And that sitting-room with its 1822 A.D. fireplace, its wood fire and low ceiling, its suffocating tobacco smoke and the oil lamp on the table. What memories !

Those three magic words 'do you remember?' come into their own in any talk of Thorneythwaite and they bring back a thousand happenings, all memorable in their way, but mostly personal and, therefore, difficult to mention separately.

Yet, do you remember the green covered wagon with the piebald horse which later grew into a palatial motor caravan always in its place by the stream and the caravan which housed the rowdy 'Hullaballoos' from Hull (what a pun !) ?

Do you remember the campers in the close behind the barn, and in the meadows ? Do you remember that night when the rains descended and the floods came and washed the lot completely out to seek refuge in the barns and hayloft ? No matter what one's memories are, whether of friends or visitors, of climbs or days on the fells, of the beauty and quiet of the place, (save only the

persistent cuckoo) *Thorneythwaite*, *The Jopsons* and *Whitsuntide* are synonymous and have become a tradition of the Club.

Undoubtedly there is a sadness in the fact that it is no longer our Whitsun Meeting place, and yet :

‘How at their mention Memory turns
Her pages old and pleasant.’

The Club owes an unpayable debt to *Thorneythwaite Farm*, and to the *Jopsons* for that matter, because so many friendships born of the mountains and in the mountains began there ; so many members found their love of the hills and the crags there, and so many happy memories on which we continually feast come from there. I cannot do better than quote from Mrs Jopson’s letter to me which serves to cement that happy relationship between the Club and *Thorneythwaite* :

‘I am truly sorry to give the Club up. It was always a great pleasure to see you all at *Whitsuntide*.’

To stand at the gate on the track to *Seathwaite* and to look up the dale toward *Great End* is :

‘To hold converse with Nature’s charm,
And view her scrolls unrolled.’

SASSO DIARY

A. G. Preston

Sunday, 11th November, 1945—PERUGIA, CENTRAL ITALY

Woke up with a start thinking I had slept in. Found there was plenty of time to get breakfast and wait for the 8-15 Rome lorry.

The lorry dumped me at Terni, and I made steps towards Riete. This was 25 miles away and traffic seemed scarce. Luckily, a L.I.A.P. lorry (with two Geordies just back) picked me up and a furious political tirade from the one in the dirty cap lasted until Riete. During the last two rides, I noticed the rain came squalling down and snow lay on the hills.

Hard walking soon took me to the base of a series of hairpin bends ; looking up the hill I could see the road railings twisting towards the crest.

An Italian Fiat of small dimensions hove in sight after I had taken a short steep cut to the first bend, so I waited doubtfully for him to get nearer. He stopped and intricate adjustments of the sardinic human interior were made. I calmed a rising storm by offering cigarettes. Then one of the passengers brought out a loaded Luger revolver. He claimed that in all probability bandits would descend from the hills and rob us. The weather was evidently ideal. We all shook hands when I said I would fight to the 'finito' with them. The driver seemed nervous, too. He went very fast to avoid the bandits ; cries of alarm as we lurched round the precipice brinks. How awful that journey was ! By sunset, I was in Aquila, 120 miles from Perugia, and I limped into my haven for the night, dragging along a dead leg which had acted as a prop for a suitcase during the last hour.

12th November

Rations were my problem for the next few days. I had relied on issue at Aquila, but a Lance-Corporal looked as though he didn't like me and informed me that I could only get them through proper channels. But I had been lucky getting to Aquila, and I decided not to abandon the scheme just because of food.

The weather was very dubious when I set off. It had been raining all night and clouds were low on the hills.

The main road was crow built—long, straight and dreary. So it was pleasant to eventually turn off the road for Assergi. As I strolled along, I calculated my rations. Today allowed three sandwiches and a tin of M. and V. Tomorrow, chocolate and one tin of bully beef. The day after, chocolate and the other tin of bully beef !

An old farmer passing by said, ' Good morning, how are you ? '

in perfect English. Sounded strange from an old buffer sitting on a donkey. Another one cried, 'You go to Gran Sasso? Don't go alone, there are wolves up there!' That remark worried me a little because I wouldn't be able to offer the wolves my rations.

The Sasso mountains were grey and uninviting. Steep snowy rocks tumbled sheer down from the clouds and I started up a small path which melted into the grey mists ahead. The first station of the disused funicular was just visible, and I stopped there for a breather. After the snow and wind, it was a joy to sit beside the hot, red fire. The sole occupier said it might not be wise to go to the upper hut at 6,900 feet. However, I was feeling very fit and decided to push on.

It was a wild walk. Sometimes the snow came above my knees, and I felt very much alone and small. A bird cry made me look up and I saw it dart above me swept along by the wind. Then it crashed into a wire of the railway and fell helplessly fluttering into the deep snow-filled gorge below.

Visibility became a matter of yards, and after a while, the path vanished. The wires of the funicular, heavy with snow, were just visible, and I watched them carefully to keep direction.

The wind was very strong behind me and as the slope increased I found it a great help. The hut finally loomed up—a mixture of swirling snow flakes and solid outline. A burly, tall, long-haired individual welcomed me at the door, and I was thankful to get inside a warm and pleasantly stuffy small room. Three Italians were living there, and I introduced myself as 'Alfredo.'

After supper we sat round the fire and chatted for quite a while. The present days, why Italy went to war . . . and they told me how Mussolini had been brought up there when Italy capitulated. Later, German paratroops made a daring landing on the small plateau and took him away. They said he did not appear pleased, and they could not convince him he was being rescued. Some of the crashed gliders still remain: the next day I noticed the snow made strange outlines of the frameworks.

When we went to bed the wind was raging and tearing at the hut. The windows were thick with snow and it was delicious to crawl into the warmth of blankets.

13th November

The morning was sunny and windless and the men got ready for their work. Lali made me porridge while Whisky and Toby, the two dogs, hunted the room for scraps. The array of garments worn by my three companions was startling and ingenious. Tiny, with his sheepskin waistcoat; numerous matchsticks replaced

numerous buttons. Antonio gave a vague impression of a prickly jaw projecting from under an enormous peaked cap. Lali was kept warm not by clothes, but by a lot of patches sewn together.

Since it was so pleasant outside I was soon ready for a day's wandering in the hills. The Corne Grande (9,584 feet) was cloaked in snow and all around lay deep powder snow which was very hard going. Higher up on a ridge, conditions improved, and I paused to view the scene. The wind had wrought many strange snow shapes on the rocks and to the East, the sullen remnants of last night's fury lingered in the valleys.

The Corne Grande seemed worthy of exploration and I made for a huge snow basin which lay between the summit ridge and myself. A struggle in deep snow was very tiring and in parts I sank to the waist. When I finally reached a snow face leading to the ridge, I gave up and looked for another route. Higher up, there could be seen a snow couloir which might lead to the ridge, and I climbed up the edge of the snow basin towards it. I left my rucksack at the foot of the rocks and started to climb. The snow and my limited experience made me go very slowly and carefully and eventually I found a long fierce chimney confronting me. An alternative snow slope lay to the left and I kicked steps up to the ridge. On arrival, I learnt that it was only a subsidiary ridge and only the chimney would lead me any farther. So I turned round and slowly came down finding it harder than going up.

My rucksack seemed to welcome me back—like the home mat—and after a rest, I went higher up to the rim of the snow basin where snow conditions were much better.

At one point I learnt a lesson. The wind had made heavy frowning eyebrows of snow overhanging the ridges. Even though I thought I had given plenty of clearance from the edge of the cornice, at one point there was an abrupt jerk and grunt of the snow and a crack spread several yards in front and behind me. I realised it was best to get farther down straight away and once I was safe, a small stone thrown on to the snow sent the whole mass swishing down, like sugar out of a bag, into the hollow below.

I got back to the hut before the men. So I changed my soaking socks and cleaned the place up. The fire was soon going, and a jug of tea ready. But when I looked into the valley below they were still working—heaving on ropes—and all my efforts seemed wasted. Finally, the clatter of heavy boots broke the silence and five hungry men invaded the solitude. Two more had arrived from the village below. The tea went down in one gulp and I was swept aside as a leaf in a gale.

They set to work. One of the new arrivals attacked a plank with a

small chopper. As he beat it into matchwood, the flying fragments caused me certain anxiety. Lali had meanwhile started a generator and immersed an electric heater in the bath. A shower of blue sparks left the tip of my boots when I tested the water for warmth. Tiny emerged with a bag of flour and jug of water, and while Antonio threw oddments into a pot of boiling water, he was pummelling a soggy mass of dough. He then rolled it flat and cut it into a lot of thin strips which were then thrown into the cooking pot.

When the dishing out came to pass, six dishes were piled as I have never seen before. A great silence fell and the spoons descended. Heads bowed over the dishes and the symphony of munching started. I decided it manners to make as much noise as the others (my normal table manners, anyway!). We completed the feast by walnuts on bread, washed down by coffee thickened with bread crumbs.

Lali brought out a concertina, and sitting round the fire, we listened to the wheezes of his instrument. Lali, with his gnarled fingers dancing on the keys. His long shaggy hair and a sad far-away look in his eyes. 'Coming Down the Mountain' was a great favourite. I particularly enjoyed their Alpine songs which went with fine harmony.

14th November

The morning again promised a brilliant blue sunny day. My companions asked me to stay, the Corne Grande was tempting. The snow was slightly better and I approached the snow basin by a Col to the North-East. In parts the going was very trying, and I wished I had taken yesterday's ridge route. This time I did not go down into the basin, but leaving my rucksack and taking two sweaters and some chocolate, made a high wide circuit of the basin. The snow face I had turned off yesterday seemed the only chance, and I was soon plugging up it. After a little experience I could follow the shallowest snow but it was only by keeping a steady rhythm that any progress was possible. The slope steepened near the top, and I emerged out of a narrow gully on to the ridge. All around were the calm sun-bathed snow peaks. Pizzo Intermesoli lay nearest—tall and dignified with jagged rock teeth ringing her lower slopes. The plains below leading to the Adriatic seemed map-like and a vague Eastern blue showed the Mediterranean. An easy slope led to the main ridge, but at the end it was necessary to cut steps up a short steep portion.

I had not gone far along the ridge proper when I realised it

would be foolish to go on. My climbing had become awkward and clumsy, I did not like the ice on the rocks and after pondering, I turned round. The steps I had made came in very useful for the descent and eventually I reached the snow basin whence I had started.

The sun was deliciously warm after the cold ridge, and I took off my shirt to sun bathe. Towards the rim I found a tiny spider in the snow. No doubt he had a genus, but I called him Pedro, and put him in my pocket for a warm-up.

Nearer the hut, I noticed clouds quietly creeping over the summits. One by one, the hills drew their grey cloaks around them, and the ridge, too, was soon enveloped.

15th November

The trudge back to Aquila was long and weary, and when I finally stepped back into the Army world, I had memories of the other world to cherish. Now, as I write of it, it seems as a dream that I had.

12th December, 1945.

Millican Dalton was born at Nenthead, near Alston, Cumberland, in 1867, and died on 5th February, 1947, aged 80 years. He was one of a family of five sons and one daughter. Until the age of 30 he worked in a London office, and then left the world of commerce to spend the rest of his life as a professional camper and guide. It was in 1905 that he started leading regular organised tours in the Lakes, Scotland, Switzerland, and before the 1914 war he settled down to make climbing, organised tours, and making camp kit, his profession. He was one of the originators of light-weight camping equipment, which comprised rucksacks, tents, etc. During this period he also climbed the Matterhorn, and somewhat scandalised his generation by introducing mixed camping tours. For one or two seasons he was secretary at the Holiday Fellowship, Newlands, and latterly spent a large amount of time in the Lake District, camping and rock climbing, with Borrowdale as a centre.

Millican Dalton, Professor of Adventure, a title of which he was very fond, was a true gentleman of the hills, and his companions were many. As a rock climber he was a very safe leader, and never took risks unduly. His cheery voice and encouraging manner were a help to many a novice. His favourite climbs included *The Brothers' Climb*, *Moss Ghyll* and *Slingsby's Chimney* on Scafell. He had an especial liking for the west side of Great Gable, *The Needle* in particular, which he ascended many times, also *Eagle's Nest*, *West Chimney*, *Abbey Buttress* and *Arrowhead*. Dove Nest caves at the head of Coombe Ghyll and the great slabs above were his happy hunting ground on many an occasion. The Langstrath Valley, too, with *Sergeant Crag Gulley*, *Gash Rock*, and problems on The Wuffie Stones, proved a never ending delight to him. Latterly, he spent some three months of each year in the man-made cave on the east side of Castle Crag, where he welcomed his visitors with the ideal camp fire, having a very good knowledge of burning woods, what to use, and what not to use; larch, juniper, yew, holly being amongst the best. The approaches to the cave are many, and to go with him there, from Rosthwaite, was always a delightful journey, particularly in the month of June, when the wild roses are gracing the hedges in the lane to the bridge over the River Derwent, and, turning to the right and following the river bank, he would pause to admire the yellow iris in the swamps, and the buck bean rising from the small dark bog holes. He gave special attention to a grove of hazel trees, where the river runs shallow for a hundred yards or more, which to him were especially fine, as being a strict vegetarian,

he used to say the quality of the nut in the autumn was better there than any other place he knew of. Some little distance away a bold rock would seem to terminate further progress, but an exit is found on the left, and the patch indicated along the lower portion would be pointed out as being a very fine example of glacier rock. Here, facing directly to Castle Crag, Millican would draw attention to the way Nature was doing her best to clothe the unsightly slate heaps, over which the way lies to a series of three caves. Flowering wild thyme, parsley fern, herb robert, and black stemmed maidenhair spleenwort, being amongst a great variety of flowers and ferns. Passing the larger cave with its walled-in fireplace, Millican was now 'at home' in the cave where he had his sleeping quarters and known as 'The Attic.' On entering the visitor is warned, by perfect lettering cut in the rock: '*Don't !! Waste Words, Jump to Conclusions.*' His inventive genius fashioned many gadgets out of wire for holding billycans over the fire, and various other uses. In this cave he would entertain his visitors expounding to them the philosophy which was purely Millican Dalton.

On occasion, he would ask them to ascend the north side of Castle Crag with him, which provides a steep scramble to the summit cairn, and where the views in every direction are magnificent. Here Millican would point out, to the north, Derwentwater and Skiddaw with the village of Grange and the River Derwent in the foreground; to the East, Grange Fell or King's How as it is now called, with Helvellyn in the far distance; to the South the head of Borrowdale Valley, with Rosthwaite village, above which Ullscarf stands out on the skyline. The stream descending Greenup Ghyll can faintly be seen with Eagle Crag on the right, which marks the junction of the two streams, Greenup and Langstrath. Rosthwaite Fell and Coombe Ghyll come next in turn, overshadowed by Glaramara, then Great End, Scafell, Base Brown and Great Gable, with Grain Ghyll and Styhead Pass leading out from the hamlet of Seathwaite; to the west, Gate Crag with its wonderful scrambling gullies, and short rock climbs, and the lovely stream which comes down between Gate Crag and Knitting Howe; in between and down below, runs the track between Grange and Seatoller. All these places were familiar to Millican. He had a deep affection, too, for the south side of Castle Crag, amongst the Scotch firs, or farther over Johnny Wood and High Doat, and lovely Charity Coppice with its never failing stream and secret waterfall which has its source in Rigg Head and Scawdel.

The remains of camp fires where Millican brewed coffee are many. He was a well-known figure throughout Lakeland in his picturesque garb, and respected by all who knew him. A man of

simple pleasures and tastes, conducive to a mind at peace with the world, whose knowledge of things in general was very sound. After a day on the hills with him, or just pottering about, one had a feeling of contented happiness and peace of mind, proving the simple pleasures of life to be most lasting. Many sincere tributes have been paid to him. R.E.W., a mutual friend, says his resources for adventure were never ending. The wonderful scrambles through Lodore and Stanley Ghyll when in spate, as well as shooting the rapids on the Derwent on a raft made from local junk, and the red sailing boat on Derwentwater, are never to be forgotten.

He will be greatly missed as a companion and guide, made lasting by the Valley of Borrowdale, and its hills, with Castle Crag, the guardian fortress of them all. Farewell, Millican Dalton.

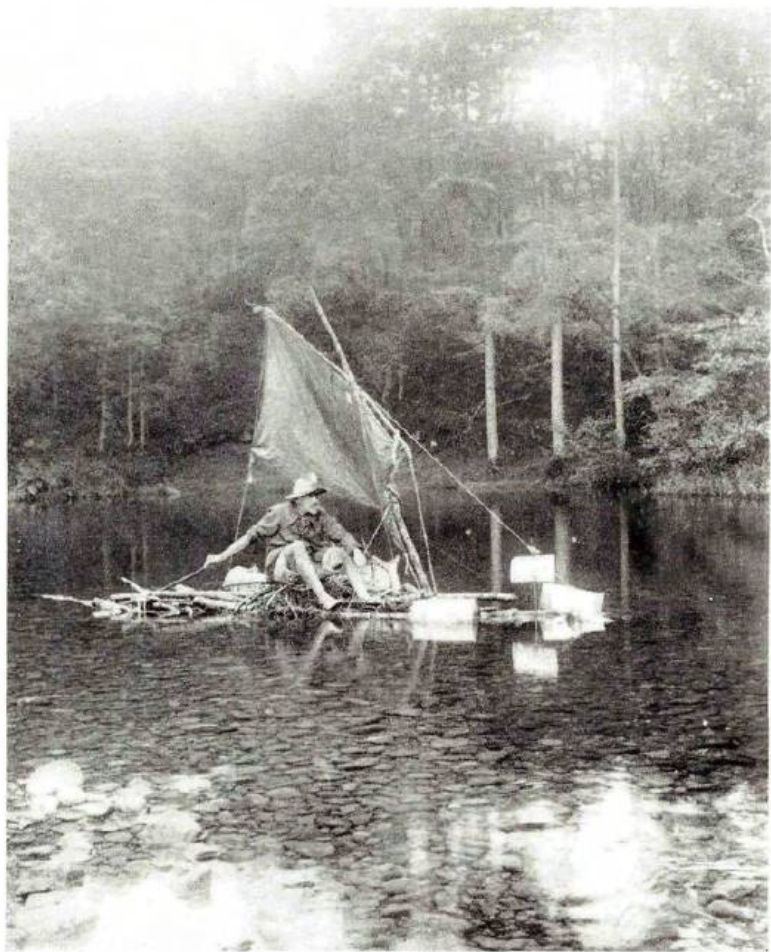
MEMORIES OF MY FIRST LEADER

Mabel M. Barker

Last summer I had an amusing and characteristic letter from Millican Dalton. It was written from the cave in Borrowdale in which he lived, and posted without an envelope. It concerned a difference of opinion with the Astronomer Royal ('He said I was wrong, but I have reason to believe that he was'); and also his immediate plans for the summer's climbing. This spring I heard through the local papers, that his strange life is over. He lived alone; I know the address of no relative, so can offer my tribute of respect and affection in this way alone; through the medium of the fells and rocks that were the original and abiding link between us.

I had heard of Millican Dalton long before I met him, for we had a mutual friend in George Morris. I gathered that he had tried without success to lure George on to the rocks. The first mention of him arose from a discussion on literature: 'I know the original of the chief character in *Rest Harrow*,' said George. 'At least, he is like enough to have suggested him.' And he described the friend who had left an office job to live on a tiny income on a piece of land in Billericay. Later, he had deserted even that for a tent among the Cumbrian mountains, and augmented the little income by making tents and rucksacks, and by initiation of budding mountaineers. I suppose he was, in a way, our first Lakeland Guide. But in long association, I never knew him to charge anything for his services beyond a trifle for camping expenses; and I wonder how many owed to him their first thrills on rock and rope; in camp and caves in all weathers; in forest and on water, and in the cunning management of wood fires. Personally, I owe him much.

When, in 1913, I first took a party of students from Saffron Walden to camp at Seathwaite, I got his address, and wrote to ask if we could hire tents from him. The tents materialised, and one evening he walked into camp to see how they and their occupants were faring. Then and thereafter, he reminded me of pictures of Robinson Crusoe. He made his own clothes, very strong and efficient, and entirely to his own design, and of a dull green, toning with the fells. But whether from choice or a streak of laziness (I do not think I ever saw him in a hurry) they were never quite finished, the edges remaining unhemmed. A red plaid added colour, and was put to innumerable uses. A slouch hat always bore a pheasant's feather. Bright blue eyes sparkled in a permanently tanned face, and a little pointed beard was slightly grey even then. He used a bicycle, not only for personal transport, but as a wheelbarrow, in which capacity it carried incredible burdens and



MILlicAN DALTON ON THE DERWENT, BORROWDALE *R. H. Mayton*



MILlicAN DALTON ON DOVE NEST, GLARAMARA *R. H. Mayson*

got into extraordinary places. At that time, and for many years, his summer camping ground was a small flat space above High Lodore Farm, and his winter quarters a hut in Epping Forest.

That evening he sat by our camp fire, and probably erected a really efficient bar to support kettle or billy cans. His own preference in this line was for a varied assortment of tins, pierced for a wire, and his choicest brew was excellent coffee. ('The only recipe for making good coffee is to use plenty of it.')

He was at home throughout his life by any camp fire, certainly so at mine. But when, years later, he visited me at Friar Row, it was a problem whether it would do him the greater honour and pleasure to put him in the best bedroom or the garage—I forget which it was ; probably a tent in the garden !

One of our rather large company, that first year, had boots to be mended. He took them away with him, and we heard later that, Plaskett's shop being shut, he just left them on the doorstep. They returned safely in due time. Would we do that today—even in Borrowdale ?

Quite casually he offered to take any of us for a climb. I could hardly believe my ears. We turned up in some force in the Needle Gully on 31st July—and so climbing for me began—officially, so to speak. I have told elsewhere of that first day with the rope. A week later some of us were with him again, and were taken on Kern Knotts. He was very careful never to take a novice on anything beyond their power, and his patience with them was wonderful. He really *taught* his initiates, explaining and showing the use of belays, knots (I was never really happy in the use of any knots but his), the safe length of a pitch, care for the leader, and the general safety of the whole party. Probably, by modern methods, he was over-cautious, but it's a good fault. He climbed till he was in his 80th year, and I never heard of an accident to anyone under his guidance.

War broke and interrupted the glorious adventures of the fells. But in September, 1914, on a walking tour with Norah Geddes, we met him somehow, and were both led by glimmering and guttering candles through Dove's Nest Caves. On that ascent, and so lit, I was greatly impressed to note the seat of his breeches—one huge patch of Willesden canvas, so ensuring that his waterproof ground-seat went with him !

On another day that same summer we did *Eagle's Nest* and *Arrowhead*.

Then a blank—years in which there were other things to do and think about—the terrible years of 1914-1918.

After the war, however, and while working at King's Langley Priory, I began going to Epping Forest at week-ends to join Millican and others in the pleasant pastime of 'Tree Boling.' The great beech trunks provided cracks, chimneys, cols and face climbs. We named them, repeated the favourites, made new ascents. One of the very few scars I carry is a tiny mark on one finger made by an Epping Forest tree climb. Dalton was, I believe, the only man then allowed to light fires in the forest at his discretion ; and there were happy tea and coffee parties and sing-songs round them. There we discussed the chances of the early Everest expeditions, and there he agreed to go to the Tyrol with a party I collected ; he to be its general guide and choosing our objective—the Zillertal. Occasionally, we went to his hut. Alas ! it was burnt down later, and with it many photographs and early volumes of the 'Fell and Rock Journal.' His only comment that I remember was that as many letters had been destroyed, he wouldn't have the trouble of answering them.

But before that I had a few more days with him on the fells. Strange it is, on looking up dates, to realise how very few and precious they were, and how far spaced. I had no other climbing partner, nor did it occur to me to seek one, though, as always, I walked and scrambled alone whenever possible. Millican was my only contact with the rope in those early years.

He took me up Walla Crag and Mouse Ghyll in 1919. At the exit from the latter I remember being very tired and coming on the rope. Only twice again, in a fairly long innings, do I remember doing that, and in these cases it was anticipated !

About this time some friends who wanted to be married with the minimum of fuss, but in a church, arranged for the ceremony at Rosthwaite. The night before I camped with the bride at High Lodore. Next morning what might have been a climbing party set out for Rosthwaite. Millican acted as best man, in complete climbing costume, boots and rope and all, his only concession being a pair of stockings ; and when the bridal party emerged he at once sat down on the grass and removed them. He cooked the wedding breakfast—a chicken boiled in a billy can—in the (then disused) slate caves, and we spent a happy day climbing in and around the quarries.

I think it was in 1921 that he took a small party, including me, to camp at the foot of Taylor's Force. The famous blue bicycle got most of our kit there. We found a cache of tinned foods, deeply hidden in grass and boulders, obviously long forgotten by its owner ; the labels departed, the tins rusted, but the contents in perfect

condition. As Millican was a vegetarian most of the spoils fell to the rest of us.

I had a good time that summer. Dove's Nest was visited again ; *Eagle's Nest Chimney* ; *Needle Ridge*, and—my first lead—*Kern Knotts Chimney* ! Then a glorious day, with the *Needle*, *Kern Knotts Buttress* and *Eagle's Nest Direct*, with Ralph Mayson. I think it must have been then that they talked about proposing me for membership of the Fell and Rock. It seemed incredible luck to me. (Do today's postulants get such a thrill out of it, I wonder ?) That same season, joined by Coward of Keswick, we did the climb now called *Black Crag Buttress*, but then *Troutdale Buttress* ; and on another day had some fun on the Ennerdale Face of Gable. For the first (and most certainly the last) time, I was inveigled into that detestable affair called *Smugglers' Chimney*. Dalton, very knowing about it, kindly gave the lead to Coward. Then he went round to the top, and sat there making sarcastic remarks about how long we took, and '*Smugglers'*' *Chimney*, while we fought and gasped in what should really be called '*Strugglers'*' *Chimney*. Years later, when helping with notes for the Gable Guide, I flatly refused to accompany A. Wood-Johnson into the thing, and sat below making notes of 'pitches' and listening with grim pleasure to his howls of agony. At one point he reported himself as upside down. (Incidentally, I wonder if the measurements were accurate ; anyone care to check up ?)

But to return to the Tyrol. We went there in 1922 and camped for a month near Mayerhofen in the Zillerthal, on a site where loveliness and novelty had to make up for the fact that not one square yard of it was flat.

Here Dalton dealt patiently with a company ranging from middle-aged women to small boys, and taught many of us all we ever learned about negotiating glaciers and snowfields. His passion for making tea and coffee in all sorts of queer places was more than useful, but on one occasion when his brew would have been more welcome than manna from heaven, I think the apparatus was missing ! This was when five of us—four women and Millican—got caught in a blizzard and benighted high up at glacier level above the Alpenrose, and spent a very uncomfortable night out in the snow. A violent thunderstorm added excitement to the situation, the lightning striking on our ice-axes, while drops of water on our hair shone strangely, so that for once at least we wore halos. Perhaps we deserved them, for though drenched to the skin before we gave up the attempt to get down, and all very cold, we sang songs and told stories through the long night, and nobody 'woke up dead.'

When the light came, heralded by a glorious sunrise, Millican led us down to the Alpenrose Hütte. I remember the strange spectacle of him defending himself with an ice-axe from a mob of sheep, as bothered as we were by a great fall of snow in August. None of us will ever forget the kindness of the folk at the Hütte.

Millican went up again later for the rope which we had left because it was impossible to coil it, both we and the rope being far too stiff. In the evening (for we had spent the day in bed) he led us down to camp, a white handkerchief round one ankle, and a lighted cigarette helping us to follow in the dark. None of us were a penny the worse for the adventure.

We ended the holiday by a small remnant of the party crossing the Brenner into Italy for a look at the Dolomites. Millican and I, the only climbers left, had a small taste of the lovely quality of the rock—I forget where. He was tired by then, and we left him at Tre Croce to make contact with a friend when the last of the party set off for home.

In all the later years, up to the outbreak of the last war, we met from time to time. He gave up the camp site at High Lodore in favour of the cave on Castle Crag. There he was to be found, summer after summer, and we could tell when he was 'at home' by the blue smoke curling among the trees, easily seen from the Borrowdale road. But it was none too easy to find, and some of us will remember adventurous treks from it, when the charm of his camp fire and coffee, and his (increasingly argumentative!) conversation delayed departure till the dusk caught us. When we climbed together it was rather a shock to find that I was expected as a matter of course to take the lead. But he never regarded himself as past climbing, even in his 80th year. Nor did he ever change much in appearance. I have some rather jolly photographs taken about 1935.

Many in these days will have less comfortable housing accommodation than he had in his 'Aladdin's Cave,' where traces of his occupation will surely be found. He was no believer in 'roughing it,' but an adept at achieving comfort wherever possible, and a great believer in down quilts as a necessary part of camping equipment.

His cave will be waiting for him this summer on Castle Crag; his fireplace ready, his seat built up beside it, gadgets in plenty for suspending tins, fresh water collecting in his pool, and a bed of dried leaves in one corner. There is an upper cave, reserved for guests. It will wait in vain—perhaps. But his picturesque figure and lovable personality have surely become part of the heritage of Lakeland so long as the hills endure and men love them.

He was not ever, I think, among the great climbers. He had no ambition to be so. In a way, he had no ambition at all. It is difficult to strike a fair balance between his firm belief in his own opinions and his innate modesty ; to assess his curious self-assertiveness, and the absence of any self-seeking. In his latter years it was quite impossible to argue with him, though he delighted in trying to make one do so.

' I should have liked to have you dropping stones on them (his opinions on the universe !), and trying to dodge them.'

He had, I think, early worked out a theory of life for himself, and if ever anyone did so, he lived up to it consistently and completely. He had found something, and was well content with it.

Into this union of theory and practice of life, climbing fitted as a natural part. He did things on the rocks, as everywhere else, to please himself, but not for self-seeking ; to fit in with his theory of life, and of earth and his relation to it. He believed that people (astronomers included) were ' shutting their eyes to the foundations of the universe.' Perhaps he was wiser than most of us, and his long and happy life indeed trod a pathway to the stars.

THE HON. MRS MURRAY OF KENSINGTON IN
LAKELAND

Mary Rose FitzGibbon

One of the charms of collecting—even in a mild way—eighteenth and early nineteenth century books of travel, apart from their nice brown calf bindings and gilt tooling, is that you never know what interesting things you may find in them. The gem of my small collection so far is *A Companion and Useful Guide to the Beauties of Scotland, and to the Lakes of Westmoreland, Cumberland and Lancashire* ; and to the *Curiosities of the District of Craven in the West Riding of Yorkshire, to which is added, a more particular Description of Scotland especially that part of it called the Highlands*. By the Hon. Mrs Murray of Kensington. London. 1799-1803. 2 vols.

My first introduction to Mrs Sarah Murray was in one of Mr H. V. Morton's delightful books about Scotland, in which he mentions how he bought her in Inverness. This in itself was an achievement as there is no old book shop in Inverness, only a stall in the market. To find such a prize in such an haphazard way must have been very satisfying. For two or three years I was on the track of Mrs Murray. I saw her once in John Grant's list at 7/6, but when I wrote for her she had gone. Then she reappeared in a London book catalogue at 30/-, but again I was too late. Eventually, I ran her to earth in Aberdeen for 2/6, backstrips damaged and two covers missing, but none the less a treasure, especially after such a long pursuit. The Dictionary of National Biography tells us that her first husband was the Hon. William Murray, brother of Lord Dunmore. After his death in 1786, she married Mr George Aust. She was born in 1744, and died at the age of 67 at Noel House, Kensington, on 5th November, 1811.

Apart from this mention by Mr H. V. Morton, no writer appears to have discovered her.

Travel was a great interest of the educated English in the eighteenth century. They travelled all over Europe and a few of them journeyed to the farthest Hebrides. They rode mostly on horseback, but the more wealthy used a light one-horsed chaise, or a carriage with a pair of horses; horses being hired from one stage to another.

Mrs Murray stands out among eighteenth century travellers because she claims to be the first writer of a Guide whereas her predecessors had only written Tours, and because she describes in a lively style how she took her carriage from Kensington to the Lakes, and through the most remote parts of the Highlands as far north as Inverness and even over the Corrieयरack Pass, giving a

graphic picture of the modes of locomotion of the times, and of the people and social conditions of the country. As well as viewing the favourite sights of the period; castles, ruins, and cascades—is there a waterfall in the Highlands that she did not visit? sometimes getting soaked through and changing her shoes, stockings, and petticoats in the carriage :

. . . after creeping over slippery stages of flaky rock, and clambering up and down steps on the rocks, from one high mass to another, the pools whirling beneath me, and the water dashing, white and foaming around me, for a quarter of a mile, I arrived at the first fall.

she ascended Cairngorm and the Scur of Eigg, walked to the Lairig Ghru, explored all the islands of the Inner Hebrides, and voyaged to Scarba for the purpose of viewing the whirlpool in the Gulf of Corryreckan.

When we wish to visit the Highlands or the Lakes, we throw a sleeping bag and a picnic basket into a car, make sure we have a jack and a spare wheel, and set off. Although more complicated, Mrs Murray's preparations were much the same :

Provide yourself with a strong roomy carriage, and have the springs well corded ; have also a stop-pole and strong chain to the chaise. Take with you lynch pins, and four shackles, which hold up the braces of the body of the carriage ; a turn-screw, fit for fastening the nuts belonging to the shackles ; a hammer, and some straps.

For the inside of the carriage, get a light flat box, the corners must be taken off, next the doors, for the more conveniently getting in and out. This box should hang on the front of the chaise, instead of the pocket, and be as large as the whole front, and as deep as the size of the carriage will admit ; the side next the travellers should fall down by hinges, at the height of their knees, to form a table on their laps ; the part of the box below the hinges should be divided into holes for wine bottles, to stand upright in. The part above the bottles, to hold tea, sugar, bread and meat ; a tumbler glass, knife and fork, and salt cellar, with two or three napkins. I would also advise to be taken bed-linen, and half-a-dozen towels at least, a blanket, thin quilt and two pillows ; these articles will set a traveller quite at ease, with respect to accommodation ; the blanket and quilt will be very seldom wanted ; however, when they are, it is very pleasant to have such conveniences in one's power. . . . With my maid by my side, and my man on the seat behind the carriage, I set off, May the 28th, 1796. Mr Edes, of Stratton Street, Piccadilly, provided me with a good pair of horses ; and a very civil man he is ; those who have the occasion for post-horses will do very well for themselves if they employ him.

Unfortunately from a Lake District point of view, Mrs Murray's heart was in the Highlands ; and the larger part of her *Guide* is an entertaining description of her adventures among the Beauties of Scotland from 1794 to 1802, and of the people she met there. She visited Lakeland in 1794 and again in 1796, and her account is unusual because she seems to be the first tourist who claims to have crossed Honister Pass, and the first woman tourist of whom we have

any record, who walked on Lakeland mountains. She commences by telling us :

The Lakes of Westmoreland and Cumberland, having been so often *described* by very able pens, I shall only offer *directions* for seeing many beauties and curiosities, seldom mentioned by, or known to, *general* Tourists. I shall notice also inns, and the distances from place to place ; avoiding all particular descriptions.

This sounds as though she did not approve of the Romantic type of tourist like Thomas Gray (1769), and Hutchinson (1773) ; who simply rode or walked on the main roads, writing effusive descriptions of the scenery, ignoring the natives, and appalled by the crags impending terribly over their way. Mr Avison, organist of St Nicholas at Newcastle-on-Tyne, cried out on first seeing Derwent-water :—

Here is beauty indeed—Beauty lying in the lap of Horror!

Let Mrs Ann Radcliffe, the novelist, who did the tourist round in 1794, including the usual ride up Skiddaw with a guide, give us a typical example of this style :

About a mile from the summit, the way was, indeed, dreadfully sublime, laying for nearly half-a-mile, along the ledget of a precipice, that passed, with a swift descent, for probably near a mile, into a glen within the heart of Skiddaw ; and not a bush, or a hillock interrupted its vast length, or, by offering a midway check in the descent, diminished the fear it inspired. . . . 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.

Mrs Murray appreciates the beauty of scenery, and when she climbs a mountain she does so for the view ; but she never lapses into the worst kind of Romantic description. In the literary chiaroscuro of the mountain writing of her time, she is a forerunner of the more restrained and lucid style of which, a few years later, Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journals* were to be such an accomplished example. Here is Dorothy's description of the view from the Sound of Mull :

There was a range of hills opposite, which we were here first told were the hills of Morven, so much sung by Ossian . . . mists floated very near to the water on their sides, and were slowly shifting about ; yet the sky was clear, and the sea, from the reflection of the sky, of an ethereal or sapphire blue, which was intermingled in many places, and mostly by gentle gradations, with beds of bright dazzling sunshine ; green islands lay on the calm water, islands far greener, for so it seemed, than the grass of other places.

And here is Mrs Murray's :

The entrance of the Sound of Mull is beautiful, Morven on one hand, the island of Mull on the other, Duart Castle forming a fine object on the shore of the latter, and the old castle of Ardtorinish, with its bold cliffs on

the former. We advanced slowly, as it every moment became calmer and calmer, so that at times the cutter hardly moved. The weather was hot and the mists were floating, sometimes along the sides of the majestic mountains, at others covering their summits, and again rolling through the vallies below, in a style I had never seen before ; it was like Ossian's 'Shadowy breeze that poured its dark wave over the grass.' It was a perpetual change of light and shade, on majestic scenery that was beyond description glorious and enchanting. . . .

We can only feel sorry that she does not conduct us through the Lakes **with** as much detail as she does through the Highlands—sketching, collecting geological specimens, pressing wild flowers and leaves, and talking to everyone that she meets. Storm-tossed on the way to Tiree :

The wind was directly for us, but the tide was contrary, which made the sea run high, and roar amongst the rocks. The sea was dashing, the sails rattling, the sailors hollowing and shouting ; in short, except in the Gulf of Coire Vreaikain, it was the greatest bustle I ever was in. . . .

she may be admiring the snows of Ben Nevis from Beinn a' Bheithir, or exploring Staffa. There is hardly a dull page. Journeying to the Lakes from Kensington by way of the Curiosities of Craven, at Kendal she found :

The King's Arms is not a good inn, and Masterman, the mistress of it in 1796, was an impertinent fine lady, and unaccommodating to strangers.

She then goes by Bowness to Newby Bridge, Furness Abbey, and back to Ambleside by Coniston :

You will afterwards go round the head of Winder Mere, and arrive at Low-wood inn, a very neat comfortable house ; and the Wrights, who keep it, are very civil good people. . . . From Low-wood to Keswick, 18 miles ; one of the finest drives in the world ; in that road observe Rydal Water, and the rocky romantic pass between it and Grassmere, where you will be introduced into the land of soft, pastoral, calm delight. Admire the mountains as you descend from Grassmere. . . . The ridge of mountain on the right is Helvellyn, 3,324 feet above the level of the sea, which is somewhat higher than Skiddaw, and it retains the snow upon its top much longer than Skiddaw. In a rainy day, innumerable torrents rush down its sides to the road, and run to the lakes. About midway between Low-wood and Keswick there is a lake, called Leathes Water ; which though bare of wood, is notwithstanding beautiful. The outline of Leathes Water, the hills around it, and the promontories that run into it, render the *tout ensemble* striking. You will pass through part of Saint John's Vale before you come within sight of Keswick ; the mountains which bound that vale are very fine. Of your own accord you will stop to admire, and almost adore, when you first look upon Keswick Vale, Derwent Water, Bassen-thwaite Lake, and the surrounding mountains.

At the Queen's Head, at Keswick, you will be well accommodated, and meet with the utmost civility from the Woods, who keep the inn, particularly from Mrs Wood, who is an exceeding good woman. The guide charges five shillings a day for his attendance, besides the hire of his horse. If you can ride on horseback, you will be able to see that fairy land far better than in a carriage.

Do not omit going to Watenlath ; it is the most beautiful mountain vale that can be seen ; it is literally a valley upon a high mountain, with mountains again rising from it, infinitely higher than the vale. It lies at the top of Lodore Fall, having the rivulet, which is precipitated over the rocks at Lodore, running through it from a small lake at the village of Watenlath.

The only other tourist of Mrs Murray's time who has left a record of a visit to Watendlath, is Wra Gilpin, M.A., Prebendary of Salisbury (*Observations, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772*), who 'reached this upper valley after a painful perpendicular march of near two miles, and found nothing picturesque in the view, but something immensely grand.' He thought that goats would improve the landscape and suggests that:—•

In a Picturesque light, no ornament is more adapted to a mountainous and rocky country, than these animals. Their colours are beautiful (in those particularly of a darker hue) often playing into each other with great harmony. But among these animals (as among all others) the pied are the most unpleasing ; in which opposite colours come full upon each other, without any intervening tint.

The shagginess of the goat also is as beautiful, as the colours which adorn him ; his hair depending in that easy flow, which the pencil wishes to imitate.

His actions are still more pleasing. It would add new terror to a scene, to see an animal brouzing on the steep of a perpendicular rock ; or hanging on the very edge of a projecting precipice. Virgil seems to have looked at these attitudes of terror with delight:

*Ite, capellæ ;
Non ego vos posthac, viridi projectus in antro,
Dumosa*pendere procul de rupe videbo.*

Gilpin was the High Priest of the Picturesque school of thought about natural beauty ; they nearly always required the landscape shifted around or something added to it, in order to make it appeal to the Picturesque eye.

Mrs Murray continues :

Go through Borrowdale, and over the Hawse into Gatesgarthdale. In Gatesgarthdale you will pass under Honister Crag to the left, where are fine slate quarries. From the top of Honister Crag is a prodigiously fine view of the lakes below, and the heaps of mountains all around. The descent from the crag, on the sharp and rocky ridge of it, near to the houses of Gatesgarth, is somewhat tremendous ; but it was descended, in 1796, by a female. The head of Buttermere is close to the village of Gatesgarth, and you will ride very near that lake all the way to the village of Buttermere ; where is an alehouse, at which you can get admirable ale, and bread and cheese, perchance a joint of mutton. Few people will like to sleep at the Buttermere alehouse ; but with the help of my own sheets, blanket, pillows, and counterpane, I lodged there a week very comfortably.

From Buttermere I one day walked to the Wad Mines, or black-lead mines, and returned over the top of Honister Crag. Another day, I walked over the mountains by Gatesgarth into Innerdale, and through it to Inner Bridge, on the whole, sixteen miles. If possible, Innerdale should be seen, for it is beautiful, particularly about Gillerthwaite, at the head of the lake ;

and again at the foot of the lake, looking up the valley towards its head. At the alehouse at Inner Bridge, I was obliged to pass the night in a chair by the kitchen fire, there being not a bed in the house fit to put myself upon. The next morning I returned over the mountains, by Scale Force, to my lodgings.

Is it possible that this descent of the ridge of Fleetwith Pike was, in fact, made by Mrs Murray herself? She is modest about her achievements, but conscious of being more adventurous than other females. This is also the first mention of the crossing of Honister Pass and Scarf Gap. Although by the 1780's there was in the Lakes a well established and flourishing *tourisme*, the ordinary tourist round comprised Ullswater, Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite, Grasmere, Rydal and Windermere, and occasionally Coniston. Few tourists penetrated to Buttermere, except that formidable fell-walker, and endearing personality, Captain Jos. Budworth. In his *Fortnight's Ramble to the Lakes* in 1792, he relates how he walked to Buttermere by Newlands, went on to see Scale Force, returning to the alehouse for lunch. Then he walked back to Keswick and ascended Skiddaw to see the sunset.

Camden's *Britannia*, edited in 1695 by Bishop Gibson, who knew his native district well, only maps three indefinite lakes in this region, from which streams flow to the Cocker. He marks Borrowdale, Grange and Watendlath, but no passes over the mountains. Yet, Gatescarthevd (top of the road gap) was the name of Honister Pass in 1209. James Clarke, in his *Survey of the Lakes* (1787 and 2nd ed., 1789), does not include a map of Buttermere; although this work was intended for the tourist. Peter Crosthwaite, *Admiral of the Keswick Regatta, who keeps the museum at Keswick, and is Guide, Pilot, Geographer and Hydrographer to the Nobility and Gentry who make the Tour of the Lakes*; first published his tourist maps in 1783, but only includes Buttermere and directions for crossing Honister on horseback in the fourth edition of 1800.* West's (the first, and then only) *Guide* (1778), conducts the traveller as far as Rosthwaite, but there is no mention of Honister Pass, even in the eleventh edition of 1821. It mentions Gatesgarth and Honister Crag, and an 'Alpine' journey over the Stake, but gives directions for reaching Buttermere through Newlands. Gilpin is the only tourist who says that he penetrated into Gatesgarthdale, but the 'wild and hideous precipices' drove him back to Buttermere after about three miles. He says:

This valley is not more than six miles from the black-lead mines, and would have led us to them, if we had pursued its course.

* I have not been able to consult the 3rd Ed. of 1794.

f See page 58.

After her *tour de force* in Ennerdale, Mrs Murray—perhaps with a slight touch of sarcasm—continues :

. . . But to return to the travellers on horseback. At Buttermere you may leave your horses, and walk about a mile to Scale Force, a very lofty and curious waterfall. In your way thither you will have a fine view of Crommack Water, and the noble mountains around it. . . . If you have time, and can ride on horseback, by all means see Innerdale (before mentioned) and Wast Water. . . .

This is her only mention of Wasdale. In the absence of further evidence, we must conclude that she did not go there. She states that she is avoiding all particular descriptions, yet she follows on with one, of the ride round Derwentwater. Would she not have done the same for Wastwater if she had visited it, especially as the 'general tourist' had not so far written up this valley. Nothing deterred Mrs Murray from getting anywhere that she really wanted to, as in her walk from Logie Almond to Leadnock :

. . . I was determined, however, to see that admired place. I set out alone, and contrived to lose my way ; and into the bargain, got my flesh and my clothing tattered and torn ; but I was resolved to accomplish my purpose, I therefore pierced thick woods, climbed stone walls, clambered over ploughed clods, knee deep, waded the burn, and at last succeeded. I was hospitably regaled with some nice mutton and potatoes at Leadnock House ; a very acceptable refreshment after my laborious, lonely, blundering walk.

This was at the age of 52, when the background of the period in which she lived was of powdered hair and hooped petticoats at the Court of St James's, elegant manners and exquisite Meissen Porcelain.

. . . Also ride entirely round Derwentwater ; every step you take in that ride will afford you pleasure. . . . An hour or two before noon the reflections of the surrounding objects in the clear lake are more beautiful than can be imagined. The ride from the village of Grange, on the sides of the mountains on the west shore of the lake, and through Lord William Gordon's woods round Keswick, is delightful, in a fine evening, when the setting sun gilds the opposite mountains, crags and woods. . . . The prospect during the whole descent of the Cockermouth road into Keswick (which you will have when you return from Scale Hill), is prodigiously fine. . . . It is a matter to boast of, that of climbing Skiddaw ; but the view from it is hardly worth the fatigue of obtaining it, even in a clear day. On the summit of Skiddaw, to which travellers climb, is a long and broad bed of very large loose pieces of slate. Upon each of the summits of Skiddaw is a huge heap of these slate flakes ; one heap is called My Lord, and the other My Lady. A dreamer of dreams, not many years ago, dreamed that a great treasure was hid under My Lord ; the man secretly mounted Skiddaw, removed the slate heap piece by piece ; but whether a treasure rewarded him for his labour I never could learn. . . . At Mr Crosthwaite's Museum may be had charming /Eolian harps, for five shillings each. . . .

Here, the Hon. Mrs Murray of Kensington, leaves Keswick for the Crown Inn at Penrith. Regretfully, we can picture her, an interested and determined figure 'clad in a habit of Tartan such as the 42nd regiment of Highlanders wear'; sitting upright in her carriage with her maid by her side, her man on the seat behind; slowly climbing the hill out of the town. They turn up the old road from Chestnut Hill, the carriage creeps up past Fieldside to the top of the brow, and we lose sight of her 'red leather cap with its brown fur trimming,' as they descend the bill towards Goosewell Farm.

PRESENT AND FUTURE OF FELLSIDE FARMING

S. H. Cole

Thirty years ago there was one motor cycle in Caldbeck, shortly to be followed by an old Model 'T' Ford. Those two inoffensive-looking machines were the pioneers of a revolution that has left a greater mark upon Fellside than anywhere else in the country. Before the coming of the motor we had to be self-supporting, to manage our own affairs, to entertain ourselves and to co-operate amongst ourselves to get work such as dipping, clipping, threshing, ploughing and moving house done.

The Parish Council, the School managers and the 'Barney' Court (Manorial Court) were bodies that exercised some considerable power, guidance and restraint over an area where, owing to the vast amount of open common land and other difficulties peculiar to fell districts, such control was vital.

The accessibility, so-called efficiency and hurry made possible by the motor car has swept all this away and left a void. Partly owing to bad times, but largely owing to easy transport, men who used to stay at home and attend to their work have become trader-farmers who spend too much time round auction rings.

Transport, bad times and then the war have encouraged Fellsiders to sell milk. In the hands of a few conscientious owner-occupiers and tenants this steady source of income has enabled some farms to be modernised and put into good heart. In the hands of the majority it has been an excuse to rob the land, debase strains of cattle and neglect everything else. That cheque at the month-end has caused sheep stocks, poultry and bees to be neglected and bracken cutting has had to go. This, combined with lack of time to burn heather properly and to keep bees to keep it healthy is largely responsible for bracken slowly but surely taking the fells from us.

Fell sheep stocks have suffered seriously as a result of milk selling, too. Ewes and lambs have to be turned out to the Fell much earlier in the Spring to clear the fields for the cows and to clear the mowing ground for hay grass—for good hay is the first essential for winter milk production. As a result the ewes do not milk well and lambs do not grow as they should. The low-country farmer, again as a result of milk selling, wants his grazings in winter for his own young cattle and will not take in to winter the Fellsiders' 'hoggs' as he used to do. Feeders complain that, as a result of milk selling the Fellsiders' bullocks do not get plenty of milk when young, and that they will not grow to the same prime carcasses as in the past and that they require another year to mature.

Another fearful threat to the Fellsider has developed from the activities of Water undertakings and Afforestation.

' Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where trees accumulate and sheep decay.'

It is not just the loss of land to these undertakings—that is bad enough. It is the threat to an already tiny market made by depleted supplies to it when each new sheep walk falls into their hands. Once the supply of Fell mutton and wool to this market falls below a certain level it will no longer be worth while to merchants and manufacturers to cater for it—and only those of us who are in this market know how perilously near we are to this happening.

Another source of income has practically gone, too—the Fell pony. The new form of transport has killed the demand and motorists will not close fell gates and breeders are constantly being fined for having them on the roads !

In the short space of twenty years wages have risen from a few shillings a week to ten times that amount and, as a consequence, the fell-siders' sons and daughters leave home to seek the better wages their own small farms cannot afford to pay.

And the cult of the small family has reached Fellside, too. These two factors must have a grave bearing upon an industry where, more than any other, family labour and tradition have been the secret of success in the past.

The present position is one of bewildering change in an incredibly short space of time. The greatest anomalies are everywhere to be seen on Fellside. Some few prescient men who have specialities such as pedigree stock of high standing are making money fast—as are others who have been fortunate in finding themselves upon large cheap fell farms with large flocks of ewes drawing Hill Sheep Subsidy or others similarly drawing Hill Cattle Subsidy on wild cheap farms.

But the sober fact is that most fellside farms would not be self-supporting at the present time without these subsidies—and especially without visitors. The Fellsider was quick to cater for the visitors, who have not only proved a source of much needed revenue, but a much needed link of mutual liking and understanding with the outer world.

And what of the future . . . ? Once the country is round the corner of shortages and Hill Sheep and Hill Cattle subsidies and milk selling are taken away from the fellsider—as they most probably will be—can his sturdy individualism hope to compete with the problems of the Fells ?

The Hill Farming Bill, with its provision of some ten millions of

pounds over a period of five years, has been made available by the Government in the hope of putting new life into the industry.

Such a sum of money spent collectively after careful planning in one district each year (as, for instance, in the Skiddaw Group area one year, the Shap Area another, and so on) could do a good deal of good. Spent here and there, however, in £50 lots it will be entirely wasted.

Again, upon a planned basis, the various Government grants for attested and T.T. herds of cattle should bring a certain amount of prosperity to the fell dales, and artificial insemination should make it possible to produce heifers from heavy milking strain sires without the necessity to milk record upon fellside farms. In my opinion, fellside farms are not suited to milk production—this is not to say milk cannot be produced upon fellside farms, for I know from practical experience it can be and is being produced. The fellsider's proper function is breeding and rearing, and it should be possible for him to make a decent living by doing so.

The accumulation of problems during the past few years is such that one is compelled to the conclusion that larger units—either of free co-operation or under some State scheme of nationalisation—will be the only way in which the vast hill areas of Britain can ever be successfully tackled. The amount of money required ; the shortage of skilled labour and its cost ; the demand for short hours and the small returns to be expected—at least for a long period until much reclamation, drainage, bracken eradication, walling and fencing and grid construction at exits to prevent straying stock has been done—would appear to be past the powers of individual enterprise.

And again, some co-operation amongst Fellsiders would appear to be essential if the encroachment of afforestation and large water undertakings is to be met upon an equal footing.

The fellside farm is the cradle of good farming—or at least, of good stock breeding—and it would appear that co-operation and collaboration would retain and encourage the native skill and enterprise of the fellsider while giving him the necessary strength to overcome difficulties and withstand attacks, while nationalisation might destroy his interest and drive him from the fells.

It is unthinkable that we should lose our fellside sheep and cattle breeding industry—probably the most highly skilled form of the agriculturalist's art—the source from which the low-country farmers draw their raw material.

The collaboration of the past has been swept away and that collaboration was the life-blood of fellside farming—it must be recovered before Fellside can once more be healthy.

'FOR HARDY WALKERS ONLY'

R. B. R. Bloxam

The above title is the qualification given in Muirhead's excellent 'Blue Guide' when describing the walk in Skye from Strathaird House to Loch Coruisk. Fortunately the description came to the notice of Jock and myself only after we had accomplished the walk successfully, if not without ultimate protest. We were certainly not 'hardy walkers,' but we still consider the qualification somewhat exaggerated, though we refrained from public criticism of an authority that helped to re-establish our slightly shaky reputations. We always insisted that for the proper appreciation of Skye 'combined operations,' afoot as well as awheel, were essential, and it was unkindly suggested by people who saw us invariably start off awheel that we ourselves were ready to go afoot just as far as the car would take us; this base insinuation we could now refute with chapter and verse.

We were staying in the homely and comfortable hotel situated at the foot of Broadford's little pier, where we looked out over an almost land-locked bay dominated by the rounded cone of Beinn-na-Cailliche. Across the bay the low island of Pabbay showed a bare expanse of green that five centuries ago was 'full of woodes and a main shelter for thieves and cut-throats'; in the background the mainland mountains of Ross-shire etched a long irregular line against the sky, completing a picture in which no one feature is outstanding, but where the whole effect has a very decided charm. As Canon Maculloch says of Broadford Bay in 'The Misty Isle': 'When the sea is like glass and the world is bathed in sunshine no scene could be more peaceful, more suggestive of the light that never was on sea or land.' It would be difficult to find a greater contrast to the wild recesses of Loch Coruisk that we now set out to visit.

Our departure from Campbell's Hotel coincided with the arrival of the steamer that calls on its way from Portree, the 'capital' of Skye, to the mainland; the steamer does not call at the hotel, or even at the pier, whose wooden landing stage is considered to be unsafe, but it stops in the bay while a motor boat takes off any passengers or goods there may be. The first stretch of the road to Elgol from Broadford skirts what Doctor Johnson would have called 'the considerable protuberance' of the Beinn, and at a point about one-and-a-half miles from Broadford we saw across the river at the foot of the mountain the ruins of MacKinnon's house at Coire Chatachan, 'the corrie of the wild cat.' Here the Doctor so far forgot himself with a 'lively pretty little married woman' as to

take her on his knee and permit her to kiss him ; he behaved, in fact, 'like a buck indeed,' as the probably envious Boswell remarked.

Soon after passing the ancient burial ground of the MacKinnons at Cill Chriosd, where the walls alone remain of the little church,

'At a clear open turn in the roadway,
Our passion went up with a cry ;
For the wonderful mountain of Blaven
Was heaving his great bulk on high.'

Beyond the sea-loch of Slapin this monarch of Scotland's mountains (except in actual height) towered proud and alone over 3,000 feet into the sky, the grandeur of his buttressed peaks and riven sides emphasised by the symmetrical outlines of the Red Hills on his right, where the detached sugar-loaf crests resemble a succession of gigantic bee-hives. We stopped by the shores of Slapin to photograph some Highland cattle, Blaven making a fine background to the loch and the shaggy wild-looking beasties ; as we could not shift Blaven we had a certain amount of trouble in getting the animals into their background. This feat safely accomplished, we doubled round the head of the loch, eventually to turn inland down the Strathaird peninsula until at 94 miles from Broadford we came to Strathaird House. This nestles amid a clump of trees in a manner unusual for an island where 'few vows are made to Flora' ; a quarter-of-a-mile beyond the house a convenient opening enabled us to park the car off the road, since we had now to follow on foot the track that struck away across the hills on our right.

Weather conditions were far from attractive as we climbed towards the mist-shrouded heights, but it was only after we had disposed of our lunch well up on the hillside that we began to wonder whether we should proceed any farther. This uncertainty was not due to the lunch, but because drizzle had become a steady down-pour, while thickening mist confined the world to the very small circle of visibility immediately around us ; as we trudged upwards we seemed therefore to be heading for nowhere in particular and making no particular progress towards getting anywhere. However, neither of us would be the first to suggest retreat, though, as we subsequently found, each had rather hoped that the other would do so, and presently the fact that we were going steadily downhill led us to assume that we had crossed the saddle of the pass. The descent before us might have been twenty, or two thousand, feet for all that we could tell, but we continued on our way resolutely if not exactly rejoicing.

Our persistence received its just reward with dramatic suddenness. As if a great curtain had been drawn, the mist rolled aside, and far below us we saw the green valley of Camusunary stretching

away to the head of Loch Scavaig, a sea inlet that belied its name of 'the shadowy loch' by gleaming brightly in the watery sunshine. Facing us was Soay, the 'isle of sheep,' and out towards the Atlantic lay two of what are facetiously known as 'the Cocktail Isles,' the long mountainous outline of Rhum, and Eigg with its distinctive prow-like hill, the Scur; the third ingredient, Muck, was hidden away behind Eigg. The far side of the Camusunary valley was shut in by a low mountain ridge that ended where Trodhu, 'the peak of strife,' thrust his great hump into the headwaters of the loch. The hidden recesses of Coruisk lay behind this ridge, and in the background we could :—

'. . . see the mighty Cuillin rise,
like battlements against the skies,
Peak after peak in order set,
a holly leaf in silhouette.'

(The Cuillin derive their name from Chiulionn, the Gaelic for holly.) Vaporous trails of mist drifted idly about the grand cluster of mountains, playing hide and seek among the jagged peaks that thrust so aggressively into the sky and at times vanished completely in the clouds, to emerge again like the bow-on view of a battleship cutting through a bank of fog. The whole scene of land, sea and mountain made up a superb composition without a single jarring note, and was so complete a transformation from the grey emptiness of a few minutes before that we felt as if we had been spirited away to another world.

'The bay of the white shieling' contains two houses, the larger a shooting lodge closed for most of the year, the smaller bungalow sheltering the keeper and his mother, who live here all the year round, with their nearest neighbours miles away over the water or across rough hill tracks. Humanity is quite an event at Camusunary, instead of a nuisance, and when we noticed the keeper standing at his door a 'Doctor Livingstone, I presume' type of greeting seemed almost appropriate. The 'natives' proved anything but hostile and Mother offered us cups of tea that sent us on our way with renewed zest, to wade knee-deep across the adjacent river since stepping-stones that used to be available had, apparently, disappeared.

We now followed a grassy track, very indefinite at first and equally wet in places, that curled round the foot of Trodhu towards the head of Scavaig. This part of the loch is seen to best advantage from the water, but there was still a very pleasing prospect from our path, suspended, as it were, between the mountainside and a sea almost green in colour. In its later stages the way becomes very rough and rocky, the 'piece de resistance' being the notorious

'Bad Step,' where a smooth slab of rock rises directly from the loch with a ledge slanting across the face for a distance of some thirty feet about fifteen feet above the water. This ledge is the path, but the Step is bad in reputation rather than reality, for the rock slopes inwards and there is firm and definite foothold. We traversed it without difficulty, and a scramble over scattered boulders on the shore brought us to the track that leads to Loch Coruisk, pronounced 'Coroo-esk,' and meaning 'the hollow of the water.'

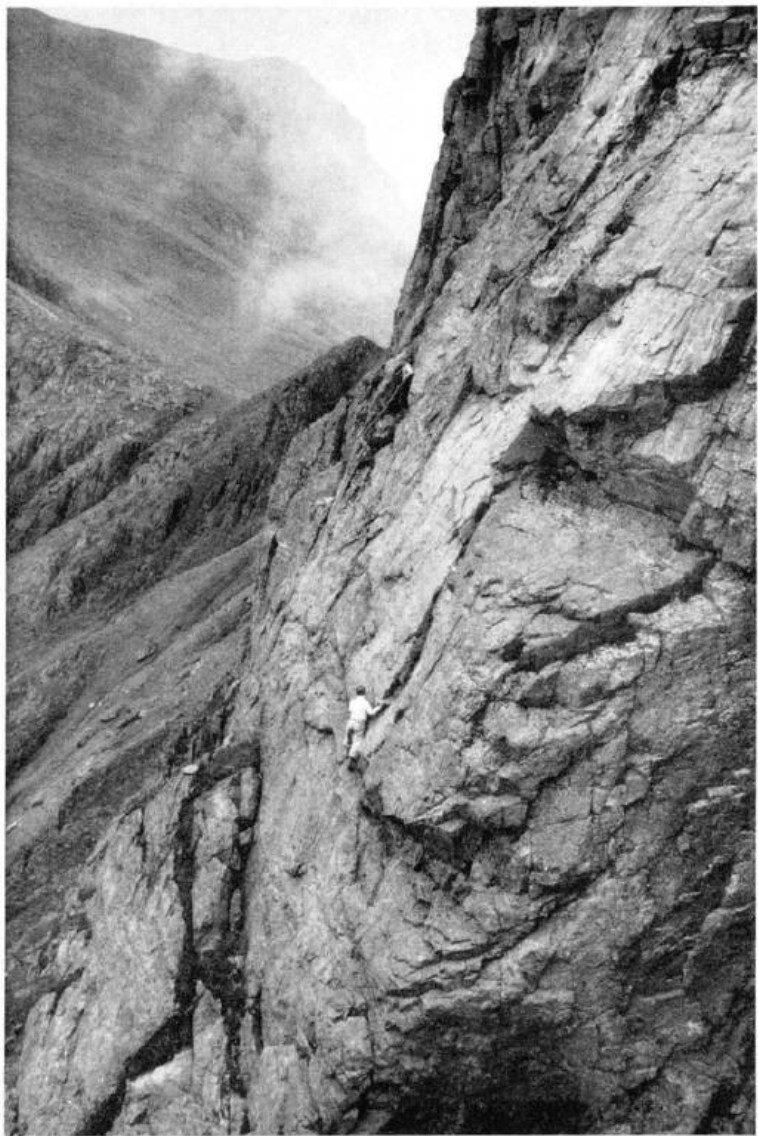
Coruisk can be reached with the minimum of exertion from Elgol, motor boats plying between there and a landing place roughly cut into the rock at the head of Scavaig. It is then a matter of only a few hundred yards across the narrow strip of land separating that sea-loch from the fresh-water loch of Coruisk. To view the latter amid a crowd of casual sightseers and with one eye on the watch is not the ideal way of absorbing its atmosphere, but that might be considered an advantage by such visitors as the man who announced on his return to the boat, 'I felt like a worm crawling about the bottom of a bucket!'

Alexander Smith, author of the classic 'Summer in Skye,' spoke of Coruisk as 'the most savage scene of desolation in Britain,' where :—

'All is rocks at random thrown,
black waves, bare crags and banks of stone.'

So wrote Scott in 'The Lord of the Isles,' in which, however, he makes Bruce describe his surroundings as 'yet so sublime in barrenness.' But even Scott, master of descriptive writing, could not fully convey the mystical and occasionally almost sinister fascination of this dark, narrow loch, cradled in the heart of a close-set amphitheatre of hills that resemble great walls of stone topped by broken glass. Coruisk has been belauded as 'the gem of Scotland'; it has been reviled as 'a damned awful inkpot.' It can be both, depending on the weather at the time of the visit and on the temperament of the visitor, who will be either greatly attracted or definitely repelled. In my case, I had come under the spell of Coruisk many years before and, like the magic of Skye as a whole, it will remain with me to the end of the road.

We saw Coruisk now under a dull, lowering sky, the loch lying sombre and still amid mountains that seemed watchful and grim. We were quite alone, with no sight or sound of life to distract our attention; in the complete quiet and lack of movement about us we felt rather as if we were the last two survivors awaiting the end of the world! Even the nymph who belongs particularly to Coruisk was missing. She is said to visit the loch only when someone is present who will love her, when she will sit by the water's edge and



JONES'S ROUTE FROM DEEP GHYLL ; THE GANGWAY

Austin Barton

sing sweet songs. Legend adds the unsatisfactory condition that on no account must one speak to her, but though we were willing to play our somewhat negative part we waited in vain.

At last, disappointed in love and feeling an increasing interest in food, we made our way back to Scavaig, a 'wild stream with head-long shock' hurrying at our side and beyond it two fine cataracts pouring in a white flurry of foam down the steep sides of Garsbheinn. We had promised ourselves a good meal at Camusunary before we tackled the last lap of our travels afoot, and with that prospect spurring us on, we scrambled over the rocks, recrossed the Bad Step and rounded Trodhu to wade once more through the river. We congratulated ourselves that there was little likelihood of Mother being out shopping or at 'the pictures,' and as we hurried up to the bungalow we could almost smell the ham and eggs soon to be set before us. Anticipation and reality proved vastly different things; the door was shut and the house was empty.

By an ironic coincidence that did not pass unremarked, the discovery that Mother had unwittingly 'let us down' was made at precisely the time when dinner was being served at our hotel. Our wanderings had taken us much longer than we had anticipated, and our light lunch seemed a very distant memory. The walk across the hills to Strathaird House that we had assured ourselves would be just a stroll after a meal now assumed the proportions of an Everest expedition; we eyed the path zig-zagging up the hillside with the gloomy conviction that it would not prove any less steep than it looked and, subsequently, found no reason to revise that estimation. Food had become as elusive as Love, and when rain chose this moment to come down 'whole watter' the end of the world that we had awaited at Coruisk began to seem almost desirable.

For once our sentiments regarding the hills were on a much less exalted plane than that expressed by the psalmist. We had to climb the confounded thing because our hope of salvation lay in the car awaiting us on the far side, but the sooner we reached that less celestial level the better. Jock was seeing visions in which food and bottles (we had too much water about us already) figured very largely, and he described them in detail until we were barely on speaking terms. My visions, being less imaginative, were hampered by mist and rain, but I followed my usual procedure in dire circumstances of picking out a succession of prominent objects a hundred yards or so ahead and then concentrating on arrival at each in turn. This led at long last to a dark spot below being identified as the Lagonda, and we plunged recklessly through the streams that sprayed across, and along, our path, in frantic haste to

reach the car before she, too, became an illusion. Once aboard, wild horses would not have dragged us out again, but a Highland cow did succeed in bringing us to a standstill ; she and her calf had chosen the middle of the road as a suitable place for the latter's supper, and we had every sympathy with their reluctance to interrupt the meal.

We arrived back in Broadford wondering whether we were most wet, tired, or hungry. Contrariwise, we were again in excellent spirits, the last even more so when a bottle of the Scotch variety appeared as Mr. Campbell's contribution to the feast his wife, as usual, provided. And so to bed, feeling that after all there was every truth in the lines of Duncan MacIntyre :—

' Oh, wildly as the bright day gleamed I climbed the mountain's
breast,

And when I to my home returned the sun was in the west ;
'Twas health and strength, 'twas life and joy, to wander freely there,
to drink at the fresh mountain stream, to breathe the mountain
air.'

Duncan does seem to have been more fastidious about his weather than we were, but perhaps he was not a ' hardy walker.'

"WHEN THE TIMOROUS TROUT I WAIT"

G. W. Muller

The real angler is the man who gives up sweetheart or wife and children, father and mother and all who are dear to him to go fishing. Early or late in life there lodges in his brain a bug causing an itch to betray into error the trout of lake, mountain tarn and fell beck, an itch subsiding only with the oncoming of senile decay, or of rheumatism in the knee-joints, or the decay of heart and lung. An incapacitated fisherman is like a spent fox, he has nothing to live for. Pleasant memories do not suffice, for the bug never dies ; it is found not dreaming that the bug insists upon.

But while the disease is strong upon him, and belly-crawling on quaky banks to ensure stealthy approach to little fish is not unduly tiring, the mountain angler lives in a state of ecstasy which even in his soberest moments he would be unwilling to admit can be experienced by brides and poets. It is not the fish he is after. They can be got in divers ways. They can be grappled with cupped hands. That is fun ; but nothing more than base fun. The real angler is not out for fun, nor even for excitement as when he strikes too hard and beholds his fish dangling from a rowan tree.

What makes fell-beck fishing worth while, what induces in him the fever of anticipation that is akin to madness, is the stalking leading up to the moment when he puts on a tiny bubbly pool the confection of feathers which he is persuaded is the counterfeit of the fly on the water. It may be of course a worm which he drops at the foot of a cascade. And lest it should be thought that the man who uses worm is of an ignoble order of fisherman, consider the loving care spent on bringing the worm into the condition of perfection required by a trout with no memory of crag and scree ever having yielded him such a strange object to swallow. The angler's worm is not the worm freshly caught by the light of a torch on a lawn. The angler's worm is the worm who has lived for days on end in moss impregnated in cows' cream. Thus delicately fed, the worm acquires a wriggleness so attractive that the trout does not pause to look, the trout simply bolts him.

Here it ought to be said that in the North Country clear-water worm fishing is considered to be as high an art as fly-fishing. How the Test or Itchen dry-fly purist would describe it is another thing altogether.

But whether fly or worm, the angler who can get within casting distance of fell-beck trout is as great an artist as a trapper in the Americas. In one respect, he is not unlike a Fell and Rock chimney sweeper. All the friction in his case is, however, on his waistcoat and covered or uncovered knees. The knobbliness of his knees is the sign of his craft. No Herdwick smit could be more distinctive.

Often, too, this kind of fisherman bears scars, seldom old, nearly always new, on his shins, token of inadvertent collision with rough faced boulders. They are honourable scars. In the intermitted time they disappear. Alas, for the waistcoat or woolly. It frays or holes, and the wife, who receives gladly the lean, lanky little fish of **the** becks to pot for the family turns a deaf ear when coupons for renewals are mentioned.

It may be asked, after this mention of worms and shins where the angler's ecstasy comes in. Well, the angler has quick as well as keen sight, and, if he is young, a good ear, and no sight or sound escapes him. The very murmuring or purring of a shrunken stream on a summer's day is soft music filling him with the contentment running through so much of what Isaak Walton sets down in his *Compleat Angler*, the rolling of the ravens in their nuptial frolics, the mewing of buzzards soaring and planing in a blue sky, the stooping of peregrine at a flock of pigeon taking an adventurous flight from one forestry planting to another, the uprising of mallard from a tarn, the flushing of twite or pipit from the sod overhanging a mountain path, the curtsyng of a dipper on a boulder, the flirting of wheatear beguiling him from the nest tucked away in a gorse-covered scree, the stonechat and whinchat perched on a swaying spray of furze-bush, all these are to be seen or heard in the mountain country on a sunny day.

Or it may be, that as at dusk, from mountain tarn, he travels slowly to the strath at the head of the lake, he may see the mountain hares on their way among bracken and bleaberry to the bottoms, where they are to feed, he may even be privileged to watch the wary among them swim the stream between one lake and another in preference to taking the gate under which hedgehog creeps, or he may hear the flute-like whistle of an otter calling her young, or, if he is camping in the spring, he may hear the blood-curdling cry of mating badgers.

And at eventide, if the air be balmy, he sees the gulls hawking the moths in the long grasses or beating against the wind in search of bracken-clock or May-fly (in their season), or the immature cormorant flying low to another fishing ground, or the heron using his stilts to wade the shallows and his pick-axe bill to seize mallard ducklings strayed from their mother, or frog, or rat, or trout come into thin water to hunt brandlings and other littlest fish.

These are delights intoxicating as sloe gin and if they follow the delight of a dish of trout, pink fleshed as they may be in Devoke Water, or white-fleshed as in tarn and beck, then the angler is a man become a dream-walker, fortified by his happiness for the trials of the morrow.

THE ARRAN MEET. 10—20 MAY, 1946

T. R. Burnett

During the meet a book was available to enable members to record their excursions and enter their comments. It was used pretty freely and contains much interesting matter, so it is being placed in the Club Library for the use of members who may be interested. This book has supplied a good deal of the material for this account, and I cannot do better than start by quoting the final entry which is made by Graham Wilson, President.

' Conclusion :—One of the best, if not the best F. and R. meet I've ever attended—good company, grand weather, magnificent hills and ridge walking, blue seas and a very comfortable hotel.

May the success of the Arran Meet lead to the holding of one or more " foreign " meets being included in the Club's programme each year.

Very especial thanks are due to Lyna Kellett for the vast amount of trouble she went to in so efficiently organising the meet.'

As the access to Arran was restricted to one steamer a day leaving Ardrossan at 10 a.m., all those joining on the official opening day, Friday, 10th May, met at the boat and were entertained by the efforts of the motorists to get their cars satisfactorily stored on deck in the face of considerable difficulties. The crossing to Lamlash (Brodick Pier being closed) was a sheer delight, and the striking outlines of the hills and ridges in the brilliant sunshine provided allurements and the promise of great things to come. Bus transport took the party to Corrie and deposited them at the Hotel there which is one of the N.B. Trust Houses. Situated on the shore and with the hills rising immediately behind, the position is ideal for amphibians. After settling down and having lunch, excursions of various degrees were undertaken by all. The day was very warm, and while some made their first visit to the ridge, others who were less ambitious or more fatigued after a night journey or an early start were content to make more modest altitudes and fill in the time by catching up sleep in the heather.

The party was strengthened on Saturday, 11th May, by the arrival of nine more members, and this day rather put the hotel staff to the test. While our reception had been most cordial and our quarters and food quite adequate, one got the impression that a mob of our character had not previously invaded the hotel, and the demand for sandwiches by every member of the party came as a shock. The manner in which it was met did credit to the management, and was a good and correct omen for the pleasant treatment we were to receive during the whole of the visit. May 12th saw no augmentation of the party for the very good reason that in

Scotland the steamers observe the Sabbath, but 13th and 15th furnished two each, and so completed the list. By this time a routine had been established and groups were being formed to meet all tastes. The tigers were out for fresh blood, the ridge walkers had laid their detailed plans, and all realised that the Island offered far more to explore than could be covered in the available time. General impressions—some obvious and others surprising—were being formed. That Arran is the summer playground for a large population is made clear by the fact that almost every house takes guests, and it was found by seekers that booking was already almost complete for the whole season. The neatness of the houses and gardens, and their prosperous appearance contrast strongly with the primitive conditions which obtain farther north. The charming little group of houses known as High Corrie, struck one as quite unlike anything British—they were reminiscent rather of a cluster of chalets on an alp in Switzerland or of *Saeters* in Norway. Agriculture also seemed to be thriving, but a quite unexpected 'industry' was the hiring of bicycles—'all 1946 models'—and many members of our party took advantage of this service and found it most useful, not only for reducing the road walking to climb, but also as a means of seeing more of the island. A few members also had their cars which they used most generously for the advantage of the rest.

We were most fortunate in the weather, for not only was there period of drought prior to our arrival. One noticed repeatedly when on the hills that in normal conditions much of the ground would be soft and boggy, yet we trod with confidence on those mosses which one associates with ankle-deep water only to find that they were like a dry springy carpet. One could not help contrasting the general bareness of the valleys with the richness of their counterparts in the Lake District. With the exception of the lower portion of Glen Rosa they are almost entirely treeless, so that even in this colourful time of year, the early summer clash of greens and yellows was lacking save for the patches of gorse whose bright yellow flashes were a joy to the eye. Then the rocks. As is well known, the main hills are of granite and this accounts for their striking features, but as is also well known, it is not good for the pure rock climber, and we got many surprises. The apparently impossible often turned out to be almost a walk and *vice versa*. Many climbs apart from those charted in the S.M.C. Guide were sought out, and the Rosa Pinnacle attracted most attention, and gave the best return. Quotations from members' notes on many of these will be found below, and they make a useful addition to the climbing records of the Island.

Another striking feature was the great number of deer. Herds

of varying size were constantly sighted, and in general, they appeared to be less timid than those seen in the more northerly hills.

Perhaps the most persistent explorers were Pinder and Alexander, acting under a stimulus somewhat foreign to ordinary rock climbing. Everyone walking the hills had noticed the evidence of an aeroplane having come to grief, as fragments of wreckage were found scattered over a wide area. On one occasion the shattered woodwork even provided material for a bonfire and tea-making which, by the way, became a favourite occupation. But the particular enterprise now referred to was initiated by the discovery from a distance of what appeared to be a rucksack or parachute bag jammed in a chimney on the precipitous faces of Nuis. This had evidently some connection with the crashed plane, and its elucidation became almost a matter of honour. Repeated attempts to reach the treasure from below, from above, and from the flanks proved abortive, even though for the final effort the party was armed with an elaborate outfit of ironmongery. And so for the time being the mystery remained unsolved, the prize unwon. But here I may appropriately give the sequel. Some weeks later, Pinder returned to the task, and having decided that it could be accomplished only with help from above, he had with him 600 feet of naval rope. This he made fast at the top and threw over, intending to climb up it from the bottom of the chimney. As usual, however, it got stuck, and the only thing was to abseil. This was done for several hundred feet with only occasional contact with the chimney, which seemed to be entirely devoid of holds. Pinder congratulates Oppenheimer, Baker and Co. on never having got anyone to repeat their attempt on this relentless crack. When the goal was reached, the first thing found was a parachute almost entirely buried in earth and rock, and twisted fragments of aeroplane which had torn into it. This was pushed to the bottom, and then the suspected rucksack revealed itself as an aircraft dinghy. And so was curiosity satisfied and enterprise rewarded.

On Monday, 13th May, there was a combined operation in which most of the members participated. The President very generously provided bus transport to the summit of the String Road, which is 750 feet up on the moor—the waist-line of the Island. From here the route lay across the bog to the North, and thence over the summits of Beinn Nuis, Beinn Tarsuinn, A'Chir, Castles, Ceum na Caillich and Suidhe Fhearghas, thus traversing the whole of the N—S ridge. A grand excursion and excepting the Coolins, probably unequalled in the British Isles. Non-mountaineering incidents of that great day were 'apprehensive expressions on the faces of the assembled company on viewing an unspecified brand

of snake (query adder ?) near the String Road,' and the lunch party at the very remarkable gushing spring on the ridge below the summit of the Castles.

No less memorable than the climbing days are those spent in milder pursuits. For example, on 17th May we became proper trippers and hired a bus to take us round the Island. 'Going in a clockwise direction, after a short stop at Dippin Head, we went on to Blackwater Foot where a stop was made for lunch in the sunshine on the silver sand. After lunch, T.R.B. formed an antiquarian section (unjustly referred to by the President as the septuagenarian section!) which walked along the coast to see the prehistoric fort of Drumnadoon and the King's Cave, two of the most interesting antiquities in the Island, rejoining the coach at Tormore. Others climbed a rock pinnacle near Drumnadoon Point. After picking up Weston, who had walked across from Corrie at Catacol,¹ another stop was made for tea at Loch Ranza. Reached Corrie in time for dinner after a most enjoyable and interesting day.'

Another non-mountaineering excursion made by many was the walk by the shore from Loch Ranza to Corrie. For this one party was lucky enough to do the outward road journey in company of the County Road Committee, who kindly made seats available in their bus. 'Lunch at Cock Rock. Made big fire with driftwood and were provided with tea by T.R.B. Nest with two large eggs on top of Cock Rock. Water-filled shafts between Cock and Lagan near remains of buildings were stated to be coal workings by Mr. Hutton, who provided us with tea at Lagan. Found hewn millstone.'

It was a favoured few who managed to spend a day on Holy Island, and the accomplishment of this feat was entirely due to the influence of R. T. Wilson with the Royal Navy! They would almost eat out of his hand, and on this as on a previous occasion, a landing craft was willingly placed at his disposal.

Bathing in burns and sea was favoured by several when temperature and other conditions were suitable, but by one lady member daily before breakfast regardless of conditions. She is to be congratulated not only for her hardiness, but *even more* for the fact that she never bragged or even spoke unasked about her performance.

The mentality of the bull which guarded the approach to Glen Rosa was studied but never solved. Was it really malevolent or did it merely wish to take advantage of an opened gate? Anyhow, like loose rock, it is best left alone.

1 An interesting account of his expedition will be found in the Arran Book.

For some gay members the climax of the meet was reached when they attended a public dance at Brodick on 18th, and initiation into the mysteries of the 'two step' by no means exhausted the excitements of that night. But a detailed description of the incidents would ill become the pages of this sedate journal!

The last day, Sunday, 19th, was passed peacefully by many at the Fallen Rocks. The day was again gloriously fine and so warm that sea bathing was the most popular occupation. Six o'clock breakfast was the order of the day for 20th, and then all survivors travelled together to Ardrossan whence the parties went their appointed ways. And so ended one of the best ever.

Members attending : Graham Wilson, Mrs L. Pryor, W. G. Steven, J. E. Clements, John E. Parton, Mrs Pam Parton, G. H. Webb, Miss Lyna Kellett, A. H. Wane, J. E. Blackshaw, A. M. Cleary, Mrs. Maud Hargreaves, E. B. Mendus, Miss Elsie Gilson, R. T. Wilson, T. R. Burnett, P. H. Weston, R. C. Abbatt, Keith Gregory, Miss M. Matley, F. C. Ashton, A. B. Hargreaves, P. Alexander, G. Pinder.

Some Notes on Climbs quoted from the Book of the Meet:—

A'Chir Crack.—About 450 feet. Probably V.D. Thought to be a very good climb. Most impressive rock scenery. Magnificent Rock ; but perhaps in a few places undue reliance on heather necessary. J.E.P. and others.

Ceum-na-Caillich.—Buttress climb on Southern Ceum-na-Caillich. Approx. 700 feet. Difficult with three very difficult pitches which can be avoided. Start: Walk up Witch's Step Gully till the obvious subsidiary gully branches off on the right, then scrambling to the foot of a large slab on the left. The route keeps as much as possible to the left throughout. Six Pitches. Details given, P.A., L.K., G.P.P.

Rosa Pinnacle.—Fourth Wall. Top pitch with rope from above. This is a pleasant route, 'D.' standard with 'VD.' or 'S.' top pitch which can be avoided.

Southern Slabs. A lovely climb ; very exposed, but ample good holds. Standard 'D.' or 'VD.' Boots or rubbers! The excellence of the holds comes as a complete surprise. *Sou'-Wester Slabs*. A most magnificent climb, leading to stupendous rock situations—in particular gigantic overhang and exposed corner. Good satisfying rock throughout. Classification : 'Mild severe.' A delectable climb.

Rocks flanking right-hand side of *Rosa Pinnacle*. Tried the main arSte and did the lower rocks. Standard moderate, well cairned. The upper buttress went. 4 pitches (VD.—standard) to a spike belay under overhanging smooth crack with no future in it. Last pitch inspected from above. Exit looks possible.

E.B.M. and M.H. found orthodox 20 foot chimney after some search, ascended this and then quitting ordinary route, finished slabs to summi. *Rosa Pinnacle* by VG. variation in boots.

Crack on North side of *Rosa Pinnacle* examined from above. M.H. solved problem of finish by discovering ingenious 'through' route. First ascent of *Keyhole Crack*, E.B.M.

TWO POEMS

ENNERDALE

O weary long is Ennerdale,
And bleak and bare its barren fells,
And far the way down Ennerdale
To sound of kindly Christian bells.

O dark is night in Ennerdale,
With clinging mist and sodden ground :
While Gable crags stand sentinel
To guard the hidden ways around.

A dreary dale is Ennerdale.
Through stony wastes the white becks creep ;
Like ragged ruins demon wrought
The Pillar Rock looms gaunt and steep.

At eventide in Ennerdale
A mystery and a magic drave
Adown the dale, athwart the hills,
And we were whelmed within its wave.

At eventide in Ennerdale
With golden water foamed the ghylls,
And golden air from Tir-nan-Og
Was pouring down upon the hills.

O clear to us in Ennerdale
Beneath a sea of crimson fire,
Magnificently wrought, arose
The City of the Heart's Desire.

Mabel M. Barker

THE STAY-AT-HOME

Spread out the map : and **with** the finger trace
The great ascending shoulder of this fell ;
Follow the contours of its steep north face ;
(Boots, and a rope, and sunshine : all is well.)

Here is a track along the southern slope :
(Hot scent of bracken 'neath the sky's blue dome.)
Memory now goes hand in hand with hope,
Lifting a burden from the stay-at-home.

See how this river narrows in the glen :
(Rowans, sparse-berried, grasp the rocky side ;)
Follow its course toward the sea, (and then,
Listen ! the pulse of the incoming tide !)

Spread out the map : let the eye seek and find ;
Here every valley is a green retreat ;
Each crag and buttress, faithfully aligned,
Rings out a challenge to the climber's feet.

Dreams, in the evening with the day's work done ;
Dreams, with a map spread out beside the fire ;
Yesterday or tomorrow—all is one,
Since thought can travel to the heart's desire.

Kathleen Leonard

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

J. Carszvell

The output of new climbs for the first full post-war season has been somewhat smaller than expected. No doubt the cold winds of spring, and the moist conditions prevailing during the summer, when the rocks never really got into condition, had an adverse effect on many post-dated ambitions.

The chief centre of activity has been Langdale, where a girdle has been achieved on White Ghyll, together with a new climb.

Gimmer, surprisingly, continues to yield virgin rock, and a 'short day' climb has been discovered on Side Pike.

Attention is again drawn to the fine climbing to be found in Mirklin Cove.

WASDALE

SCAFELL

Moss GHYLL GROOVES One pitch. 90 feet. Severe. First Ascent, July, 1946. T. G. Peirson, M. H. McFarlane. Starts at the top of the fifth pitch of Moss Ghyll. Traverse left for 15 feet into the groove above that of the ordinary start. Climb 25 feet to the grass ledge below overhang. Move right into the next groove, and climb this for 40 feet by lay-back. Step left over the edge, then down and across to the Look-out.

UPPER DEEP GHYLL 50 feet. Very Severe. First Descent, 8th June, 1946. A.R.D., J.W.C. This pitch offers more interesting climbing than the original route. Starts a few feet to the left of the large pedestal at the top of pitch 3. The wall is climbed on good holds until it becomes necessary to traverse round the rib to the left. An exposed ascent on small holds in a steep shallow groove leads to the belay at the top of pitch 4.

ESK BUTTRESS

CHIMNEY BUTTRESS Second ascent, 9th June, 1946, T.H., C.J.M.

GREAT GABLE

THE NAPES

GREMLIN CRACK 50 feet. Very Severe. First Ascent, 14th July, 1946. Derek Haworth. Solo. Stockings. Wet conditions. The climb is on the right wall of the Sphinx Ridge facing the gully, about 40 feet up the gully from the Sphinx Rock. The gully is the left-hand branch of the Arrowhead Gully. It is possible to arrange a thread (using a chock-stone) 10 feet below the finish. The final 10 feet are the hardest and climbed as a lay-back.

THE NAPES

EAGLE'S CORNER First Ascent, 12th October, 1946. Marcel Schatz.
 DIRECT START G.G.M. From the pinnacle at the foot of the
 Tricouni Rib, instead of traversing right, climb
 to the edge of the slab on the left, and ascend a shallow scoop for about 60
 feet. This takes one to the end of the traverse to the left on small holds,
 which is the hardest pitch on Eagle's Corner.

ENNERDALE

MIRKLIN COVE
OCTOPUS

Very Severe. Climbed in rubbers. First Ascent,
 15th April, 1946. J.W., C. A. Bunton, H. Iron-
 field. The climb is on Haskett Buttress and starts
 at the same point as Twin Ribs (*vide* Journal, 1946, p. 255).

- (1) 75 feet. The wall is climbed for about 10 feet and a step to the right
 leads to the groove above. This is climbed until it terminates at
 a small stance. Traverse left for a few feet, then step up and back to
 the right, bringing a ledge within reach. (Stance on pitch 2 of
 Twin Ribs.)
- (2) 30 feet. Swing out to the right under the overhang until a foothold
 is reached. Climb the vertical wall by means of a small crack
 until a short traverse left effects a junction with the Twin Ribs.
 Finish up Twin Ribs.

BUTTERMERE

BIRKNESS COOMBE
GREY CRAGS
MITRE ARETE

100 feet. Severe. Leader needs 70 feet of rope.
 First Ascent, 22nd April, 1946. Jack Greaves,
 Fred Poulter. The climb runs up the ridge to
 the left of Mitre Ordinary. Commencing where
 scree shoot from head of Mitre buttress meets main scree bed.

- (1) 65 feet. The crest of the arete is followed over a series of small
 overhangs to a sloping ledge under the overhang.
- (2) 35 feet. The wall on the left of the overhang is climbed on fine holds,
 finishing on the ledge by the top of the Mitre Ordinary Route.
 Variation finish 60 feet. Very Difficult. A descent from belay is
 made to large ledge of Mitre Ordinary. The thin crack to the
 right of Mitre Chimney is climbed direct. The final overhang
 requires care.

GREY CRAGS
CENTRAL ROUTE

First Ascent, 15th April, 1946. J.W., R. Ewin.
 The climb starts to the left of the Oxford and
 Cambridge Ordinary, and was thought to be of
 the same standard of difficulty and length as the Oxford and Cambridge
 Direct. Climp up clean bollard (artificial), or up obvious grassy groove to
 overhanging corner. Belay. Climb overhanging corner. Belay. A long
 crack, leads to top of crag identifiable by scar of loose blocks which were
 removed.

CENTRAL ROUTE

Second Ascent, 15th April, 1946. C. W. Hudson,
 C.R.W.

FAR EASEDALE

MONKEY PUZZLE Second Ascent, 29th March, 1045. D. D. Davies.
J. M. Hirst, B. Black.

DOW CRAG

THE LEOPARD'S CRAWL First Ascent, 9th September, 1947. R. J. Birkett,
L.M., T.H. Starts 30 feet to the right of
Giants' Crawl, at a point where a block leans against the face.

- (1) 90 feet. From the top of the block step up and to the right to a niche at the foot of a crack. Make a rising traverse to the right across a steep slab to the foot of an open groove. Straight up the groove, keeping to the left of the moss. Junction with Murray's Route.

SIDE PIKE

TOWER CLIMB Moderate. First Ascent, 1943. A.F.A. The
climb is a conspicuous arete high up on the south
side of Side Pike overlooking Blea Tarn.

- (1) 30 feet. A wall. Traverse 15 feet left to—
(2) 20 feet. A groove.
(3) 40 feet. An arete followed by a 10 foot slab. Ascend grass slope for about 40 feet to jammed blocks which are climbed by a 10 foot chimney on the left. The summit of Side Pike is within 100 feet over easy ground.

LANGDALE

WHITE GHYLL

WHITE GHYLL TRATERSE Very Severe. First Traverse, 23rd June, 1946.
R. J. Birkett, L.M., T.H. Start as for Hollin
Groove. Pitches : 1 (20 feet) ; 2 (30 feet), 3 (30
feet), 4 (70 feet) of Hollin Groove.

- (0) 70 feet. From the top of the groove scramble up to the left over broken rock and grass, block belay on terrace that here splits the lower half of the crags from the main buttress,
(fi) 50 feet. Traverse left over broken rocks picking the easiest line to block belay at the foot of pitch 4 on White Ghyll Wall.
Pitches (4), (5), (6) and (7) of White Ghyll Wall. Descend pitches 4, 3 and 2, of the Gordian Knot. It would be possible to arrange a running thread for the last man. The first party, however, climbed this clean.
(14) 45 feet. Traverse left across the top of an undercut groove, and on to a slab which is climbed to a stance and belay on its top left-hand edge.
(15) 25 feet. Traverse left to the block belay at the top of the first pitch of White Ghyll Chimney.
(16) 90 feet. Climb diagonally upwards to a shattered ledge where a running thread can be arranged, then traverse in a downward direction to the arete, then moving upwards again for a few feet, the spike belay at the top of pitch 3 of Route 1 on the slabs is reached.
(17) 45 feet. Traverse diagonally up to the left to the belay at the top of Pitch 3 on Route 2 of the slabs.

- (18) 35 feet. Pitch 4 of Route 2, then 80 feet of scrambling to the top of the crag.

WHITE GHYLL WALL First Ascent, 9th May, 1946. R. J. Birkett, L.M. T.H. 240 feet. Starts 6 feet to the right of a small cave below a dead rowan tree.

- (1) 30 feet. Up the rib to a stance below a split block. Thread belay in crack.
- (2) 30 feet. Continue up the rib to belay below the overhang.
- (3) 30 feet. Traverse right for 30 feet to a stance and belay below a scoop.
- (4) 25 feet. Up the lower overhang and on to the slab, then to a second overhang (a thread can be arranged), belay a few feet higher.
- (5) 25 feet. Straight up the mossy wall for 20 feet until it is possible to step left to a good stance and belay.
- (6) 45 feet. Step on to the rib on the left and climb straight up to a small belay.
- (7) 25 feet. Upwards and to the left to a small grass ledge.
- (8) 30 feet. Straight up to the top of the crag.

GIMMER CRAG

NOCTURNE

Probably very severe. 160 feet. Leader needs 100 feet of rope. First Ascent, 24th September; 1945. A.R.D., J.W.C. (Last pitch led by J.W.C.). The climb lies on the steep and rather mossy wall which forms the left wall of Junipall Gully, and starts some way up the gully, a few yards below the first short chimney pitch.

- (1) 30 feet. A narrow zig-zag crack enables a traverse to be made upwards to the left to a stance and good belay. (Pallid Slabs Junction.)
- (2) 90 feet. Ascend directly on good holds until progress is stopped by the overhang. This is turned by means of a short hand traverse to the right, followed by a vertical ascent. A good spike provides a running belay. The holds become small, and it soon becomes necessary to traverse to the left again above the overhang on to better but mossy holds. A shallow grassy recess is reached with a flake belay.
- (3) 40 feet. Ascend diagonally left to a small ledge on the arete. The mossy corner above to the right is climbed to a heather ledge. A thin crack is followed by a right movement with easier climbing and scrambling completing the climb.

NOCTURNE

Second Ascent 14th April, 1946. D. D. Davies, B. Black.

GROOVE VARIATION START

14th April, 1946. D. D. Davies, B. Black. 'D.D.D.' ascended the groove immediately to the right of the original start. After ascending for some distance on moderately good holds, a step to the left was made, and the spike 'to the right of the hand traverse on the original route' was eventually reached.

SEMINOVA WALL

Very Severe. 200 feet. First Ascent, 22nd April, 1946. A.R.D., D. D. Davies, D. C. B. The climb involves the use of one pitch of Pallid Slabs, and half a pitch of Nocturne ; hence the name. The climb lies on the wall to the left of Junipall Gully. Starts in the gully a few feet above the lowest point of the buttress and below some prominent overhangs.

- (1) 60 feet. Ascend left towards a rib, to the point where a mossy crack provides the only breach in the overhang. Fairly good holds are available for the pull over. Ascend right to belay. (Top of Pitch 1 of Pallid Slabs.)
- (2) 50 feet. Pitch 2 of Pallid Slabs.
- (3) 60 feet. Traverse back right along heather ledge. Continue traverse horizontally to rib. This is crossed and a diagonal ascent made to the belay at the top of pitch 2 of Nocturne.
- (4) 30 feet. Move upwards to the left round a corner to a ledge with jammed blocks, and finish up steep corner on right ; this being a few feet left of the final mossy grooves of Nocturne.

ASHEN TRAVERSE Very Severe. 215 feet. First Traverse, 5th May, 1946. D. D. Davies, J. M. Hirst. The traverse girdles from right to left, the buttress to the **North-West** of Junipall Gully. Cairn.

- (1) 80 feet. Climb some vegetatious ledges and ascend a crack to a large flake of rock immediately to the right of an obvious black mossy streak. A step on poor footholds is made to the left to reach Nocturne. Ascend this climb for a few feet. Now traverse left round a corner and *via* a slab to the heathery ledge, top of pitch 2 Pallid Slabs. It is probably advisable for the leader to ascend some distance from here in order to safeguard the second on the difficult step.
- (2) 30 feet. From the heathery ledge move left, crossing a chimney. A rounded rock ledge leads to a white rocky nook. Belay on left.
- (3) 40 feet. Round the corner and attain a ledge which slopes downwards to the left. Cross a groove and continue the downward traverse to a small ledge round a further corner. A short chimney leads to a green grassy recess below a crack. Poor belay (for line only) high up on right.
- (4) 65 feet. Crimson Crack. The crack is 35 feet in height and overhangs in one direction. Ascend this, using poor holds on the left wall. Scrambling leads to a good belay.

LANGDALE

The second crag up from the New Hotel, on the path to Raven Crag has produced a short climb of some difficulty, but not much merit. 130 feet. Very difficult, except for one pitch, which is very severe in boots. First Ascent, 26th February, 1945. W.P., and J. Pugh. Start at the lowest point of the crag on the right-hand side, beneath some bulging lichen-covered rocks.

- (1) 30 feet. Straight up bulging rocks to the higher of two rock ledges under a large bulge. Small spiked belays on the left.
- (2) 30 feet. Work round the nose on the right, pull up on to sloping rock ledge using good holds high up. Continue up to belay spikes.
- (3) 30 feet. Up the rocks above the belay to large triangular grass ledge with steep walls on two sides. A slightly overhanging crack runs up the junction of the two walls, belay spikes near the foot of this.
- (4) 25 feet. The crack in the corner is ascended on poor holds, and it is strenuous. About 15 feet up, a bracket on the right wall gives good holds for the pull up on to a small ledge. Ascend higher until stopped by a large overhang. Rock ledge and small, but good spike under overhang. There is also a large flake on the right, but this may not be too secure.



E. Bauer Mendis

MONT COLLON, MITRE DE L'ÉVÊQUE, AND L'ÉVÊQUE
FROM CARANE DES VIGNETTES

- (5) 15 feet. Traverse to the left under large overhang on good flake holds. A small slab is reached and climbed to belays at the end of the climb, 10 feet of scrambling leads to the top of the crag.

The prominent crag on the left skyline (from Raw Head and R. L. 11.) of Side Pike was investigated, and yielded a climb worth doing if one is in the vicinity.

SPIDER CRACK Severe in boots. First Ascent, 31st July, 1946, R.B., D.J.H., and R.L.P.

- (1) 25 feet. The obvious crack in the centre of the face overhanging at the bottom is reached by an ascending traverse of the left wall (Well scratched holds for about 10 feet up only.) Recess and belay in crack above the overhang.
- (2) 25 feet. The crack is climbed direct on good, but awkward holds. Then mossy, grassy, scrambling for 40 feet to the top.

GIMMER CRAG

CROW'S NEST DIRECT First Ascent, 13th January, 1946. Alternative Start Severe. Starts midway between the slabs on 'B' route and Crow's Nest Direct.

- (1) 15 feet. Easy rocks to good belay below overhanging groove.
- (2) 30 feet. The green groove above is climbed, proving awkward, particularly at the top. The grass shelf at the top of pitch 2, on ordinary route is then reached.

NOTES

The fourth pitch of Deer Bield Chimney is now very dangerous, as the keystone in the cave roof has been crushed.

This makes the ordinary route unsafe, as the slightest pressure on the inverted pinnacle will cause a heavy rock fall.

A rock fall from Stony Buttress on to the Crescent Climb, has been reported. The climb is no longer a moderate, the first section is exceptionally loose, with no good belay, and has one awkward movement before the traverse is reached.

The prominent loose block on the first pitch of Gordian Knot was, in the interests of public safety, cast down to the scree, and will cause no further trouble.

The original ascent of Crow's Nest Direct describes a step round into a groove on the second pitch.

This was found, by one party, to be impossible due to the lack of retaining holds on the overhanging right wall, and a very difficult vertical ascent into the groove had to be made.

The rock of the 'lay-back crack' on the last pitch of the North-West Arête is badly shattered, and lay-back movements are probably no longer advisable.

On an ascent of Mayday (without combined tactics) D. C. Birch and L. J. Griffin found the third piton to be of very doubtful security, all others appeared to be quite sound.

Peter Hogg reports a direct finish to Tower Buttress, giving 35 feet of climbing of very difficult standard. Starting at the top of the 11th pitch, it goes up the central of three cracks in the final tower, beginning 30 feet down from the highest point of the ledge.

- (1) 15 feet. Work up to the right to a large spike belay.
- (2) 20 feet. Bear slightly right up the line of least resistance, to another spike. Continue straight up the edge above this bearing left to a belay.

Yew Crag Arete, which was submitted as a new climb, appears to follow Holly Tree Grooves for the first three pitches, and Peregrine Buttress for the final two. Pitches 4 and 5, however, would form a useful variant for a party wishing to avoid the severe crack of the former climb.

From the top of pitch 3 (strenuous chimney) instead of moving left (Holly Tree Grooves) traverse right to an oak tree on a ledge.

(4) 30 feet. Traverse left and up a groove.

(5) 50 feet. Exposed but easy rocks, junction with Holly Tree Grooves.

Ascended, 5th August, 1946. W. K. Dunlop and others.

It would be greatly appreciated if persons who insert in the log books items suitable for inclusion in this section, would identify themselves fully, *i.e.*, full names and whether members or non-members.

Initials alone do not always convey a great deal. T. Hill asks me to correct the statement in the 1946 Journal that the Great Central Route, Esk Buttress, was led by him. It appears that this was incorrect. The climb was led by R. J. Birkett ; T. Hill second.

KEY TO INITIALS

J. W. Cook	L. Muscroft
A. R. Dolphin	Miss C. J. McGregor
T. Hill	W. Peascod
G. G. Macphee	J. Wilkinson
D. C. Birch	L. J. Griffin
	C. R. Wilson

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

Lyna Kellett

January 1st.—The year young and asparkle with frost and sunlight ; hearts young and glowing with the spirit of good fellowship and an enthusiasm to renew the joy of tramping the Coniston Range in the cool, invigorating air, to try again the exasperating third pitch of *Woodhouses* with its suspicion of ice ; to stretch a searching foot along the traverse on *Jones's* ; to reach anxiously for the handhold on *Sunlight Crack*, and to explore, through the medium of Dr Burnett's lantern slides, the mysteries, fascinations and discomforts of Pot Holes—all this, and more, was the spirit which prevailed at the Coniston Meet—a happy beginning shared by over forty members and guests.

February 6th/8th.—Here were novices eager for instruction in 'snow and ice work,' but the conditions were such that ice-axes and crampons were left at Bracken Close. There was a little sunshine and a mighty wind aloft. The Meet ascended and descended *Arrowhead*, *Needle Ridge*, *Eagle's Nest Ordinary* and *Sphinx Ridge*. Perhaps there was a little ice on one of these routes for someone was overheard in ardent supplication to the Deity for handholds and footholds he could not find !

March 23rd/25th.—In spite of a chilling wind and greasy rocks, Peascod, Beck and the Editor nimbly traced *Cook's Tour* on Pavey Ark, while on the banks of Stickle Tarn lesser fry lay shivering, but compensated by the demonstration of very neat climbing. Two members were thrilled to meet a snow bunting at the top of Gimmer.

April 9th/22?id.—Both huts were completely booked up and since there was a little more than the usual ration of sunshine everyone seemed anxious to cram in as much climbing and fell-walking as they could. There was a swarm on Pillar and a whisper of 'How about traffic lights on *Slab and Notch* ?' Two tourists and their luggage were rescued from Red Ghyll. There was a murmur of rebellion at Raw Head when the communal cooking team produced a strangely flavoured porridge, but it must have been a magic brew for one party was urged to leave the hut at 6-0 a.m.—climb *Deer Bield Crack*—(leave at 8-30)—High White Stones—Stake Pass—Esk Hause—Safell Pike—East Buttress (very wet)—climb *Botterills*—(troublesome wind third pitch)—(leave at 2-30)—Corridor Route—Kern Knotts—up first pitch of *Buttonhook*—(too cold and windy)—(escape by hand traverse)—up *Sepulchre*—down *The Crack*—5-50—'Good-bye'—8-10—Raw Head—peel potatoes. Whew ! And Dolphin found another route on Pallid Slabs.

May With 120th.—*Vide* Dr Burnett's Article.

June 8th/10th.—**Whitsuntide**, Borrowdale and Thorneythwaite ; a combination that has become a habit of the Club ; **well**, perhaps not quite a habit, for all who have attended these Meets have been very conscious of the friendliness of the valley and now are aware that the centre of that friendliness was Mrs Jopson and Thorneythwaite. This year, after enjoying her hospitality for thirty years, we were a rather disjointed party scattered between Rosthwaite and Seathwaite, where an exchange of Huts with the 'K' Fellfarers gave over a dozen members shelter. An accident on the Napes gave the President and others more exercise than they had expected, and the wounded member an opportunity for showing that bombing without explosives can be an occasion for good spirits.

June 5th/16th.—An all-night walk had been planned, but the weather was deplorable, and although there had been every intention of doing the circuit of the Great and Little Langdale Watershed, after six hours, most of them spent in cloud about 1,200 feet, the gallant trio agreed that the Band was too good a way down to be missed and were fast asleep in Raw Head before sunrise !

August 3rd/5th.—Again both huts were filled to capacity. After travelling from Leeds, Dr Nancy Heron left her motor-bike at Raw Head and then, in the dark, walked over to Brackenclose in order to be 'on time' for her 'duties' there. Gable and Pike's Crag were the favourites and the often neglected Seatallan, Haycock and Steeple were visited. In Langdale the strong, cold, rain-laden wind blew one or two climbers to Heaton Cooper's studio at Grasmere ; and one person who found himself half way up *Diphthong* before he realised where he had been led, looks forward to no wind and rubbers next time.

August 24/A/25/A.—Surely this was the Meet of the year, and the Club's special thanks are due to Robert Files, Muriel Files and Colonel Westmorland for their very fine leadership, unobtrusive organisation and ability to infuse all with the essence of their own friendliness. There were thirty-six novices, leaders and guests ; our overflow, men only, enjoyed the hospitality of R.L.H. As we all know, one of the difficulties of climbing from a hut filled to capacity is that of getting breakfast cooked, eaten and dishes washed in time to get off at a reasonably early hour ; this was overcome by the volunteer cooking, washing-up and sweeping-up teams. To enable the cooks to have everything to hand in the mornings people were asked to hand in their food the night before

and the three cooks did a splendid job ; (they did not serve a porridge comparable with the Easter mixture, and perhaps palates were better suited). The kitchen was out of bounds at breakfast-time to all but cooks and washers-up and the liaison between kitchen and table provided odd snatches of conversation such as, ' Are you a dried egg ? ' ' No, I'm two slices of bacon, ' ' and ' I'm sausage and tomato. ' At the time the weather seemed to be bad, but in comparison with subsequent weather, was very good indeed because although it rained every day it did not rain all day, and when there was no rain the sun shone. Saturday morning was wet but it cleared towards noon and after an early lunch most of the novices and some of the leaders gathered on the grass at the foot of the second pitch of Middlefell Buttress where, under the encouraging eye of the President, instruction and demonstration were given in types of holds and how they should be used ; position ; balance ; footwork ; *afew'don'ts* ; knots ; the rules of the use of the rope ; and belaying. After this novices were led up Middlefell Buttress and later Scout Crag. An unusual phenomenon occurred on Scout Crag. A leader with three girls on the right-hand climb found himself taking in the rope a few feet away from a leader similarly employed with three boys on the left-hand climb. With amazement the two leaders could not help but note that whereas the girls were climbing with a complete absence of unnecessary words the boys were chattering like jackdaws. On Sunday, a fine day after early rain, much climbing was done on Dow Crag and Pavey Ark. One novice led the President up *C Buttress* and another, when escaping from the last pitch of *Intermediate Gully*, was asked how he had enjoyed it and replied, with a grin, that he was completely shattered. Monday morning's brilliant sunshine was too good to be true and several parties walked up to Gimmer Crag. Clouds began to appear over Crinkle Crag, thicken and lower until mid-day found at least ' five ropes ' sheltering under overhangs and boulders in a downpour of rain, and hopes of climbing ' severes ' in rubber shoes, as a change from *Great Gully* and *Gwynne's Chimney* in boots, dissolved. Unexpectedly the rain ceased and a decision was made to climb something in boots. In the five minutes it took to reach the foot of the ' Introductory Scramble ' the rock was half dry. Then patches of blue sky appeared, the rocks dried with incredible speed, boots were taken off and replaced by rubbers, spirits rose, and in a few minutes the transformation was complete—novices and leaders alike rejoicing in the delightful footwork and balance of climbing in rubber shoes on Gimmer. Great credit did the novices do their instruction and practice of the short week-end, especially on *Amen Corner*. Climbing continued on the Tuesday but the

Meet was over, and it was more by way of a busman's holiday for some of the leaders.

The following routes were climbed, and some descended, during the Meet. Langdale :—*Middlefell Buttress* ; *Scout Crag I and II* ; *Great Gully* ; *Gwynne's Chimney* ; *Crescent Climb* ; *Rake End Chimney* ; *Lower Scout Crag* ; *Tarn Crag* ; *White Ghyll* ; *Porphyry Slabs* ; *Harristickorner* ; *Oliverson's and Lyons* ; ' *B* ' *Route* ; *Bracket and Slab* ; ' *A* ' *Route* ; *Ash Tree Slabs*. Coniston :—*Blizzard Chimney* ; *Black Chimney* ; *C Ordinary* ; *D Ordinary* ; *Giant's Crawl* ; *Great Gully* ; *Woodhouses Route* ; *South Chimney* ; *Giant's Corner* ; *Gordon and Craig Route* ; *Intermediate Gully*.

An attempt was made to gather the impressions of the novices, here they are :—(a) The spirit of the Meet was friendly, encouraging and altogether pleasant, (b) When wet, suggest indoor instructional talks, (c) Novices prefer to be told when making mistakes in climbing, (d) Favour communal cooking at breakfast, (e) Novices are put off when **told** the classification of a climb beforehand, whereas they are pleasantly surprised when told at the top. (f) Excellent idea having a Meet for novices, (g) An early to bed, early to rise rule helpful.

There is no doubt that this Meet was very successful and should be repeated, but more leaders are needed and experienced climbers are invited to volunteer.

September 29th.—In spite of, or because of, an excellent Dinner at the Royal Oak, Keswick, anything less than a 'severe' was scorned. Bentley Beetham produced *Chamonix* for inspection and enthusiastic approval. The North Crag of Castle Rock of Triermain was a hive of activity, Marcel Schatz, our gallant C.A.F. guest, climbed his first English *very severe* by leading the Editor and Graham Macphee on *Zig-Zag*. Meantime, Dolphin's party was making the third ascent of *Overhanging Bastion*, his third man climbing in boots just to demonstrate that the difficulties are purely mental. The two parties got slightly entangled at the point where the climbs cross each other. To complete the gala effect, R. J. Birkett (the original leader of both climbs) and Tom Hill were starting on *Zig-Zag* as the other parties finished. The next day M. Schatz led *C.B.*, and was able to return to Paris with a good opinion of our climbs. Cheerful talk in Committee of an Alpine Meet next year.

November <M/10/z.—He (the Meet) walked to the top of Scafell via Cam Spout.

December 7th/8th.—Whether or not it was the motorists' vanity that helped to propel the cars over an ice-patched, snow and mist-bound Kirkstone Pass does not matter. What does matter is that twenty-odd members were greeting each other at the Inn. Most walked the ridge, John Bell's Banner, Thornthwaite Beacon, High Street, Kidsty Pike, and back by Hayeswater and Hartsop. They got lost once which is excusable since visibility was practically nil. At mid-day the mists parted for half-an-hour and the views were so rewarding that everyone felt the outing well justified. Two or three others trekked over the tops to Dove Crag, ticked off all the slab routes, and looked at the *Inaccessible Gully*. After tea, Charlie Wilson described, with the aid of snaps, his new climbs in Swindale.

IN MEMORIAM

MRS G. A. SOLLY, 1921-1946

We note with regret the passing hence of Mrs Solly, whose husband, our old friend G. A. Solly, did so much for the welfare of our Club and for its business arrangements, and who, with him loved mountains and had wide knowledge of those of Britain and the Alps.

Mrs Solly was always a welcome addition to our Club functions, friendly and chatty with us all and keenly enjoying the contacts made at our jolly gatherings ; her first Club Dinner being that of 1911, at Coniston. I gratefully recall her gracious hospitality in the days when I lectured on mountaineering to Liverpool societies, at which her husband presided.

One by one the older members and friends of the Club climb those hills ahead ' where cairns are stars of light ' ; they leave fragrant memories and a gracious pattern of friendly sportsmanship, and surely such spirits do indeed abide unseen amongst the hills they once loved and climbed.

Of such was our late President's charming helpmeet.

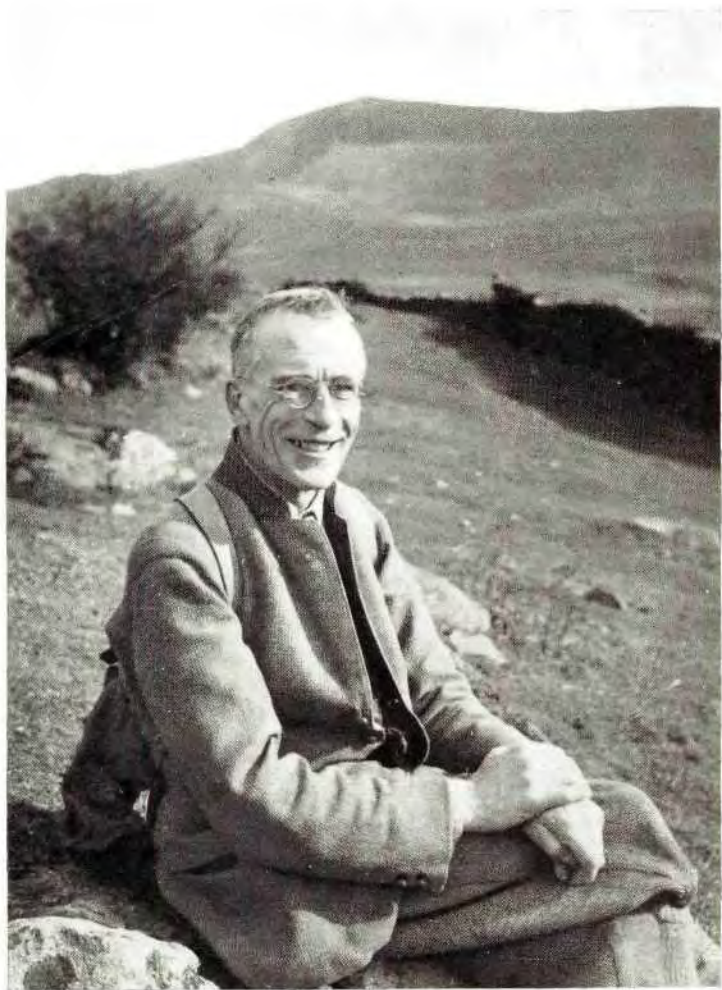
ASHLEY P. ABRAHAM.

NAN WILSON (1937-1947)

Those of us who knew Nan best will not remember her primarily for her climbing ability, although her accomplishments in this direction are worthy of note in this Journal.

As Nan Hamilton she commenced walking the fells in 1930, and started rock-climbing in 1934. Her enthusiasm was so great that a usual Sunday's climbing in Lakeland entailed a cycle ride there and back from Carlisle. Nan was a splendid exponent of delicate technique and was one of the few women who have been able to lead the Scafell Pinnacle climbs. To watch her leading *Bad Corner*, *Herford's Slab*, or the *Mantelshelf* on *Jones' Direct* was an object lesson to all would be ' tigers ' in our group, as also were her leads on such climbs as *Eagle's Nest Direct* or *Moss Ghyll Grooves*. With C. R. Wilson she formed a very strong team and in 1937, she ascended the *Great Flake Direct* on *Central Buttress* and also took part in first ascents on Dove Craggs and the Carrock Fell Climbs. Not content with being a good climber herself, Nan was always ready to help others to share the pleasures she found in rock climbing and many of us owe much to her instruction and patience when we were still in the novice stages.

Of later years her responsibilities as a wife and a mother took first place in Nan's life, but she never lost her love for the fells and



C. P. LAPAGE

when her young son attained the age of four she returned to the hills. If we were climbing on crags too far distant for four-year-old legs, Nan and Billy would walk to meet us—Nan eager to hear of our doings, never with any envy, but sharing to the full our pleasures or disappointments in the day's achievements. To all who climbed or loved the hills, the Wilson home was the ever-open door. You called in passing through Carlisle for a cup of tea and stayed the night—and Nan loved it. To have her home full of 'climmin folk' was one of her greatest pleasures.

Despite her intense love for the hills Nan's family always came first and in the end she virtually gave her life for her babies. She had been warned of the danger to herself of allowing them to reach maturity, but elected to take the risk, and so give them the chance to live.

There is at least one regular climbing group to whom the fells will not be quite the same again, for when we rendezvous on Sundays, Nan will not be with us. She will be missed, but we are grateful for her memory.

R. A. EWIN.

C. P. LAPAGE, 1930-1947

Dr C. P. Lapage, who died on 23rd September, 1947, was so lately amongst us and one of us that it is no easy task to write about him as one who is no longer playing his part in the affairs of the Club.

He joined the Club in 1930. Although his special interest in mountains only arose somewhat late in his life, relatively speaking, he had from his boyhood been conscious of an urge for open-air recreation. The seed for this may well have been sown by his father, a medical practitioner in Cheshire, who took his family for caravanning holidays in an age when horses and not cars were used for this purpose, and indeed, when such holidays must have been almost unknown. The family lived close to a Chester river, which accounted for his early interest in boating, and he often talked of the exciting times he had with his brother in their canoe.

Lapage was in his early forties when he first turned his serious attention to the hills and from that time on his days on the hills were an ever-increasing joy to him. Quite early on he became a collector of 'pips,' and he used to say that their value to him was that his programme took him to much delightful mountain country which he might otherwise never have visited. It is sometimes thought that in following this sort of scheme there is a danger that its accomplishment may command too much of one's attention.

No one who walked on the hills with ' C.P.' could say that any such plan prevented him from deriving the most complete refreshment for mind and body.

To spend a day with him on the tops was to experience a companionship unusually sincere and warm. He was a good talker to his intimate companions, and had a wealth of anecdote to draw upon from his wide experience of life both professional and otherwise.

Walking with him, too, one became familiar with the various types of headgear, from helmets to khaki vests, and other articles of clothing, upon which he had decided views and which sometimes provided no little amusement to other members of the Club. He was always glad to exhibit his latest acquisition. This interest in headgear was no mere fad, for his ears were unusually sensitive to wind and cold.

He was a familiar figure in Committee, and while his particular interest was in first aid, he could be relied upon for wise counsel on all matters under discussion. Special mention must be made of his work in connection with first aid, for the idea of putting mountain rescue teaching on a sound basis was very largely due to him and his persistence was mainly responsible for the setting up of a joint committee of representatives of the mountaineering clubs, now the Mountain Rescue Committee, of which he was the first chairman. One of his last week-ends was spent in North Wales assisting in the production of a mountain rescue film and happily, we have in this a permanent record of him as one of the actors.

Perhaps the most characteristic memory of him is of the joy his days on the hills gave to him. He had memorised many passages of poetry on mountain subjects which he loved to quote occasionally, and at times he was moved to compose himself. He made a great point of his week-ends in the Lake District and North Wales and their anticipation was a constant source of pleasure and stimulation. Latterly, and particularly through the war years, he depended more and more upon these short holidays for the recreation he found so necessary in his exacting professional life. It was not merely that he knew they did him good, he was truly grateful in a way not often seen and would return to work refreshed and thankful.

We think of him with deep affection in our hearts, and we know that we have lost a rare and generous friend. We shall miss his tall, friendly figure from our gatherings, as the children who were his life's interest, will miss a distinguished and lovable doctor.

R. W. ELDRIDGE.

- w. H. COOK, 1908—1946
MISS E. G. TODD, 1920—1947.
Killed ski-ing, March, 1947
- R. H. ATKINSON, 1924—1946
R. G. CHEW, 1920—1946
w. H. COTTON, 1926—1946
E. CREIGHTON, 1920—1946
W. M. HUNTBACH, 1918—1946
A. J. G. CARPENTER, 1942—1946
Drowned in Thames, 12th July, 1946

T. I. COWLISHAW

Thomas Inglefield Cowlishaw, whose death was noted in the 1946 *Journal* (his initials being wrongly given as 'T.L.'), was not an active member of the Club, especially of late years, but I knew him well when he was my Headmaster at Eccles between 1915 and 1923, and at that period and for some time afterwards he organised a good many parties of his senior boys for the purposes of fell-walking and mild rock-climbing. These parties usually went to the Gritstone districts of Derbyshire, but I have vivid memories of a week spent at Dow Crag in 1926, and I think that he may have inspired many people to a lasting interest in the fells.

I do not know much about his pre-1914 mountaineering, but he took part in severe first ascents in North Wales, two of which are mentioned on page 162 of Porter's Appendix to *Climbing in the Ogwen District*; both of these were accomplished with J. Laycock as leader, but I believe he also climbed with S. W. Herford.

ARTHUR CHAMBERS

EDITOR'S NOTES

The most important event of the past year has been the purchase of Raw Head, thus ensuring that the Club shall continue to enjoy the possession of this exceedingly popular hut. The Committee's recommendation, which was made after lengthy deliberation and after much financial work on the part of the Treasurer, and its endorsement by the Annual General Meeting were gestures of confidence in the future of the Club, and with good reason, for the Club has never been more healthy and active than now. But even if we have plenty of cause for satisfaction, we must never grow complacent. A project like the purchase of Raw Head is no light undertaking even for a Club as strong as ours, and it is well that this should be realised. The Raw Head Appeal has done well, but not by any means well enough, and more funds are needed if other projects are not to suffer. The enormous popularity of Raw Head and the way it is crowded weekend after weekend are the best signs of the important part it plays in Club life, and the urgent need for the improvements and extensions planned by the Committee. May I therefore remind members and friends of the Club of the Raw Head Appeal Fund? A very useful addition to the Fund could be made in small sums included in hut-fee envelopes by users of the Hut, who may wish to contribute but feel that a substantial donation is beyond their resources.

With the present *Guides* out of print and rendered incomplete by the great number of new climbs which have been made since their publication the Committee's decision to print a new and up-to-date edition will be welcomed. This is another major project involving heavy capital expenditure, but the necessity is obvious and the outlay will be recouped over a period of years on the sale of the *Guides*. It is good to know that H. M. Kelly has again undertaken the work and we can therefore be sure that the high standard of the present *Guides*, which he edited, will be maintained. The work of climbing, checking, measuring and recording the new climbs is a long and difficult one. These climbs are scattered over the whole district and contain a very high proportion of *very severes*, which require the right party in the right form in the right weather—a consumation not always easily achieved. We look forward to the publication of the *Guides* in due course, and in the meantime may every success attend the work of Kelly and the leaders who are dealing with the different districts for him.

The Report of the National Parks Committee (England and Wales) which has been sitting for two years was published in June. The Report proposes that twelve parks, with an area of 5,682 square

miles shall be established over a period of three years. The proposed area for the Lake District park is 892 square miles and the other districts affected are North Wales, the Peak District, Dartmoor, the Yorkshire Dales, the Pembrokeshire coast, Exmoor, the South Downs, the Roman Wall, the North York Moors, the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains and the Broads. The Report which contains many excellent maps is published by the Stationery Office, at 4s. 6d., and will well repay study. Its weakness lies in the inadequacy of the proposed administrative and legal framework to guard against the dangers which arise when interests of different Government Departments conflict.

Although our members climb mountains in many districts and often in distant parts of the world, a fact which is often reflected in the *Journal*, our principal concern as a Club is with the Lake District and, from time to time, we have been glad to welcome contributions of special importance from non-members. My thanks are due to Mr Norman Nicholson—who will be known already to many members as one of the most outstanding younger poets of today—for allowing me to publish his remarkable poem : " The Land Under the Ice." The only previous publication of the poem was in *The Fortnightly*, to whose Editor I make grateful acknowledgment. The poem is broadly allegorical and treats of the social and moral predicament of man in terms of an ice-age. In Norman Nicholson, we have a modern Lakeland poet who can convey the essential spirit of the district in vivid, memorable imagery and whose verse can be as strong and virile as its life and mountains.

Mr S. H. Cole, who is Group Secretary for the National Farmers Union, writes as an expert on Fellside Farming, and does not shrink from criticism. It is worth our while to know something of the Fellsider's problems and difficulties.

J. Brady, one of our members who is in his eighty-third year walked last May-day from Sedgwick to Morecambe, to take part in the Labour day procession and afterwards walked back again—a distance (I rely on my own rough estimate) of about thirty-eight miles. A very fine performance.

Charles Pickles reports that on 23rd June, 1947, while climbing Giants Crawl, Dow Crag, he found a piton in the quartz slab at the top of the third pitch only about one foot below the long grass ledge. It seemed to be fairly new and its presence was rather a mystery, as there were good holds a matter of inches on either side, and the large ledge above. Possibly it was found essential under iced conditions. It was removed and Pickles is glad to say that no apparent damage was done to the Crag.

The many friends of George Basterfield will be delighted to welcome the publication of his collected work in *Mountain Lure* (Titus Wilson, Kendal, 15s.). The book (which is illustrated by many excellent photographs) contains essays, entitled "Why do men climb?" "Mountain Lure," and "Rock Sense," also two of his best dialect stories and his collected poems. Unfortunately it was received too late for a review, which must be held over until the next number, but its publication must be noted.

E. BANNER MENDUS

12 HOLLAND STREET,
LONDON, W.8.
18/XII/46.

DEAR EDITOR,

In a pleasant article by H. K. Gregory, in this number,* introducing folk to the Northumbrian climbs, the author has omitted to verify his history, as to the crags, or to consult earlier numbers of climbing journals.

In the *C.C.J.* a note appeared over my initials, describing Wanney crag climbs; which were all climbed out by myself with George and Sir Charles Trevelyan at the beginning of the century; on one occasion taking with us young Parsons, son of the owner of the land. One name I gave, that of the "Skull Climb," should not be altered, in view of the singular rock accident upon it.

Simonside, was climbed regularly by us, and later by Raymond Bicknell from Newcastle, with his friends, and doubtless his sons (of whom Claud is resident still there).

Craig Lough. The chief climbs here were all done by Marcus Berresford Heywood, his friends and myself. A note appeared in *C.C.Y.*

Wolf Crag, Shafto Crag, etc., were also climbed, by the Trevelyans and myself.

The new Club should get into touch with Heywood, head of Wyse, Speke & Co., and Claud Bicknell, who would be glad to advise them, I feel sure.

*The 1946 Journal.

Meanwhile, I feel there should be some note written later, to correct this defective early history ?

Yours sincerely,

G. WINTHROP YOUNG

N.B.—In the *B.M.C. Circular*, Pyatt's list gives the references to these notes quoted above.

CLUB NOTES

The Club now numbers 981 members of which 29 are **Graduating** members. Eleven members have died during the year.

Congratulations are offered to Miss B. Cunliffe and Mrs P. B. Thompson, on their marriage to another two of our members, Mr J. King and Mr A. E. Wormell, respectively, and also to Miss B. Leighton, Miss W. Greenfield, Miss S. McLeod and Miss V. Bolton, on their marriage.

This year has been one of the most successful on record for outdoor activities. The very happy Arran Meet of last year was followed this year by a ten day meet at Glen Brittle during May. A meet at Pen-y-Pass, North Wales, in April, was attended officially by some 12 members, but G. Bower gate crashed at breakfast on Saturday, having ridden over from Derby, to which place he returned after doing the Snowdon Horseshoe. The Alpine Meet, at Arolla, of some 40 members was from all accounts a huge success which was only marred by the sad accident to Miss Gray, a guest, who succumbed to the injuries she received from a fall whilst descending from the Petite Dent de Veisivi. The thanks of all are due to Lyna Kellett, for a tremendous amount of work in making all the arrangements and to Douglas Side, who was mainly responsible for the successful running of the meet itself. Owing to travel restrictions it seems unlikely that there will be an Alpine Meet in 1948.

Nearly all the home meets have been well attended and miracles of packing have been needed to provide beds for all at those held at Raw Head.

Owing to staggered holidays and the lack of domestic help at hotels and farms, we are being driven more and more to the use of the Club Huts for our monthly meets, as it is only during the off season that it is possible to obtain week-end accommodation. Our thanks are once again due to the 'K' Fellfarers Club for very kindly consenting to allow us the use of High House, Seathwaite, in exchange for Brackenclouse for the Whitsuntide and Dinner Meets, and also to the Wayfarers for use of R.L.H.

J. C. APPELYARD

LONDON SECTION

Chairman :

DR CHARLES F. HADFIELD

Committee :

Lady Chorley
H. N. Fairfield
Miss M. Glynné
E. W. Hamilton
J. E. Jackson

Mrs Lancaster-Jones
Mrs Milsom
Sir Leonard Pearce
W. A. Poucher
R. Walker

Hon. Sec. and Treasurer : Mrs M. Garrod, 19 Douglas Road, Harpenden.
Telephone 230

Walks Secretary : E. W. Hamilton, 20 Balmoral Road, Worcester Park, Surrey. *Telephone :* Derwent 1659. Business hours, Central 2801.

Gradually as the war years recede the London Section is getting back something of its former vigour and many new activities are being planned for the future. A successful start has been made with informal dinners at the Strand Brasserie, and we hope to hold these monthly in future. **Any** member visiting London will always be very welcome.

Monthly walks have been held among the hills of Kent or Surrey, in the Chilterns, around Windsor, and sometimes farther afield. Our thanks are due to the faithful band of leaders who have done so much to make the walks successful in fair weather and in foul. Perhaps it is not surprising to note that our walks generally lead us over the highest ground to be found in London's countryside.

We have also started visiting Harrison Rocks and these climbing days have proved very popular. This sandstone outcrop is an excellent practice ground and certainly the best, if not the only one available to the Londoner exiled from the mountains. Our special thanks are due to R. P. Mears for so cheerfully acting as leader and his knowledge of Harrison Rocks has proved invaluable.

We have also had a grand day's walking in the country around Hawkley, in Hampshire. Cyril Moore arranged a splendid route in the Selborne country and the strawberry tea provided by Mr and Mrs Moore still lingers in the memory of those present.

A change was made for the 1946 Annual Meeting and Lunch, which was held this time at the Connaught Rooms, on 7th December. Over 80 members and guests were present and we were specially glad to welcome L. W. Somervell, President of the Club.

Owing to insuperable difficulties the plan for building a packhorse bridge in the Lake District as a Speaker Memorial was finally abandoned and, as will be known to members, the London Section and friends have transferred the Speaker Memorial Fund to the Raw Head Hut Fund to go towards the purchase of the barn.

Members can always obtain details of current arrangements, walks, etc., by contacting either the Walks Secretary or the Hon. Secretary.

MARJORIE GARROD, *Hon. Secretary.*

E. W. HAMILTON, *Walks Secretary.*