T. R. Burnett
President, 1952

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THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB

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THE GREAT LANGDALE STONE AXE FACTORY

R. G. Flint

The discovery of a stone axe factory of the late Neolithic Period (about 1900 B.C.) in Great Langdale was an event of some importance in the archaeological world and I venture to think that an account of it may be of interest to members, seeing that the evidence of the axes is an indication of the activities of what may be said to be the first " Fell and Rockers."

The rock used is a volcanic tuff or ash hardened and baked to the consistency of flint. It is dark green in colour, very finely grained and weathers to a light grey. When struck it chips in a similar manner to flint and thus is capable of being worked.

The rock occurs on Bowfell, Mart Moor Crag and again on Pike of Stickle where it can be distinguished as a broad band of light grey rock just below the ' thimble ' and in distinct contrast to the darker colour of the nearby crags. It also extends as a low out-crop along the whole of the south-east face of Harrison Stickle.

How it came to be discovered by the Stone Age Man is not known ; but there can be no doubt that through the many thousands of years covered by that period he became acquainted with the types of rock best suited for his purpose. In the south of England he used flint and even mined for it in the chalk, while in the mountains he probably went to the natural quarry of the scree and by trial and error found out which was the most suitable rock—usually of volcanic origin.

The discovery of the Great Langdale factory by Mr Brian Bunch, of Ulverston, is most interesting. It had been known for a long time that axes had been made from stone of Lakeland origin which, it was thought, was carried down as boulders into Lancashire, Cheshire and the Midlands by the glaciers during the Ice Ages ; and the significance of the discovery many years ago of a small chipping site near the top of Stake Pass by Professor D. M. S. Watson had not been fully appreciated.

A petrological study of stone axes found in their area was recently made by the South Western Group of Museums and Art Galleries and the axes examined were grouped according to the type of rock from which they were made. Those of Lakeland origin came under Groups VI, VIII or XI and by far the greatest number were Group VI: only odd specimens of the other two groups having as yet been found. One result of the examination revealed that there were far too many axes made from Lakeland rock (Group VI) for

glacial drift to have been the sole source of supply and it was, therefore, assumed that there must be a main source elsewhere. It should be noted that such factories had already been found in Wales and Ireland. Mr Bunch and his wife in 1947 spent a holiday in Langdale where it was known the rock occurred and during that time examined the various scree slopes to see if there was, by any chance, evidence of such a factory. Their efforts were finally rewarded by the finding of flakes and axes in the screes descending from the gully on the east side of Pike of Stickle. Further examination in the area showed that the workings were extensive. More flakes and axes were found in the screes to the west of the main fall and in addition several small sites were found on the fells above. Later still it has been found that the work had gone on over the whole of the out-crop on the southern face of the Pike and much of the scree below had come from these upper workings. At Easter this year it was noticed that the scree at the southern corner of Harrison Stickle was light coloured and, on examination, proved to be the result of another extensive working. Further visits have shown that there are sites along the whole of the south-eastern side of that peak.

So far only axes have been found and these vary in shape : some are broad with a thin butt and others are slightly thicker in section but have a pointed butt. In length they can be anything between 6/10 inches, depending on the initial size of the piece of rock selected for the work and how much it was necessary to chip away. The axes are thought to have been fashioned by striking the piece of rock chosen against a block of stone which acted as an anvil. Many such blocks may be found in situ with chippings surrounding them. It is also possible that portable anvils of granite were used. I have one of about 10 lb. weight, which was found on the main scree shoot. It is about 9 inches in diameter and 4 inches thick, flat on the underside and dome shaped on the top as the result of countless blows. I tried out a piece on it and succeeded in chipping out an edge ; but the process was hard on the hands. A number of pieces of granite have been found on the sites and as they all show some part of a curved surface similar to the specimen in my possession it would appear that they are parts of broken anvils. Granite is not found in Langdale and as the glacial flow was outwards, the boulders could not have been carried there by that means and must, therefore, have been brought in by hand. Hammer stones were also used ; probably for the finer work, and one found has been identified as a piece of granite from Criffel or Dalbeattie. I have two others, as yet unidentified.

From specimens found of the thin pointed butt type it would appear that it was the practice to shape the thin end first as this would be the end most likely to break in the course of manufacture ; but in the case of another specimen of the broad thin butted type the two ends have been chipped out and the centre left untouched. All the axes found, with perhaps the exception of a few that have been overlooked, are discards, having either been broken across in the shaping or because in chipping, a flake has plunged too deep and so spoilt the symmetry of the implement or because some part of the rock has proved intractable. Even so I do not think anyone who has handled them can fail to appreciate the skill with which they have been made. Some of the discards are in a very advanced state of manufacture and it is not difficult to imagine the feelings of the craftsman when his work was marred through no fault of his own.

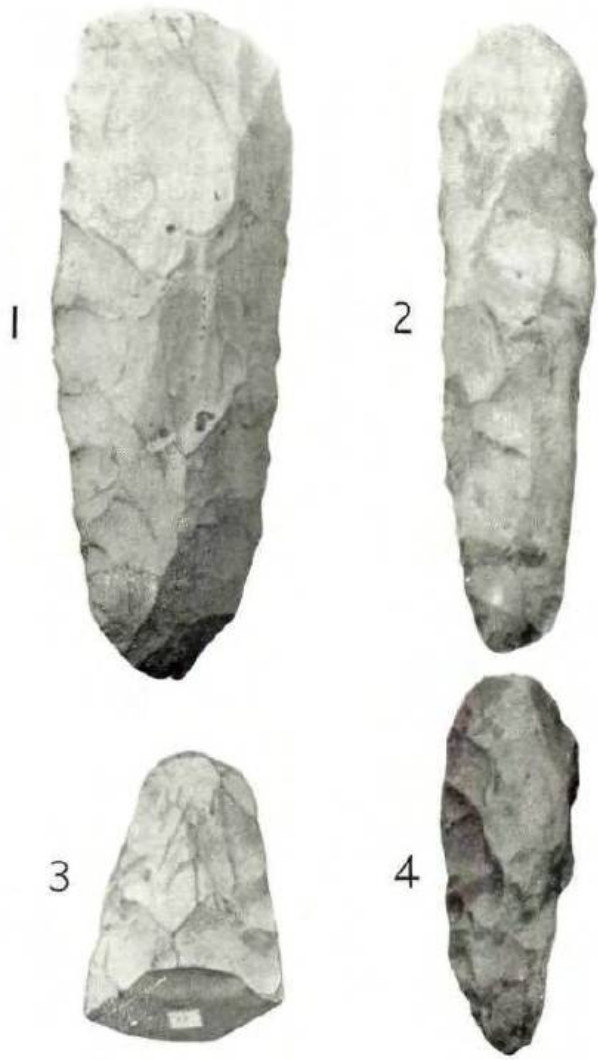
The final process in the manufacture was that of polishing. This would be done by rubbing the implement down with sandstone and water. At Ehenside Tarn site, near Beckermet on the Cumberland Coast where sandstone is abundant, both rough and polished axes have been found. It is assumed that the work on the Pikes would be done during the summer months of the year and that the roughed-out axes would be taken by way of the high level routes to the permanent settlements, which were most likely on the Cumberland Coast, for finishing during the winter. On completion they would be traded for other goods and so have travelled far and wide over the British Isles. A polished specimen in the museum at Dumfries is said to have been found in Poland.

Some interesting points have come to light in the course of the examination of the factory sites. A section of peat from the Mart Moor site has been subjected to microscopical examination and it is estimated that the lowest layer is only 2,000 years old. From this it would therefore appear that when the factory was in full production the upper fells were just bare rock. On the other hand it may be that the chipping sites on the fell top were selected because they were dry and well drained. Both Mart Moor and Watson's sites fulfil these conditions and even now are more or less free from **peat.**

Again it is often said that the screes are always on the move but the finding of axes and chippings lying around anvil stones on the screes seems to show that the movement for a very long time has been slight and that the screes are very much the same now as they were 4,000 years ago. It appears probable that climbers and walkers

in the past 50 years have imparted more movement to them than natural causes in several thousand years.

In case any reader would like to obtain fuller information this can be found in an article by Miss Clare Fell in Volume L of the *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, and also in a paper by Mr Brian Bunch and Miss Clare Fell in the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, Vol. XV (1949).



STONE AXES II«>M GREAT LANGDAIE

1. [{road thin-butted type (10 in.I
2. Narrow pointed-butt type (')J in.)
3. **Butt** end, thin-butted **type**
4. Narrow pointed-butt type (5i in.)

Photograph by II lh,,,l,

JUBILEE ASCENT OF PILLA.R, 1951

J. R. Files

The histories of the Pillar Rock and of the Westmorland family are closely interwoven, and it is therefore appropriate that the third Jubilee Ascent in the annals of rock-climbing should have been made by a Westmorland on Pillar.

The first Jubilee ascent was, of course, that by W\ P. Haskett-Smith on the Needle in 1936, with R. S. T. Chorley, then President of the Club, as leader *{Fell and Rock Journal,* 1936-37). The second was G. A. Solly's ascent of Pillar in 1938, again **with** the President, G. R. Speaker, as a member of the party. The third was made by H. Westmorland in the three-fold capacity of celebrator of the Jubilee, leader of the climb and President of the Club—a very strong party in itself but accompanied for the sake of appearances, by three other members. This ascent was made on October 14th, 1951.

The association of the Westmorland family with Pillar dates back to July, 1873, when May, Tom and Edward Westmorland climbed the Rock, as recorded in verse by Tom in " A Summer Ramble," part of which is printed in the Journal for 1939. The route taken on this occasion was across the Slab and around the Notch.

Eighteen years later, in the middle of the summer of 1901, the same Tom Westmorland, accompanied by his daughter and 15-year-old son, Horace (pronounced Rusty), caught the early morning train from Penrith to Keswick and thence cycled to Seatoller, pushed the cycles to Honister summit and walked to Pillar. They climbed across the Slab, which was still adorned with grass and moss, again rounded the Notch and reached the summit by the chimney above. No rope was used in accordance with the custom of that period, and the party climbed close together, father steadying a foot of each young climber whenever he thought that such support was necessary. They returned to Honister and cycled back to Keswick, and it must have been a tired but very happy and proud party which awaited the evening train to Penrith.

Last year the President, H. Westmorland, achieved the great ambition of making a Jubilee Ascent of Pillar to commemorate his visit made 50 years before. The party for the ascent numbered six (counting the President as one) and left Borrowdale in cars on a perfect autumn morning. It soon disgraced itself by becoming lost on the road from Loweswater to Gillerthwaite in patches of dense morning mist. Considerably behind schedule the two halves of the party united at Gillerthwaite and, after following ' the white stakes,' arrived, in due course, at Pillar. Here two of the six nobly withdrew

from the climbing party to save time. As it was, the North Climb, which had been chosen for this great occasion, was somewhat preoccupied by a party of climbers from York (or vice versa) but the first arrivals courteously granted the right of way. The climb was done on two ropes, first the President and his second man, followed by the photographer and the lady. Nylon, in lengtns of 100 feet, was used to mark the progress which has been made in the sport since the days when ' not less than a 60-foot length would be needed for a party of three.'

Each well-known landmark was encountered and passed—Twisting Chimney, Stomach Traverse, Cave Pitch, Split Blocks and Strid—appropriate places for such an historic ascent. The Nose, which made such an impression on climbers of half a century ago and where curious devices such as the stirrup rope were recommended and employed, was reached. There was no question of the route to be followed ; the occasion demanded the direct ascent of the Nose and the leader, **although** he had not previously done that route, ' mounted gaily upwards ' but not, as the old writer continues, ' on his second's shoulders.' It was a very fine effort indeed for a Jubilee ascent. Fortunately the remainder of the party was able to follow the lead without recourse to stirrup ropes or other engineering devices.

In short time the four assembled on the summit of Pillar to be greeted by the two who had foregone the ascent but who now offered congratulations across Jordan Gap. The photographer, who had also played the role of porter to the expedition, now produced from his rucksack a bottle whose contents quickly disappeared in toasts to Pillar and to the man, still very young, who had first ascended the crag 50 years ago.

The party then followed the Old West Route, where the pages of the Book of Time were rapidly turned back, and the descent successfully completed ' without ropes or other illegitimate means.'

Thus was another chapter of the history of Lake District Climbing written and the Club will join the small group who wished many more years of happy climbing to the leader, and to Pillar much happiness, for the Old Rock must surely rejoice in the pleasure it gives to those who come to climb respectfully but without fear.

HAUT ATLAS

Bentley Beetham

In a travel-book—what it was I cannot recollect—I saw a picture of the Saharan desert with a great range of snow-capped mountains gleaming in the dim distance : it was entitled ' The Atlas Mountains'. I was very young at the time, perhaps nine or ten, and had never then seen a real mountain, but that picture captivated me and lived continually in my memory. Some 30 years later, on returning from Everest, I decided to try to turn fantasy into fact ; to go and see. I could find no book or article on the Atlas Mountains, nor could the Alpine Club help ; yet there was the range shown on all the maps stretching for over a thousand miles across the north of Africa.

My first reconnaissance was after a climbing trip to Corsica, when taking a boat from Marseilles to Tunis I went south past Biskra and on towards Tugurt, thus passing right across where the range should have been, but I saw nothing to interest the mountaineer. Tunisia having failed, I tried next through Algeria, and reached Figig which gave an interesting peep of the desert but only distant signs of my snowy mountains. A third attempt, this time through Morocco, at last yielded what I sought—the High Atlas.

This first Moroccan trip was in 1926, and travel off the beaten track was then difficult. I was held up at Marrakech, the ancient ' Morocco City,' where the French authorities refused to give me permission to go into the mountains : to Asni in the foothills, yes, but up into the Haut Atlas, no ; the zone of security was drawn short of that. Every obstacle was put in my way—the natives were in a state of unrest ; there was no transport ; the road had been destroyed by avalanches ; and what not. It appeared that a short while before two German botanists had gone there and never returned, and things like that cause diplomatic trouble.

While stewing in heat and impatience in Marrakech, I made useful acquaintances in the person of a bank manager, and in the consulate, was given the hint that though the French officials, for diplomatic reasons, would not grant me permission to go, they might not make much effort to stop me if I went without it, the responsibility would then not be their's. Next morning I left by a crowded native bus—a lone white in and under a sea of Arabs in their flowing garments and piles of household property. Typhus was about, and at the Bab or gateway in the city wall we had all to turn out while the bus and our persons were disinfected. The drive of 40 miles or so was interesting, and having shed most of the

passengers *en route* we arrived at Asni, the terminus at that time : here I found excellent quarters in La Bonne Auberge. The good hostess was a French-Swiss, but though speaking only English, I made her understand that I wanted a mule and man to go up into the mountains for a prolonged trip. In the course of time (there is no hurry in Morocco) the requisite turned up, in fact two men, who were brothers, presented themselves for service, and I made my choice, taking Larsem. A satisfactory choice it proved to be, and I had the same man on five different expeditions. We had not a word or even a letter in common, and everything had to be done by gesture and dumb-show, but it worked well and never resulted in any serious misunderstanding.

The Atlas are not a group of mountains like the Cumberland hills or the Alps, but are a long range running roughly east and west, and reminded me somewhat of the Pyrenees in that the chain is not broken up by deep passes descending to low levels, and though the tops only reach some 13,000 feet, seldom do the cols descend below 10,000 feet. For this reason the mountains tend to look rather unattractive, the peaks lacking individuality and isolation ; in fact it was only last year, when returning to the range after an absence of 17 years that I fully appreciated how good they really are. They are totally different from the Alps : there are no glaciers, no coniferous forests on their flanks, there are no slender peaks towering up into the sky, there is a complete absence of railways, roads and hotels, though now there are a few Alpine huts belonging to the Moroccan Section of the French Alpine Club. But to make up for these deficiencies there was the grand feeling of exploration, the voyaging into the unknown. So much has been written and so many photographs have been published of the Alps that you know beforehand, at least in part, what you are going to see and find wherever you go. That was not so in the Atlas, though since my yearly visits ceased an excellent guide, *Le Massif du Toubkal,* was published in 1942, which though it may rob a visit to the range of its feeling of exploration, will undoubtedly be of the utmost use to those who wish to see the best and the most in a brief trip. Quite apart from the differences in terrain, a visit to the Atlas is an entire change in experience from a trip to the Alps. I have been to the latter some 30 times, but no matter whether one goes to Italy, Germany, France, Switzerland or the Julian Alps, the way of life of the people is really very similar to that of our own; the main difference is the superficial one of language. In the Atlas we meet wholly new habits and a new outlook on life—we are ' East of Suez,' if not geographically at least in effect, and what a wonderful difference that makes.

Perhaps the greatest asset of the range lies in its climate. In the Alps you hope, often vainly, tor fine weather ; in the Atlas you take it tor granted and get it. There may be a thunder-storm, or worse a dust storm, but these are passing incidents and quite worth experiencing—at least in retrospect—and they do not break up the weather. This applies to the summer only ; earlier in the year it is less settled and at Easter I have sometimes camped in heavy snow. These camps at 9,000-10,000 feet placed just where the passing whim suggests and always amid gloriously **wild** surroundings are one of the joys of climbing in the Atlas. Everything can usually be carried up on mules or donkeys, and if they fail the Berbers will shoulder the loads themselves, and if confidently led will go almost anywhere. Just as in the Alps the cattle, here mostly goats and sheep, are driven up to high pasturage in the summer, and so it is often possible to buy meat delivered fresh, aye, alive, at the camp site 10,000 feet up, although the nearest place where any other commodity can be bought may be a long day's march away.

The atmosphere is very dry and therefore clear, hence distances are farther than they appear to be to our eyes, accustomed as they are to a damp climate. This fact was soon brought home to me on first arriving at Asni. That evening I saw the great wall of the range close at hand and decided as a preliminary canter just to go up it at its nearest point to spy out the land. Accordingly, I set off immediately after breakfast. The way lay straight ahead and there was not a difficult step in it: yet I failed to reach even the foot of the range, let alone ascend to its 12,000-foot top—so completely had I underestimated the intervening distance. But though lateral distances tend to be greater than you expect, the vertical lift to the summit is refreshingly small, since your camp sites are high and the tops are relatively low. Now that there are adequate huts one could do without a camp and thereby save transport, but I think so doing would rob the expedition of much of its pleasure, novelty and freedom.

The long tortuous valley with precipitous flanks, leading up into the mountain fastnesses, must have provided an ideal lurking place for the old-time kidnapping Berbers. As one goes up now in peaceful days, one realises the former hopelessness of rescue. At the foot of the valley stands the Kasbah or castle of the local chief, and even if a force sufficiently strong to brush past it were organised, the captive would long before have been taken ever farther into the mountains whose passes only the Berbers knew, and in the background lay the limitless Anti Atlas and the Sahara. We are constantly reminded of this state of affairs even today, for the watchful

habits of the natives still unconsciously, uselessly persist and we see motionless figures ever seated on eyries far above the trail, quietly, ceaselessly, scanning the gorges, and nothing can move therein without being seen and reported. It is still second nature to these mountain folk to sit and watch—they are great sitters.

On my first trip there was an amusing incident. I was then staying in the last inhabited spot in the valley and had gone far up above it into the mountains, and while resting and having a bit of lunch noticed a peculiar semi-circular line of bushes where it seemed no bushes should be. It looked unnatural, and next time I happened to glance at them they appeared to be nearer. Interest aroused, I studied them carefully, and saw that without doubt they were moving. Slowly, very slowly, they advanced converging steadily on me. It was a perfect camouflaged movement and I couldn't help remembering the two Germans and the French refusal ot a permit. I, in my turn, sat and watched—and wondered. Gradually the bushes approached, but even through a monocular I could scarcely see the figures that propelled them. Had 1 taken alarm and bolted I should never have known the explanation. It turned out that, unknowingly, I had rested on a mountain track leading to the village and what I saw was a scattered party of fuel gatherers returning with their loads slowly heading for the track, and so forme. ' How easy is a bush supposed a bear.' It certainly looked ominous.

At nigh camps there is a complete absence of wood, as we understand the term, and this being so a roarer primus is recommended. There is, however, a little cruciferous plant, *cralris spinosum,* that grows at from 7,000-8,000 feet upwards, which provides remarkable kindling. It forms small compact dome-shaped cushions about a foot in diameter, grey-green when alive and biscuit colour when dead. In the latter state it burns with astonishing, almost explosive vigour, but as a corollary it is burnt out almost as soon as lighted. Combustion is so complete that little or no hot ash is left and therefore cooking, or shall we say stoking with it is a whole-time job. It is a prickly xerophyte, and awkward to break up, but it must be fed under the pan in very small pieces continuously ; desist for a minute or so and the fire is out. Larsem loved the job : to sit and feed a fire exactly suits a Berber. In the lower villages charcoal, made still lower down, is sometimes obtainable, and is a clean admirable fuel.

At Tacheddirt the Mokadam, or local chief, used to come every evening to the shack where I was living to drink coffee or mint-tea, and sometimes he brought an elder or two of the village with him. They were queer gatherings. We had not a single word in com-

mon, but they would come silently in and with a sweeping action each would spread his burnous round his legs and sink quietly onto the earth floor. So long as there was beverage well laced with sugar all went well. I soon found it was unnecessary to try to show them where i had been that day ; they knew better than I did myself, **for** evidently the silent watchers saw my every movement from dawn till dusk. They could never make out what it was I was seeking. 1 hat it must be some kind of precious stone or ore they were convinced, and at all my camps, here and elsewhere, silent figures would come in and seat themselves and remain motionless for a time. Then slowly from within the copious folds of their robes they would produce a little cloth bag of earth or crushed rock and spread it out in front of me. To seem uninterested in any article offered for sale is typical of Arab business methods. It therefore took long to convince them that I really cared nothing for the offering : it would then slowly disappear whence it came, only to be followed later by a different sample, and yet others. At last they would rise and depart as silently as they had come, convinced only that what they had brought was not the right stuff, the stuff I sought. That anyone, even a white infidel, should toil up into the high mountains and come down the precipitous gorges seeking nothing, was quite naturally beyond their comprehension.

At Asni two big valleys come down to meet near the village, and each gives an excellent approach to the mountains, the eastern one via Tacheddirt, the western by Aremd. When I was last there in 1934 they were actually engaged in building a motor road to the latter place and had got a little of it completed, so on returning in 1951 I took it for granted that it would be in use and ordered a car. They looked astonished and said there was no road, not even a foot-path, and so it proved to be. Having arranged for a mule to carry up our baggage we set out gaily walking on the part I had seen under construction, but were soon utterly unable to trace where it once had been, so completely had the floods removed all sign of it. One could make a way up the valley-bed continually wading the stream as the better going changed from side to side, but we f nally gave that up and climbed very steeply hundreds of feet up the true right flank and there found a tolerably good path from which one obtained a bird's eye view of the valley floor beneath, and every now and then looking down we could see traces of where the road had once been.

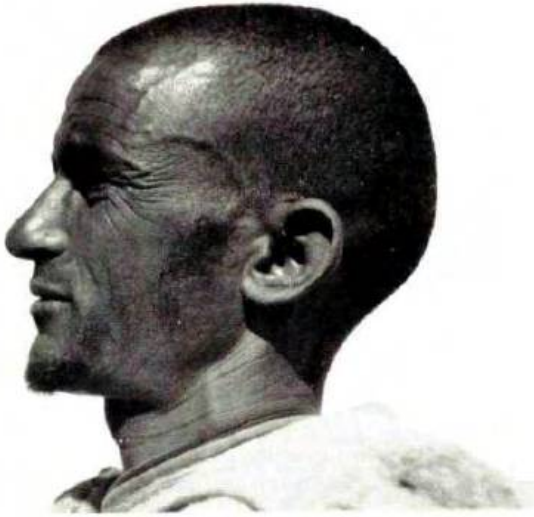
What of the actual mountaineering, the climbing ? Easily answered—just what you like to make it. You can, I think, walk and scramble to the top of all the greater summits, just as you can walk up Scafell or Gable, but if you choose the difficult way you can

get something to satisfy most tastes. Toubkal (13,665 feet), the highest peak is no exception ; without any knowledge of the route I did it from Aremd Rest House and back in a single day, but if approached from the south, from Lac d' Ifni, it offers a magnificent ascent. Half-a-dozen long and difficult routes could be made here—I spent an exhausting day on one ; it was a lift of 5,000-6,000 feet, much of it up really steep virgin crag; and there are plenty of other interesting and difficult courses on subsidiary ridges.

Those who have gone in for the ***viertousanders*** may find recreation here, too. One can do four or five 4,000-metre summits in a single expedition, and it might be possible to tick off all of them in the Toubkal Massif, not in a life-time or in a season but in a single marathon day, the Atlas counterpart of the Coolin Ridge in Skye. Of more delicate spectacular climbing there is plenty for those who seek it. In addition to the difficult faces of the larger mountains, there are on the high ridges connecting them numerous *clochetons, doigts* and *ladats* which offer no easy way up but plenty of interesting ones, and as they are perched on the crests of a great range they present attractive problems and give really magnificent views from their tops. Now that the excellent Guide already mentioned has been published it is superfluous to detail them or any of the individual climbs; my object has been rather to give a general idea of what these mountains are like.

Nailed boots and rubbers or vibrams, are standard equipment lor summer, but an ice-axe may be useful in snow gullies long after the main faces are brown. Some of these gullies provide glorious glissades on the descent, and one may thereby sometimes return to camp in an incredibly short time. Of course earlier in the season although there are no glaciers, crampons are most useful and an axe essential.

The Berbers go either bare footed or with their flapping sandals attached by only a rough thong passing round the ankle and between the big and second toes. It looks the most impossible footgear, yet they will move adequately and swiftly over smooth sloping slabs which I, in nailed boots, treat with care. They know nothing of hand climbing and will on no account face anything in the nature of verticality or steep rock. I have seen and marvelled at them heavily laden with grain crossing steep snow couloirs in their sandals, and have more than once kicked steps across for them when they have been temporarily held up by hard snow. They have no idea of cutting steps, nor any implement to do it with—you can't kick holes with a flapping sandal, and they do not use a rope. They are hill people and move easily and tirelessly on the mountain sides but



LARSBM

Bentley *Bectham*

have no idea of climbing as such ; no doubt that will come as more mountaineers visit the district.

Having left the first consideration to the last let us now deal with how to get there. I know of no place that offers such a wide variety of means and routes of approach, without any one of them being pre-eminently the best. The simplest is to take a rail ticket to Madrid via Paris and Irun, and then one on from there to Algeciras. From the last or from Gibraltar take the ferry across to Tangier, and then by bus to Rabat, Casablanca and Marrakech. This last is your goal whatever route you chose, and you can now get a train with sleepers to take you there from Tangier, if rail travel is preferred.

I have used the air route, flying via Toulouse, Pcrpignan, Alicante and Casablanca, but if a camping trip is proposed excess luggage occasioned by tents and necessary equipment is a heavy additional expense.

A pleasant way is by P. and O. or other liner to Gibraltar and then on as given above. This was my usual method of approach, but now fewer boats call at Gib.

Occasionally it is possible to get a cargo boat carrying a few passengers from Liverpool or other English port direct to Casablanca. I have done this and recommend it as the cheapest and most carefree way, but such boats are few and far between, and inquiry long before the date of departure is advised.

There is a regular service from Bordeaux to Casablanca, but this, of course, entails the cross-channel and a long French rail journey. Another route, and not a bad one from the travel point of view, is by train to Marseilles and thence by French Line to Oran and on by bus or train to Oujda, Fes, Meknes, Casablanca and Marrakech. The last two places are about 150 miles apart, and on first driving this road I eagerly scanned the horizon to the south but saw nothing of the Atlas. I was unlucky, but on many subsequent trips they have come suddenly, grandly into view on topping the last rise a few miles north of the ancient city. There they have been riding across the southern sky like a great snow-capped wall with the dark oasis of Marrakech in a depression beneath them, the Kutubia, a most useful identification mark, standing up above the encircling palm trees. On that first trip it was not until the second day in Marrakech that I got my first peep of the promised land, and then only a fleeting one from the housetop before breakfast. There at last was the great chain floating on a sea of mist, its summits glittering in the morning sun—a perfect fulfilment of the picture. An hour later it had vanished completely in the heat haze.

THE 'CONQUEST' OF STAC POLLY

W. A. Poucher

I was staying in Ullapool and the weather was bad. Some months previously I had visited this quaint and beautiful little fishing village, with its rows of prim whitewashed cottages standing on a promontory in Loch Broom, and looking across its shimmering surface to the lofty, rounded dome of Beinn Dearg which always seems to beckon invitingly to the climber staying in this part of Wester Ross. On that occasion I had spent some weeks in exploring, climbing and photographing the great mountain ranges spread so generously throughout the Western Highlands to the north of the Great Glen, and had enjoyed the solo ascents of such peaks as the Saddle, the Five Sisters of Kintail, the magnificent giants of Torridon and the splendid chain of An Teallach. But thereafter I had been too ambitious by expecting to cover the ground between Ullapool and Ben Loyal in the extreme north of Sutherland in a fortnight. Of course, I had been defeated ; not so much by the weather which suddenly let me down, but more especially by the number and remoteness of those strangely beautiful red sandstone obelisks which characterise this part of our rich heritage. In fact I found them so fascinating that I felt compelled to explore them all, and had good weather favoured me continuously throughout the remainder of my trip the time available would have been totally inadequate to do them justice with my cameras. Ultimately I had to spend two months on them before I was satisfied.

So I had come back again in the following spring, and after a good run up from my Surrey home had explored the vast desolations of Beinn Dearg immediately after arriving in Ullapool. Then the rains came and I was marooned in my hotel, save for an hour each afternoon when, come what may, I took exercise locally to keep myself in condition. On the present occasion I was strolling back along the front to my hotel, and had just passed the pier, when I espied four heavily laden figures complete with windproof clothing, ice-axes and camping kit. They looked as if they might have come from Garve by the mail bus and from their appearance I could see they meant business. They entered a cafe for refreshment: so I followed and on getting into conversation with them discovered they were Sandhurst cadets, bound for Linneraineach on the shore of Loch Lurgain, from which base they proposed to explore the wild surrounding country.

Now I knew it was too early in the year for members of the climbing fraternity to take their holidays and therefore never

expected to encounter another human being on any of the hills in these distant solitudes. Yet I was most anxious to use any mountaineer I might meet, mainly as foreground interest and to impart scale to certain of my proposed photographs, particularly on the bristling, pinnacled ridge of Stac Polly. Since these young men were going to camp almost at the foot of this attractive little hill I suggested we might scale it together, and in the course of its traverse snap them in action on the ridge. They were delighted to fall in with my proposal and we agreed to meet there on the first sunny day.

While Stac Polly is well known to many mountaineers, it might be advisable to give a brief description of it here for the benefit of those members of the club who have not already visited Wester Ross. During the last two decades I have explored all the main ranges in the country and have come to the conclusion that this bizarre, wedge-shaped peak is one of the smallest and most picturesque I have seen : for its summit is only 2,009 feet above the level of the sea ; its half-mile crest rises gently from east to west and is decked with a remarkable collection of spectacular pinnacles and towers of red sandstone which are scarcely surpassed even in the Coolins of Skye. Either end is supported by sheer cliffs and some of its subsidiary ridges are poised in space, between which narrow gullies fall steeply to streak the talus slopes of the mountain with scree. One of them encloses a smooth, slender pinnacle known as the Lobster's Claw which will be noticed from above by alert climbers during the traverse of the ridge. The lower slopes rise at a gentle angle from the wild road skirting Loch Lurgain and in spring are flecked with heather, cotton grass, violets and spotted orchis, while on one occasion I found tufts of primroses tucked away in crevices of the eastern buttress. The angle steepens at about the 700 feet contour, above which the talus slopes soar up into the sky to be crowned by the pinnacles of the ridge. There is a col near its eastern end at an altitude of 1,700 feet and it is here that the crest is usually attained. There is, however, a short break near the western buttress which is guarded by a little tower having broad sloping hand and foot holds. If the crest of the ridge is adhered to strictly it makes a good rock climb, though some of the difficult bits may be turned on its north side. Scramblers wishing to avoid this section may do so by following a sketchy track, perhaps a hundred feet down on the south side. Any mountaineer will therefore choose his route according to his powers, but in any event he will revel in the splendour of the rock scenery displayed everywhere around him.

Rising on the northern borders of Ross-shire, Stac Polly is 14 miles to the north of Ullapool and immediately overlooking Loch Lurgain and the narrow, twisting road to Achiltibuie. It is surrounded on all sides by roek-bound lochs and lochans, is flanked on the east by the attractive peaks of Cul Mor and Cul Beag, and on the south by Beinn Eun, a conspicuous outlier of massive Ben More Coigach. To the north, and beyond the islet-studded blue of immense Loch Sionascaig, rise the peculiarly isolated peaks of Sutherland, with the long ridge of Suilven most prominent, but with glimpses of Canisp and Quinag. Its remote situation makes access difficult, save to those coming by car, but a tent may be pitched amid the trees at Linneraineach or more comfortable accommodation obtained at the newly-opened hotel of Drumrunie Lodge, four miles away. As a subject for the mountain photographer, Stac Polly is without equal in Britain.

On my first visit to Ullapool I had made one abortive attempt to photograph this bristling peak, when I had the company of two lady climbers who happened to be staying in my hotel. The day promised well as we drove out of the village, but the weather deteriorated in the course of the journey and we had no sooner attained the ridge than the mist came down to mar the prospect, followed by sleet and ultimately rain.

On the present visit three more attempts were necessary before I achieved success, but the time and expense involved were well worth it. On the first and second occasions mist and rain spoilt my chances, and on calling at the Sandhurst camp at Linneraineach I found my young friends absent on other expeditions.

Now it should be borne in mind that although Stac Polly is only 14 miles from Ullapool the hill is quite invisible from the village owing to the intervening high ground : the best one can do is to walk to a point beyond the cottages from which the western extremity of the gullied ridge of Ben More Coigach can be seen. But even if this mountain is clear of cloud it does not follow that its neighbours are basking in sunlight, and in consequence one has to go as far as Ardmair Bay before even their tops come into view.

On my fourth attempt I set out in glorious sunshine, when cumulus floated lazily over Beinn Dearg and above An Teallach whose outlier, Sail Mhor, may be seen across the loch. The narrow road rises gently at first and opens up magnificent retrospects of Loch Broom, with L'llapool below. Then it crosses the desolate moors and winds down in sharp curves to the shore of Ardmair Bay, where a graceful sweep of shingle leads the eye to Ben More Coigach on its far side. But on reaching this vantage point I was

disappointed to observe a vast bank of cloud stretching northwards from this mountain and shrouding all the peaks on this side of it.

However, this area is subject to sudden changes in the weather just the same as in our Lakeland hills, so I parked my car on the edge of this beautiful bay and went for a walk. An hour later the cloud began to lift and so I strolled back to be in readiness for a quick run to my objective, should conditions improve. I was seated in the car when I noticed a sturdy Scot approaching with a can in his hand. Imagine my surprise when he stopped beside me with these words : ' As you seem to have run out of petrol I have brought you all I have and it will be sufficient to enable you to reach Ullapool where you can get some more.' Now, fellow members, this is typical of our Scottish friends and does it not belie those stories of Aberdeen ?

By one o'clock the weather looked promising, so I drove on at a pace that was definitely risky for those rough and narrow mountain roads, and in half-an-hour was at the foot of my peak. As there was no passing place nearby I parked the car on the boulder-strewn ground beside the road, changed into nailed boots and set off at a brisk pace for the col at the eastern end of the ridge. I set foot on it in an hour, but found no sign of my Sandhurst friends, so made my way to the eastern buttress to commence operations ; in my hurry accidentally loosening a huge boulder at the top of the intervening gully which crashed down the chasm to create a cannonade that could have been heard for miles in the profound stillness that always seems to cloak these hills. When silence reigned once more I heard a shout in the distance and some time later the noise of moving scree told me these boys were climbing the northern slopes of the mountain as fast as their legs would carry them. In due course they stood beside me and it appeared they were on their way to Suilven, but when the weather changed they felt sure it would be my day for the ' conquest' of Stac Polly, and so changed their direction.

We started the traverse together, but I decided to go on ahead so that I might snap them as they climbed. We found the western section more suited to my purpose and had a lot of fun posing them on pinnacles and towers, the ascent of some of which proved a tricky business. The scene unfolded in every direction was enchanting, with a wonderfully clear atmosphere which enabled us to pick out all the widely spread landmarks. Perhaps the most remarkable panorama was to the north, across the bare, grey wilderness of Lewisian gneiss, whose forlorn aspect was relieved here and there by the intense blue of the many lochans strewn about everywhere and glittering in the sunlight like gigantic sapphires. I took no less

than 50 monochromes that day, as well as many shots in colour, and when I had done we sat down to watch the changing lights and shadows on the vast landscape spread around us in all directions, with the sea flanking it on the west. Then, as the evening shadows lengthened, we stuck our heels in the scree and came down one of the gullies, to bid adieu to one another on reaching the road after the gratifying experiences of the day.

BIRDS OF THE FELLS, DALES AND LAKES

Alan F. Airey

Walking along the dale to the fells, the first bird met is the Meadow Pipit. This is a small brown bird, about the size of a sparrow, with white tail feathers noted in flight. It has a sweet trilling song, often sung as it makes frequent short flights, always near the ground. Right up to the top of the highest fells, goes this small bird. In spring, big flocks arrive on migration, to increase the numbers of birds which stay on the fells all the year round. Another bird of the dales and lower fells, is the Wheatear. This is a small grey and black bird, of sparrow size. It has a prominent white rump noted in flight. It nests in the stone walls of the fells and dales. This bird is the first migrant to come from Africa, and usually arrives in Westmorland in the last week of March. The Ring Ouzel, the Mountain Blackbird, nests in the rocks of the fells and the fell walls. Once I found a nest with parent birds and three young birds, in the summit rocks of Helm Crag, near Grasmere. Its characteristic is a white collar, on its otherwise blackbird-like plumage.

Leaving the dales and lower fell slopes behind, the mountaineer comes into the land of the Raven, Buzzard, and Peregrine Falcon. The Buzzard looks like a small eagle, so lordly is its flight. But the eagle has been extinct in the Lake District for many years. The names of many " Eagle Crags " in the area, give signs of the birds that once were there. The Buzzard has a mewing call, like a cat, and delights in circling movements in the sky. Its wings have fretted rounded ends, and it nests in the high crags. On Esk Pike I have watched birds in Eskdale, and Langdale always has a pair of these birds round Bowfell and the Langdale Pikes. In July 1950, I spotted a pair and one young bird in Boardale, xiear Martindale, Ullswater, down from the crags and enjoying the morning sunshine.

The Raven is a big black bird with a characteristic croak, and nests in the high crags, like the Buzzard. In summer sometimes, small parties are about the fells. The Peregrine Falcon is a grey and white bird. The young birds have some brown in their plumage. In July 1949, I noted birds in Eskdale. In August 1950 and 1951, there were birds near Borrowdale. The call is a whistle and the flight is typical of the falcon species. Many " Falcon Crags " in the area are evidence of its former prominence. The Carrion Crow is a black plumaged bird of the lower fells and dales. Solitary or in pairs, they have a characteristic remote call.

The birds of the lakes and tarns are very interesting. In winter, big ilocks come down from the cold continent of Europe, to winter in the area. The most common diving ducks are Tufted Ducks. They are black and white in colour, with a slight tuft on the head. A few birds nest here in the summer. When the higher lakes and tarns are frozen, Coots flock on Windermere, which usually keeps open water in severe frosts. In February 1952, there were flocks totalling 600 birds between Storrs and Waterhead Bay, Ambleside. These birds are small and black, with a white forehead. They call quietly ' coot,' like their name. Pochards (Russet Heads) were on Rydal Water in December 1951, and February 1952, and also Goosanders on Grasmere. Goldeneye, Dabchicks, Slavonian Grebes, Scaup, Teal, Shoveler and other species frequent the lakes in winter. Mallard, which do not dive for food, are common winter ducks. Flocks of 50 or so birds frequent Windermere and Elterwater. The green head and grey back of the drake, brown plumage of the duck, and red legs, are characteristic of the species. Cormorants fish on Windermere and Derwentwater. In winter their numbers increase, as they come inland from the sea. They collect on the small rocky skerries in the lakes.

The most romantic birds of Great Britain, are the wild Whooper Swans. The Lake District is favoured by having many of these birds, wintering on the lakes and tarns, from December to March. Frosty weather brings more down from the frozen North. In January 1952, on a day of blue sky, sunshine and snow-covered fells, I was near Elterwater. In the morning there were six birds sunning themselves on the lake ice. In the afternoon, they went for a fly round, and came back at about 2 p.m., flying in from the Skelwith Bridge direction, trumpeting magnificently, and a glorious sight silhouetted against the blue sky. They did not land on Elterwater, but flew away to Little Langdale Tarn, where they would find open water, near the fast-flowing mountain beck coming down from Greenburn. The same day I noted Whooper Swans as follows : eight on Loughrigg Tarn and four on Rydal Water. At sunset, the Rydal Water birds flew to Grasmere to open water on the north side, where they drank water and upended for water weed. Later in January 1952, Rydal Water was frozen thick and many people were skating there. The swans had gone and I sought them everywhere. Late in the afternoon, I found them, in a flock of 42 birds, in a remote bay on the north-east side of Windermere, near Ambleside. They were busy upending for food and quietly trumpeting. This flock would include birds collected from a wide area from the frozen high lakes and tarns. The Whooper Swans may be identified by

their close flocking methods, upright necks, bright yellow bills and trumpet calls. The Mute Swan, with orange bill and rounded neck, is a resident. It has only a slight call.

In winter the estuary of Morecambe Bay is a famous place for wild geese and ducks. It is a case of knowing just the right place to go to meet them, otherwise the day turns out to be a wild goose chase indeed. Nearest to the area is Meathop Marsh, near Grange-over-Sands. On visits in January and February 1952, I noted flocks of Grey Lag geese feeding there. On each occasion 150 birds were feeding on the Marsh at 2 p.m. and at about 3-30 p.m., another 150 birds flighted in from Morecambe Bay, calling grandly, and alighted with the others, making a total flock of 300 birds.

They delight in feeding on the sea-washed marsh grass. Sometimes gaggles of geese, in V-shaped formation, may be noted flying over the Lakeland fells. They are usually moving between Morecambe Bay and the Solway Firth. Both are favourite areas for wild geese. One January day in 1952, I noted three gaggles of geese, totalling 120 birds, flying north over Windermere, and making for Dunmail Raise and the Solway Firth. They were calling, and made a romantic scene.

The Leven Estuary (Greenodd and Ulverston Sands) is the place for Wigeon in winter, and Park Bay, near Holker, is the best place to see them. I was there in February 1952, two hours after ebb tide, and had a fine view of a flock of 65 of these beautifully plumaged ducks feeding on the marsh. In January 1952, I waited patiently for over an hour, and a flock of 80 birds flighted in from Morecambe Bay, whistling with a lovely call, from which they get the nickname, " Whistler " Duck. The russet head with yellow stripe, grey back, beautiful rosy breast and white tail, are characteristic plumage. The female is browner and also has the rosy breast. Park Bay is also a place for Shelduck. They are big black and white ducks. Some winter in Morecambe Bay, and many more birds arrive from the Continent in the summer, to nest and breed young birds. Leighton Moss, near **Silverdale,** is interesting for ducks, and rare birds.

Concerning gullerics, the area is famous for these, at Ravenglass and Walney Island near Barrow. The Ravenglass Gullery is in the Drigg Sandhills. There are over 6,000 nests of Black-headed Gulls each spring. The Walney Island Gullery is at the south end in the sandhills near the lighthouse. There are over 3,000 nests of Lesser Black-backed gulls each year. Some Terns, nicknamed " Sea Swallows," also nest at the gulleries. They are dainty to watch. Shelduck, too, nest on Walney Island. Sunbiggin Tarn near Tebay is famous for a black-headed gullery near the tarn and Black-headed

Gulls nest on Leighton Moss near Silverdale. Gulls return each year to the gulleries for breeding, from a wide area. They then disperse around the sea coasts. The famous Foulshavv Gullery near Grange-over-Sands, is now deserted. About 1939, the birds found a new area on Ward's Stone and Wolf Hole Crag, in the Bowland Moors, near Lancaster. This gullery has over 3,000 nests. In June 1949 I watched a young gull breaking out of its shell. A tapping on the egg shell by its protruding beak, preceded its entry into the world, and in half an hour, it had cast away the egg-shell covering, and was warming up in the summer sunshine. The gullery is called the Roeburndale Gullery. It is best approached from Tarnbrook, near Abbeystead, in the Trough of Bowland. I ringed some lesser Black-headed Gulls, at the Roeburndale Gullery, in June 1949, as young nestling birds, and three birds were found in later years in Spain, Portugal and Belgium. This shows their migration routes. Black-headed Gulls which I have ringed as young birds in Northern England, have been found in West Ireland and South Scotland. The bird ringing scheme is organised by the British Museum (Natural History). People who are experienced as bird ringers, work voluntarily with this organisation. The rings used are made ot aluminium, and fit comfortably on the bird's leg and allow for growth. They have a number and the words, ' Inform British Museum, Nat. Hist. London.' You may consider that few ringed birds will ever be found. But approximately 4% of seagulls ringed are found and reported, and thousands are ringed each year. The percentage of recoveries of ringed wild geese and wild ducks is higher than for seagulls, and less for smaller birds.

I had an interesting experience, on Helvellyn, in May 1944, when I noted four Dotterels. They are scarce. I was descending by the Wythburn Path, and saw the four birds which were very tame, and allowed me to approach within five yards of them. The Helvellyn Range is one of their favoured haunts. They are of the Plover family. The plumage is brown grey above, black head with white stripe and russet breast.

Great Crested Grebes have chosen some of the Lakes as their regular nesting areas. At Esthwaite Water and Blelham Tarn, they nest each year. A summer afternoon may be contentedly spent watching these birds making their famous dives for food. They frequently swim under water for 50 yards or so. Some quiet bay will let you into nature's secrets, in July, where beyond the reeds you will note the parent birds dive for fish and feed the young birds. Sometimes the parent birds carry the young birds on their backs. The spring display of the adult birds in May is the most famous of all the displays of the British species of birds.

Other interesting Lakeland birds include Skylarks, Long-tailed Tits, Goldcrest (the smallest British bird), Green Woodpecker (nicknamed ' Yaffle ' from its laughing call), and Great and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers. Summer woods are full of migrant birds including the melodious Blackcap and Garden Warbler. Willow Warblers are common, Chiff Chaffs fairly so ; Wood Warblers are not common. The Spotted Flycatcher is a typical summer migrant, the Pied Flycatcher is not so common. The Redstart (nicknamed ' Firetail' from its russet tail), nests in the fell walls in the dales. All the common species of Wagtails nest in the area. Dippers frequent the becks, and Kingfishers occasionally are found there. Sedge Warblers sing in the lake-side reeds, often far into **the** night. Tree Pipits and Whitethroats sing in the early summer on the lower fell slopes. Swallows and House Martins nest in farm-house eaves and in farm buildings. Ringing has proved that birds which migrate to South Africa in the winter, return to the same barn to nest in Great Britain in the spring. They have been caught in traps in South Africa and Great Britain, and their ring numbers noted. Swifts, after nesting in church towers and in the eaves of buildings, frequent the peaks in the summer. I have found them on Harrison Stickle and the Howgill Fells and sometimes they are there in May, on arrival on migration. Lake shores are merry in May, with the calls of nesting Sandpipers.

Rooks and Jackdaws frequent the lower fell slopes in flocks for food, flying from and to their roosts in woods, in the morning and evening. At Dallam Park, near Milnthorpe, is one of the oldest established Heronries in North West England, and there are others in the area. St. Bees Head is famous for sea cliff nesting birds, and the Solway Firth for geese and clucks, in the winter.

SUTHERLAND

R. W. Eldridge

There is always something alluring about the remote parts of a country. The more inaccessible they are, very often, the more insistent the call and it is in response to this call that many have visited distant parts of Scotland in their search for peace and recreation. Sutherland occupies the north-west corner of Scotland and a visit there from England involves a journey of anything Irom four to six hundred miles, perhaps more. Few who have been there have failed to find tracts of country remote enough to satisfy their desires and have not felt for many reasons that the long journey was worth while.

It is undoubtedly the unique mountain formations which attract the mountaineer and yet what cragsman could be so single-minded in purpose as to be unaware of the many other experiences to be enjoyed ? The undulating heathland and bog, freely sprinkled with innumerable lochs, the never failing interest of the coastline and above all, the kindliness of the people impress us in their different ways and leave us with treasured memories of some of the happiest weeks of our lives. Many of the mountain peaks of western Sutherland and Wester Ross, composed in the main of Torridonian sandstone, form a group with certain family characteristics and once seen are never likely to be forgotten. Rising as they do, isolated and magnificent, from the surrounding undulating gneiss country of a thousand hills and lochs, they give us what is so rare—a comprehensive view of a complete mountain from base to summit. From almost any part of the west coast of Sutherland, if you look inland, your eye will travel over many miles of country which is anything but level though the height of the biggest waves in this sea of little hills may be never more than three hundred feet or so. And there, rising out of it, though obviously not of it, the bold contours of Canisp, Suilven, Cul Mor, Cul Beag and Stac Polly will arrest your attention. Whether seen from five miles away or 25, there they stand, impressive and unforgettable. A few miles to the north, on the other side of Loch Assynt, there is the great massif of Quinag, a more extensive formation than the mountains already mentioned yet still to be seen as a whole from some directions.

There could never be any question in the minds of hill climbers visiting this district that Suilven should be the first choice, whether on account of its fantastic shape, the miles of hard going involved in reaching its base or perhaps because Suilven far more than any of the

others soon becomes endeared to us from the way its great domed summit constantly peeps out at us over some hillside or across the sea, at the most unexpected moments. We climbed it from Lochinver, walking up Glencanisp and branching off at a certain point to make a bee-line for the mountain. Bee-lines in Sutherland are anything but short cuts but they are highly interesting, not to say amusing. They should not be undertaken lightly, merely as a result of making rapid calculations while studying a map or with any possible idea of saving time. Our course took us over a long succession of hillocks and valleys, the ground thickly covered with heather or soft with bog, and we wandered right and left around numerous miniature lochs. Each time we dipped a few feet into a valley our horizon was limited, at most, to a few hundred yards and then as we approached the top of the rise leading to the next depression, Suilven's reddish dome would suddenly appear before us, ever nearer and more impressive, its great mass more and more dominating the whole scene. At last we were at the base and we then began to rise steeply towards the high vertical crags that reach right up to the rim of the dome.

Suilven is extraordinarily narrow, seen from the west or the east, very steep on all sides, but from north or south the full length of the mountain is seen with its long jagged ridge and pinnacles, culminating at the western end in the dome. There is a considerable depression or saddle in the middle and all ordinary mortals achieve their object by climbing up this saddle either on the north or the south side. We took the northern slope which in its upper reaches is mainly grassy, a useful point as the steepness is such that an occasional bite of tough grass makes an efficient hold ! About half way up we were glad of an excuse for a breather for we spotted a herd of deer, about four hundred yards away, and about at our level. There is something unusually exciting about reaching the saddle itself as from this point there is a magnificent view of Sutherland to the north and of Wester Ross to the south. The lochs are countless in number and the wandering coastline can be traced almost as far as Cape Wrath. There is also the eastward view along the ridge and this gives some idea of the steepness of the contours.

A few minutes' scramble brought us to the top of the dome and, it seemed, the top of the world, for the precipitous sides were quite out of sight and we appeared to be poised on a gently convex platform, high above the earth, the only link being with the other end of the ridge. We could have stayed there for hours on this particular August afternoon for the air was warm and the sun was shining most of the time. The main mountain feature in the view

was Cul Mor, altogether bulkier than Suilven, its dark recesses giving it an awesome and even sinister appearance. From time to time these recesses were hidden behind floating islets of cloud which contrasted sharply with them as they reflected so brilliantly the light of the late afternoon sun. We looked down upon countless lochs, outlined as from an aeroplane while here and there in the misty distance a loch could only be discerned as it mirrored the sunlight from its surface.

With the long walk back in our minds we decided reluctantly not to explore the eastern end of the ridge, but we had done enough to give us a much closer acquaintance with Suilven and whet our appetite for more. We descended by the more stony south side of the saddle, disturbing a buzzard and getting a good view of its flight from above. We had our supper close by one of the many lochs, with the towering rocks behind us looking redder than ever in the light of the low western sun, afterwards taking up our trek to the west and to the end of our journey.

Quinag is another mountain that well repays a climb. It covers a very considerable area, has five peaks and a long line of magnificent cliffs over the top of which the mists cascade and roll like some great waterfall. If you go up with the idea that you will do it thoroughly, descending by a route at the other end of the mountain, you are apt to find yourself many miles, by road, from your starting point, so few and far between are the roads. Most people therefore take the precaution of hitting the road not too impossibly far from where they left it. Given a good day this does allow plenty of time. We went up—dare I say it—from the most convenient point on the Inchnadamph to Kylesku road. As a matter of fact the more members of the club I mention this to the less need there is, I find, to be apologetic about it and I begin to feel I am being told, in the words of the ancestral bishop in *Ruddigore,* ' That is expected of you.' Anyway, a start from seven or eight hundred feet is all to the good. The shoulders leading up to the ridge are of varying steepness and the one we took was fairly gentle.

We put up a pair of ptarmigan when we were well up; we were much more surprised than they were, by the sudden flurry of two greyish birds from under our feet. We also caught sight of a mountain hare as he lolloped his way up the slope in front of us. We stalked him carefully and were amazed to find that we could approach him to within a few yards as he sat quite motionless,his great ears sticking up like two distant cypress trees. We tried to turn him off his upward course by making a detour and outflanking him but he was of set purpose, running round us and up again with such

bounding ease as to make our own efforts laughable. That, ot course, is why he has such long back legs and they do say that he can only go up, never down ! As we neared the top we were thrilled to see a golden eagle. Though we were some distance away, we were in no doubt as to its identity from the size, the flight so obviously powerful and the upturned wings.

The tower summit of Quinag at the southern end is quite striking and on its northern face has a vertical cliff consisting of massive rectangular blocks. Turning our backs on Loch Assynt and the silhouette of Suilven in the distance, we walked along the ridge which is full of interest. We had occasional glimpses of the road we had left as it wound its way to Kylesku and looking straight ahead had more difficulty in making out the various points of the coastline as far as red-cliffed Handa Island and beyond. Arkle, the quartzite mountain, glistened in the sun, while Foinaven, most northerly of all, made a fitting north-western outpost to the Scottish Highlands.

The interest of the rock formations in Sutherland is by no means confined to the mountainous interior for on the coast, where the Torridonian sandstone is exposed, can be seen the effects of prolonged action by the sea. The softer parts have been penetrated to make archways which have later given way, leaving isolated rocks separated from the cliff by but a few feet. At one point a great tower ot rock rises sheer from the swirling waters below to the height of the cliff from which it appears almost near enough to be reached by a jump.

Once you settle down for any length of time on the coast you might be excused for forgetting about hill climbing, for apart from the exceptional coastal scenery the abundant bird life ensures that no walk by the sea need ever be dull. Of the more unusual sea birds the gannets are perhaps the most fascinating as they quarter the coast in search of food. There can be few more beautiful sights in bird life than a flight of six or eight gannets when seen from some rocky point which they are approaching. There is something quite distinctive in the rhythm of the wing beat giving an unmistakable impression of power and purpose in the gannet's flight. They can be followed for long after they have passed on their way for as they dive and wheel the sun lights up their wings to a dazzling whiteness which can be compared only with that of sunlit snow. Formation is only broken when one peels off to dive like an arrowhead into the sea on sighting a fish. Other birds of special interest to be seen are eider duck, fulmar petrels and black-throated divers.

Whatever the physical attractions of a country may be, however, you cannot feel at home and therefore in true spiritual harmony

with its natural glories, unless those who spend their lives there welcome you into their midst and offer their friendship. In our experience the highlanders are most friendly and helptul in every way and we drive away at the end of our holiday to waving hands from young and old. This is one of the most thinly populated parts of Great Britain where life, judged by many standards, is hard and otters few of the amenities upon which we are apt to count so much. Harsh conditions have to be faced as a matter of course, but this is balanced by a life of simple needs. One of the rewards of spending our time among such people is that we see how complex we have allowed our lives to become.

It would, of course, be unwise to expect much assistance concerning such alien pursuits as, for example, mountaineering or sea bathing. Being somewhat cautious, though not natives of Scotland, we thought it wise to seek advice from the local people as to the best routes for climbing Suilven. We gave it up after asking all likely-looking persons within a radius of seven miles and being met with a blank expression that indicated either ignorance or astonishment or being told in no uncertain manner of the probable disastrous consequences of such an enterprise. I really ought to have known better, when prospecting along the coast, than to ask the first person I saw what the bathing was like in the bay near by. The poor fellow, who was working on the road, had certainly never heard of such a thing and was obviously in two minds as to my mental balance.

The people live very much as a community, which indeed we would expect. It is quite usual to see a good catch of fish freely distributed throughout the village. Wnat impressed us more was the sequel to the accidental burning of a cottage on the hillside where an old widower had lived since his marriage. We saw the thatch smoking thickly and knew that the place was doomed. A year later, looking up towards the remains of the cottage we saw in front of it an attractive wooden bungalow that we found had been erected from funds immediately subscribed by the villagers.

There are plenty of good stories going round, too, when the old hands get talking. We know the keen loch fisherman who, for a change one evening, was out with his gun and fired at what he took to be a duck on the water. To his amazement he discovered that he had shot a three-pound trout which his dog retrieved before it had sunk. Who would ever expect to find a trout sunbathing ? Or the sad story of the salmon's unlucky night. The fisherman approached the edge of the loch and just at that moment the otter was about to leave the water with a salmon in its mouth. The fish was

dropped and the otter disappeared about as quickly. Later in the evening a salmon was hooked, and when landed was the same poor fish the otter had caught for there were the tell-tale teeth marks.

Then there was the story of the wild cat caught as a very small kitten and kept as a pet. All went well for about two years, though the beast, twice the size of a normal cat, did cause some comment occasionally as he padded about the countryside. One nignt he suddenly came to life when his owner found nim purring like a motor-bike and eyes as big as saucers, ready for a spring ; and spring he did, but it was his last.

The first time I saw Sutherland was in March and a few inches of snow had fallen. All the hills from Foinaven to Quinag had a sprinkling and this enhanced the wonderful impression of colour so evident at any time. The view along the coast where the March sunshine picked out the reds and the gold of the cliffs, with the rich blue green sea and the background of snow-covered mountains, was one long to be remembered. In the summer, unlike so many other regions, the colouring is no less vivid and with the ever-changing light on the hills is a constant source of delight.

Each time we return our gaze to the hills it seems the scene is different. This is particularly true of those hills seen to such advantage from near the coast. In the early morning, on a grey day, they are sharply cut off at the cloud level, but in fine weather they are often caressed ever so softly by clouds of whitest wool which they would seem to have gathered to themselves during the long hours of the night. In the middle hours of the day much of the detail is lost, especially if we are looking anywhere between south-east and south-west. At this time the hills in the far distance look their most mysterious for we can see but their merest outline so curtained are they by the noonday haze. Lovelier still are the lights on these hills in the glow of sunset when we must watch continuously if we would miss nothing of the subtle play of light and colour. Every hue of the sunset over the ocean is caught up by the Torridonian sandstone and even as we watch, the colours change rapidly yet imperceptibly as every shade of pink and purple is in turn reflected from the hillsides.

The fascination and the spell of Sutherland deepen with each visit and we leave with one thought only in our minds, that the day may not be far distant when we shall return once more to this land of uncommon beauty.

THE OLD MILL, COOMBE GILL

D. and N. Murray

Before the war we had a caravan at Thornythwaite, which we used for holidays for many years. This was ail we needed in our more youthful days, when it was no hardship to come back soaking wet after a day on the hills to a brisk rub-down with a dry towel, and when the thought of damp clothes the following day did not daunt us. As we grew older we looked **for** a little more comfort, and particularly for a hot bath to round off the day, so a search then began for a barn or similar building which would be capable of conversion, and where a fire and bath would welcome us at the end of a day.

Eventually we found the Old Mill, a neglected building with the roof half-fallen in, which was being used as a bracken store. It was a dry stone building, lacking windows, but we foresaw its possibilities, and, after negotiations with the owner, R. B. Graham, a fellow member, a long lease was granted. In 1939 we had obtained an estimate from a builder, when war was declared and we were forced to abandon our project. Fortunately this proved only a temporary setback, and, in 1945, we were able to go ahead with our plans.

The building consisted of two rooms, one 20 feet X 14 feet, where the millstones were housed and the other about 12 feet square with the floor 18 inches higher, which had been used as a drying kiln for grain. The floor of the latter room was made of square brick tiles, hollow on the underside and pierced with holes, laid on stone joists, which were in turn supported by stone walls. In the space beneath this floor some form of heating, originally probably charcoal and, at a later date possibly coal had been used to dry the grain before grinding. Since no chimney was incorporated, it is doubtful whether the miller **lived** on the premises, although the Deeds of 1727 refer to the ' Dwelling House and Mill.' Everywhere in the building levels had been carefully adjusted to enable a man to hoist a sack on to his back without any great effort.

Before we could start alterations it was necessary to clear the building of the dust and dirt which had accumulated over generations, and we had to remove the millstones, **weighing** probably three-quarters of a ton each, from a platform three feet above the ground level. This operation alone took a whole day of really hard work. With the help of two local men to repair the dry stone walls and clear away a landslide which had obliterated the road, we ourselves did most of the inside work, dividing a fortnight's holiday between the Thornythwaite caravan and the Old Mill. At odd

E. O. Harland

THE OLD MILL, COOMBE GILL, IN 1952

week-enus we brought up fittings we had made and equipped the interior.

The earliest available deeds show that the Mill was probably erected in 1546, and it seems likely that only the main building existed at that time, whilst the drying kiln was added at a later period.

After we became interested in the building we began to learn something of its history. It had been owned by the Jopson family of Chapel House for more than 200 years, and it is quite possible that at a distant date, before it became a Mill it had been a summer-pasture shelter, when it bore the name of Ashside. The word ' side ' in common with the old Norse word ' saeter ' denotes a shelter, and many examples of these early summer steadings still linger in the place-names of the district. There are Seatoller, Ambleside and Hawkshead (the ' saeters' of Ulla, Hamel and Hakon).

The site of the Old Mill was probably once ' The summer farm amongst the Ash trees,' or ' Ashside.' Early documents show that the Miller had, with his holding, one ' cattlegaite ' or right to graze one cow on the common, a ' close ' of land, still known today as Mill Close, and a ' dale ' where he had the right to cut hay, which still bears the name of Milldale.

In the early days of the Mill the local grain would be ground, and although it is possible that the pack ponies carried wool over Greenup to Ambleside, it is also possible that they would bring back corn for grinding into flour for the inhabitants, as little corn would be grown in the valley itself. Fisher Jopson states that his father talked about taking corn to the Old Mill to have it crushed, so the Mill was still in use for that purpose, if not for grinding flour, as late as 1880. The initials of a Daniel Jopson we found carved on a slab of slate, which we have used as a doorstep. It is fairly apparent that corn-grinding was a useful means of augmenting income in those days, for the father of John and Daniel Jopson is known to have retrieved his fortunes by endless grinding after his day's work on the farm.

The grinding-stones rested at sack-height from the floor, and consisted of a stationary stone, about five feet in diameter, surrounded by a rim with a spout at the front, surmounted by an upper stone driven by gearing from the water-wheel. The grain was poured through the centre of the upper stone, which revolved, crushing the grain, and working it out gradually to the outer rim, until, fully ground, it ran through the spout in the lower stone into the sack hanging beneath.

We retained the lower millstone as a hearth, the upper millstone became a step outside the Mill, and a further worn-out millstone on the premises has been used as a doorstep.

A hole in the wall of the building enabled the miller to see that the water-wheel outside was working satisfactorily. The wheel, which is now driving an electric-light plant at Grange is some 12 feet in diameter, and worked on the principle of buckets filling with water, their laden weight carrying the wheel round, the direction of its revolution being counter to the current of the stream.

Long after the mill had ceased to grind grain, it was used as a sawmill for the Honister Quarries, and Fisher Jopson remembers working there round about 1890, and he tells an amusing story of his distress when he worked there all one day and got his eyes so full of sawdust that he could not go to a dance in the evening, which he particularly wanted to attend.

After much hard work, the interior began to look more inviting. The cracks and crevices on the inside were sealed by the process known locally as ' gobbing up.' This consists of throwing quantities of mortar at the walls in the hope that most of it will stick, and we spent many laborious days before the walls were properly sealed. We were careful not to fill up cracks on the outside of the walls, for we had been warned that the walls were built to allow the water to run off and the air to circulate thoroughly. The effect of filling up the external cracks would be that water could seep through behind the filler, and be trapped there, with the result that the walls would remain damp.

Our water supply is carried from a subsidiary stream through a three-quarter inch pipe to an open spout. A distance of two feet away another three-quarter inch pipe runs into the Mill, and when we arrive we simply connect up the two open pipes with a piece of rubber piping. The connection is removed before we leave, and as all the pipes empty automatically, we avoid the danger of burst pipes during severe frosts.

The final result of our work has given us a living room fitted with an alcove kitchen with a sink, running water and soak away. A small lobby serves as an entrance and for hanging clothes, ropes and other equipment, and keeps the living-room free from draughts. Another small part of the living-room is partitioned off for a tiny bathroom with basin and bath supplied with hot water from a calor gas geyser.

The old drying kiln floor, originally 18 inches above the level of the living-room, is now on the same level. We removed the holed bricks and stone joists, throwing them into the space beneath, which

had been the flue and cavity for the old fire, and in so doing we discovered pockets of burnt grain which may have been anything up to 300 years old. This romantic thought compensated us for the dirt and dust that the work entailed. This room is now divided by partitions into three cabin-like bedrooms, each with a small window and fitted with bunks, shelves and useful hanging space for clothes. These final details for comfort were added gradually, but at an early stage we faced the problem of fire and drying facilities. The character of the building demanded an open stone fireplace, but we felt it was essential to have a fire to return to after a wet day on the fells, and we reluctantly fitted a slow combustion stove that will stay in day and night, with flue pipe surrounded by a cage of stout wire on which can be hung the inevitable wet clothes. The vent for the pipe through the roof was disguised by a typical lakeland chimney of two slates in A formation.

One of our major tasks has been the reconditioning of the road to the mill. A few journeys with a wheelbarrow filled with gravel and cement up the steep track convinced us that this was our first consideration, and after the landslide had been cleared, and the land's original base discovered below the overlying grass and rushes, we dug gullies and made culverts to take the water from the fell and to divert the many streams that had established their right of way down the track. To the uninitiated the track still looks of no importance, and does not invite the casual visitor, but many ot our friends have been able to find their way over the little humpback bridge and some will remember a hilarious evening one Whitsun meet **when** some 30 members witnessed the performance of a trick, which somehow went wrong, and the small space left between the observers was filled with broken egg, glass and flying broomstick.

HYMENOPHYLLUM OR THE FILMY FERN

W. G. Standring

In the 1950 Journal Bentley Beetham has an article, ' Climbs Good and Bad,' in which he discusses the characteristics desirable in a good climb. This led me to consider the reasons for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from particular expeditions. The indefinable joys of climbing are not to be measured, nor deliberately grasped. They depend on the nature of the route, on the weather, on one's companions, on one's health, and on much besides. For me the one essential quality of a good climb is interest of situation. It is an unforgettable experience to stand on the summit of the Needle ; to look out from the Eagle's Nest ; or to sit behind the little pinnacle between the two delicate traverses on Scafell Central Buttress. The best situations have a wide view with interest from foreground to horizon and give, especially if one is alone, that other world feeling so difficult to describe. Such situations are not necessarily associated with great technical difficulty and I have enjoyed no place more than the Coolin ridges—the easy but narrow, even perforated, ridge in the foreground, shapely peaks in the middle distance, and, beyond, the ever-changing beauty of the sea and sky towards the Outer Hebrides or the Scottish mainland.

A good climb is better when done with good companions : their reactions to the different situations add interest, and are sometimes such as greatly to increase one's appreciation both of climb and of companion. Perhaps it is for this reason that one of my most vivid memories is of a climb which, for its own sake, is not one of my favourites.

In July, 1929, my companions at Wasdale Head were Ella Mann and Gilbert Adair. We climbed routes perfect of their kind, including Pinnacle Face where the Gangway, each Nest, and Herford's Slab gave pure delight. But my strongest recollection is of an ascent of Walker's Gully. On a recent visit 1 found the top cave uncomfortably loose, with only two sound knobs to seat two people, and I doubt if I shall ever want to return ; but in 1929 the floor was firm and capacious and the roof secure. The gully looked intimidating but not repelling.

On our way to Pillar Rock our enjoyment of the w'alk up Mosedale and along the High Level Route was increased by the sight of bog asphodel in flower, of butterwort and sundew, of foxglove and golden-rod, of roseroot and the starry saxifrage. At one place Adair pointed out to us a solitary patch of a rarity which it might be unwise to name lest it share the fate of Lloydia above Hanging

Garden Gully in Cwm Idwal. At the foot of Walker's Gully a demonstration of the difference between ' oak ' and ' beech ' ferns enlightened my botanical ignorance, and in a general discussion on ferns Adair mentioned the filmy fern which I had never heard of and Ella had never seen.

We started up the Gully, and the ascent of the scoop gave much interest and satisfaction. A little higher we came to one of the best of gully situations. One leaves a damp cave by a window and works up by back and foot between bottomless walls until one can embrace a smooth slimy sloping holdless chockstone. Somehow one balances on this and gets into an upright position in spite of excessive interference by a higher chockstone. The walls are not perfectly smooth, and the upper chockstone is not in reality animate, but I think that most people would find their attention completely occupied in the negotiation of this pitch.

Not so Adair : in the uncomfortable situation I have just described the benign serenity which assured the first ascent of King's College Chapel allowed him leisure not only to observe, growing at the side of the sloping chockstone, a specimen of *Hymenophyllum unilalcrale* but to detach a portion and safely stow it away to show us later.

He did not tell us of finding this treasure at the time, and we continued to enjoy the varied incidents of the climb, including the cave with a hole in the roof through which it is important to poke one's members in the proper order, until we came to the top cave. Here we sat on a comfortable roomy floor and had a meal before facing the alternatives of getting out or climbing down again.

None of us was long enough to back up, and getting out involved delicate work on the right wall. Adair and I found the holds barely adequate, Ella walked across and up like a fly.

As soon as we came to a drop of water Adair took from his pocket what looked like a bedraggled little bit of green string. He immersed it in water and each threadlike stem separated out and each tiny translucent leaflet opened and became a gem. The pleasure of this unexpected sight, and the realisation of Adair's observation and thought at that very exposed and uncomfortable sloping chockstone, added the final touch to make a satisfying day perfect.

In the evening, back at Wasdale Head, looking again at the filmy fern in a bowl of water, we felt that a note of our day in the book provided by the Club would be incomplete without mention of the association of the gloom of Walker's Gully with the delicacy of the filmy fern.

THE NORTH RTDGE OF THE PIZ BADILE

Nancy Smith

Our plans for the summer of 1951 included the ' Grandes Courses ' from Courmayeur, the Hirondelle ridge of the Grandes Jorasses and Mont Blanc by the Peuteret ridge. But when we reached the Alps on our motor-bike at the end of June, roads and passes were snow-blocked and there was far too much snow on the peaks for such projects. So we went to the Bregaglia, which we knew to be an ideal place for climbing under less perfect weather conditions than one likes for the higher Alps. The rock is solid and steep and as good as any in Britain, and the routes are long and interesting. The Sciora Hut is in an excellent position, an amphi-theatre of rocky peaks with climbs ranging from the hardest to the easiest within reach all around On the right, dominating the whole range with a clean completely unbroken sweep is the north ridge of the Piz Badile We were already interested in this climb as we had read about it in André Roch's *Climbs of My Youth,* and had heard about it from John Cook and John Ball, who had chilling tales to tell of being benighted on it in short-sleeved shirts and rubbers.

The Guardian of the Sciora Hut was a genial and observant man, who watched us unpack ropes, extra ropes, karabincrs, pitons, piton hammers and the rest. He also noted the determined look in our eyes. Next day he sent us off to do a route of his own, the lnnomi-nata ridge, Grade 5. It went well and we only lost one piton. He was pleased with us and, after that, enthusiastic for us to make the first ascent of the north ridge of the Badile that season. The ridge itself looked clear though there was much more snow on its slopes than in an average year.

The alarum went off at 2-30 a.m. At 3-15 we were off across frozen snow and many moraines, and at 7-15 we reached the foot of the ridge. At first our difficulty was in getting off ice and snow on to rock and back again ; the thin layer of ice kept breaking away from the rock as we tried to cut steps. This and ice on the holds added a little to the difficulty of the climb which was in every way delightful. For hundreds, nay thousands of feet we climbed pitch after pitch of perfect rock, very like the south face of Gimmer Crag, but here we found nothing as easy as Oliverson's Variation and nothing as hard as E Route. Pitons were there and we used some to enable us to climb quickly, so our own were merely clanking clobber. It was the perfect ridge climb, incredibly exposed on both sides ; the north face looked all but impossible, with miniature avalanches falling continuously. Dark clouds rolled up and en-

veloped us, leaving the exposure to our imagination ; then cleared away, and rolled up again from time to time.

Near the top I suddenly found myself with nothing ahead but a gap, a 12-foot drop, and on the other side, Cym, grinning broadly with the camera poised. He had just stepped over this gap, at least 6 feet across and knew I would stick as I had so often done before in similar places. Then I had to descend the 12 feet and climb laboriously up the overhang on the other side.

We romped along the summit ridge, which was just, or almost as exposed as the rest of the ridge, only horizontal, and reached the top in seven hours, full of glee at our achievement. ' What a terrific climb ! ' I said. ' Just super ! The best ever ! Five thousand feet of rock-climbing, the longest we've ever done ! ' Cym agreed entirely. ' Yes, a pleasant scramble,' he said. We were very hungry and there and then ate up all we had with us.

On the Italian side, to the south, there should be a way down a gully that would take us to the glacier in half an hour, but we could find no gully, no bergschrund, no glacier, only piles and piles of snow. We tried another way, where there was less snow, and then a very steep gully of completely shattered rock with not a solid thing to hang on to. Hours passed and we were not making much progress ; I was frightened as I always am when everything is loose and steep. Cym laughs that one who can romp up very severes gets stuck on what he calls easy ground. I insisted on abseiling, which we did, and reached the snow abour four hours later. Down, down, down we went, hundreds of feet of weary plodding, each step knee deep in snow. Tiredness was becoming something important. At the foot of the Badile we paused and gazed longingly down at the little Badile Hut, not so far away, but we knew it was locked and barred until the season opened in a week or two.

Spurred on by the exhilaration of our grand climb and wanting to make the day complete, we went on round the foot of the south ridge of the Badile, past the foot of the next ridge and the next, the Cingalo, and yet another ridge, and lastly up and up, legs moving automatically now, still knee deep in snow, up to the Passo di Bondo and back into Switzerland. It was such a long way. Clouds gathered round. The sun set and a weird orange and green light spread round the horizon. Summer lightning and thunder urged us on. Darkness fell as Cym, on a section of unsound rock reached the Col, having just enough light left to see the sheer drop beyond. Steep, smooth black rocks covered with shimmering ice fell into the darkness below. There was a long silence which I broke by saying : ' What are you waiting for ? Let me come up.' Cym said : ' We

can't go down here now. This is the wrong place and this must be the Falso Passo di Bondo.' We had seen this on the map vaguely and without interest before we left. The route had seemed so obvious then that we had left the guide-book behind, to travel light. Oh dear ! how often climbers think only of the way up and not of what comes after.

My heart sank to unfathomable depths as Cym slowly descended, in darkness that was now black indeed. He got stuck, then abseiled the last 40 feet, and sat down to rest while 1 pulled on the abseil rope. It jammed. In the dark I had not seen a knot moving upwards. Poor Cym had to climb up again to where he had stuck before, free the rope, and climb down.

We were very tired, because the psychological impetus which had urged us on to make one grand complete climbing day, was now gone. It was 10 p.m., and we sat gloomily in the snow. It grew cold. Thunder and lightning played menacingly around. We took a dim view of our chances at this height, with no food and utter weariness.

Slowly we plodded down the heart-breaking slopes of knee-deep snow, back, up and down, past the foot of all the four ridges. I protested that there could not be any more uphill to that Badile Hut but Cym persisted and led me straight to it. We tried hard to break in, but prison-like bars and steel girders effectively kept us out. We were wet, cold, and as tired as we'd ever been, and it did not help to know that our plight was due to neglect of such elementary precautions as taking a guide-book and map.

We took off sodden boots and socks and put four icy feet into our one and only sweater, inside the rucksack. Our Duvet jackets of nylon and finest goosedown were a joy. (Would that we had also had a *Pied d' Elephant).* We fastened them together with us inside and snuggled down on a rocky platform. There was a hard frost but our upper halves kept warm, though our wet cold legs and feet went on shivering all night. We slept soundly, and by the morning our feet had warmed up. We rose briskly with no trace of stiffness. An intensive search of our pockets brought forth one boiled sweet for Cym, a prune for me, and one Nazionale cigarette each. Though very thirsty we could not bring ourselves to drink the ice-cold water.

Once more, for the third time we began that endless snow plod, but now the snow sparkled and was hard and frozen, making for easy going at first. As the slope steepened, however, our tiredness returned at a time when there was more step cutting to do than we have ever done before. We arrived this time at the real, the true Passo di Bondo. The sun met us at the top and all was lovely.

On the other side the frozen crust of snow had already melted and we sank in it up to our thighs as we descended. It was more than we could manage so we lay back on the snow and shuffled ignominiously down. At last we arrived at the Sciora Hut which we had left over 30 hours before. And how we enjoyed the rest of the day sleeping and eating and drinking the *vin ordinaire.*

According to Cym the moral is : ' Never leave the Kendal Mint Cake behind.'

Dedicated to my late husband Cym, with uhom alas I shall climb no more.

KASHMIR MEMORIES

J. A. Jackson

During the summer of 1951 I was delighted to meet Robert Zurbriggen (Guide) once again in Saas Fee, and was interested to learn of his several months of ski teaching at Gulmarg and Killenmarg in Kashmir during the winter of 1950-51. His photographs of the mountains brought back many memories of a few years earlier whilst I was with the Aircrew Mountaineering Centre at Sonamarg.*

1 think that many who trekked and climbed there then, thought quite seriously that ease of access to its mountains, and the enchantment of travel into Ladakh—the land of chortens—might make Kashmir the mecca of mountaineers who could spare a few weeks in the summer months. The peaks of 15,000 to 18,000 feet, though low by Himalayan standards, have a charm quite their own, and this meeting with Robert awakened the hope that the day may soon come when mountaineers may once again trek and climb in that delectable country.

The *Climbers' Guide to Sonamarg* (a copy of which is in the Fell and Rock Library) serves a useful purpose in describing much of the area to the north and north-east of Srinagar, and pernaps a day or two recounted here may serve to stimulate further those who have perused its pages.

On the first day of peace (as we found out later) Bill Starr and I were at Matayan Dak Hut on the east side of the Zoji La, and that morning we left to try and locate the route on Beraz (17,800 feet) used by Capt?in Bagot and his party a few days earlier. They had ascended by one of the steep canyons or nullahs off-shooting from the Matayan Nullah, and attained a height of 17,000 feet where they had to halt and return owing to the sickness of one of the pupils.

We ourselves were puzzled by the numerous turnings but decided to explore the main nullah, and soon we beheld a beautiful white pyramidal peak several miles ahead—so beautiful that to continue towards it seemed a natural procedure. Perhaps two hours later we ascended a steep little glacier snout followed by a snow wall, and found the same peak tempting us from the other side of a flat stretch of open glacier. After crossing this we ascended the peak by a ridge to its summit. Not knowing the mountain or possessing a

'Since this article was printed it has been learned that Robert Zurbriggen was killed by a fall into a crevasse, while ski-ing during the early spring of 1952. Ed. F. & R.C.C.J.

map, it was pleasing to find a small cairn and the scratched names of Ralph Stokoe and Gordon Whittle—it could only be Cumberland Peak.

Without doubt it was the high Karakoram we could see to the north for some of the highest points disappeared into the great level stretch of cloud base estimated at some 22,000 to 24,000 feet. To the south and east rose a host of peaks between 17,000 and 20,000 feet in height^ set splendidly in a frozen base of untrodden glacier systems.

Descent was made quickly by traversing along the westerly ridge for a short distance and striking down obliquely to reach the glacier by jumping the bergschrund. It was late, so we ran down into the Suweke Nar and sped quickly along the valley bottom. Darkness descended whilst still some distance from Matayan, and it was some time after 10 p.m. when we reached it. Our ponymen Rajbah and Illia seemed relieved to see us, whilst we in our turn were pleased to receive the pot of strong tea they had thoughtfully made and kept hot for us.

Ladakh, across the Zoji La, is well described by Harry Tilly in the 1947 Journal, and I think that to many of us much of the charm of the country lay in the startling transformation in the people, their customs, clothing and religion. In strong contrast too was the change in mountain scenery, so barren in Ladakh.

My last memory of Ladakh is of a superb sunrise experienced while moving from Matayan to Machoi. At first all was quiet, dismal and gloomy. Trekking onward, our last glimpse of Matayan was of a dark narrow valley with the flat-roofed Central Asian village straggling along the ice-edged Gamru river. Ahead lay the snow-covered ' alpine ' meadow of Nimarg in shadow but surrounded by the splendid peaks of the Lower Suweke Nar and Machoi, seemingly aloof and remote within regions of intense cold. Suddenly the bold Machoi Peak was illuminated by warm flaming rays of light as though the sun had burst the bonds of cold and frost and was now pouring forth its life in jubilation. The pale white face of the mountain was transformed into a wall of rosy ice flutes, the snow and ice crests of the steep ridges being lit with brilliant coruscations.

By 8-30 we were resting our ponies at Machoi and supplying a couple of cheery and voluble Dak Runners with cigarettes. The Machoi Peak and Pinnacles were by now fully flooded by the sun's rays and the glacier curling down to the Dak Hut was a superb glistening white pathway in its new dress of powder snow.

Towards the end of that day we were back at Sonamarg preparing for our last evening in the Golden Meadow, and surrounded by a host of peaks which in the previous months had given us so much of life.

Two peaks in particular bring back golden memories. One of these Greater Thajiwas (15,928 feet), first climbed by J. Waller in 1937, affords an interesting and rather complicated glacier crossing to the base of its final rock pyramid, which unfortunately proves rather disappointingly easy to ascend.

The other, Kazin Pahalin Bal, is a fine ridge about 16,400 feet in height overlooking the largest of the Thajiwas glaciers, and one evening in August, 1945, **with** Rajbah, a **Shitkari** ponyman, I carried gear to a small Guja type (or perhaps Neanderthal type) hutment we had built earlier in the year. Rajbah returned to Sonamarg, and I spent a memorable evening alone among the beautiful moonlit snows of the valley. Suspecting a visit from a prowling black bear I slept **very** little, and stayed awake reading F. S. Smythe's *Kanchen-**junga** Adventure.*

Shortly before dawn I ascended to the col at 14,000 feet, and then traversed the Pinnacle Buttress route of Valehead Peak in the warm rosy glow of early morning. Gwashi Bror or Kolohoi, and the peaks of Ladakh were magnificently clear, yet I cannot ever recall seeing a more breath-taking view than that of Nanga Parbat during the first crystal clcarnessof dawn. It seemed but a stone's throw away and all its detail of ice, snow and rock distinct to the very summit. It was splendid to be amongst such scenery, enhanced so invitingly by the beautiful sweeping ridge I was to ascend.

The ridge to the East Pinnacle was climbed slowly and steadily **without** any real difficulty, but with a care for loose rock. One short hand traverse, and later a pretty window come back to mind. From this East Pinnacle a traverse of many gendarmes was made, mostly on the right-hand side where steep rib buttresses sweep down to Glacier 3. Surprisingly, after the first promise of morning, snow-flakes began to fall and the sky to cloud over before reaching the Central Pinnacle (probably the highest). The traverse to the West Pinnacle proved rather more difficult and progress was slower due to the cooler weather. On reaching it I decided reluctantly -because I was alone and the weather worsening—to escape down the crumbled south face to Basmai Nar. A loose but easy descent over a series of ledges and short rock walls was followed by a rather hurried ascent over two ice-fields in quite a snow flurry, to the col at Umbrella Peak. It proved an exhilarating run and glissade from Umbrella Peak to Glacier 3, and from there down Amphitheatre Gully to camp.

Complete happiness after such a rare mountain day compelled me to stay yet another night amongst those fine volcanic peaks, sleep or not, bears or no bears—but sleep I did.

Peaks other than those of Thajiwas, Valley of Glaciers, **and** mountain meadows other than Sonamarg, golden in spring with yellow saffron, lie to the north, south, east and west. With ponies one can within a day or so bivouac in the range of the Zogpu Da, or wander freely among the rich scented alpine meadows of Zaiwan. There one can see the falcon swoop on low flying buntings, or hear the cry of Alpine swifts whilst crossing the Yem Har (Pass of the Goddess Yem) or scrambling over ridges to ' Sentinel Peak ' or Sekiwas.

There at the Yem Har pass the Kashmiri ponymen will brew tea in thanksgiving for a safe crossing, and at the little Forest Hut lower down **will** light fires and sing most of the night to keep black bear away from the ponies. To the north are high bare peaks and snow-filled valleys, regions perhaps where man has never trod ; and always at night the snows are growing pink, then suffusing into purple shadows—a cold land maybe, but with a strong pull at the heart. Perhaps it is these and so many other little details of every-day life in the Kashmir hills that make it a place so rich in memories.

A BIT STEEP

The Lay Gazetteer

(An excerpt from " Round about the Legal World " by " The Law Gazetteer," reprinted from *The Law Society's Gazette* for September, 1952 by kind permission of the Editor. We understand that Mr T. H. Tilly has advised the author that his name has nothing to do with the petty cash!)

It is not true, gentlemen, as you yourselves are no doubt aware, that solicitors prefer the dust of their offices to the high road of adventure. Examples of their admirable recklessness reach me every month, and were the space available I could present to you a whole issue of the *Gazette* containing records of derring-do that send a chill down my lay spine. Sometimes the news of such things reaches me belatedly, for the solicitor is rarely given to boastfulness (as journalists and actors and Deans are), and I have now to make reference to Mr. Harry *1* ill, a West Hartlepool solicitor, who thinks so little of travelling 300 feet down a Himalayan mountain on an avalanche that it would seem to be part of his character to underestimate his performance.

I have only just heard of his adventure, which occurred a couple of months ago or more, and I feel that you should know about it, for even among solicitors it must be comparatively unusual to select this highly risky form of transport. Not that Mr. Till in fact did select his adventure. It was thrust upon him, as Fame might be on any one of us if destiny so decided.

Mr. C. S. Till, the adventurer's brother, had merely heard in a letter that Harry had hurt his knee in an avalanche, but a member of the mountaineering expedition which Mr. Till was leading reported that he was engaged on the ' steep bit' of the mountain, 20,000 feet high, when the avalanche swept down. There seemed no escape as he was carried towards a ravine, but suddenly ' he was at rest and free among the debris.'

I am myself not given to mountain climbing unless it be by cog-and-ratchet or some other mechanical means (I have done it by the former system several times up Pilatus in Switzerland, and I have ascended from the shore to an upper promenade of a seaside resort by some kind of inclined lift.) Such adventures create in me a highly nervous tension, as I have always been a doubting Thomas and still frequently wonder if the men who invented such comforts really knew their jobs. It would be so unfortunate if a cog or a steel rope gave way—unfortunate for my family I mean—and as I have such an unrestricted imagination I pass through a thousand hells dailv.

Not so Mr. Till. He may have as fantastic an imagination as I have, but being a solicitor he controls it. By reason of his profession he is accustomed to the vagaries of the human mind, including his own, and therefore he is in the happy position of being able to say : ' I am going to climb a high mountain, come what may.' It came, in the shape of an avalanche, and he therefore accepted it in his stride, which was a stride *force majeure* of 300 feet.

It is not famous men who should be praised, but modest men ; modest men who say that they have hurt their knee, when you know very well that they have faced death and, in this particular instance, might have left West Hartlepool for ever. And, although I have not been there, I believe that West Hartlepool is a very agreeable place, more agreeable than others I have heard of, here or hereafter, which latter I dare say is a point of consideration.

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

J. Carswell

A fair amount of exploration is now being done in the Deepdale district, and a brief topographical description of the area is given below. This read in conjunction with the 6 in. Ordnance Survey, Cumberland Sheet No. LXXVI.N.W. and Westmorland parts of Sheets XVIII and XIX will give ample guidance to anyone visiting these crags.

New climbs of a high standard of difficulty continue to be done in Langdale.

ULLSWATER

DEEPDALE

Deepdale splits at its head into two coves separated by the fine isolated spur of Greenhow End, Sleet Cove to the north west and Link Cove to the south west. Greenhow End has a long north face prolonged to the west by Hutaple Crag, all lying to the east of the scree shoot known as Black Tippet which runs up from Hog Hole. To the west of this is a fine buttress (Black Buttress) running out in its lower portion in a horizontal spur with broken rocks on the Black Tippet side, and climbing rocks on the west or Fairfield flank.

Seen from the Coniston-Langdale road the rocks at the top of Scrubby Crag and those of the top watershed part of Greenhow End form the ' Step of the old guide-books and the O.S. Sheets.

BLACK BUTTRESS

PORTCULLIS RIDGE 175 feet. Severe. First ascent, Easter, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty, K. Miller. Starts at the lowest point of the buttress to the left of a small chimney (not the conspicuous chimney on the Fairfield side).

(1) 30 feet. From the cairn on the left of the small chimney climb the wall for a few feet to a ledge which is traversed to the left for 6 feet, then up a crack to another ledge and belay.

(2) 35 feet. Climb a crack on the right to a stance and belay.

(3) 25 feet. Up a small wall above the belay, move right and climb a groove and slabs to a small stance and good belay on the extreme left of the ridge.

(4) 30 feet. Climb a groove immediately above the belay to a ledge and belay.

(5) 30 feet. Climb slightly left to a ledge on ' The Tower ' which lies on the crest of the main buttress.

(6) 25 feet. The left-hand wall of The Tower is climbed on good incut holds with awkward landing onto a ledge with belay. Easy rocks follow, exit to left down Black Tippet.

HUTAPLE CRAG

TERRACE WALL 235 feet. Severe. First ascent, Easter, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty, K. Miller. Starts at the lowest point of the right-hand side of the crag. Cairn.

(1) 55 feet. Climb over a series of small walls to a stance and belay on grass ledge below slabs.

(2) 50 feet. Climb directly above the belay to the left of a detached flake with an awkward move round a somewhat exposed nose. Ascend steep slabs on good holds to belay on a grass ledge.

(3) 80 feet. Climb the wall above the belay direct to easier rocks which lead to a rocky stance above a sloping grass ledge with bollard belay.

(4) 50 feet. Easy rocks and grass ledge lead onto The Terrace.

UN-NAMED CLIMB — feet. Mild Severe. First ascent, Easter, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty, K. Miller. Starts to the left of a dark cleft level with The Terrace on the extreme right-hand side of the crag. Cairn.

(1) 85 feet. Up a broken ridge on sloping holds to a large grass ledge with belay.

(2) 35 feet. Climb the wall above the belay to a grass ledge with line belay in the corner of a crack.

(3) 45 feet. Climb the crack and short wall above to grass ledge and belay.

(4) — feet. Up the vertical wall above the belay on small incut holds with an awkward movement at the top, another small wall leads to a large grass ledge and belay. Broken rocks lead to the summit.

' A ' ROUTE 340 feet. Severe. First ascent, May, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty. Lies on the North Face of the crag and starts 200 feet to the right or west of the open gully which bounds the crag on its Greenhow End or east flank.

(1) 30 feet. Easy rocks lead to a small stance below a ' V ' groove. Belay on left.

(2) 30 feet. The groove is followed for 10 feet, then traverse left to a good stance and spike belay.

(3) 25 feet. Climb the wall above the belay to a rock ledge and belay below overhangs.

(4) 60 feet. Along the ledge to the right to a scoop on the left of the black overhang, ascend this scoop to a large bilberry ledge and belay.

(5) 30 feet. Climb the right-hand of two cracks to a grassy corner where there is a small chockstone belay.

(6) 45 feet. The Crux. Make an awkward move upwards towards the right round the corner, to a small grass covered ledge. This ledge is attained by a press movement, after which easier rocks lead to a bilberry ledge with belay.

(7) 80 feet. Climb to the left over easy rocks to a belay in a corner by a large block.

(8) 40 feet. Ascend a corner and groove to a good ledge and belay.

CURVING GULLY 550 feet. Mild Severe. First ascent 20th May, **1952. J.** C. Duckworth, G. Batty. Lies on the north-west face of the crag, and more or less divides this face into two parts. Cairn.

(1) 60 feet. Scrambling up the bed of the gully.
(2) 60 feet. Climb the chimney above for 30 feet and then 30 feet of easy climbing leads to a cave pitch with belay on wall.
(3) 50 feet. The cave is avoided by climbing the right-hand wall and the gully re-entered above the chockstone. Belay on right wall.
(4) 70 feet. Follow the chimney for 40 feet where a thread can be taken round a small chockstone, after which proceed to the Terrace. Belay on ash tree.
(5) 35 feet. Climb past the ash tree direct to a small cave in the chimney. Belay.
(6) 70 feet. Rock requires care. Climb directly up the chimney. Thread belay.
(7) 40 feet. Follow the chimney to a chockstone.
(8) 35 feet. Climb the left wall on small holds, avoiding a dangerously insecure chockstone at the top. Belay a few feet to the right in the bed of the gully.
(9) 90 feet. Climb the wall on the left and then follow a grassy groove to the exit at the top of the crag.

NORTH WEST GROOVES 500 feet. Severe. First ascent, 22nd May, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty. Lies to the left of Curving Gully, directly below a prominent ' V ' groove. Cairn.

(1) 60 feet. Up the wall and traverse right into the foot of a prominent groove. Belay at the foot of a crack in the groove.
(2) 50 feet. Up the crack for 25 feet then move a few feet out across the right-hand wall, to a small ledge where a running belay can be taken. The traverse continues for 15 feet to an obvious bollard belay.
(3) 30 feet. Traverse upwards to the right on good holds to a large grass ledge and belay.
(4) 60 feet. Up slabs above the belay to a grass ledge with belay.
(5) 60 feet. Strenuous. Traverse 15 feet right and get onto a mantel-shelf, then straight up a groove to a large ledge and belay. A running belay is available just above the mantelshelf.
(6) 70 feet. Easy rocks directly above lead to a steep wall which is climbed to a large pedestal belay.
(7) 55 feet. Climb the wall for about 30 feet, then move to the right into a recess which is followed to a ledge **with** a large flake belay.
(8) 60 feet. Move about 15 feet to the right and climb the rocks above to a ledge with a small spike belay.
9) 55 feet. Easier rocks lead to the top of the climb.

HUTAPLE CRAG

TERRACE WALL 235 feet. Severe. First ascent, Easter, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty, K. Miller. Starts at the lowest point of the right-hand side of the crag. Cairn.

(1) 55 feet. Climb over a series of small walls to a stance and belay on grass ledge below slabs.

(2) 50 feet. Climb directly above the belay to the left of a detached flake with an awkward move round a somewhat exposed nose. Ascend steep slabs on good holds to belay on a grass ledge.

(3) 80 feet. Climb the wall above the belay direct to easier rocks which lead to a rocky stance above a sloping grass ledge with bollard belay.

(4) 50 feet. Easy rocks and grass ledge lead onto The Terrace.

UN-NAMED CLIMB — feet. Mild Severe. First ascent, Easter, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty, K. Miller. Starts to the left of a dark cleft level with The Terrace on the extreme right-hand side of the crag. Cairn.

(1) 85 feet. Up a broken ridge on sloping holds to a large grass ledge with belay.

(2) 35 feet. Climb the wall above the belay to a grass ledge with line belay in the corner of a crack.

(3) 45 feet. Climb the crack and short wall above to grass ledge and belay.

(4) — feet. Up the vertical wall above the belay on small incut holds with an awkward movement at the top, another small wall leads to a large grass ledge and belay. Broken rocks lead to the summit.

' A ' ROUTE 340 feet. Severe. First ascent, May, 1952. J. C. Duckworth, G. Batty. Lies on the North Face of the crag and starts 200 feet to the right or west of the open gully which bounds the crag on its Greenhow End or east flank.

(1) 30 feet. Easy rocks lead to a small stance below a ' V ' groove. Belay on left.

(2) 30 feet. The groove is followed for 10 feet, then traverse left to a good stance and spike belay.

(3) 25 feet. Climb the wall above the belay to a rock ledge and belay below overhangs.

(4) 60 feet. Along the ledge to the right to a scoop on the left of the black overhang, ascend this scoop to a large bilberry ledge and belay.

(5) 30 feet. Climb the right-hand of two cracks to a grassy corner where there is a small chockstone belay.

(6) 45 feet. The Crux. Make an awkward move upwards towards the right round the corner, to a small grass covered ledge. This ledge is attained by a press movement, after which easier rocks lead to a bilberry ledge with belay.

(7) 80 feet. Climb to the left over easy rocks to a belay in a corner by a large block.

(8) 40 feet. Ascend a corner and groove to a good ledge and belay.

GREAT GABLE

THE NAPES JAGA — 410 feet. Very Difficult. First ascent, 16th September, **1951.** G.B.F., F. Bantock, P. Taylor. Starts on the steep left wall of Lucifer Ridge.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the wall on the right from the recess uritil level with sentry box. Traverse left into it to stance with belay high on left wall of sentry box.

(2) 60 feet. Leaving the sentry box on the right climb slightly right, up the wall until a large grass ledge is attained. Belay in front to left of ridge.

(3) 60 feet. Traverse left for 20 feet from belay and ascend ridge until it finishes under a nose of rock. Good stance and belay.

(4) 40 feet. Climb over the belay and move left across a hand traverse, with very good holds. The traverse finishes at the nose which is climbed to good stance and belay.

(5) 70 feet. The easy slabs behind the belay are climbed, continuing up the tower like rock in front to stance and belay.

(6) 40 feet. Climb the slabs immediately behind the top of the tower, trending right until a belay is reached about half-way up the slabs.

(7) 50 feet. Continue up the slabs and a small rock wall until a landing is made on a small ledge below the final pitch. Poor belay.

(8) 30 feet. Climb the rocks under the overhang, working first right then left to the finish.

LANGDALE

BOW FELL BUTTRESS

RUBICON GROOVE — 330 feet. Very Severe. First ascent, 7th October, 1951. A.R.D., A. D. Brown. Start as for Central Route.

(1) 30 feet. Follow the shallow groove of Central Route to a stance and belay.

(2) 20 feet. Step left and ascend to stance and belay below overhang.

(3) 60 feet. Above on the left is a steep, deeply cut groove which is undercut at the base and impossible to enter directly. Ascend diagonally left under the overhang into a corner which runs parallel with the groove and about 5 feet on its left. Climb the corner for a few feet until it is possible to traverse right to reach a good hand-hold on the edge of the groove which enables an entry to be made. A very doubtful block at the commencement of the traverse should be treated with care. The groove is climbed first on the left wall for a few feet, and then on the right to avoid a large loose Hake at the back of the groove. A stance and good belay are reached.

(4) 20 feet. Step back left across the groove and ascend easily to a good ledge and belay for line only.

(5) 100 feet. Steep slabs are ascended diagonally left to the foot of two thin vertical cracks about 18 inches apart. These are ascended until they join to form a short shallow chimney which is climbed to a good ledge and spike belay.

(6) 80 feet. The easy ridge above the belay is followed to a good belay below the very scratched narrow crack which forms the penultimate pitch of Sinister Slabs.

(7) 20 feet. Move right for a few feet and climb the final wall via an awkward niche. This pitch is scratched and has been used as a variation finish to Sinister Slabs.

DEER BIELD CRAG

DEER BIELD BUTTRESS 185 feet. Very Severe. First ascent, 24th June, 1951. A.R.D., A. D. Brown. Starts about 10 feet to the right of the Crack and immediately below a small tree.

(1) 45 feet. Climb past the tree and up a crack on the right leading diagonally left at the top. Join the Crack and follow it for 10 feet to the first Raven's Nest.

(2) 15 feet. A strenuous ascent up the overhanging crack above the belay. Stance and belay on the edge of the Crack.

(3) 35 feet. The first crux. Traverse right into an overhanging groove and climb its left wall to a small ledge and running belay. A short overhanging section leads to a stance with tree belay 10 feet higher.

(4) 50 feet. Climb the groove until it divides. Take the subsidiary right-hand branch and follow it until it peters out. The wall is then climbed to a good running belay, move right and back left to the top of the pinnacle. Belay but no real stance.

(5) 40 feet. The second crux. From the top of the pinnacle swing out into a layback position on a sharp flake on the left and then go straight up. The difficulty soon eases and the top is attained without further difficulty.

RAVEN CRAG

EAST **CRAG**

BABYLON 105 feet. Very Severe. First ascent, 14th October, 1951. A.R.D., Miss F. M. Ball. Lies on the isolated crag on which is Peascod's Route, and starts below a large tree which grows out of the base of the crag directly beneath the great final overhang.

(1) 15 feet. Climb the wall and into the tree. Belay in tree.

(2) 40 feet. Ascend the groove behind the tree and past another small tree. At the top of the groove step round the corner on the right to a ledge and tree belay.

(3) 50 feet. Move back left and climb straight up for about 10 feet to a good running belay. A tree growing out of the wall about 20 feet up to the right is the next objective. It is attained by a rather awkward upward traverse the holds on which must be chosen with care. After fixing a running belay on the tree **climb up** over it and finish onto a sloping ledge on the right.

NINEVEH 105 feet. Very Severe. First ascent, 21st October, 1951. A.R.D., P. Tuke, D. Bennett. Starts at a cairn below a lichenous wall about 30 yards to the right of the start of Babylon.

(1) 50 feet. The wall is ascended to a narrow grass ledge. A sloping gangway about 6 feet above the ledge leads left to a combined holly-ash bush which is passed to a ledge with good stance and tree belay on the left.

(2) 25 feet. Climb over the tree and mantelshelf onto a semi-detached flake. Ascend to the left to stance and tree belay.

(3) 30 feet. Climb past the tree and ascend awkward rocks above until a heather filled groove can be crossed to the finishing ledge on the right.

THIRLMERE

IRON CRAG
SHOULTHWAITE

FERROUS BUTTRESS 250 feet. Very Severe. First ascent, 15th July, 1951. A.R.D.', E. Hodgson. Starts at the lowest point of the buttress on the right of the gully.

(1) 25 feet. A crack in a corner is climbed to a stance and large dubious belays.

(2) 15 feet. Continue to the top of the pinnacle of which the lower crack forms the right-hand edge. Belay on top of pinnacle.

(3) 80 feet. Climb diagonally up to the left for a few feet and enter a shallow groove. This is followed for about 20 feet to a large but doubtful running belay when a traverse right is made to a tiny ledge. Move up 10 feet and traverse further right into an open groove, which is ascended to a sloping ledge and small belay on the wall above.

(4) 90 feet. Traverse right along the shattered ledge to the bottom of a steep crack, overhanging slightly at the base. This is followed for about 20 feet (running belay) when it is possible to move out to the right. A diagonal ascent is made to the right over steep grass to a good rock stance and belay below the final overhanging wall.

(5) 40 feet. Traverse right round the corner of the buttress and ascend back left to the top. Belay 20 feet back from the finishing edge.

KEY TO INITIALS USED

A. R. Dolphin G. B. Fisher

Non-members' names are given in full in the text.

CORRECTION

In ' Climbs Old and New ' in Journal No. 45 (1951) there is on page 85 a description of a climb on Hanging Knotts, which should be amended as follows :—

For ' Don's Delight' read ' Dons' Delight.'

For ' A. G., N. Flew, J. G. Rauldon ' read ' A. G. N. Flew, J. G. Mauldon.'

We are indebted to Mr Flew for calling our attention to these corrections.—ED. F. & R.C.C.J.

SCOTTISH MEET—May 19th-29th, 1951

George H. Webb

In 1951 the Scottish Meet continued its progress northward and on a perfect evening 11 members descended on Kintail Lodge, Invershiel, some by car from the east, others by train, boat and bus from the west. They were : T. R. Burnett, F. Lawson Cook, G. Graham Macphee, W. G. Milligan, H. R. Preston, Mrs. L. Pryor, R. Shaw, W. G. Stevens, P. "Warrington, G. H. Webb and the popular leader of the meet, R. T. Wilson. Miss D. Richardson, who chanced to arrive on the same evening became, in effect, an associate member of the meet (and subsequently a member of the Club).

The meet was noteworthy for the amount of snow on the tops, which made for some genuine mountaineering, and for the large number of ' Munros ' climbed by the party as a whole. The weather was reasonable, if erratic, and any tendency to grumble was silenced by the salutory experience of the one really hot day, with its attendant sapping of energy and feeling of inertia.

On arrival at the hotel the first feeling of consternation at finding the party split up, for sleeping purposes, into three separate dwellings, was followed by a hasty reckoning up of pros and cons. The odd ones in the main hotel kept a reserved superior silence, those in the corrugated iron hut were mildly depressed, whilst the three members in the brown timber cottage, headed by Milligan, were openly jubilant as to its general amenities and private drying room.*

The first morning showed a weather inconstancy typical of the meet, and in pouring rain Macpbee, Milligan, Preston and Webb set off to traverse the Five Sisters of Kintail. It had already been realised that Macphee was suffering from an attack of Munro-itis, but the severity of the malady had not yet been fully recognised, and this expedition was but the first of many hare-and-hounds races. The Snowy Sisters were duly trampled underfoot, though the fifth Sister, Sgurr na Moraich, was abandoned unclimbed as being not sufficiently beautiful (and just under 3,000 feet). The remainder of the party had meanwhile climbed up the narrow defile to the Bealach an Sgairne, where claims were made of incredible views which in no way conformed to the contours of the map, except for those members with X-ray eyes.

* As one of the ' depressed class ' I can affirm that my companions bore their alleged inferiority to the ' cottagers ' with remarkable cheerfulness.—Ed., *F. & R.C.CJ.*

On the Monday, Mrs Pryor, Burnett and Milligan had a heavy day driving over the hill road to Glenelg, where they conducted an exhaustive survey of the ancient Pictish Towers. 1 he remainder, bound for Cluanie Inn, split up into two climbing parties, having thought out a marvellous shuttle service of cars—a system which as usual broke down in practice. Cook, Miss Richardson, Warrington and Wilson went up Ciste Dhubh (3,218 feet), the fine peak already climbed by **Macphee** on the Saturday on his way to Kintail. The rest ascended Saileag (3,124 feet), Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dhcirg (3,378 feet) and Sgurr an **Fhuarail** (3,284 leet) in shifting mist. On the supposition that the cairn on one mountain was covered by snow, one member was precariously let out on a rope to the highest point of the cornice ; two minutes later the mist cleared and there was the real rocky top some hundreds of yards away. A fine sight was that of 20 deer jumping a small cornice and careering down the steep slope in single file. On the descent Stevens showed his independence, and usual good judgment, by taking a completely unorthodox line and arriving down first to the great disgust of the rest.

The following day was the hot one to which reference has already been made. Burnett, with five adherents visited the Falls of Glomach by the upper route, where tea was duly made by the obvious member with his usual skill. The Fall, the highest in Britain, must in reasonable spate impress all who have seen it. With its lofty, dark, smooth rock it is indeed the Black Prince of waterfalls and, except for colour of rock, quite reminiscent of the great chasm or Gaping Gill as seen in the chair descent. Meanwhile, the remainder had gone off to eliminate most of the peaks on the south side of Glen Shiel and, about midday, five hot and dishevelled climbers threw themselves thankfully on the summit of Sgurr an Lochain (3,282 feet), having traversed two tops from Aonach air Chrith (3,342 feet). From there, Milligan, Preston and Warrington went over Sgurr Beag (2,926 feet) and down to the glen. Macphee and Webb continued over Creag nan Damh (3,012 feet), Sgurr a' Bhac Chaolais (2,802 feet), up the sporting east ridge of Sgurr na Sgine (3,018 feet) and down by Faochaig (3,010 feet) ; needless to say two people were late for dinner that night.

Great was the delight of all when Wednesday dawned fine, for this was the day when the company went nautical and chartered a motor-boat, with destination Skye. A call was made at the unoccupied Eilean Donnan Castle, which is the traditional headquarters of Clan Macrae and had been rebuilt at a reputed cost of £120,000 during the period 1912-32. The party were privileged in

being taken round the private portion of the castle, where was the curious sight of a large number of bedrooms, all fully prepared with bed linen, for occupants and visitors who are never there. The next stop was at Kyle of Lochalsh, where a trio of members, led by Milligan, patronised the fleshpots of the hotel and, so he claimed, discovered the largest sherries ever served for the price anywhere. The others munched, Spartan-like, on the rocky shore where Burnett made one of his best quality bonfires. Kyleakin was the next large port visited, and here Preston, who had never been to Skye, paid the shortest call on record, though an offer to leave him there was rejected with contempt by the pier employees. During **the** voyage various members had taken turns at the tiller and, on the whole, the party were favourably impressed by tneir competence.

Thursday turned out windy, with mist on the tops. Burnett, Cook, Mrs Pryor, Miss Richardson, Shaw and Stevens went to make a further survey of the Glenelg Pictish Towers, where Shaw did a spectacular cave traverse ; afterwards an ascent was made of Ben Sgriol (3,196 feet). The others, their prestige enhanced by the presence of the leader went up to Cluanie by car and attempted the lonely high peaks of that district. In a wind of gale force and driving mist A' Chralaig (3,673 feet) was ascended. Macphee and Webb also took in A' Chioch (3,050 feet) and then traversed the main ridge to Mullach Fraoch-Choire (3,614 feet).

The President, Colonel H. Westmorland, arrived very late that night together with Eric and Jean Arnison. On the following morning, thanks to the versatility of Shaw on the harmonium, and an early apprenticeship of ceremonial procedure on the part of Cook, an impressive official welcome was given to the President.

The best-known mountain in Glen Shiel rejoices in the curiously English name of The Saddle (3,317 feet) and this was the objective for most of the party on the Friday, some ascending by the rocky Forcan ridge and others by the north-west ridge. The President and Arnison were accompanied by two dogs and it was a sad reflection on the relative frailty of the human body to see the dogs running madly up and down steep slopes after 3,000 feet of climbing. On arrival back it was discovered that a missing member, who had stopped behind reputedly to write letters, had developed mental fatigue and climbed A' Ghlas-bheinn instead. His plea that it was ' only a little Munro ' (3,006 **feet)** was accepted. At night the local ' Car for Sale ' was inspected with a view to impressing its virtues on the President. This car had been suggested to various members before and it was felt that this was the final chance to effect a sale.

' JURY ' MGB.174 dated 19XX, with all odd wheels, was parked in a field on the wrong side of a wide stream. Although the bridge was marked ' UNSAFE FOR ALL MOTOR VEHICLES' it was felt that with the healthy man-power available this would not be an insuperable obstacle. Unfortunately Colonel Westmorland's requirements were unduly onerous and no sale was effected, as he had the unreasonable idea that the car would be better with an engine.

On Saturday two members, Miss Richardson and Webb took their departure. Arnison and Macphee set off to climb Munros many miles away in the wilds and their initial adventure in starting up the wrong glen, thus adding some three miles to an already lengthy tramp, was greeted with misplaced glee by the lazier members of the party. The two climbed Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan (Kiernan !) 3,771 feet, involving some 20 miles in all. By contrast the lazy ones motored to Totaig, and enjoyed an easy day picknicking and pottering in the sun.

The following day the Arnisons went home, and Stevens and Wilson went to church at Letterfearn, thus adding lustre to the meet. The President, Cook and Shaw went up to the great and misty plateau of Ben Attow (3,383 feet) arriving back to the usual brilliant evening sunshine. As Colonel Westmorland rightly said ' Why does the perishing sun shine at night instead of by day in these parts ? ' Macphee and Preston climbed Sgurr nan Conbhairean (3,635 feet) and Tigh Mor (3,285 feet) beyond Cluanie, whilst Mrs Pryor walked (or crawled) the countryside and brought back some of her wonderful beetles.

By Monday the party was reduced to six and it set forth to place and investigate a curious minor mountain **hitherto** dubbed ' Westmorland's Knob.' Its true name was ascertained to be Boc Beag, a doubtful improvement on its original nickname.

Tuesday brougnt the official end of a most enjoyable meet, so everyone departed except Warrington who was left as hostage to the Glen Shiel mountains. It is a fine unspoilt district and the meet, under its able leader Dick Wilson, ran as smoothly as ever.

IN MEMORIAM

ASHLEY PERRY ABRAHAM, 1906-1951

On 9th October, 1951, the Club's first President died in Edinburgh, at the age of 75.

It is difficult to express in this short tribute how great was his influence for good in his beloved Cumberland. Most of us associate his name solely with those great days when rock climbing was entering its second period, during which the Keswick Brothers met Owen Glynne Jones. The influence of his wonderful elder brother brought him to rock-climbing when he was only 16, but he had many other interests which gave him a wide circle of friends ; chess, cricket, bowling, golf, billiards, swimming, educational lecturing on mountaineering, and motoring. The last was directed specially to hill-climbing, as well as the less competitive use of the motor vehicle as a means of ascending mountains. He leaves a permanent memorial to himself in his book on Skye and short articles on mountaineering. It is remarkable that he was in the front rank of several of these pursuits when one remembers his contribution to mountaineering and rock climbing.

I had the honour of taking the chair at the Club's First General Meeting (Easter, 1907), but we all felt greatly disappointed that our President and his elder brother George were not able to be present. The Club owes so much to its early Presidents and Honorary Members, who gave their advice and grand support to its foundation.

I first met him when W. McNaught brought me to the Lake District, after an absence of nearly six years. We had to follow the Keswick Brothers' lead, and scour nearly the whole of the District, armed with large cameras and many plates. However, it was their climbing photographs which led us to the rocks. It would be interesting to know how many other mountain-lovers owe the same debt of gratitude. Haskett-Smith, Slingsby, Solly, Seatree and J. B. Farmer—to mention only a few—valued those photographs as being true pictures ; of service to the novice, and to the old hand, a lasting reminder of great and glorious days.

Ashley served his apprenticeship in the orthodox manner ; he started at the beginning, and chose his birthplace as his training ground. A short walk brought him and his brother to Castlehead, Keswick, and in 1892, at the age of 16, the partnership with his 20-years-old brother began. Owen Glynne Jones joined the partnership in 1896, but many unrecorded ascents had been made in the

preceding four years: Falcon Crag, Walla Crag, Force Crag, Iron Crag, and others, were all visited, although it was not until January, 1899, that Jones, the brothers and their father made the second ascent of Iron Crag Chimney. Shortly before, the first ascent of Walker's Gully had been made under bad conditions of ice and water, and the brothers were anxious to repeat their first ascent of Iron Crag Chimney. Those who knew the climb before years of " gardening " made it more presentable must still wonder how these first two ascents were possible. Jones's influence led the brothers from the gullies to the slabs and ridges.

This may be subject to qualification, of course. Mouse Ghyll Direct, was I believe one of their first ascents. However, they had made a visit to Skye in 1895, which was followed by others, and the seed was sown for journeys to bigger mountains. The ridges had won, and several visits to Skye followed. Among the first ascents were : Inaccessible Pinnacle, S.W. Route (Sgurr Dearg) ; Third Pinnacle Face (Sgurr Nan Gillean) ; A'Cioch, Direct (Sron Na Ciche). The result was over 300 pages of *Rock Climbing in Skye*, which is a masterpiece of thoroughness and beautiful illustrations, including a map of the Coolin and nine diagrams.

The book was prepared by Ashley—we like to imagine—in honour of the founding of the F.R.C.C., because it was completed during his term as first President. On a visit to Skye in 1920 (G.D.A. ; H.H. ; and G.S. ; and joined later by G.W. ; T.H.S. ; L.W.S. ; H.P.C. ; and F.W.W.-J.), we found that the map, photographs and notes in that book made it possible to do much more than otherwise would have been a normal programme. On the Scottish Mainland the Crowberry Ridge (Buchaille Etive) was conquered early in 1899.

In 1897 the Keswick Brothers' Climb was the first notable first ascent in Lakeland. From 1901 to 1912 were added New West (Pillar Rock) ; Route I Shamrock Buttress ; Abraham's Route (B. Buttress, Dow Crag) ; N.E. Climb, (Pillar Rock), etc. From 1907 to 1913 Ashley attended all the Club's Annual General Meetings ; and there are still many members who remember those delightful Dow Crag expeditions, as well as others, after the Coniston dinners.

My recollection is that there were few Lakeland climbs which had not been done by the brothers before the First World War, in spite of visits to Wales, Scotland, the Alps, and the Dolomites. The first visit to Switzerland was to Zermatt, October, 1897 ; much

Ashley Perry Abraham

S. H. CI-IKS

A. T. HAHGREAVES

too late for the big peaks. However, in 1899 the Matterhorn was " in the bag." A guideless ascent of the Matterhorn Couloir (Riffelhorn) was a fine effort. 1900 season was spent in the Mont Blanc Chain, at its southern end, among the Aiguilles and on the mountain itself. 1903 was an Oberland season, and 1904 was spent in the Arolla Valley. To those who can obtain the pocket-book, *Swiss Mountain Climbs* (by G.D.A.), a comprehensive picture of the expeditions can be obtained. I will lend it to members who cannot find it in libraries, but as it was given to me by G. H. Charter (whose recent death deprives the Club of one of its founders and a very fine character), its worth to me will be understood.

I have not climbed with Ashley Abraham since 1920, following a grand but all too short visit to Skye with his brother. At 44 years of age he was at the height of his physical fitness, as far as I could judge. He always had the gift of putting a gathering of people into a happy mood.

This short memoir would be incomplete without some reference to Wales, in particular to the year 1897, when Owen Glynne Jones was with Ashley and his brother for part of the holiday. Cyfrwy, Great Gully of Craig-y-Cae (now no longer in existence as a fine climb, because of the collapse of Pencoed Pillar), Lliwedd's Slanting Gully (first direct ascent), Great Gully of Craig-yr-Ysfa, Twll Dhu (second direct ascent, I believe) and the Devil's Staircase, as well as the climbs on Y-Tryfaen and Glyders. 1899 (the Devil's Staircase) was Jones's farewell British climb with George as his companion.

He maintained his interest in the Club throughout, and his attendances at Annual Dinners were governed only by his ability to make the journey, whether from his Keswick home, or from distant places. His sense of humour added greatly to his always appropriate speeches at those dinners.

He was genial and helpful to all those who were new to the mountains. It was doubtless because of his strongly altruistic nature that he reversed his decision, and thus consented to be its first President. The same love of service made him one of the Trustees of the Club Funds.

I am grateful to his brother and to Scantlebury for their help and corrections. Also, I wish to pay tribute to Honorary Editors of the of the *F. & R.C.C. Journals* throughout the Club's life of 46 years. Their records have been invaluable.

T. C. ORMISTON-CHANT.

A. T. HARGREAVES, 1929-1952

' Unto the Hills '—a fitting epitaph for one who lived for the mountains. A.T. started his climbing in gritstone, but soon found his way to the mountains of the Lake District and Wales with his climbing companions Roy Horseman and Herbert Hartley. In the very early days they would travel up by motor-cycle and then A.T. was lucky—his work brought him to Barrow-in-Furness where he soon made friends with Basterfield, Bower, Clegg and Barker. In 1930 he and Barker made the White Gill Slabs Route 1, while earlier in the year he and Macphee did Deer Bield Crack, a very fine climb which is still held in great esteem ; in 1932 Nor'-nor'-west on Pillar, and Sinister Slabs, Bowfell ; in 1933 Hadrian's Wall and Ledge & Groove, and in the same year on the East Buttress of Scafell, Overhanging Wall with Linnell, and Morning Wall with Clegg and Linnell. In Scotland, which he loved, three fine climbs were first ascended by Hargreaves and his party, Observatory Buttress and Rubicon Wall on Ben Nevis, and Route 1 on Cam Dearg. In the following years he was instrumental in the making of many other first ascents.

In these early days he had a reputation in the Club of being an impatient man, but to those who knew him well he was the kindest and most considerate of men. He was only impatient to get on with things, to get climbing. There was no late starting for A.T.'s party and no early returning either ; every minute of the day was lived to the fullest. His idea of a day's climbing was to start early with a good walk to the crags and to finish at the end of the day on the tops with a good walk home. He was a mountaineer and bad weather never deterred him or his party. He never felt the cold ; a pouring wet day in a gully gave him as much enjoyment as a fine sunny day on the crags. Snow and ice he loved and his ice technique was a joy to watch.

He was one of the small team of members responsible for Brackenclose and he put an amazing amount of energy and work into the Club's first hut. He was the first Warden and those who recall the early days of Brackenclose remember A.T. as a strict disciplinarian, but they will also remember his friendliness to all new comers. The circle at the fire could always be made larger and many new friendships were made. A.T. was also in at the start of Raw Head and put in a lot of hard work there. He was elected a Vice-President of the Club in 1945.

A keen and competent skier, he first started ski-ing through Helen Bryan and Evelyn Pirie in the great Coniston days when ski-ing

really started in Lakeland. To A.T. ski-ing was a part of mountaineering, a means of traversing mountains in winter.

His tragic death, at the age of 49, occurred at Obergurgl on the first day out of a well-earned holiday. His going leaves a gap in the circle of friends who knew and loved him. His name will live in the climbing world.

S. H. CROSS.

LORD LECONFIELD, 1920-1952

The death of Lord Leconfield, one of our honorary members, calls to mind that it was in recognition of his gracious gift of the summit of Scafell Pike to the Nation as a memorial to the men of the Lake District who gave their lives during the first world war, 1914-1918, that the Club committee invited him to accept honorary membership.

It is believed that the suggestion for this gift first came from Canon Rawnsley. It received a good deal of publicity at the time, and was undoubtedly the inspiration of other similar gifts, including the Club's own war memorial, and that of Scafell by Mr. A. C. Benson, the well-known author, and Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, grandson of the poet, a year or two later.

CHORLEY.

G. H. CHARTER, 1906-1952

One of our earliest members, George Harold Charter died at his home in Rugby in March, 1952, at the age of 72.

Harold Charter was a member of the first committee when the Club was formed in November, 1906. In that year I was the Hon. Secretary, Ashley Abraham was President, and the Committee was composed of Alan Craig, S. H. Gordon, G. H. Charter and Charles Grayson. Of these six only the first and last now remain with us. I knew Harold Charter for some 14 years at Barrow-in-Furness before he left to take up another appointment ; first in Scotland and then in Rugby. He was ever a most delightful companion in any ramble or camping outing ; always so considerate and thoughtful for the comfort of his comrades. He was an enthusiastic lover of the Lake District and a keen mountaineer and rock-climber. His genial nature endeared him to all his pals and his loss will be deplored by all who knew him. My old friend would have loved to know that this quotation from the poet William Watson appears in his memoriam :

' Region separate, sacred, of mere, and of ghyll and of mountain,
Garrulous petulant beck, sinister laughterless tarn ;
Haunt of my vagabond feet, of my fancy for ever reverting,
Haunt and home of my heart, Cumbrian valleys and fells ;

Yours of old was the beauty that rounded my hours with a nimbus,
Touched my youth with bloom, tender and magical light ;
You were my earliest passion, and when shall my fealty taker ?
Ah, when Helvellyn is low ! Ah, when Winander is dry ! '

EDWARD SCANTLEBURY.

E. BANNER MENDUS, 1941-1952

Elwyn Banner Mendus died in hospital on 7th January, 1952. He was 35 years of age. His early and unexpected death has meant a very great loss to many.

His boyhood was spent in Tenby and Fishguard, and his first climbing done on sea cliffs. As a schoolboy he saw Stanley Watson on Kern Knotts and the Needle, and embarrassed his elder brother by immediately buying a thick rope to carry on the hills. Returning home from this holiday he explored the garns of North Pembrokeshire, and later the appearance in the *Western Mail* of his account of a snow camp on the Brecon Beacons, led to the formation of the South Wales Mountaineering Club. He explored in the Black Mountains,finding new rock, particularly at Llanthony, and occasionally visited North Wales.

Just before qualifying as a solicitor and coming to Workington in 1941, he had been ill for over a year with spinal trouble which prevented military service. However he was able to climb regularly from Workington, often with Bill Peascod, and together they did many of the first ascents on the crags which were beginning to be developed in the Buttermere Valley, particularly in Birkness Combe.

In 1945 he married Enid Jenkins, whom he first met when she attended a meet at Brackenclose with her brother. They had two daughters, Caroline and Julia. He was appointed coroner for West Cumberland in 1948.

During the last few years he had fewer opportunities for climbing, but he enjoyed meets in Arran and the Alps. He seemed to ski as much as ever, and was one of the founders of the lately established Bassenthwaite Sailing Club. In 1945 he took over the editorship of the Journal but had to relinquish it in 1950 when a recurrence of his previous illness kept him off his feet for nine months. He seemed to be making good progress towards a complete recovery, but a virus infection supervened and he died after a brief illness.

I have an early memory of him stepping very carefully down the lower slopes of Great Hell Gate in rubbers. It was raining heavily, at the end of a day which had begun with the threat of rain. This was during the middle years of the war and Elwyn had posted

food, rope and boots to Brackenclose, cycling clown from Workington the next day. The parcel did not arrive, but bootless he still climbed on Gable in the rain. Somehow the whole incident reminds me of the sort of person he was ; as a true mountaineer he looked first for the easiest course to his objective, but if that way failed he was not afraid to tackle the job in any other way that was necessary. He was at once both gracious and determined, enjoying the whole round of life very deeply. This was probably a reason for his friendship with George Muller, whose death he noticed in last year's Journal. As I again read that notice I know that much of its feeling is what I would wish to convey now.

Elwyn was a good leader, having an instinctive appreciation of unclimbed rock. He was an outstanding second, especially on new routes, and his seconding to Peascod on the Buttermere climbs already mentioned will be long remembered. After Birkness he became enthusiastic about Mirklin, and a start had been made in that combe, in 1948, with some of the routes which remained to be explored. Almost his last climbing was there, when we ascended two benign routes of 300 feet or so, his notes of which have not been found but I remember the names as Rook's Flight and Knight's Route. He climbed as he lived, without fuss and always with a kind of inward enjoyment and contentment : we are indeed the poorer for his going.

H. K. GREGORY.

BASIL CALVERT ALFEROFF, 1925-1951

Basil Alferoff came to England with his mother in 1918. They were refugees from the Russian Revolution and had made their escape at great personal risk. His mother was English and had family associations with Liverpool, where they settled, and where Basil joined the staff of a firm of cottonbrokers.

His first interest in outdoor activities was as a cyclist ; but he was soon attracted by the greater freedom of the mountains and his cycling became increasingly a means of approach to them.

On the whole, I think he preferred talking to climbing and I have happy memories of long walks on the fells, sometimes during the night, in his company. For many years he was a well-known figure at Club meets and on the hills, especially after his marriage and during the time he and his wife lived at Underbarrow near Kendal. After the war, during which he attained the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, he took up a business position of responsibility in Pakistan, and there he died in 1951.

Basil was a strong individualist and somewhat restless in temperament ; but he had certain charming qualities which all who knew him will always have in memory.

R. G. PLINT.

IAN H. APPLEYARD, 1944-51

Although I have always advocated great caution in the election of very young applicants for membership, I had no hesitation whatever in sponsoring Ian at the age of 17. And how fully was that confidence justified—for, with his home environment rich in encouragement and opportunity, his inheritance from both parents, and his intimate association with Jim Cameron, he quickly developed into a careful and competent climber, capable of leading high category courses with ease and safety. It may be said that he had ' superb nerves ' or ' no nerves ' according to the interpretation which is put upon the expression, the result being that he never became the least rattled however exacting the situation.

In his ordinary life, his characteristics were a love of carefulness, tidiness and exactness, a hatred of sham, and a passion for agriculture and anything to do with living things.

As a schoolboy, most of his spare time was spent on a farm, and the interruption which war service caused in his chosen mode of life must have been most unwelcome. Nevertheless, he discharged his army duties with efficiency, until he was smitten with an attack of rheumatic fever so severe that after long periods of suffering in many hospitals, he was ultimately discharged. The surprising completeness of his recovery is emphasised by the fact that he was accepted for emigration under the scheme of the Government of New Zealand, and passed nearly three years in that country, working on farms, and spending his holidays in climbing and ski-ing.

His untimely death was due to the fact that the tractor which he was working alone, skidded, overturned, and trapped him in a few inches of water in which he was drowned.

To his sorrowing family—so well known and esteemed in the Club—goes out the heartfelt sympathy of the members.

T. R. BURNETT.

M. LE POER TRENCH, 1946-1950

Michael Le Poer Trench was one of the most promising of our young men. Nephew of our member ' Jennie ' Barnard, he had climbed in the Lakes, Scotland, Wales, Austria and Switzerland, both in summer and winter, keeping remarkably accurate records of all his climbs.

On leaving Stowe he joined the R.A.F., thus following the

example set by his father, a Group Captain, and his uncle Captain Charles Barnard whose record-breaking flights to India and South Africa, some 20 years ago, will be remembered by many. Michael was Secretary of the R.A.F. Mountaineering Association and was instrumental in reviving the Cranwell Mountaineering Club.

As Flying Officer he was posted to an Aerobatic Squadron, and was flying a Vampire Jet over the English Channel when he collided with a bomber. He baled out and was ultimately rescued, but died of exposure and multiple injuries at the age of 22. The Club is the poorer by his loss as he would undoubtedly have made his name in the climbing world.

G. H. WEBB.

MISS M. H. CLARKE, 1928-1951

REV. J. HOLT SMITH, 1910-1951

T. M. NIGHTINGALE, 1931-1951

w. P. POWELL, 1946-1951

Died at Cape Town on 2Sth April, 1951.

R. E. W. PRITCHARD

Pritchard, whose death in December, 1950, was noted in the last Journal, belonged, as a climber, to that happy decade following the year 1918 when climbers turned with relief from war and sought adventure more to their liking.

Pritchard's interest in climbing would appear to have begun in North Wales. He probably visited the Lake District during 1916, the year in which he was elected a member of the Club. One might say, however, that his real initiation into rock-climbing began when he met G. S. Bower at Wasdale in 1917. My first meeting with him was through Bower on 3rd August, 1918. The following day we all did the Girdle Traverse of Scafell, then considered quite a feat, and, accordingly, a good test of anyone's capability. The few days' climbing we had together engendered mutual trust and confidence, and so a climbing friendship was formed which not only yielded many successes on the crags but also gave us innumerable pleasant days in the hills.

For some years, whenever possible, we arranged joint holidays. These were mainly at Wasdale Head, with occasional visits to Scotland—including one to Skye. A memorable day was the 4th of June, 1927, when we climbed the Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis in a snowstorm that completely obscured the rocks by the time we reached the Gap and did not cease until we got off the mountain some four and a half hours later.

Needless to add, Pritchard was a first rate rock-climber—one has only to glance through the Club's Guide Books for evidence of that. He had, however, a very retiring disposition and in consequence, I think, was diffident about leading ; this notwithstanding, I recall his fine lead of the North-west Climb on Pillar Rock in rain. He was particularly nimble of foot and a trick he had gave point to this. Poised on his right leg, he grasped his left heel in the right hand, thus forming a loop (in front of his body) through which he skipped without breaking the connection of hand and heel, the position at the end of the movement being that the ' loop ' was behind him. So confident was Pritchard of his ability to perform the feat that on one occasion he did it on top of Napes Needle—while I sat by, roped to him, just as a precautionary measure.

Unfortunately the exigencies of his occupation prevented Pritchard taking lengthy holidays; hence his inability to serve the Club other than as a loyal member. I doubt whether he had any inclination to climb abroad. Wasdale was his favourite retreat from the workaday world.

He was thoroughly reliable, good tempered (a valuable asset to any climbing party when obstacles are encountered), exceedingly modest, and a very pleasant companion to have on or off the hills.

H. M. KELLY.

TONI DEMETZ

The many **members** of the Club who had the pleasure of meeting Toni Demetz during his stay in England throughout the autumn and winter of 1950-51—when, it will be recalled, he was a guest at the Annual Dinner and made a short speech—and those who have climbed **with** him in his own country, will have heard **with** great regret of his untimely death on 16th August, 1952. With two friends he had reached the summit of the Langkofel, and soon after they were overtaken by a severe storm and disabled by lightning. Toni and one of his friends had succumbed to exposure when his father Johann Demetz reached them early the following morning.

Toni's vital and attractive personality had endeared him to all those who knew him, and they will realize how grievous is the loss to his family and friends.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

W. E. Kendrick

The year 1951 is memorable for two events : the purchase of a new hut at Hassness, and the restoration of the New Year Meet to the level of success which it used to have in Buttermere. The Editor was over-sanguine when he suggested in the last Journal that Birkness (for that is the apt name given to the new hut by the Secretary), would be in use by the time his notes were read, but it certainly will be open betore the issue of this Journal. Sufficient to say now that a great deal of work has been done by the Warden, his wife, and a relatively small band of helpers. The full story of their work and the Warden's missed buses home, would make an article in itself. Contributors please respond.

The New Year Meet, however, requires longer mention. It was a happy day for the Club when the Crosses arrived at the old Dungeon Ghyll, as its new landlords. They welcomed the suggestion that the New Year Meet should be held there and the idea evidently appealed to members. They filled the hotel, and both the huts at Raw Head. On New Year's Eve over 60 members and guests dined, and very well too, at the hotel. Afterwards they watched Dick Cook's lantern slides both serious and comic. At midnight our hosts produced rum punch, mince pies, a cake iced specially for the Club, and a black-bearded stranger to let in the New Year. The beard's singing of ' Allouettc,' and ' The Soviet Commissars of Tomsk ' gave us much amusement and the opportunity to raise our own voices. A merry group continued to do so in the bar until a late hour. Meanwhile the denizens of the huts had their feast at Raw Head. We heard of a crate of beer in store, and an unspecified number of ducks in the oven at R.L.H.

The weather was poor. Heavy falls of soft snow and a warm atmosphere kept all but the most energetic, in the valley. About six people waded through the slush to Bowfell, Pavey Ark, Gimmer and Grasmere, on different occasions. Only the occupants of Raw Head made good use of the weather. By the weight of their numbers they flattened the snow on the field behind the Cottage, and there held a successful ski school.

The list of meets, if we are to continue from the end of the previous ' Year with the Club,' began, not with the New Year, but on December 1st, 1950, at Raw Head. On this week-end there was already snow on the tops, and more of it fell on the Sunday, when two parties reached the bar at the Old Dungeon Ghyll by two different routes up Bowfell. Another sought tea in Grasmere via Great Gully on Pavey Ark ; the Brant and Slape, heavily iced, only served to add a piquancy to the expedition. However, the palm for resource must be given to the party from west Cumberland *en bicyclette,* who killed a rabbit on Hardnott, and ate it for supper.

By the time of the next meet in February, snow and ice were plentiful. One party took three hours to make their way along the high level route to Robinson's Cairn at the foot of Pillar, another skied on Lingmell. Snow continued to Easter, which brought the most severe conditions that many of us have ever known. Their coincidence with the usual influx of Easter visitors, many of whom had no experience of the hills in winter, led to fatalities, most of them in the blizzard on the Monday. There were none amongst our members from these causes, but we regret to say that a graduating member, in the company of a friend lost his way, when returning to Brackenclose from Great End, and died of exposure, accentuated by an unsuspected physical disability.

So to Whitsun and Borrowdale. Members were scattered throughout the valley, mostly at Stonethwaite and Seathwaite. We enjoyed, in fine weather, the very unusual and beautiful sight of snow- on the peaks, and spring flowers and unfolding leaves in the valleys. Some members were still able to ski on Helvellyn, some went caving in Dove's Nest, and others went to Buttermere to inspect the new hut there. Our bonfire-makers were in the last-named party, and toasts to Birkness were soon being drunk in tea. A few fortunates were able to extend their holidays at Whitsun and from Borrowdale went directly to Glen Shiel for the Scottish Meet, of which an account will be found in a separate article.

The meet at Dow Crags in June drew few members, only seven including the leader. There were also few novices at the meet at Raw Head in July, but the leaders enjoyed themselves on Bowfell and Gimmer, in the first warm sun, after a fortnight's rain. Rain, however, spoilt the week at Glen Dena in August for the second successive year, after raising hopes by two fine days at the start of it. One of them was spent on Dinas Cromlech and Carreg Wasted in the Pass of Llanberis, where it is reported that tree and rock climbing can be combined. To show that it not only rains in that ' other place,' the meet at Raw Head, later in August was washed out. Brackenclose fared little better in late September. The Saturday of the meet was fine, but it was the end of a brief respite in two very wet months. In October, when most of us had had our holidays, and only the local members could make use of it, the month was **the** finest for many a year. Six of them had a good time at Mungrisdale at the meet there on October 6th and 7th, and climbed most of the routes on Carrock, opened up by Mabel Barker and C. R. Wilson.

The year ended with the Annual Dinner at Keswick, recounted separately, two Hut Committee Meetings at Birkness, when the Committee members, after their deliberations formed themselves into a working party, and by a privately organized firework display at Raw Head on November 5th. Had the large squib not been damp, the year would have ended with a bang.

ANNUAL DINNER, 1951

The Thirty-ninth Annual Dinner took place at the Royal Oak, Keswick, on 27th October, 1951. Previously to the dinner the Annual General Meeting held in a brightly repainted and refurbished Albion Hall, was well attended. The usual business was dispatched with the customary promptitude, **leaving** time enough to discuss the Committee's recommendation to take over the Salving House at Rosthwaite, as another club hut. As the vendor could not keep his offer open until the date of the A.G.M. some members had bought the Salving House privately, and they now very kindly offered it to the Club, together with the loan of the purchase money. After discussion the meeting adopted the Committee's recommendation, and warmly thanked those members whose generosity had enabled the Club to obtain, at long last, a hut in Borrowdale.

Soon after 8 p.m. some 250 members and their guests heard the President say grace. An enjoyable dinner was served as expeditiously as always by the staff of the Royal Oak, and well contented, we waited to be entertained by the speakers of the evening. The President introduced our principal guest, Claude Elliott, President of the Alpine Club, Provost of Eton, formerly Headmaster, climber for many years, Vice-President of the Outward Bound School in Eskdale, and a neighbour to us at our new hut at Buttermere.

In a very witty speech, Mr Elliott reminded us that he first began to climb when the Fell & Rock was being founded in Wasdale, and that he was helped by our old members. He said he was particularly glad to be the guest of a club that had given so much service to mountaineering. It was the first club to organise meets, at a time when it was considered that a club's main function was to hold dinners. Its war memorial in the gift of Gable to the National Trust, was the finest in the country, and its Journal was always of the highest standard. He asked us to add to these services by discouraging those who scratched their initials on the crags, and the names of climbs on the rocks, and who scattered orange peel on the fells, even to the extent of rolling boulders onto the delinquents : it was rumoured that such people were Harrovians anyway.

Following the toast of the Club, the President, T. R. Burnett, responded. He said that in just having drunk his own health with enthusiasm, he would remind the visitors that it was essentially a family gathering. Each unit in the family, be it fell walker, valley walker or ' tiger,' made up the Club, and the idea of the club needed a focus ; hence his office of President, who was the embodiment of all their interests. He greatly appreciated the honour that was thus given him. He acknowledged with gratitude the good wishes of Provost Elliott, whose fame extended to spheres other than mountaineering, and with the good wishes of so distinguished a man, we should surely live up to the high opinion he held of us.

The President went on to say that it was unique in the annals of the Club for a past-president to take office a second time, and also to become an Honorary Member. He said he was one of a large family, who kept in touch with each other by means of a private magazine, in which he recently wrote : ' You will wonder what has come over the Fell & Rock, who now, after 22 years, have made me President again, and also an Honorary Member. As I had already become a life member when the cost was only four guineas, I made a very good bargain.' Speaking of the family magazine reminded him that for many years he had a brother in Keswick who was a doctor, at the

time when he (Dr Burnett) went abroad for study, and where incidentally he got his passion for the hills. Returning with university honours, his brother wrote in the magazine : ' There is only one Dr Burnett ; he lives in Keswick. Beware of worthless imitations made in Germany.'

The President then referred to the loss the Club had suffered in the deaths of Ashley Abraham, the first President and a founder of the Club, and of Ralph Mayson, also of Keswick. They would be missed sadly, as would Laurence Pollitt, who was killed in the Alps ; never was there a more trusted and unselfish companion. All these would say, he felt sure, look to the future, be up and doing. In looking ahead he was convinced that we were right in not neglecting our opportunities to increase the number of our huts, firstly in the liarn at Raw Head, then in Birkness at liuttermere, and now in the Salving House in liorrowdale. We must, however, all help. At present, he said, most of the financial aid to buy these huts had come from people who would seldom use them. It would be a source of gratification if each member who had not subscribed were to make a token payment of say half-a-crown to show his appreciation of what was being done. The number of subscriptions received, both for Raw Head and Birkness, was exceedingly low compared with the number of members in the Club. He further appealed to members to use and keep the huts in a manner creditable to the Club.

He next referred to the designation of the Lake District as a National Park, and to the appointment to the Planning Board of two of our members, Miss M. R. FitzGibbon, our Librarian, and H. H. Symonds, who had striven for the preservation of the amenities of the Lake District for many years. In conclusion the President thanked Mr Beck and his staff of the Royal Oak for their excellent service, and Lyna Kellett for making all the arrangements for a happy evening : as an expression of appreciation of her work, he presented to her a chairman's gavel, made from ash grown in his own garden, turned on his own lathe, and polished with wax from his own bees. In his final sentence he asked all members to pledge themselves that the prestige and prosperity of the Club would be increased, so that he could pass on to his successor a torch flaming more brightly than ever.

There was then an interval for the Club Songsters, as the President announced John Hirst and Harry Spilsbury, who delighted us with ' Climbing, Climbing, Climbing,' brought up to date, even to the President's predilection for bonfires, and with ' It's Foolish but it's Fun.' They were accompanied by Mrs Spilsbury. At the conclusion of the songs, the President announced that an anonymous member had given £100 to the cost of the Salving House. Well sung J.H. and H.S.

C. E. Arnison in a short and amusing speech proposed the toast of the guests, who were Dorothy Pilley, J. A. Martinez, Miss M. Sutton, E. Moss, R. Grieve, F. L. Cook, and C. J. W. Fox, of the Ladies' Alpine, Climbers', Fellfarers', Rucksack, Scottish Mountaineering, Wayfarers' and Yorkshire **Ramblers'** Clubs respectively. He spoke of the prowess in mountaineering of each of them, except of our own member, Lawson Cook, who was masquerading as a Wayfarer, and whom, as one solicitor to another, he reminded of the penalties of impersonation.

J. A. Martinez replied for the guests. He said that if he merely said what he was bound to say, that was to thank the Club for its **hospitality,** he would have made one of the shortest speeches on record. In addition to saying

' thank-you,' he would, however, **tell us** how he came to represent that rugged band of mountaineers from North Wales, of whom two were at present on Everest, and to whom he belonged, not by virtue of his prowess, but because, unlike the President of the Fell & Rock, he paid his subscription annually. In fact, he said, his prowess was confined to the solo descent of the S.E. Gully of Gimmer in 1935, and it was his failure to **traverse** the mantelpiece **at** Brackenclose that brought him there that evening. On that occasion **several** years ago he was again enjoying this Club's hospitality, at Hrackenclose, and was being entertained by the attempts of some young amazons to traverse the mantelshelf in the common room, without using the *verboten* and loose hold of the picture hanging above it. Some failed, but there was one, who by her delicacy, skill and grace was above the others. She was none other than Lyna Kellett. From that time his friendship with her had lasted until two weeks ago, when she told him that he was to reply to the toast of the guests that evening.

Finally the ' duettists ' entertained us with two more songs—' An Kxhortation to the Higher Life,' and ' The Two Mountaineers,' which were encored and cheered. **The** company then moved to the lounge to seek out old friends. It was early morning before the last of us had left for bed.

W. E. KENDKICK

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

When we Fell-and-Rockish folk
Assemble at the Royal Oak,
We think and talk and croak and joke
On Climbing, Climbing, Climbing.
Tory tough and Labour Lord,
We blether on with one accord,
Till even Mr Beck is bored
With Climbing, Climbing, Climbing.
Sated, inebriated,
We'll stagger gaily home for miles and miles
On paths not marked by Bobbie Files,
While lovely Lyna crawls to bed,
Revolving in her shapely head
The multifarious things we've said
On Climbing, Climbing, Climbing.

If you wander Kendal way,
And call upon the House of K.
You'll find they chatter all the day
Of Climbing, Climbing, Climbing.
Wearers of this famous brand
May not know their shoes were planned
And manufactured in the land
Of Climbing, Climbing, Climbing.
Gay folk are all the K. folk !
If you complain your footwear doesn't fit
They'll say : ' O put a sock in it!
We duly note your valued views
About our blasted boots and shoes,
But first let's have the latest news
Of Climbing, Climbing, Climbing ! '

Our President, T. R. Burnett,
Is quite the most distinguished vet—
eran the Club has nurtured yet
On Climbing, Climbing, Climbing !
Long ago he had his whack,
But aren't we glad to have him back,
Because he never has got slack
At Climbing, Climbing, Climbing !
Yearning, though full of learning,
To spend his days in camp and caravan,
He is the perfect outdoor man !
But when from camping he retires,
I wonder whither he aspires—
He's just as keen on stoking fires
As Climbing, Climbing, Climbing !

JOHN HIRST.

Sung by John Hirst at the Annual Dinner on 21th October, 1951.

EDITOR'S NOTES

In the Club's ' Annual Reports, 1950-51,' it was stated that the 1952 *Journal* would be of smaller size than those of recent years in order that it might be possible to publish earlier in the year, a desirable end for many reasons. Increasing cost of production was another factor which influenced the Committee in the same direction. While the reduction in size will be only too apparent, the substantial advance in the date of publication hoped for seems unlikely to be achieved, for reasons which need not be enlarged on here.

In days gone by the journals published by climbing clubs, including our own, were wont to contain very full accounts of their annual dinners, in which the speeches of the President and others were reported at great length, if not verbatim. In these more austere times it would be impracticable to devote so much space and paper to after-dinner oratory. It would, moreover, be difficult to do justice in cold print to some of its recent manifestations—the operatic flights of a Spilsbury, or the rope tricks of a Tarbuck !

It has, however, been suggested that the Annual General Meeting and Dinner should receive rather more attention than has been customary in these pages in recent years. It is the most important social event in the Club year, and the only occasion on which a really large numbers of members are able to meet together. Thanks to the excellent reporting of W. E. Kendrick, I am able to print an account of last year's A.G.M. and Dinner, which strikes a happy mean between the profusion of the past, and the brevity of recent times, and which, I hope, will recall agreeable memories to those who were present, and tell ' Absent friends ' something of what transpired.

The President's interest in history and archaeology is well known to many members—is it not recorded in the account of the Skye Meet in the 1948 *Journal* that ' T.R.B. was formally decorated with the Grand Brass Medal of the Glenbrittle Archaeological Society ' ? It is therefore appropriate that this year's *Journal* should contain two contributions full of antiquarian interest—I refer to those on the Great **Langdale** Axe Factory, and the Old Mill in Coombe Gill, which deal with the very remote, and the more recent past in two of our best loved dales.

A Journal published annually obviously does not lend itself to comment or controversy in the form of ' Letters to the Editor,' to the same degree as do the pages of daily or weekly papers. But the

perusal of past numbers of our *Journal* shows that many interesting topics have formed the subject of ' Correspondence ' from members, and I think a renewal of this feature might give pleasure to readers, and provide the Editor with useful—and unsolicited—' copy'. I am therefore pleased to be able to print a letter (on a distinctly controversial matter) in this issue, which will possibly encourage other members to follow suit.*

The publication of the New Series of Rock-Climbing Guides proceeds as expeditiously as present conditions permit, and the fourth of the series, *Pillar Rock and Neighbourhood,* by H. M. Kelly and W. Peascod, became available early this year. The next on the list is the Scafell Guide on which good progress is reported.

It has recently been necessary to increase the price of the Guides, but they still represent remarkable value for the money.

The most important event for the Club during the first half of 1952 was the official opening of Birkness by the President. This brought a large number of members and friends to Buttermere, and a sunny afternoon enabled them to see the buildings and their surroundings at their best. They could appreciate to the full the efforts of the Hut Committee and of the working parties (still busy right up to the opening time), who have made the hut and the cottage so attractive to the eye, and so well equipped for their purpose. A fuller report of the afternoon's proceedings must be held over for the next *Journal,* as must some account of the Salving House at Rosthwaite, the purchase of which has been completed and for which plans for internal alterations are well in hand.

The Rucksack Club is celebrating this year the Jubilee of its foundation, very fittingly under the Presidency of one of its original members Mr John Wilding. With admirable discrimination the Club chose **Langdale** as the scene of part of these celebrations, and there many of the members gathered at Whitsuntide. Judging from the reverberations which reached Borrowdale the event was a great success, and all Fell & Rock members will no doubt join in wishing the Rucksack Club continued prosperity during the next 50 years.

* A second letter on ' First Ascents', has since been received and is printed on page 198.

While the fortunes of the Swiss expedition to Mount Everest have been followed with interest by mountaineers the world over, members of the Club have had a special concern for those of two other Himalayan expeditions this year, in which several of our members have themselves taken part. A. Gregory was honoured by an invitation to join the ' official party ' led by Mr Eric Shipton, which has been in a practically unexplored region to the west ol Everest, in which Cho Oyu, the sixth highest mountain of the world, is situated. A small British party led by Mr David Bryson has also visited the Garwhal Himalaya, and this included two of our members, T. H. Tilly and J. A. Jackson. The *Manchester Guardian* has published a message from the latter describing the earlier stages of this expedition, including a narrow escape from an avalanche, when Tilly unfortunately sustained a knee injury (which later enforced his premature return to England).*

By the time these notes are read much fuller accounts of all these expeditions will no doubt be available than is the case at the time of writing.

At the last Annual Dinner, as reported on another page, Mr Claude Elliott referred to the defacement of the fells caused by the scratching of initials, etc., on the rocks, and the scattering of litter. The Lake District Committee of the National Trust has also called the Club's attention to reports received of initials, arrows and other marks on many of the crags most frequented by climbers, some of which are on Trust property. We hope that all members who have the opportunity **will** do their utmost to discourage such disfigurement of the rocks, by whomsoever caused. The Club has always set its face against the extensive way-marking that is advocated in certain quarters from time to time for the supposed benefit of tell walkers : it would be very regrettable if the crags should become defaced by the misguided zeal or thoughtlessness of those who climb them.

July, 1952. W. G. STEVENS.

* Some further account of this misadventure will be **found** under the heading 'A Bit Steep' on a previous page.

CORRESPONDENCE

DOE OR DOW ?

To the Editor of the ' Fell and Rock Journal '

SIR,

Congratulations on your stand for the Pure Word ' DOW ' for Dow Crags. It is strange that such a stand has been taken up to now in the Journals of the Climbers' and Yorkshire Ramblers' Clubs.

Advocates of DOE seek to base it on *(a)* Closer to Dhu, dark, black ; possibly this is why O. G. Jones, a Welshman, adopted DOE in his book, followed by the Abrahams ; *(b)* the analogy of Buck and Doe. As Fowler in his *Modern English Usage,* summarising the O.E.D. gives it, the male deer is Hart, not Buck, though the latter is colloquially used particularly in Canada and U.S.A. Buck is the male goat. Can it be that the proximity of Goats Water is a cause? If so, as W. G. Collingwood in Journal No. 8 shows, it was Gaites Hause and Water in the 13th Century Boundary. Collingwood uses DOW in his *Lake Counties.*

There are three Dow Crags in the district ; maybe more not marked even on the 6-inch O.S. Sheets. It is easy for the advocates of DOE to say the users of DOW blindly copied the O.S. maps. This is not so as the O.S. sheets were not issued until at earliest the late 1850's—my copies are 1864 onwards—and the hachured 1-inch does not name Dow or Doe, only Goats Water. The fact that Wordworth's, Harriet Martineau's and Black's Guides, issued in the 1840's and 1850's give DOW, disproves a blind following of the Ordnance Survey.

Until Dymond revised Prior's Guide in the early 1880's all the books I have here give DOW. Mrs E. Lynn Linton's *The Lake Country* 1864, Jenkinson's Guides, Baddeley of the 1890's and all later editions, Barrow's *Mountain Ascents,* Badminton and so on.

C. E. Benson in *C.C.J.,* New Series, Vol. IV, No. 3 of 1931, gives the case for DOW. See also *Y.R.C.J.* for 1932, where the editor apologises for having altered Dow to Doe in an article by Benson on the assumption that Doe was the official version.

Benson quotes the authorities and what R. G. Collingwood said is worth repeating : ' I can see no reason at all for Doe. I don't know of any case in which the word certainly figures in a place-name ; and the pronunciation, as you say is certainly Dow (dark, which is appropriate) and not Doe. I think that in a case like this the only guide that one possesses is the pronunciation, and that therefore this guide must be implicitly followed.'

No Northcountryman pronounces ' OW ' as ' OE ' even in surnames. Three elderly Coniston natives now in my neighbourhood—one was in mining and quarrying there in his youth—insist on DOW.

As Marr said of the advocates of ice-scooping of tarns and lakes ' Let them *prove* it.' So let the advocates of DOE prove it before changing local pronunciation and map spelling. It is sad to see the new 1/25,000 Ordnance Survey uses DOE. It also demotes Coniston Old Man !

Bridgend, Yours, etc.,

Patterdale. W. ALLSUP.

12th March, 1952.

NOTE ON ' FIRST ASCENTS ' (SCAFELL)

To the Editor of the ' Fell and Rock Journal '

DEAR SIR,

Before the new Scafell Guide appears, may I beg the space to correct an historical error in the ' old ' ? There, under ' First Ascents ' (page 101) you will find that W. G. Collingwood suggested that Coleridge may have ascended Scafell by Broad Stand ; and that is the mistake to be corrected. These are the facts :—

(1) Between 1st and 9th August, 1802, S.T.C. made a ' circumcursion ' from Keswick by Newlands to Buttermere and St Bees, up Ennerdale, thence by Gosforth to Wasdale Head ; from where he climbed Scafell, descended to Taws in Eskdale, and then continued by Ulpha and Coniston to Brathay and so back to Keswick.

(2) His account of this can be read in a long journal-letter he wrote for the Hutchinsons and Wordsworths (Wm. and Dorothy). It was printed by E. L. Griggs in 1939 in a collection of papers entitled *Wordsworth and Coleridge* (Princeton U. Press), but is more easily accessible in Miss K. Coburn's *Inquiring Spirit* (Routledge, 1951), pp. 225-40. The letter survives in a transcript made by Sara Hutchinson, for whom, it may be surmised, Coleridge mainly wrote ; he was in love with her.

(3) Some confirmatory evidence can be gleaned from ' Notebook 2,' a manuscript now in the British Museum. It is the pocket-book be carried throughout his tour, and the notes made on the spot were open before him as he wrote his three-part letter (one part from Strands, one on top Scafell, the third from Tawhouse : the rest of the tour being only in the Notebook, and still unpublished).

(4) Coleridge went up towards Burnmoor, and then up Scafell by the side of a ' torrent ' which was joined by another in a Y. At his second resting-place he still saw Burnmoor Tarn, and Miterdale. *(N.-bk.)* It follows that, though he scrambled, he did not rock-climb.

(5) Having gained the top, and written ' surely the first Letter ever written from the Top of Sea' Fell,' he ' skirted the Precipices ' and saw beneath him a ridge of hill, like a hyphen, joining Scafell to ' a most sublime Crag-summit, that seemed to rival Sea' Fell Man in height.' He went that way, and got down by ' dropping ' by the hands over a series of ' smooth perpendicular Rock ' walls ; got ' cragfast ' or very nearly so, and finally slid down by a ' chasm ' *(N.-bk.)* or ' Rent,' as between two walls *{Letter).* The rest enables one to trace him down beside Cam Spout to Samson's Stones and ' a little Village of Sheep-folds,' and so by the peat-road to Tawhouse.

I think it is clear that Coleridge has a title to the first *descent* of Broad Stand, on 5th August, 1802. But more may perhaps follow from this. It is evident that Thomas Tyson, with whom he stayed at Wasdale Head on 4th August, did not tell him of this way-down ; and probable that John Vicars Towers of Tawhouse, his host on 5th August, did not know of it either. In Green's *Guidebook* of 1819 these two Estatesmen are the only persons mentioned ' as having climbed from the Wastdale side of Mickledore to the summit of Scafell.' (I quote Mr Gordon Wordsworth's note dated 1912-13 in E. L. Griggs' book : not having been able to consult Green). Tyson was born in 1760 and died in 1842 : Towers, born in 1746, died in 1817 ; they lie very neighbourly in St Catherine's, Boot. Should they not share the ' first ascent ' of Broad Stand ?

Jesus College, Yours sincerely,
Cambridge. A. P. ROSSITER.

LONDON SECTION—1951

During 1951 the London Section has fully maintained its various activities and these have generally been well supported. Both the outdoor and indoor meetings give excellent opportunities for members to keep in touch **with** each other, and many a plan of campaign for visits to the hills, the bond and link between us all, has been eagerly discussed, to come to fruition eventually in Lakeland or elsewhere.

Our numbers tend to increase slowly and we are always glad to welcome new Club members living within easy reach of London, or in fact any other members who may happen to be in the South. We have often been pleased to welcome to our walks and meetings members of kindred clubs, and the annual walk held in April jointly with the London Section of the Rucksack Club has become an established and popular fixture.

We have had four informal dinners at the Rossmore Restaurant at which there was generally much passing round of photographs and anxious talk about the latest currency position.

There are so many competing lectures arranged in London in the winter months, that we limited our own this year to two only. On February 15th, Lieut.-Colonel A. E. Tydeman gave us and the L.S.K. Mountaineering Club his illustrated talk on ' Iceland.' We particularly liked the way in which he gave an uninterrupted narrative, without pausing to comment on any individual picture. And yet picture and narrative coincided, which must have involved very careful timing technique. We were only sorry that there were not more present to hear him. Then on November 8th, Alastair Gebbie showed us his magnificent colour films of the Dauphine, Switzerland, and Scotland. Our thanks are due to him for an enchanting evening and also to Ruth Pickersgill for so kindly giving us the use of the room at College Hall, Malet Street, where also she welcomed the Committee of the London Section on various occasions.

We paid several visits to Harrison Rocks during the summer, but the attendance was disappointing. The weather on most of the chosen dates was not good, and perhaps this, and the fact that the novelty of the rocks has now worn off, may have accounted for the lack of support.

With one or two exceptions we have been lucky with the weather for the walks during the year. Our well-tried leaders are most successful in finding the footpaths, and in spite of London's sprawling suburbia, we can rind miles of unspoilt country at no great distance from town ; only the fells are lacking. Stella Joy's January walk from Windsor to Virginia Water is now traditional and the excellent tea she so kindly provides is much appreciated. In March a new and very pleasant route was made from Shoreham to Knole Park and Sevenoaks by M. N. Clarke. In April on a glorious spring day we joined with the Rucksack Club, as previously mentioned. On the walk from Dunstable to Tring across the Ivinghoe hills, the gliders were out on the downs, and we were also able to observe another form of wild life, as the route skirted the confines of Whipsnade, without actually penetrating the defences, so that the walkers had their full share of free entertainment. In May, R. P. Mears led us across the Surrey highlands of Leith Hill, Holmbury arid Pitch Hill to a copious tea at Peaslake. The June **walk,** led by Stella Joy and Joyce Lancaster-Jones from Beaconsfield to Wycombe, was another lovely summer day. We were very pleased to welcome Mrs Munday on this walk and there was much talk of mountaineering in Canada

and elsewhere. Ian Clayton's walk in July, announced as providing ' natural and unnatural obstacles ' supplied all these and a first-rate thunderstorm as **well.** The walkers could hardly have been wetter in Lakeland. Hut hot baths, dry clothes and a sumptuous tea, kindly provided by Mr and Mrs Clayton and family at Tanglewood, worked wonders. Being in the middle of a heat-wave nobody seemed to have bothered about mackintoshes, etc., and it is believed that everyone sat down to tea in borrowed clothes. In September, Ian Clayton took us across the South Downs from Lewes to Seaford. There was no thunderstorm this time. We had the **tang** of sea air and only slight rain at the start, which was delayed somewhat as one member of the party managed to get lost at the station and search parties had to be sent out as our leader dare not return home without her. She was tracked down eventually and restored to her master, to be promptly put on the lead.

For the autumn tints of October, M. N. Clarke took us a fine walk by Hambledon and Hascombe, starting and ending at **Witley,** and later in the month Tyssen-Gee led from Leatherhead to Reigate, where he had arranged to show us **a** selection from the collection of slides given **to** the Club by W. T. Palmer. Rain marred Clements' walk in November from Watford to Chalfont St. Giles, but it was an interesting and varied route ; though long and muddy. Darkness overtook us in the mud near **Coleshill,** but, although we had no torches, all survived—thanks to the leader's light-coloured cape—to enjoy their tea in the warmth of Staccy's cafe. December is the ' dinner ' month and the weather cheered up for the ' dinner ' walk to Polesden Lacey (National Trust) and Ranmore led by the Walks Secretary. The last walk of the year ended at the sedate Burford Bridge Hotel as the sun set over the Surrey hills.

Of the dinner itself on December 8th—the **thirty-first** dinner of the London Section—we can say that it was its usual success. It was again held at the Connaught Rooms and 58 members and guests were present. Our guests were Mrs M. Milsom, representing the **Ladies'** Alpine Club ; Mrs Don Munday, the Alpine Club of Canada ; D. F. Trowbridge, Imperial College Mountaineering Club ; Michael Way, University of London Mountaineering Club. We were atso delighted to have with us Dr T. R. Burnett, the President, and thank him for his encouraging words and the interesting account he gave of the Club's activities and hopes for the future. The toast of the guests and kindred clubs was proposed by John Poole in a humorous speech and Mrs Munday and Michael Way responded. Dr Hadfield was in the chair and we hope we convinced him how much the London Section owes to him for his many years of service on its behalf.

R. A. TYSSEN-GEE

E. W. HAMILTON