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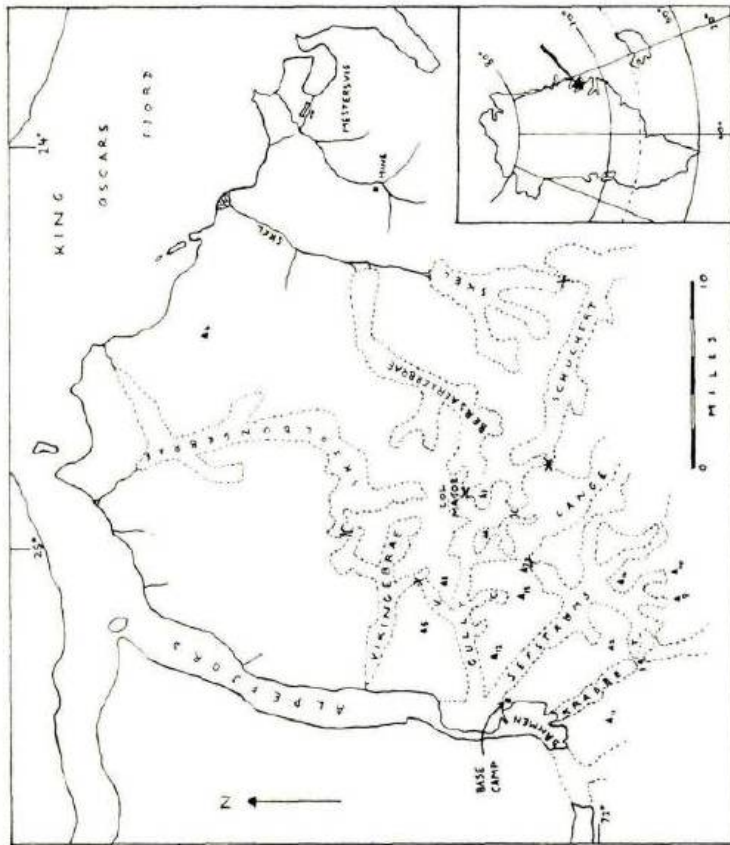
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# THE STAUNINGS ALPS

## KEY

- V VERTEBRAE
- C CAVENISH GLACIER
- T TRINITY GLACIER
- 1 GRAMBES JORASSES
- 2 TRINITY
- 3 SNETORPEN
- 4 MENANDER'S SPIRE
- 5 MAGDALENE
- 6 BOLVAERMET
- 7 GIRTON
- 8 PROCTOR'S PINNACLE
- 9 CANTABRIGIA
- 10 MAGOC
- 11 QUEEN'S PEAK
- 12 KING'S PEAK
- 13 KORSPIDS
- 14 SISNEY





## THE CAMBRIDGE EAST GREENLAND EXPEDITION 1963

*Robin Hildrew*

The last few weeks of my existence in Cambridge were some of the most hectic I have known. The final stages of packing coincided of course with exams, to say nothing of the usual end-of-term festivities, and the mechanics of my final exodus from that fair city, all combined to make life more than usually interesting. It was something of a relief therefore when we were all finally loaded on the 'Gullfoss' at the end of June for the three-day journey to Reykjavik. We were 12 members of the Cambridge University Mountaineering Club bound for the Staunings Alps in E. Greenland. Our leader was Colin Knox, a research student from New Zealand, and the party included two Fell and Rock members, Dick Morton and myself.

This area of huge glaciers and jagged peaks, rising in places to more than 9,000 feet, is a peninsula bounded on the east by Kong Oscar's Fjord and on the west by the long arm of Alpefjord which separates it from the main Greenland ice-cap. Our object was to set up a base near the double snout of the Gully and Sefström Glaciers, in the Western Staunings, and to explore and climb as many new peaks as possible in the area of these two long glaciers. Because the projected base lay 40 miles west of the nearest air-strip, Mestersvig, on the other side of the main divide of the Staunings, its establishment was no easy matter and in fact took three weeks. It was achieved by a parachute-drop of two and a half tons of equipment onto the level Sefström Glacier which we carried out ourselves from our charter plane. This venture, which was tried here for the first time, was very successful, the only hitches being that one load out of the 28 failed to open, and that all the loads landed much higher up the glacier than they needed to have done, so that we were faced with more portage down (down, however, not up!) to Base Camp than we had expected. So that we could observe the air-drop and retrieve the loaned parachutes as soon as possible, an advance party of four, including Dick, flew in a week before the main party, and drove themselves very hard through very soft snow conditions, appalling despite the help of skis, to reach the dropping-zone on time. Mike Graham, the photographer, and I supported them as far as Col Major, the divide between the

Bersærker and Gully Glaciers, and then returned to Mestersvig to meet the main party.

They landed in the early hours of 7th July after what must by all accounts have been some of the most terrifying moments of the expedition. The pilot made three low runs down the Sefström, banking steeply over Alpefjord, climbing high above all the peaks, and then diving at 45 degrees down to the glacier. We others were in two minds whether to be thankful or sorry we had missed this experience.

Our march-in was an exhausting experience. Half of us had very little ski-ing experience, and 90-pound loads were no help. But worst of all was the snow. We had arrived just a little too early; the winter snow was still melting and the 24-hour sunlight gave it no chance to freeze. So even though we moved in the cool hours, our skis sank deeply in and the trail-breaker had to dig his ski out after practically every step. Small wonder that progress was painfully slow and that our time-distance estimates were wildly out. We had the added annoyance that the weather broke as we reached Col Major and we had to make the ascent in a snow-storm, six hours of grim struggle, often sinking waist-deep into soft snow. But for all that, our troubles were light compared with those of the advance party, striving desperately to keep to a time schedule and literally going to sleep in their tracks for sheer lack of rest.

Generally speaking, the weather during the first two weeks was the best we had. The sun shone practically every hour of the 24. We slept by day in the open with just a shade for the head. He who valued his beauty-sleep, however, made sure to allow for the movement of the sun, for it was impossible to sleep once the sun reached one's face. Later in the expedition we had many bad days and the sky was almost continually overcast. This was all the more annoying because we could see that the cloud-bank was a local one, confined to the Staunings. In the evening the sun often shone underneath from the north, producing some wonderful colour effects.

Once Base was established we worked more or less in three groups of four, but the composition of the groups was continually changing, so that there was little opportunity to get on each other's nerves too much. There was only one more occasion when all 12 members of the expedition were together at Base Camp. One party returned to Mestersvig by a new crossing of the North Staunings from the Vikingbrae

to the Skjoldungebrae to bring our two small boats from Mestersvig round the Staunings peninsula and up Alpefjord to Base, the pack-ice having by this time, the end of July, almost disappeared. During the next month these boats, a wooden dinghy with an outboard towing a rubber one, made three trips between Mestersvig and Base ferrying food and equipment in both directions.

The next phase of the expedition was one of scientific work and preliminary exploration. The Mestersvig party had the collecting of some geological samples on their programme. At Base, four glaciologists spent a week drilling stake-holes and taking bearings on the Sefström. They also found and took bearings on stakes left by Sugden two years before. Also at Base we were taking tape recordings of ionospheric noises for the Cavendish Laboratory. Most of the delicate equipment for this had to be carried in. Another party, led by Colin, managed to cross round from the upper Gully into the upper Sefström, crossing two new cols, climbing the Grandes Jorasses en route, and spying out the encouraging climbing possibilities in the upper Sefström, a large area of tributary glaciers enclosed by fine peaks.

Meanwhile Nick Estcourt, Tony Robinson, Dick and I were exploring the small Krabbe Glacier, which, after an impressive ice-fall, flows into Alpefjord south of the Sefström. It took three days to find a way of turning this obstacle, and we were then disappointed to find that instead of being level above the ice-fall, the glacier was heavily and deeply crevassed right to its head. We climbed our first peak here, Queens', named in accordance with our theme of Cambridge colleges. It was small, only about 6,000 feet, and later on we had difficulty in picking it out from the higher summits, but it taught us a lot about what to expect on these climbs—difficult routes, taking almost as long to descend as to ascend, step-cutting in hard ice, steep cramponing with lobster-clawing up and down, and superb views from the top. We abandoned our original plan to cross the col at the head of the Krabbe and descend into the upper Sefström because of the difficult terrain, but we did sight a worthy objective, a high three-topped peak on the north-east side of the col which we called Trinity and which we resolved to tackle from the other side. Being very narrow, the Krabbe got little sun and was a cold and depressing place, so we were glad to leave and return to Base.



After these preliminary sorties, the serious climbing programme began, with the advance of two groups of four to the upper Sefström. Our first effort was a 25-hour marathon which resulted in three peaks, Sidney, Sussex and Emmanuel, and gave us a good idea of further possibilities. We were then forced into our tents for two days by bad weather. After this delay, Rupert Roschnik, Peter Rowat, Nick and I managed to flog our way in deep fresh snow up 'Gog', and on the same day moved our camp across to the head of Trinity Glacier, a branch of the upper Sefström, below Trinity Col, the col we had seen from the Krabbe. The assault of Trinity was to take three attempts, one of the two occasions in the whole expedition when a peak attempted did not go first time.

The first attempt failed because we accepted, against our inclination, advice from Colin and Dick who paid us a visit after climbing Snaetoppen, the peak on the other side of the col opposite Trinity. They advised us against going for the col and then the south-west face of the mountain. So instead, in beautiful weather, we headed up a long couloir on the north side of Trinity Glacier onto the east ridge of the mountain. This was however plastered with enormous gendarmes and after several hours of strenuous rock-climbing, up and down, with many enforced detours, the summit seemed no nearer, and it was clear we were off course. Cursing volubly our leader and his Fell and Rock mate, we retreated. The next day we beat up to the col on our originally intended route. However, as we were going up the snow slopes above it, there was a nasty crack and a large area of snow about 6 inches deep avalanched off along the line of our tracks. Fortunately our feet and axes had dug through to the firmer snow underneath. We proceeded, suitably chastened, until we reached a gendarme necessitating a 40-foot abseil. Here we took stock of the weather which was looking very menacing, and decided to retreat again. The third day we had actually intended going down, as we only had enough food and fuel for breakfast, but surprisingly it was a perfect morning so, refusing to think about the unpleasantness of packing up camp on empty stomachs after our return, we set off up. Up to the abseil the going was fast and easy, but after that the route was a really interesting one, by no means easy, mixed rock and snow up the south-west face to the summit ridge. We felt we had really achieved something as we sat on the top in the sun and brewed hot orange. The peak was a good nine-thousander

and hot dispute still exists between respective parties as to whether or not it is higher than its neighbour Snaetoppen.

After a recuperative spell at Base and the celebration of four birthdays, Colin, Mike, Chris Donaldson-Wood and I headed up Gully Glacier to explore a tributary flowing in from the south, which we christened the Cavendish. It tumbles 4,000 feet in an enormous two-tier ice-fall down into Gully just above the second Gully ice-fall, but above, it becomes a huge level plateau and our aim was to put a high camp on this plateau to be in a good striking position for the surrounding peaks. We took one two-man tent and four days' food. The ascent, or rather the by-passing of the ice-fall took a lot of route-finding and was a good 12 hours' work, so we were very thankful when at last we saw the plateau stretching out before us. We were squashed like sardines but we slept well that night, better than on any other. This was because the days that followed were so short and easy and we did not get tired enough to sleep through the discomfort. It was a pleasant novelty getting up and down a peak in five hours, when we had been used to days of anything from nine to 25 hours. We only regretted we had not been able to bring skis up with us as we had to do a lot of plodding on the glacier plateau. It was now getting on in August and the drop in temperature was very noticeable. Boots invariably froze when we were plodding on the glacier and on one occasion we spent a whole hour thawing our feet out after we had reached some rocks.

Our last peak was a fitting conclusion to our part of the climbing programme. This was a nine-thousander, Korspids, lying at the head of the Cavendish, the highest point of the massif between the Gully and Sefström Glaciers, and took us 11 hours even from our high camp. As far as the summit tower the way was easy but very long, along the glacier, then a wearying climb to a col and up a snow ridge. But the final 200 feet were a rock-climber's delight. The summit tower looked pretty formidable, but closer inspection revealed that it was cleft by a deep chimney. Working our way up inside this, we discovered that it was capped by a huge chockstone with room for us to crawl out on top of this from behind. Perched on the small summit block, we had a magnificent panorama in all directions, east to Kong Oscar's Fjord, north to Petermannspitze, west to Alpefjord and the ice-cap, and south to a complicated jumble of peaks and glaciers.

Meanwhile other climbing groups had been active in Gully and the upper Sefström, scaling among others two further nine-thousanders, Bolverket and Cantabrigia. When we finally added up the score, we found we had a total of 28 new peaks and five new passes crossed, a result with which we felt very satisfied.

But now the time for evacuation was on us. Eight members returned to Mestersvig on foot via another new route south of Col Major, crossing the upper Lange Glacier into another one called the Schuchert, and descending this to Swiss Peak and the Skel Glacier. The remaining four, Colin, Nick, Tony and I, returned to Base and like good mules carted everything down the 1,500 feet to the fjord ready for the final boat trip. These 80 miles were not without incident. We made very slow progress due to the heavy load and head wind and waves, and just as we were rounding Kap Petersen we tore a large rent in the bottom of our rubber boat. (Our map said: "Limestone reefs—be very careful"! ) This cost us a 12-hour delay while we effected a makeshift repair with string stitches and Li-Lo-pillow patches. The actual journey took us 27 hours. However we all arrived back at Mestersvig intact and flew back to Glasgow two days later.



I just wanted to photograph Peru. Is there a better reason for a journey? It interferes with mountaineering of course—this photographic lark I mean. Well, you cannot show people pictures of mountains all the time and one mountain looks like another if you see a lot of them, so you need to turn your cameras on more interesting things like Indians, tropical rivers and the insects of the Amazon forest. I did not always think like this and once, it seems impossible but it is true, I did not even have a camera and went rock-climbing in the rain. It comes of being a veteran, I suppose.

Having picked Peru as destination, and begun learning Spanish, I cast around for a companion, a thing that is not absolutely essential, and photographically you are better off without one, but it is handy sometimes and he can always be persuaded to stand in the foreground. I thought the then President would be a good bet but he could not come, because of being President. It had to be a Fell and Rock man of course and there is this chap Harry Stenbridge, who can be talked into anything, so I said 'Come to Peru, Harry?' He said, 'Yes, certainly,' so we went.

The main excuse and objective of our journey was to travel in the mountains of the Cordillera Blanca. The very fact that we selected such an area shows a singular lack of interest in first ascents because all the peaks, more or less, have been climbed, but the mountains are the biggest of Peru, among the most sensational, and are very, very photogenic.

Before Harry Stenbridge flew out, I drifted south to La Paz, the capital of Bolivia, which at 12,000 feet is the highest capital city in the world. With La Paz as a base I saw a lot of the high Altiplano of Bolivia and photographed some of its wonders, the Cordillera Real, Lake Titicaca, llamas and Aymara Indians. Next to Katmandu, La Paz is the most exciting city I have yet seen, in which to use a camera. Along the top of the town there runs a street called the Avenida Buenos Aires which, within its length, has more colour and more photographic possibilities than any similar area I know. Dominating it, and giving it character and charm, are the Aymara Indian women, bowler-hatted ladies, sitting or walking the street, majestic in the colour of their clothes, the life throb of this essentially Indian city set in the crystal air and

dazzling sunlight of the roof of South America. It was a month before I returned to Lima to meet Harry. It was not long enough.

It did not take us long to organize our journey to the Cordillera Blanca. Just enough time to clear our baggage from customs, buy some food and fix our transport and we were away, bowling over the high sierra at 15,000 feet to Huaras, a small town on the edge of the mountains. Peru, like Bolivia, is a high land and you gain altitude quickly, so I watched Harry carefully on the way across, as he had come up so fast that I thought it must have some disastrous effect. He did not seem to notice it then, or later in the high peaks. Perhaps it is psychological after all!

Before we went to Huaras we had no fixed ideas about what we would do. We just planned to wander in the mountains for a few weeks, see as much country as we could, and maybe climb one or two peaks. Coolies are not needed in these mountains as donkeys carry all the loads, and very good rock-climbing donkeys they are too. Over some of the passes it seemed to us that they could cope with anything up to 'diff' standard, or did the altitude cause us to exaggerate? We took six of them plus a young *arriero*, Juan Rosales, to look after them, and incidentally to help to look after us. We could not be expected to cook our own meals or anything rough and alpine-climbing like that! Life here is civilized—thank God! To complete our group, and to see that we lived in a state we are used to in the Himalayas, we added one porter, Donato Solano, a first-class man who had been with Lionel Terray. It made a very happy party.

On the 28th May we went by hired car up the rough road that leads to the bottom of the first lake in the Yanganuco Valley and slept that night in a wooden house. The next morning we moved off with our donkeys walking by the two Yanganuco lakes. They were blue and green in the sunlight with lupins and flowering shrubs growing along their banks. High peaks were not very visible, as to begin with we were shut in by the narrow valley. Beyond the second lake the valley opened out at a point where a track climbs away to the east out of the valley over the Portachuelo pass. The valley runs north into the heart of high peaks and stops against a wall that comes down from Chacaraju. In this high valley we camped in a garden paradise and realized how right we had been to approach the mountains by this route. Perhaps

because all the climbers we had spoken to, who had been here, had come much later, we had believed there would be few flowers. Suddenly, in one day, we had walked into a corner of the mountains where we found more flowers than we had ever dreamed existed in any mountain area. Certainly no Himalayan valley I know can compare with the Yanganuco in this sense, for here the balance is perfect. Our tent was pitched by a clear-running stream, whilst all around were flowering shrubs and beautiful Quenial trees, through which strange birds came and went. Lupins, tall light-blue pokers, and dark blue tree lupins grew everywhere. The moist grass was starred with gentians and large stalkless daisies, so numerous that we trod them underfoot as we moved around. Then, as though these flowers and birds were not enough for this special bit of heaven, the hills swept up from the valley over green and flowering ridges, flashing colour in the sunlight, to the point where vivid colour died and a world of light-grey granite, ice, snow and blue sky began. Great and fantastic peaks I have seen many times in the Himalayas, and a Himalayan man will always make this comparison, but nowhere have I seen mountains more beautiful or with more grace of line. They are from 20,000 to 23,000 feet in height and can stand comparison with any mountains on earth.

Our camp in this corner of the Yanganuco Valley was our base for several days, during which time we were able to explore fully the surrounding country. For me they were mostly photographic days and the subjects were endless in a nature sense. I do not think that anywhere have I seen such a combination of subtle colour of bush and forest against such majestic snow peaks. The weather was perfect, as it was during the whole of our stay in the Cordillera Blanca. The weather must be always very good and stable here, as compared with other mountain ranges.

From here we climbed Pisco, reaching the summit from a camp at 17,000 feet on the moraine of the glacier which comes down from Huandoy. It was a superb camp-site by a small and very green lake. Of all the mountains I have climbed I remember most the camps where I have spent the night before going to the top. Perhaps it is because just after a big carry to get there and before the effort of the summit climb, one enjoys to the full the hours of relaxation and contemplation that such camps bring, and always they are in situations of breathtaking beauty. So it seemed to me that this corner of



Cordillera where we pitched our tent was an ideal moment during our modest expedition.

The ascent of Pisco is not difficult but it gave us the usual alpine joys. The morning start was in shadow and was cold, but the snow was hard and crisp and our crampons bit, crunched and squeaked the only sound in a soundless world, until the sun caught us up near the col. There were crevasses and we wandered amongst them. There was no hurry and the day was perfect, so we took many photographs looking north to the peaks of the Paron Valley, and beyond across the Quebrada Santa Cruz. They are well known and incredibly lovely, Artesonraju, Alpamayo, the Pyramid, Pucahirca, wonderful-sounding names for noble mountains. A ridge of first good, then deep powder snow, led up to the summit.

During the following days we crossed the chain by the pass called the Portachuelo which took us over to the east. On this side the mountains fall steeply and long narrow valleys drop away losing height quickly, and eventually lead the traveller down to the forest, the dense impenetrable forest of the Peruvian rivers that are the upper reaches of the Amazon. A two-day journey took us over the pass and down to a delightful corner at a height of about 10,000 feet.

I can never forget the evening we walked down this lower valley. Suddenly we had left behind the world of ice and granite, although we could still see the peaks, and come to a land that was green and flowering. Already even at this height one sensed the nearness of the tropical forest and the lush growth that goes with it. We made a camp in a fertile corner, by a field of ripe maize and near to a small Indian community with whom we became very friendly during our brief stay. This became a base for a few days whilst we soaked ourselves in the sunlight and the beauty of our environment.

Above us was a hill called Punto Collo which looked like a gigantic rock garden, for it was covered with flowers of all kinds. On this hill there were ruins of ancient buildings and curious stone slabs with pre-Inca designs on them in relief, geometric forms, monkeys and frogs. We turned over other rock slabs that we found hidden in the bush, which again had the same curious designs. Later we checked our finds with the curator of the museum at Huaras. He confirmed that they belong to a very old pre-Inca culture which must have existed some 2,000 years ago. Our little hill, its beauty, our archaeological discoveries and the friendliness of the nearby Indians,

completely captivated us and made us not want to leave this wonderful area, but eventually we tore ourselves away.

A long valley took us back into the mountains and we camped for a few days under the east face of Chacaraju. From here Donato Solano and I climbed a small rock and snow peak of about 18,000 feet, an un-named and not too important point on the ridge north of Chacaraju, but it gave us a wonderful day with superb views towards the peaks in the west.

For our return to the Santa valley we crossed the Punta Union pass and it seemed to us no small achievement for our donkeys. On the other side we descended into the Quebrada Santa Cruz past the mighty Taulliraju, one of the most beautiful mountains I have ever seen. Our camp sites on this side gave us similar joys to the Yanganuco but with rather less flowers, although there were lupins everywhere. We had breath-taking views up a side valley to the Alpamayo peaks and we would have loved to have gone up to these, but the time we had allowed ourselves in the Cordillera Blanca was coming to an end, and there was still much of Peru to see and photograph.

Before we finally left these peaks we travelled along the Sierra, underneath the mountains at a height of some 12,000 feet above the Santa Valley, west of the main chain. This was a very rewarding area with a lovely lake by which we camped, and more archaeological ruins. There was an ancient fortification above the steep mountain wall that drops to the Santa Valley and nearby a large series of Inca buildings on a square, that had been a granary where the Incas had stored grain to be issued to the Indians in time of famine. The soft colours of the Sierra, the ripening corn near primitive Indian homes, backed by the grey-blue wall of the Cordillera Negra across the main valley, made this country one more high spot in an exciting journey and gave me tremendous photographic possibilities.

Back at Huaras we stayed in comfort at the very attractive Hotel Los Pinos and spent a few days walking in the surrounding district, always in country green and bright with flowers, and with views of the high peaks. We went up into the Cordillera Negra by Indian truck, on a desperately bad road, and then walked across country at about 15,000 feet, to see and photograph the flower that is unique to the high places of Peru and Bolivia, called the *Puya Raimondii*. It is a plant

that is becoming rather rare, but we found some specimens. They grow to a height of up to 30 feet and are the tallest flowers in the world. They are blue-green pokers, rather like the lobelia of Ruwenzori and have a cactus-like base.

Happy with our month in the mountains we returned to Lima for a day or two of city life and to eat the big steaks you get there. Soon, however, we flew south to Cuzco, on one of the most beautiful flights in the world, sucking oxygen from a rubber tube, and flying under Salcantay, a very lovely mountain indeed. We wandered a while in the valleys below Cuzco, visiting places of Inca culture, and seeing the great Inca forts of Ollantaytambo, Pisac and Sacsahuaman. Machu Picchu, the secret city of the Incas, was a special joy. We went there for two days and stayed at the small, but very good, nearby hotel. These ruins are something of a tourist sight and every day a small number of tourists disembark from the train that runs down from Cuzco, but they do not stay long and hardly anyone was staying at the hotel whilst we were there. In the late afternoon and evening the ancient city, set between the mountains of Machu Picchu and Huayna Picchu, becomes again the lonely and supreme mountain citadel of the Inca and it was at this time of the day that Harry and I enjoyed it most. Then, with all people gone away, we walked quietly amongst the ancient and speaking stones, or sat on a prominence above and watched the sun go down, whilst the shadow of Huayna Picchu lengthened across the ruins. In such moments we felt very close to all this had once meant and sensed that the ghosts of the Incas still walked through this great city hung halfway between the forest and the high snow peaks.

Below Cuzco lies the forest, the vast impenetrable forest of the country that is the upper reaches of the great rivers of South America. We decided that we must see something of this country before we left Peru. We only had about two weeks to spare, but it was enough for an introduction to this fascinating area. We travelled in a big Ford truck on a long day down the steep and narrow road that leads to the Alto Madre de Dios river. The account of this journey would be a complete story in itself, but there is no place for it here. The men who drive these lorries are a race apart and very tough. They bring rubber and timber from the forest and do a 30-hour turn-round, without a rest or sleep and with no relief-driver. Mostly they do this three times a week. The end of the road



was at the 'out-back' station of Pilcopata, or Atalaia some miles further on, where the road stops and the river begins. From here onwards for 1,000 miles or so, rivers are the only highway through impenetrable forest of Amazon country.

We went by canoe down the Alto Madre de Dios and stayed for some time at the Dominican mission of Shintuya, which is a very small station in the forest, run by two Spanish fathers. From here, we were able to explore a wonderful piece of forest country by following and wading the streams that flow into the Alto Madre de Dios. Photographically it was a paradise and gave me wonderful opportunities to continue some experimental work and to continue a photographic essay on the forest and nature close-up. One place I shall never forget. It was just a stagnant pool in shadowy undergrowth. There I stood in water, attacked by everything that bites and crawls, and shot film for hour after hour, whilst the sun shafted down from tall trees, and all loveliest creatures of nature flew in to see me and to be photographed. It was a memorable place and I would not have changed it then for all the high peaks on earth.

Our South American journey came to an end in a crescendo of colour and Indian fiesta on the road back from the forest, high on the Sierra, at the Indian town of Paucartambo. We went back by lorry again, this time with Peruvian friends from Pilcopata, four of us travelling all night in the cab of the lorry. It was the most awful and uncomfortable journey I have ever made. At Paucartambo it was the Fiesta of Virgin del Carmen, a wild, primitive and essentially Indian affair that lasts about four days.

Our stay here was a period of wild, intensive excitement, during which I photographed Indians all day long in one of the most thrilling situations that anyone could wish. For a short time we felt that we lived close to these people, jostling with them in the crowd by day on the plaza of the town, and dancing and drinking with them in a café by night. When eventually we tore ourselves away and returned to Cuzco, we felt that we were taking with us something basic and magnificent that we had learned and experienced in this ancient land of Peru.

## THE HIGH ATLAS 1962

*Peter Ledeboer*

Visions of brilliant burning sun, colourful Arabs with their centuries-old traditions, snow-capped mountains rising high from the desert—such were the exotic thoughts that the High Atlas conjured up in the great winter freeze-up. Not that the range is unknown, but it has been comparatively little visited from this country, and an air of mystery prevails.

The High Atlas lies at the southern end of the great Atlas chain which runs from Algeria practically to the Atlantic. As the name suggests, its peaks are the highest of the chain, mostly around 4,000 metres, and form a compact group about 40 miles south of Marrakesh—the gateway to the south, since the mountains are the last barrier to the Sahara.

Something of the reputation of a fortress still clings to the High Atlas. It is the land of the Berbers, the fiercest of the Arab races in Morocco, who were never really subdued by the French, and accounts varied of their attitude to foreigners. Information varied too on suitable routes. It was good to know that Bentley Beetham had pioneered the S.W. ridge of Toubkal, the highest peak, in 1935 and that Wilfred Noyce had done most of the peaks solo (perforce of circumstances) in 1961. But it was also clear that three strategically placed C.A.F. huts would enable most peaks to be reached within the day.

Donald Clarke, Wendell Jones and I set off by air on a wet Friday evening at the end of April, and early next morning landed at the ancient walled city of Marrakesh. The approach by air is quite enchanting with a curtain of snow-capped peaks looming out of the haze, and we felt something of the spell of another world.

Telephone connections take an unbelievable time, but our eventual contact with a French hotel-keeper in Asni, a village at the end of the road in the foothills, produced the happy suggestion that we should drive his car up there straight from servicing—an almost miraculous start, which scarcely gave us time to buy food in Marrakesh.

Fortified by a superb meal we began negotiations for a mule, and next morning appropriately enough Mahomet appeared, an impressive figure wrapped in a tent-like cloak. Lacking experience in the technique of oriental bargaining, we had some difficulty in arriving at the known 'rate',

owing to inexplicable reasons for a 'pourboire' that seemed to arise at every juncture. However, the mule was eventually laden, and practically obscured with our gear, we set forth for Imlil.

This village at about 1,500 metres is the junction of the tracks that lead to the three huts. It is pleasantly situated at the end of a fertile valley, green with walnut trees and terraced hillsides, and boasts of a hut almost up to Fell and Rock standards with calor gas and a shower. Obviously a strategic depot that enabled us to offload some food.

Our plan was to spend the first few days based on the Neltner Hut in the central area, since it has the advantage of being in a horseshoe formed by many of the 4,000 metre peaks. About five hours from Imlil and at about 3,000 metres, it was well above the snowline at this time, so that the last stage of the approach involved man-handling our packs with the mule left tethered by two of its legs. Here too we parted with Mahomet, since in his unlaced boots that were three sizes too big, even in the socks borrowed from Donald, we felt that he was not likely to prove an asset.

After discussion with a French party at the hut, we decided on the ordinary route to Toubkal (4,165 m) as our first venture. Being quite straightforward, 1,000 metres of ascent should be a good training climb. The approach is up steepening snow slopes on the south side of the horseshoe, and one should be able to say that the climb was completed without difficulty. But ludicrous as it may seem, the last 500 metres proved of Himalayan effort, forcing ourselves to advance 20 paces before pausing to gasp for breath. We were however rewarded with a spectacular view—peak upon peak receding into the shimmering haze that bordered the Sahara. Donald ate an Easter egg (it was Easter Sunday), I read a carefully preserved copy of *The Times*, and Wendell made a sitting descent on the snow which eventually removed the seat of his trousers.

Donald was sufficiently affected by the altitude to be *hors de combat* for the next three days, so Wendell and I set forth daily from the hut to tackle the main peaks of the horseshoe—Aougdal (4,040 m), Afella (4,043 m), Ras n'Ouanoukrim (4,083 m), Timesguida n'Ouanoukrim (4,089 m), and Tadat (3,875 m). The pattern was fairly similar, starting with a long plod up steep snow gullies leading almost to the ridge and ending with a succession of scrambles up loose rock



(some rock was fairly sound, but there was a tendency for holds to come away in one's hand). To this extent there was a certain lack of climax, apart from the unbelievable views. Tadat was different, in that it consists of a 30 metre needle projecting above the ridge, giving good slab and chimney climbing (V. Diff.). And then the steep descent through deep soft snow, which was our inevitable fate on returning to the hut each day.

The temperature range is such that it is freezing at night, and woe betide those who forget to bring in melted snow for water in the hut. But the African night has a silence and a brilliance of the stars that has to be experienced. By day the sun will reduce the snow to the consistency of porridge by mid-morning with a temperature rising into the nineties.

Our last expedition from the Neltner Hut was to the south of the horseshoe to visit Lake Ifni, the only lake in the High Atlas. Donald set forth with us, crampons crunching in the dawn, up to Tizi Ouanoums (Tizi = col), and then we parted down a precipitous snow gully, past vivid brown cliffs, 4,000 feet into the burning heat. Lake Ifni is about the barest and most desolate spot I have ever seen and felt like an oven. We clearly could not retrace our steps in the soft snow in this heat, so we formed the ambitious plan of traversing up the southern ridge of Toubkal. But we made slow progress with diminishing energy, and decided to return to the village below the lake for the night.

Berber villages are unused to climbers and we must have seemed like men from Mars, particularly as we could speak no Berber. The tradition of Arab hospitality is however a cardinal rule, and we were soon sitting cross-legged on the floor of the headman's house.

The ritual is simple. First, an endless succession of glasses of mint tea. This is made by plunging a large block of sugar and a fistful of mint into a pagoda-shaped metal teapot. Add boiling water. The result is very sweet but surprisingly refreshing. This goes on for about three hours, for it takes this time to prepare a couscous. For those who are unfamiliar with this dish, it consists of an enormous tray of rice with a faint sprinkling of chicken (no sheep's eyes) and bursting with pepper. Normally eaten with the fingers, we were offered the courtesy of teaspoons. Our night-long raging thirsts were not exactly quelled by the appearance for breakfast of the same huge dish covered with Arab bread and

12 hard boiled eggs. And so we returned, partly by mule, to a somewhat anxious and incredulous Donald.

A week had elapsed. We went down to Imlil, collected some food, and returned up a parallel valley to the Lepiney Hut through junipers. The Lepiney Hut, named after a French pioneer of the High Atlas, is small, almost miniature, and delightfully situated facing the great plateau of Tazarahr.

This is a geological freak. It is an almost horizontal waste at a height of 4,000 metres, two miles in length and one mile across. Bounded by cliffs, the most interesting approach from the Lepiney Hut is up the 300 metre high ice couloir, which faces north. This is permanent ice and very steep, involving the passage of two ice-falls. We found these insuperable without ice pitons.

Returning once more to the junction point at Imlil, we struck east to the third hut at Tachedirt. This is really in the village, and with its barred windows was distinctly reminiscent of a prison. We met here a week-end party of French skiers from Casablanca, who very astutely made the maximum use of mules for their ascents. This could be a fine rock-climbing area with its two great ridges of Anrhemer and Aksoual, but time did not permit more than a reconnaissance.

And so back through lush green valleys of walnut trees, this time in a bus with more goats than humans, to the fleshpots of Marrakesh. This ancient city is still a babel of all races with its imams calling to prayer from the minarets, its snake charmers, its souks (or markets) which are like vast mediaeval workshops, and its brilliant gardens of bougainvilleas—and above all its vista of snow-capped peaks.

The High Atlas has a spell of its own. We had done about ten 4,000 metre peaks, but mainly in snow. Winter had been more severe than usual this year, as in England, and snow was later than normal. But in autumn the alternative would have been steep scree slopes. And then this curious effect of altitude to which we were not normally prone in the Alps and which robbed us of the energy even to climb Bentley Beetham's S.W. ridge of Toubkal. Yet, to the climber with a taste for exploration the High Atlas still has its secrets to offer—we never met another party on the peaks.

## A JOURNEY THROUGH THE PINDUS MOUNTAINS IN 1963

*Sir John Hunt*

Readers of this *Journal* may remember an account of an expedition to Scoresby Land in the summer of 1960 which, despite the fact that its membership included a large contingent of working boys with no experience of travel outside Britain, carried out an ambitious programme of glaciology, ornithology and exploration. The younger element had accompanied a smaller group of mountaineers and scientists in a supporting capacity rather than the reverse, and the expedition had been an interesting, successful and novel experiment in the composition of a party for such a purpose. The specialized nature of some of our fieldwork, however, notably in respect of the more difficult climbs on uncharted peaks, had placed inevitable restrictions on the experience as an exercise in social relations. Next time, I felt, it would be necessary to look elsewhere than in the Arctic for even more rewarding results.

I had spent the latter part of the war and the first year of the peace in Greece and it occurred to me that the wild backbone of this mountainous land might provide the ideal objective for a combined expedition of older and younger people from very different backgrounds. The less specialized nature of the problems set by the terrain would enable us to share the experience equally from the start; there would be an added advantage of meeting and journeying with some of the inhabitants—in 1960 we had been based beyond the most northerly Eskimo settlement. There would be an element of pioneering adventure about such a journey in that, to the best of my knowledge, an integral journey through the whole length of the range had not been made; my friends in the Hellenic Alpine Club confirmed this belief. The relatively little scientific information available about the Pindus and the opportunity to meet and see something of the way of life of the mountain people gave an added spice to a venture which seemed to be well worth pursuing.

In planning the journey with the Greek alpinists we recognised that May would be the best month for this journey; but the boys in my party, all of them at work, could not be spared at that time owing to examinations and other demands of industry. I therefore decided to attempt the traverse in



April in spite of the known vagaries of the weather at that time and the certainty of a heavy accumulation of snow, especially after the severe winter of 1962/63. Allowing a week either side of the walk itself for travel by road via Italy and back through Yugoslavia, there would be a bare three weeks available; even by my calculations from the 1 : 100,000 maps this seemed to be a bare minimum of time to traverse upwards of 200 miles of mountain landscape so early in the year. In the event, I was too optimistic.

The group which assembled in London on 22nd March to board the convoy of four minibuses and one lorry consisted of 12 seniors\* and 22 juniors.

Ten members of the Hellenic Alpine Club were to walk with us during various stages of the journey; four boys from the Anavryta School near Athens and three officers from the Special Services unit of the Greek Army, accompanied by their batmen completed the party and gave the enterprise an international character.

While most of the party spent the afternoon on a conducted tour of the antiquities, John Sugden, who with his son David, had travelled to Athens a week ahead of the main expedition as an advanced party, discussed with me a number of modifications of the plan; later, we were joined by leading members of the Greek Alpine Club who offered valuable advice. The journey was intended to fall into three stages, marked by our arrival at large villages where we could be joined by our vehicles and receive replenishment of our rations. The transport would travel in parallel with our advance along the eastern flanks of the mountains; we had marked a number of tracks by which a jeep-type vehicle could afford us emergency support, in addition to the main lateral roads across the range.

The first stage was from Amfissa, or points along roads leading from this attractive little town in the centre of the great olive groves on the north shores of the Gulf of Corinth, to Karpension, some 60-70 miles further north and beyond the high mountain block of Ghiona and Vardhousia. From this latter town, situated in the centre of the high peaks of the range in picturesque scenery known as "Little Switzerland", we were to start on the most arduous section of the route to Metsovon, about 100 miles to the north. The last lap of

\*Sir John Hunt (leader), Major H. R. A. Streater (deputy leader), J. Disley, Lady Hunt, J. Jackson, G. Lowe, Mrs. Lowe, J. Sugden, H.M.I., D. Sugden, R. Alcock, A. Bough, D. Giles.

50-60 miles would take us to Kastoria within 20 miles of the Albanian frontier, where it behoved us to call a halt. At each of these staging places I planned to spend a day resting and making contact with the local people; the total time, according to the paper plans of John Sugden and myself, would be 19 days. Three routes were plotted, using tracks except over some of the highest ground, which would make it possible to travel on a wide front and thus extend our contacts and observations. Each of the three groups was composed of a mixture of nationalities, ages and backgrounds.

This was the plan but, like most plans relating to travel in rough and little known country, it had to be modified in the light of the conditions we encountered. Our first leg by various ways around the Vardhousia-Ghiona massif proved to be a most gruelling affair; with three days out of the four in shocking weather we waded through snow, some of it thigh-deep, in mist or rain.

*31st March (Daphnos).* Rain—and lots of it—made a dismal start from Delphi this morning, with the earth churned to red mud to make things worse. But at least this hastened our departure, for we were away by 8 a.m., making for our starting points about one hour's drive away, beyond Amfissa; my group was to de-bus near the village of Lidhorokion. The skies cleared as we drove along the road taken yesterday, and the first part of the walk, through a valley and up a long spur rising to 5,000 feet, was done in hot sunshine. Thence we traversed through fir forest towards this village, with the great mountain mass of Vavoudhia (2,500 metres) snow-covered and magnificent, towering above us. The walk was an easy one, along a broad track, which is to be made into a motor road (or so they say).

We arrived here at 4.15 p.m., descending a slope onto a cluster of two-storied, square stone houses, with stone roofs and wooden verandahs, which made an attractive foreground to the snow ridge above. We had intended to go as far as the village of Dhikorion, across a valley and about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours distant, but this seemed too far for the first day.

Children have brought firwood and handfuls of eggs. The local schoolmaster has invited us to his house tonight; he has only 14 pupils, for the village is almost deserted, with 50 inhabitants, mostly shepherds. Many go down to the plains of Attica for the winter with their flocks. We learned that there were as many as 1,000 people living here at one time.

*2nd April (Stavia).* We were away by 7.15 a.m. Another snowy day, three inches have fallen again during the night, and down to 4,000 feet. After descending to the junction of two rivers—an interesting contrast, one carrying clear water from the limestone of Vardhousia, the other coloured yellow with the bauxite soil we have passed through—we crossed by a rudimentary bridge made of branches and climbed steeply up to Gramaini Oxia, where people turned out to greet us with the traditional glasses of Ouzo. The party had split into two groups, but we joined forces for the next stretch of the route, which was quite an adventurous one. It led us up a valley into the mists towards a pass at 6,000 feet. The snow here was at least 5 feet deep and we plunged in, trying to navigate in poor visibility and in complicated, forested terrain. Evidently we made a bad shot at the pass and found ourselves heading downhill to the S.E.; correcting, we eventually arrived on the summit of a peak (1,800 metres) among fine beech trees, with the pass far below us.

Plunging down to the north, knee-deep in snow, we came out onto terraced fields and, in clearing weather, reached Stavia at 6 p.m. We have stayed in the village, which is poor and sparsely populated, rather than continue to the planned destination of Gardhiki; the groups are spending the night in the school house and an empty building. The local school mistress, a young and attractive lass, lives in the former in great loneliness; as with the medical profession, teachers have to serve for a spell in village schools in these remote parts. She made a quick friendship with the Captain of the Special Services of the Greek Army, who is in our party.

*4th April (Karpensesi).* Rainy and cold today. Altogether depressing in the rather uncomfortable quarters, on a concrete floor.

I spent the morning discussing plans over the maps and, at the end of a meeting with the seniors, decided as follows:

(a) Three groups will make the journey to Metsovon, arriving between 13th and 15th April, using a replenishing point at Rakhovon en route. This timing will reduce the speed and urgency of completing the trip.

(b) A fourth group, led by John Jackson and John Disley, will rest for a few days and then go by transport to Metsovon, and thence make the third stage of the journey to Kastoria. They will probably start on 9th or 10th April, and taking nine days, will also be replenished en route.



Thus we will be sticking to the general intention, but accept the fact that no group or individual can cover the whole distance from the Gulf of Corinth to the Albanian frontier.

I hope that the three groups which undertake the second stage will be able to climb Smoluki, 2,616 metres, from Metsovon; it is the second highest mountain in Greece.

*5th April (near Gavrina).* We left Karpenesi this morning at 9 o'clock and motored about 40 miles to the village of Vaniani on the track to Agrafa, and about two miles off the main lateral road to Agrinion; the scenery was magnificent.

Our group has the most easterly route through the mountains and we plan to take ten days.

Today's walk took us up a magnificent gorge towards the village of Gavrina; but on reaching a tiny hamlet about three-quarter hours from the village we were told that our intended route for tomorrow, leading for several miles along a high ridge, is snowed up and not safe in conditions of cloud and mist. So we have stopped here, ready to cross the ridge to Marathos and on to Agrafa, later rejoining our route further north. It is disappointing, but probably wise.

*7th April (Agrafa).* Our journey across the mountain to Marathos proved to be more of an adventure than we had anticipated. The main reason for this was that we lost the track which leads over the ridge, soon after it disappeared under the deep winter snow. The ground, although covered by forest, was steeper than any encountered so far and the track was probably cut into the mountain side; under the snow it would probably have been impracticable. Anyway, we found ourselves committed to a ridge which flanks a deep gorge on the left, at the head of which we could see telegraph poles crossing the col through which we should pass. Higher and higher we plodded until eventually we arrived on the summit of Ouranos (1,942 metres) (it means 'heaven' but in a biting wind it did not feel like it!) nor was there any obvious way off the peak on the west, suitable for an unskilled and insufficiently equipped party. I led off along a summit ridge to the south and, after half a mile, was able to descend awkward, snow-covered slopes to easier ground; we were then able to move north along the flanks of the mountain to gain the col at 11 a.m.

From the col we at last struck a good track, and dropped down to Marathos, a hill-top hamlet of great character,

standing at the junction of three rivers and dominated by higher mountain sides on every hand. The church was built in the eighth century and contains fine frescoes which had been badly desecrated by the partisans during the last war.

At Agrafa we found both the other groups installed already. Despite this we enjoyed the best accommodation, being lodged in the dispensary above the cafe-neon.

The country we have traversed today has been stupendous: deep gorges, very precipitous hill sides, craggy and fir-covered. The rivers run clear as crystal through the limestone and many springs gush out beside the path. We passed through a tiny herdsmen's summer village named Paramerita at about 4,500 feet; it consists of wooden slatted huts; earlier in the day we had seen several of these, half buried in the snow.

*7th April (Karitza).* For the first time since we started this journey, it was a fine, cloudless morning and we had superb views as we climbed steeply up and round a spur N.E. of Agrafa, with fine peaks to the west of us and sharply cut gorges all around. The path descended to the Agrafiotis gorge and we followed this for several miles until the track branched off to the right, over a fascinating stone bridge, up a side valley towards the village of Vrangiana, in four hours. This journey was full of interest, despite the heat; for there are a few houses in the gorge, and brightly coloured blankets were hanging out on the fences to dry. We also passed some men driving a train of mules.

At Vrangiana we stopped for 1½ hours food and rest, while George's group passed through. Then there was a steep pull up to a col at 6,000 feet, with an eight-thousander immediately above it. The col was the site of a chapel; it was again cold and windy. As we started down through trees on the west side, in deep snow, what was our amazement to meet an ancient dame dressed in black with shawl, carrying an apparently heavy load, climbing up on the other side! The Greek women are certainly tough, as we have been able to confirm on many occasions during the trip.

Across a gorge a long level traverse of snowy mountain sides eventually led us to the grazing alp named Elatos, from which we were able to descend towards the village of Karitza, our resting place for the night; during this part of the journey we were in the company of four more women, on their way

to fetch food supplies from Bezoula, two days distant on the edge of the plains; the track is not yet fit for mules!

The final pull up of 800 feet to the village was a sore trial and most of the party arrived pretty tired at 5.30 p.m. We found accommodation in a new house, not yet completed, just in time before heavy rain set in for the night.

*11th April (Stefani).* This has been a really grand day. As usual, we got away at 7.30 a.m. making our way steeply uphill to the north and reached the snow line after an hour. The route, now submerged under deep snow, continued upwards, to a wide range named Paliosprag, the highest point of which is about 6,200 feet; a huge panorama of snow-covered highlands was spread all around us, the summits rounded and indefinite but infinitely wild. At the highest point we saw a large flock of choughs and a buzzard. There was also a small running bird which could have been a dotterel.

We started descending wild snow fields to the north, until we reached a deep gorge which should lead us to Krانيا; at this point our guide left us to return to Pirra and we had an adventurous journey through the gorge, in the total absence of a track. As we finally reached the path near the village we were surprised to note the footprints of Tony Streather's party ahead of us, which seemed to indicate that they had deviated from their intended line, which should have continued to the right of us.

At long last, as dusk was falling at 5.45 p.m. we reached a junction of rivers just short of Stefani and here we have stopped, pitching our shelters for once, on the track itself. It was now quite dark, but we were able to build a huge fire from masses of timber nearby.

*12th April (in the Raltas Gorge).* This has been a fabulous day. Starting from our river camp site at the usual time, we crossed the river by a single log and waited for Nicko who had gone up to the village of Stafanos to enquire about mines which we believed to have been left in these parts by the Partisans. He returned with reassuring news, having found there only a single family, in what must be one of the most remote villages in the whole Pindus range.

We hit on a track actually marked on our maps; it led us up over grassy slopes carpeted with flowers: primroses, cowslips, oxslips, blue scyllas, mauve and yellow crocuses and yellow daisies.



We reached a minor top and could then see the main line of our ridge over the two peaks of Kioli. To reach it we had a long detour along a wide, sweeping shoulder of ridge, tree-covered and in deep snow, very soft going.

Almost at once we came upon bear tracks! Later, more again and then, to our intense excitement, a long line of fresh trail, probably from last evening.

The wind was very strong and cold as we passed over the high ground of the Kiolis, blowing at force 7 from the west; we were glad to drop down at last to the north, over endless snow slopes, reaching a big stream where we stopped to make a fire and have lunch. Originally we had meant to keep to the high ground all the way to Metsovon, but the going in soft wet snow, lying down to 4,000 feet, had been heavy and tiring; our feet were soaking. As we rested, a pair of golden eagles circled overhead above the pine covered ridges, clearly visible against the deep blue of the sky.

After an hour we set off downwards, and the journey became exciting as we forced our way into and along the narrow gorge of the Raltas which flows towards the large village of Marakasi. There was some delay as we searched for timber to span the turbulent waters of the river, brown and swollen with melting snow. There was no track, and we made numerous excursions up and along the precipitous hillside to avoid vertical cliffs above the river.

Eventually, at 5.45 p.m. we came down to a grassy clearing in the pine forest; an idyllic spot for a camp beside the river. David and Nicko went ahead to reconnoitre a way downwards for tomorrow, for this has been a matter of some uncertainty all today; it was a great relief to have their favourable report on return.

The pines here are real giants, with enormously wide trunks and towering into the night sky as I lie in my sleeping bag beneath them, peering at the stars. Just before we went to bed we saw a satellite crossing the sky, past the Plough, moving eastwards.

*13th April (Metsovon).* As on the previous days, we were moving through deep snow for several hours today. We found the other groups had reached Metsovon ahead of us, when we eventually arrived, hot and exhausted, after a climb up the steep cobbled streets at 3.30 p.m. We were all lodged at the big school where we watched a procession following the body of the Bishop, who had died just before he was due

to take the leading part in the Easter services and processions; many of the women were wearing the gorgeous local costumes which are traditionally worn at Easter time.

*15th April (Valla Kaida).* I have divided the party into three groups: (i) a walking party, which is continuing the Traverse by a high level route as far as the village of Ziarkas, three days march from Metsovon; (ii) A village study group, under John Sugden, which will survey a mountain village; (iii) A Work Project group, which has reinforced the Transport party and will offer to give practical help in some form to the villagers. All of us are to be in Kastoria by Thursday, 18th April, so that we may start homewards one day earlier than originally planned (20th April). I have sent a message to John Jackson's northern Party in this sense; it seems they got away from Metsovon four or five days ago.

Tony Streather and I, with four Greek alpinists, four members of the Greek Army and nine of our boys, from Group I have just finished a superb day's walk northwards, all of it over 5,000 feet, leading up to a vast plateau at 7,500 feet. Nearly all day we have been wading in deep snow. We had a wonderful view from this desolate high ground before descending into a remote, forest-covered valley, the Valla Kaida, in the late afternoon. There was great excitement when I decided to break through an incipient cornice on the ridge to start the descent and; to add to the thrill this provided for the boys, we immediately came upon fresh tracks of a very big bear. The animal had evidently slipped while traversing across a steep slope, slid for several yards and collided with a pine tree! We could imagine his state of mind as he picked himself up and continued his journey.

As usual, we had soaked feet all day in the wet snow, but we reached dry ground at about 6.45 p.m. just as it was getting dark; we have found a lovely camp site on pine needles beneath huge trees beside a track and our clothes are drying out by a blazing fire.

It is a clear, starry night and the river, which we had to wade late in the day (there were three river crossings in all) makes a friendly noise.

*17th April (Ziarkas).* This was our last full day on this epic journey and it has been, in its way, as good as any of the others.

We set off unusually late this morning (8.40 a.m.) and continued along the hillside, moving north, so as to avoid

descending to the village and crossing the river. This manoeuvre involved us in a long detour up the river until we could eventually ford its turbulent waters by linking arms in the manner familiar to some of us from Greenland; at one point we thought it would be necessary to try to build a bridge. Later, we struck up the flanks of the limestone range—very like the Kyrenia hills—separating us from the village of Ziarkas, where we planned to stop for the night. This proved to be a long, steep climb which I found quite a grind. We noticed that even in the narrow side valleys of the range the peasants were busy hand-digging and sowing little plots, the women prominent at their men's side.

We went quickly down on the north side and entered the village at 5.30 p.m. and stopped in the tiny village shop to restore ourselves with a glass of wine, cheese and bread and olives.

We had a pleasant evening in the inn, eating a local form of porridge, eggs, cheese and a sour red wine.

*20th April (homeward bound).* Homeward bound on a really exquisite day, rolling eastwards along the dusty roads towards Salonika, through Macedonian villages rich in blossom and surrounded by the growing grain; spring is well established here.

Shortly before reaching the northern capital where I had spent an eventful year after the last war, we swung north over the wide plains of the Struma river, to the Yugoslav frontier.



## A BOYHOOD MEMORY

*R. L. Heelis*

The days we remember, are not the easy sunny ones, but the days when all the elements are against us, the wind, the mist, and the rain. The rain more than anything else makes vivid that memory of a day some fifty years ago.

An arrangement had been made that Horace should join us at Thorneythwaite during the second week of our annual holiday on the farm. We all looked forward to his arrival, not only because he had rashly volunteered to conduct my father and myself up the North Climb on Pillar Rock, but also because he was always the life and soul of any expedition on the fells. He was brimful of fun and humorous anecdotes, his eyes twinkling behind his pince-nez which were secured against the elements by a slender gold chain and hook behind the ear; he was the ideal companion.

September is not of the best months for weather in the district and we had not had a day without rain since our arrival. However my father had us out every day on the fells, so that the Jopson's kitchen was draped with our wet garments each evening. The day Horace arrived was no exception and the next day saw us trying to get some rock practice in the shelter of the Dove Holes up Coombe Ghyll.

Tramping back that evening in our usual sodden state, my father suggested we collect some dry clothes and continue from Thorneythwaite over the Styte to Wasdale. If we were lucky we could stay the night there, don our dry clothes in the morning and set off for Pillar Rock. I had no option being only a teenage son, and Horace as usual, was game for anything, so the expedition was on.

We reached Wasdale as darkness was falling and secured a room in the hotel annexe. I remember there was a double bed and a very rickety camp bed in the only room available. Lots were cast to decide who should have the camp bed and I think Horace wangled this in deference to the elder member who resented preferential treatment. However certain strange noises in the night were later attributed to Horace being deposited on the floor when the brick supporting the broken leg of the camp bed gave way.

We all hoped that it would be clear in the morning, but when we looked out, there was the rain drifting up towards

Black Sail in misty columns for all the world like ghostly giants advancing to the attack.

There were a number of climbing notables staying at Wasdale, but each took one look at the dismal scene and retired to some more billiards fives which was popular in the old billiards room in those days.

My father was not to be balked of his chance to do the North Climb on the Pillar, but it seemed that I was too puny to assist in the lowering of the leader into Savage Gully and a third adult would have to be co-opted. Luck was with us in the shape of a hardy Northumbrian who admitted he had never done any climbing. However he sportingly volunteered to accompany us. A pair of climbing boots were borrowed, as he had none, and these being on the tight side for him, were carried slung through his rucksack straps. So we set off up the valley, three men and a boy.

I cannot think that many would have chosen this sort of a day for their first introduction to the Pillar Rock. Certainly Horace had been up the North Climb before but had not led on that occasion. However, he said he could find it, which was some consolation. Still, for all that I felt a little doubtful of the outcome as I sat eating my sodden sandwiches at the top of Black Sail.

Looking back on it now, I am sure that my father was supremely happy and sure that we should accomplish our task. Most of the year he dedicated himself to ministering to the sick in the dingy surroundings of an industrial practice and looked forward to getting away from it all once a year.

We were lucky to hit off the High Level track as visibility was limited to a few yards in any direction and we had feelings of relief when Robinson's cairn loomed out of the mist. Here our Northumbrian friend prised off his wet boots and struggled into the borrowed climbing boots. Depositing the discarded footgear under a stone at the foot of the cairn, we started off again to find the foot of Pillar Rock. Doctor and leader arguing hard that it was this way not that way, we trekked backwards and forwards beneath the Rock looking for the small cairn said to indicate the start of the North Climb. However they both finally agreed on the same pile of stones, so we roped up. I was second behind Horace, then my father who was responsible for the safety of our volunteer, who thus became last on the rope.

I have had no experience of modern nylon ropes but the old alpine rope with its familiar three red strands became more like a steel hawser when wet, and with very cold hands as well, was a monstrous thing to handle. The first three pitches I remember only as miniature waterfalls, and not so miniature either. I found myself craning my neck upwards looking for the next hold, only to get the full force of the waterfall in my face. Leaning back enabled me to see but resulted in the water pouring down the open neck of my shirt, finding its way out by the seat of my breeches. Never have I been so wet, not a dry stitch of clothing. I was glad to escape from the last of these pitches. Moving over to the right where the rope led, I could not see the leader, being confronted with what looked like a long groove going diagonally upwards from left to right. Here at last was the famous Stomach Traverse I had read about. I remember finding this much easier than I imagined for although my right leg dangled over an abyss with no hold for my foot, my left leg was reassuringly jammed in the groove. So I squiggled my way up and came out to find Horace by the Split Blocks. Peering through the mist ahead, our way seemed blocked by a formidable buttress over which water cascaded, shooting out into the depths below. This was the Nose, the crux of our climb. The whole party assembled on a grass ledge below the Nose and started to unrope, so that Horace could be lowered down over the edge into Savage Gully. My father was to supervise the lowering business whilst the Northumbrian belayed him. I, as an extra precaution, belayed myself.

Some people describe themselves as being 'hard of hearing' which usually means, jolly deaf. My father came into this category. The resulting conversation went something like this. Horace—"Lower away, Doc." Doc—"What's that?" Horace—"Lower away I can't get off this hold." Doc pulls the rope in slightly. Furious cries from Horace, "Heigh, you've pulled me off". Doc—"Can't you get down?" Horace—"No, not unless you flaming well let go of that something rope." Doc (hearing at last)—"Righto, down you go". Loud and anguished cries from Horace, "You've knocked my specs off, and I'm dangling in mid-air, pull in a bit". Well, finally he landed at the bottom rather like a sack of coals, I fear. We then unroped, and threw our end down into the mist. We knew it had reached its intended destination by the yell of pain



which drifted up as the sodden stiff rope landed on our leader's head. An ominous silence ensued, whilst Horace coiled the rope. After a time we could hear the scraping of boots on rock and the occasional dislodged stone thudding down as the leader made his way up Savage Gully. I was almost startled as a familiar voice above my head said, "Heigh there, I'm throwing the rope down".

Now, we had carefully read the description of the climb, in Abraham's book, which quite cheerfully said that the leader, having arrived above the Nose, brings the rest of the party up. Unfortunately for us he omitted to mention, how. None of us three, left shivering damply below this ominous beak, could see any hold beyond the initial stance. Some discussion then ensued, talk ricocheting twixt those below and the superior person above. Finally a suggestion seemed very popular, that I, being the lightest member, should go first. They said that when I had joined Horace, I could then belay him whilst he struggled with the heavy-weights. As it was he appeared to be perched insecurely on the tip of the Nose. Thus it was that I found myself standing on a narrow flake of rock on the bulging wall below the Nose.

For the life of me I could see no further means of advancement. Stretching up as far as I could, I could find no sort of handhold. I shouted up, "Can you pull me up?" "No, I cannot," came back very definitely. So there I stood getting stiffer and more unsteady on my ledge and it seemed to me there was only one thing I could do. I shouted to Horace to hold my rope tight then I climbed hand over hand up the rope, landing sprawling beside him, with my length of rope hanging down in a great loop. If I had not already realised what a heinous offence I had committed, it was soon made clear to me by Horace, who pointed out that I had broken all the rules of safe climbing, and might have pulled him off and caused a fatality.

There was certainly no justification for what I did, but in fairness I must mention, that the great Owen Glynn Jones in his *Rock Climbing in the English Lake District*, describes this route which he did for the first time in 1883 under the guidance of John Robinson himself whose cairn perpetuates his memory. He tells how Robinson showed him how to bring his man up the Nose by using a stirrup loop in a spare rope. The method is then described and can be read by anyone lucky enough to come across this climbing classic.

Considerably mortified, I slunk away up the crags behind him, and finding an enormous belay, secured the rope between myself and Horace.

How the other two got up I could not see but I know Horace had prodigious strength and did a lot of heaving.

After this the ascent to the Low Man and on up to the High Man was easy work but by no means an anticlimax for me. I will never forget the excitement inspired by being actually on the top of the Pillar Rock and being shown the tin box in which were the visiting cards, left by some of the early pioneers. I looked down into the Pisgah gap, and was glad that this time the rope above me would be firmly held. Soon we were all off the Rock and picking our way down to Robinson's cairn. By this time it was getting late, and after picking up our friend's boots, we made all speed back to Wasdale. We had told them at Thorneythwaite that we would be back that night, and so we ate a late high tea in our wet clothes and said goodbye to our staunch Northumbrian ally. He said he had enjoyed himself and was now looking forward to a hot bath in the hotel. How we envied him. The hotel keeper said we were mad to attempt to cross the Styne in the dark and mist, but as we knew they would be anxious at Thorneythwaite, we accepted his offer of a collapsible candle lamp, and set off. We very soon lost the track and decided our only certain way of getting to the top of the pass was to follow the stream all the way. The going was rough but we steadily made headway. My father led the way and in single file I followed with Horace bringing up the rear. We were assured of the latter's presence by the sound of his songs, which ranged from, "Number one, number one, I've done a climb so I'll sing you a song" to the more lugubrious, "Don't send my boy to prison it's the first crime wat 'e done, and the judge 'e says in earnest, take back thy erring son".

We didn't find the collapsible lamp much use, except at collapsing, which it did at the slightest provocation. At last we reached the top and to our joy saw that the mist had cleared enabling us to discern the waters of Styne Head Tarn gleaming dully in the moonlight. We all heaved a sigh of relief. My father took the opportunity to stop and light his pipe. Horace strode on ahead, thinking it was now but a simple walk home, but a clump of heather looking like a solid rock, soon brought him down. No damage was done

fortunately, this proving our only mishap in our fourteen hours on the fells.

When we had got over the brow, by Taylor Ghyll and were able to look down into Borrowdale, we were intrigued by a sort of glow-worm, which appeared to be moving up the track below Stockley Bridge. We hurried on as fast as we dared, haunted by the suspicion that the glow-worm could be a string of lights carried by a search party. We met the stretcher party, headed by Fisher Jopson at Stockley Bridge. Their joy at finding us safe and well cut short our apologies for causing them so much trouble. We were soon laughing at the now incongruous stretcher they bore, as we set off again for Thorneythwaite. Soon we were being welcomed by my mother and sister and the hospitable Jopson family. So ended a day forever etched in my memory.



## DOVEDALE GROOVE

*Allan Austin*

In any decade there are always a few routes that stand out above their contemporaries, veritable giants of climbs. Beside them ordinary routes are as mice and even the recognized hard ones seem small, such is the impact these climbs make on a prospective leader. It behoves a sensitive chap to steer well clear of them. Unfortunately we don't always know.

It may be that no-one knows. A description may appear in the Journal. You may even be suspicious. But in the face of remarks like, 'There's nothing to it—must be straightforward,' even a cautious coward like myself can be forgiven if he doesn't guess.

Such a climb was Dovedale Groove, ignored, unsung, almost forgotten and in its time the biggest lead in all Lakeland.

I lay there, at the side of a quarry track, leaning against the wheels of Jack's Dormobile and basking in the sun. I felt ill. It had been all right last night, this talk of Dove Crag and Hiraeth. But now, lying here below, far below the great looming mass of Dove Crag, I felt quite definitely ill. The others were tucking into sausages. I had to keep up my strength, so I allowed myself to eat a few of Rosie's biscuits and a tin of Jack's peaches. 'I don't really want them,' I explained, as I drained the tin, 'It's purely for your benefit.' Their faces showed they understood and they moved over to the gear to sort it out, leaving me with the last cup of tea. Jack followed them, strolling casually over to look at rope. Suddenly I was suspicious. I struggled to my feet laboriously, but too late. Matie and Bob set off as I became vertical and Jack picked up the last rope before I could get to it.

It was a monster rucksack. There was hardly strength in me to get it on my back, let alone carry it up to the crag. I struggled over the wall nourishing evil thoughts and black designs, in time to see Jack just disappearing round the corner. Of Matie and Bob there was no sign.

Along that endless track I trod, plodding my weary and dispirited way, almost ground into the dust with the weight of the sack. And then I saw him, resting at the foot of the last steep grind. I staggered up—at last I had managed to catch one of them. 'You're not doing so well' said Jack, starting off as I arrived and once again I was last.

Another 20 minutes passed, when a less obstinate man than myself might have succumbed, before I eventually wheezed to a halt at the foot of the crag and slumped down on the nearest soft-looking boulder. They were already starting, Matie and Bob, on Dovedale Groove, and Jack was raring to go. 'Well,' he said, 'Pass it over.' 'Pass what?', I answered. 'The description of Hiraeth, of course.'

I stared at him. What could I say, when a chap has let you down like that? Similar thoughts were obviously running through Jack's head, so I beat him to it. 'You can start', I said heavily. 'It must start here and go somewhere up there.' I waved up at a particularly repulsive-looking piece of crag. 'The crux is high up so I'll do that. You just find the way.'

Off he went, and soon looked as if he would do just that. I began to feel ill again. Perhaps a little encouragement was needed? So I tossed up a few well-chosen remarks. 'That pedestal up there looks loose. I think you would be better going out there,' indicating an utterly disgusting wall. 'Don't you think you should have another runner,' I enquired, putting a little anxiety into my voice.

Matie was doing fine on his route and had runnered the first 30 feet. He was standing at the bottom having a rest and watching us coil the rope up. 'Fancy a go at this?' he enquired. 'I'll need a few more minutes rest'. Jack accepted with rather disquieting speed and pointedly gave the rope to me.

The line of runners stopped at the niche, the sight of which somewhat upset me. It had been the scene of a bitter struggle between myself and a large loose block which lived there at that time. From that struggle I had retreated in some confusion and that day had gone over the hill to climb on Scrubby. Unfortunately HE (Crew) had been there since, and had removed my old adversary. There was no retreat now. I rushed up at great speed. 'Get it over quickly,' I thought. The thing was a lot steeper than I remembered. It seemed to be overhanging quite a lot, in fact. At last, after about 60 feet I came to a small chock. A hand-jam, a very wide bridging move and out with my threader. After a few minutes during which I had lost a sling, straightened the hook out on my threader, got cramp in one hand and attempted to bridge even wider, I was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that I would have been better off somewhere else. Not that

but I had better get this thread on or I would be going rather quicker than I wanted.

There was a steady light-hearted chatter coming up from below. This soon stopped when I announced that it looked as if I was going to fall off. 'That's shown them,' I thought, before I began feeling sorry for myself again and wishing I was somewhere else. I bent the hook back into the threader with my teeth, dropped another sling and started threading operations again. At last, as my fingers were tightening up, I got the thing on and clipped in.

The position was terrific. On either side rose smooth impending walls. Above, huge bulges ended in a vicious overhanging crack and below, from a group of white faces, rose the thin white line of the rope, nailed by slings into the groove, before it came freely up the long last stretch to me.

'It's not bad', I announced. 'Just a bit awkward to fix the runner'. The effect was somewhat spoiled when Jack relaxed the rope a little and my voice rose sharply on the last word. I rested for quite a while before going on again. No rush this time! A few faltering moves followed by a bit of shuffling and bridging to get back into balance for a rest. At last the stance! Eight slings I used, tying myself on in such a complicated network of rope that even Jack would think twice before wanting to turn me out.

Jack came up like a lamb. I schooled my face not to show annoyance, indicated the overhanging crack above and gave him the rest of the slings.

Down below a fierce argument was going on. Nothing was going to get Bob onto that climb. Poor Matic—no second! I kindly offered him a place on our rope, but pride, or was it the sight of Jack nesting in slings above my head and obviously set for the day, caused him to refuse. They sat down to watch.

Jack had now reached a position of comparative comfort in a cocoon of slings above—a great mistake. There's nothing quite like a comfortable seat in slings for destroying drive and the desire for adventure. Jack was bent on destroying it.

He'd almost done it. One foot was out on one overhanging wall at about head-level, one hand in the crack and the other groping over the overhangings. There was a strangled cry. Something was holding him back. Quite definitely he should not have sat in slings. Eventually after another couple of



hours he disappeared over the top and the rope began to run again. My turn.

I was determined to do it as fast as Jack had seconded my pitch. Needless to say there was no pause for a rest in slings and after a lurch over the top and a cry of 'Take in', I was in the sunshine, and on a wholly unsuspected new cliff too. There were new walls and grooves, even ledges and eventually a terrace. I was bucked up no end. This was the stuff. And in a rash moment I suggested a new finish, straight up through those overhangs into a cluster of grooves. None of this skulking off round the corner for us. *Immer vorwärts!*

Jack was enthusiastic. He agreed. He could afford to! It was my turn to lead. Still I didn't mind, stupid fool that I was. I was still basking in this new sun and change of scenery. Soon I was poking my head round impossible corners, feebly attempting repulsive overhangs and wishing I could find a runner. Eventually I settled on a stride to end all strides. It was a monster, round a corner and across onto the lip of an overhang. I stayed there for some time until I realized that if I stayed there any longer, I might do myself some real physical harm. 'Let Jack get himself split', I thought and went back down into a huddle under an overhang for a belay. It took Jack only a few seconds to decide that if anyone was going to split, it was not going to be Jack. So there we were, both of us, sitting under this overhang, and wondering where to go, when I spied a line.

Off again, full of hope. And sure enough after a bit of effort, I found myself above the overhang in a sort of slabby groove, except that it was not really slabby, only in comparison with the overhanging walls on either side. The holds were sloping too. A few feet more and I decided it looked too gripping ahead and too desperate below. Once again I wished I was somewhere else. 'My trouble is that I am just a coward', I called to Jack as I selected a piton. 'I'm not built for bold leading', I said, hammering it home into a fat crack on the wall. Suddenly there was a shudder and a jerk and part of the wall slid down. I was frightened. 'It's a judgement', I thought, staring at the flake hanging above my head and willing it to stay there. 'What shall I do?' I wailed. 'Get out', said Jack, so off I rushed, up the previously impossible groove, a peg in my teeth and the hammer dragging along between my feet. At last the top, and a place to put the peg. I hammered it in, gently at first and then with increasing

confidence as it rang higher and higher. Time to relax now and take stock of my position. Damn! There was a jug just over the top! I thought of the peg I had just put in. I could take it out, or I could leave it for Jack. I left it, and rushed over the top.

It was a marvellous evening. Matie and Bob had gone long ago. It was peaceful and still, with the steady movement of the rope coming into my hands and beyond the great basin that is Dovedale and the beginning of Patterdale. Not a sound broke the stillness. Suddenly Jack appeared at the top and I smiled, not realizing. And then it began to dawn. 'Where is it?' I demanded. 'Where's what?' he replied. I looked at him standing there grinning. He'd done it on purpose! 'Them as puts 'em in can fetch 'em out', he said, coiling the rope and starting off over the top towards the deepening shadows. I stumbled after him, trying to catch him before he reached the sack.

He'd just finished changing when I got down. 'Definitely XS', he remarked, smoothly scooping up the rope ahead of my groping hand. 'See you in the pub.' His words floated back up the hill as I stared at the mountain of ironmongery waiting to be stowed away. 'That's if you're down in time.'

## THE LAKE DISTRICT IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

*W. E. Kendrick*

There have been through the ages some inventions that have altered the environment and the way of living of a great part of mankind. Perhaps the earliest of them was the invention of the plough; no longer was each individual dependent on the produce of his own land, he could congregate in towns and be fed from the ensuing increased agricultural production. Be that as it may, what is certain is that the invention of steam power and the following industrial revolution brought profound environmental and social changes. The large, dirty industrial towns that the revolution created, and much domestic squalor that went with them are still with us. Town planning, even less country planning had barely been thought about. We were not able, and probably not willing, to control the social and physical results of the revolution. Whether the social evils have yet been mitigated is not a question that is germane to this article, but undoubtedly the legacy of physical evils in ugly towns and spoiled countryside are everywhere for everybody to see. The damage was done long before the first Planning Act reached the statute books. We have come to another revolutionary period often described as the technological age with its concomitant the motor car. Are we to be as unprepared and as unwilling to control our technical environment as our forefathers were in the industrial revolution? Are we by default to allow more of our amenities in the towns as well as in the country, and in the Lake District in particular, to be destroyed? The Lake District escaped one industrial revolution, but will it escape the technological age? This may sound like the cry of wolf, but let us consider some of the the circumstances.

The Minister of Housing and Local Government said last year that between 1961 and 1981 the population in England and Wales was expected to grow by seven million, and by the year 2,000 it is likely to rise from 47 million to 64 million. The same Minister in May 1963 forecast that cars would double by 1970 to 12 and 13 million. (In fact the road census taken in the third quarter of 1963 showed 7,400,000 private cars, and 1,750,000 motor cycles, and that since 1962 private cars had increased by more than 800,000.) The Minister of Transport answering a Parliamentary question in 1963,



replied, "There is going to be a great clash of interests between the car and the amenities—I am terribly disturbed about what may happen in the Lake District when the M.6 motorway which was opened the other day links up with Manchester. A million people will be able to get to the Lake District speedily". He could have added that another million from Liverpool, another from the Birmingham conurbation will soon be able to come for the day, and even some of London's millions might suffer a longer but still feasible 'ordeal' of motoring to the Lake District for the week-end.

A White Paper on 'Holidays' published in July 1963 reported that twice as many take holidays now as were taken in 1937, and more go camping and caravanning. Add to this horde of people and cars the expectation that automation and the technological age will bring increased leisure and affluence to motivate it, then plainly the danger is that it could overwhelm the Lake District, where the paradox of a beautiful area is all too apparent in that the strength of its attraction can be its undoing. If people are permitted to collect in crowds the scene is trampled underfoot and desecrated. We must proceed from this obvious truth, and from another that the preservation of our heritage of natural beauty has little to do with the immediate good of the greatest number, to see whether the Lake District, and for that matter other National Parks, can survive as areas of outstanding natural beauty and quietude against the imminent invasion of people and cars.

It may not be generally known that the Lake District National Park Planning Board on whom the statutory duty is laid to 'Preserve and enhance' the natural beauty of the park has little control over the roads in the Lake District. The effective control lies with the local authorities, mainly the county councils, of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire. The first pressure of public opinion should be directed to having this control vested in the Board, and to making the Board aware of the damage that can be done to the Lake District by the ill-advised road 'improvements' of the county councils. Examples of 'improvements' can be seen now on the A591 from Kendal to Keswick. There is already a three carriage width, incidentally regarded by many as the most dangerous to motorists, from the Kendal boundary to the Jawbones at the turning for Hollins, and north of Thirlspot. Work from the Jawbones towards Staveley is already in hand, and in December 1963 the Westmorland County Council

Surveyor's report published a map showing similar proposals for the entire length of A591 to the county boundary at Dunmail Raise, not excepting the stretch beside Grasmere and Rydal. Even the beauty of these famous places is not sacrosanct to the road engineer. Additionally this map shows the project of a 24-foot road along Langdale. And if Langdale why not later in Borrowdale, when the flow of traffic on the widened A591 reaches Keswick, or further still, Newlands and Buttermere? If the valleys of the Lake District are gouged by broad roads what remains of their scenery will be ruined. The active amongst us may escape to the high fells, but we will look down on the decorticated valleys, and be pursued by the noise of the cars that will throng them. For the less agile seeker of seclusion and quiet there will be no escape.

The problem of roads in the Lake District is similar to that of traffic in the towns. In the towns it has been the subject of the Buchanan Report published in November 1963. Briefly its conclusion is that if the car is not controlled strictly our towns and cities will be choked by it. American experience is that widening roads is no solution, more traffic pours into them, and the congestion is as bad as ever it was. There is no reason to suppose that the Lake District, however much its roads are 'improved' to take the flood of traffic in the popular holiday months and on any fine week-end in the summer months—for it is mostly only at these times that there can be criticism that the roads are congested—could show the American and Buchanan opinions to be wrong. To attempt such a solution would mean the irretrievable loss of amenity, and we must ensure by public opinion directed towards the Planning Board and the County Councils that the present barbarous treatment of A591 is not continued and is not repeated elsewhere in the Lake District.

What, however, can be done to accommodate some of the greater numbers who will come for quiet and for recreation from urban living? The emphasis is on quietness, for those that seek recreation in pursuits that engender noise or crowds have no place in a National Park. They should be catered for elsewhere. Their kind of recreation practised in a National Park must inevitably detract from the enjoyment of other users of the Park. Examples that readily come to mind are speed boats, cars and motor cycles whether used for racing or for rally driving of any kind, and tents and caravans in large congregations. A crowd is incompatible with the enjoyment

of a National Park, and it is therefore suggested that whereas more car parks, tent and caravan sites should be provided to take these seekers of quietude, the sites and parks in themselves must be on a small scale, and screened from view as much as possible. Better a larger number of small hidden sites than fewer larger but obtrusive ones. When speaking of car parks let them be designed and landscaped and not merely barren areas of hard standing. As well as small car parks within the National Park, larger ones could be provided on the perimeter of the Park to encourage the motorist to leave his car and take to public transport, which should be ample, able to take luggage, and where necessary of a type suitable for narrow roads, for example the minibus. It is also plainly desirable that the remaining railway lines into the Park should be kept open. In the larger centres such as Keswick, Ambleside and Windermere it might be necessary to build cheap family accommodation. The initial cost and maintenance of these proposals will obviously be more than local resources could be expected to stand, even if the national exchequer grant of 75 per cent. was forthcoming. The whole operation would probably require a recurring subsidy, but as the aim is the national enjoyment and preservation of a national park why should the cost not be a national charge?

Even if these extra sites for cars and caravans and tents have been created and have fulfilled the conditions of small size and unobtrusiveness, it is unlikely when the figures for growth of population and of the number of cars are considered, that there will yet be space enough for all who want to come to the Lake District in the holiday periods. It will have to be accepted that there is no complete solution to this problem of numbers, particularly of cars; people will have to learn to stay away at these times unless they have anticipated their needs and made appropriate reservations of the limited space.

In the previous paragraph it was said that the gregarious and the noisy are not welcome in a National Park, however much they may favour the out-of-doors holiday. It is suggested that to divert them from the National Parks, centres for camping and caravanning could be created in other parts of the country, particularly in areas near to the large towns. The centres would need to be organised nationally, and this might properly be undertaken by the Central Council for Physical Recreation. The Forestry Commission, controllers of large areas of countryside, having enclosed much open land, should



assist by establishing camping and caravan sites within their forests.

For the less gregarious similar facilities could be provided in the moorlands and mountainous areas that are not National Parks, such as Central Wales, the Pennines and Scotland. In these areas where some would contend that their beauty is no less than that of the National Parks, care in siting and treatment would be essential. It would also be necessary to ensure access to the open country in which these facilities are placed. In these days of pressure of numbers seeking escape from urbanity, and the still greater pressure in the future which the motor car will unleash, there can be no justification for large areas of open country being breeding grounds for grouse and deer only. Sheep, and the walker and the mountaineer can exist happily on the same territory.

These pressures on the National Parks are also anticipated by the Minister of Housing and Local Government. In his speech at a conference of National Park Planning Authorities held in May 1963, he said—"We must recognize too that people, especially young people are going to resort increasingly to the open countryside in search of recreation . . . but it does not follow that by any means all of them will want to follow some of the more traditional exercises, such as walking and climbing. . . . Is not the best way again to meet this challenge to face it and to try to provide areas away from the centres of greatest peace and beauty where they could enjoy themselves in the various ways of gregarious open air recreation which are likely to appeal to them?" Unfortunately, from the tone of the rest of his speech it would seem that he visualises these areas for the gregarious should be found within the National Parks, and still more unfortunately the National Parks Commission have adopted this attitude in its report for 1963. The Commissioners write: ". . . in each Park there should be an area or areas which should be kept free from intrusive development or disturbance as the last reserve of solitude and wildness for the benefit of those who wish to enjoy the quiet of unspoilt country. The counterpart of this would be that other areas within or just outside the boundaries should be deliberately developed for the use of holiday makers." There is great danger in these suggestions. Where will the demands of the gregarious end? What value would there be in the 'last reserves' if they were surrounded by areas of development? These concepts would vitiate the

whole purpose of National Parks and should be condemned forthrightly. As was maintained earlier in this article, we cannot be concerned to satisfy the immediate demands of the greatest number. To do that would be to ruin the Lake District. We must only consider the preservation of our inheritance of natural beauty. We ought to feel bound to hand it on to our successors not diminished by our present petty selfishness, but enhanced by our positive actions. If that entails restraints on our opportunities for enjoyment of it, then we must endure them.

We must therefore quickly make the authorities, especially the Lake District Planning Board and the National Parks Commission, realize the enormity of the pressure of people and cars that will soon flood up to the boundaries of the Lake District; we must make them see that to admit the flood along widened roads to deliberately developed holiday centres within the small area of the National Park, will maim its beauty and peace irretrievably; and that the solution if indeed it is solvable on these lines—of diverting the flood into less frequented, but still open and attractive country of the British Isles, calls for action not on a local but on a national basis.

## GUIDES AND GRADES

*H. Drasdo and N. J. Soper*

In the *Climbers' Club Journal* of 1963 a short article by D. D. Yeoman put forward a novel suggestion on the subject of guidebooks. Since, with the initiation of a new series of our own guidebooks, interest in guide-writing and guide-reading is again quickening into argument, we take this opportunity to present some notes that we hope may form a basis for discussion.

Perhaps we might attend to Mr. Yeoman's idea first. He wants a new system entirely. He points out that owing to the proliferation of new routes the guidebooks must successively cover smaller and smaller areas; it becomes necessary to own more and more of them; they are for ever going out of print and are each time more difficult to revise. But, he says, the new climbing is rarely 'grade 5 or easier'. He suggests, therefore, that a horizontal division be introduced, with an overlap of two standards (4 and 5), thus creating a series of easier-climb books that would rarely need revision, and a series of harder-climb books (in fact, smaller pamphlets would do) that would be less tedious to amend.

Without rejecting the idea entirely, it occurs to us that harder climbs are usually related in the descriptions to easier natural lines, and that approach routes, cliff descriptions and diagrams would still be necessary in each guide. The two-standard overlap would mean, in any case, that half the routes in the current guide must appear in each of the new ones; yet neither would cover adequately the needs of those climbers working usually near the overlap standards, if the variables of weather, companions and form are considered. Finally, since the new easy climbs are not appearing, why can't the old men just keep their old guidebooks?—they are not yet subdividing like amoeba.

### STYLE OF DESCRIPTION

Apart from this new suggestion, the points that Mr. Yeoman makes have already been the subjects of widespread discussion. He would have a difference in style for his two types of book, the upper-level one being written in Lakeland 'pitch-by-pitch', whilst the lower, to be entrusted to a climber who finds Very Difficults very severe, might be in the more general style of Edwards' *Llivedd*. In fact it is widely agreed now that it were



better to have the collaboration of less expert climbers in the writing of guidebooks and, in addition, to have the draft descriptions submitted to others with knowledge of the routes—this is the practice with Alpine guidebooks and has been tried with a few recent British ones. But why should someone who struggles on Very Severs need a more detailed description than someone who struggles on Very Difficults? Surely, all routes should be written up on the assumption that the reader is taxing himself.

There has been a tendency since Edwards' 'spotlight' polemic against Lake District guidebooks to accede to the view that the *Lliwedd* style is the criterion of guide-writing excellence and that all guidebooks would be written in this style if only the writers could write. Someone should, someday, examine the varieties of 'dry print'. The more carefully you examine the *Lliwedd* guidebook the more clearly you see that it is simply written in the most logical style for a cliff of the size and structure of *Lliwedd*—generous when the lines are several, brief when there is little to report, and so on. Try to write a description of a shorter Lake District route in *Lliwedd* style and you find that, applied intelligently, some of the distinctive elements of the style tend to disappear; imitated carefully, trying to copy the idiosyncrasy of expression, the description will seem restless, or verbose in relation to the matter under survey. (What proportion of the new generation of rock-climbers would know what to expect of a route that promises good, clean climbing that is 'rather delicate and ephemeral'?)

On most points, however, climbers will agree. A description should include:—

1. *The exact position of the start*, relating it to obvious physical features, rather than other routes.
2. *Adequate directions for following the route*, including features that would allow it to be regained if it were possible to lose it, and describing objectives rather than simply spotlighting the route on indefinite rock.
3. *An assessment of the difficulty* (discussed below).
4. *A judgement of the quality* of the climb and a note on the nature of the climbing; some details about the character of the rock, the amount of vegetation and its degree of permanence, and the extent to which the climb

- is affected by bad weather if this is greater or less than normal.
5. The length of the route and the length of rope needed if this exceeds the pitch lengths.
  6. A mention of the belays, if they might be missed, and perhaps also important running belays.
  7. A statement, for climbs on which aid is used, of the minimum number of pegs or slings required; a recommendation, if pitons are advised for protection, as to whether they should be left in place.
  8. A mention of the easiest escape routes (junctions, ways off, abseil points) on long routes that are not easy to reverse.

#### STANDARDS

We approach this problem with our own guidebooks in mind. For a long time experts have been complaining that our gradings (especially the Very Severe category) are not exact enough. It has been said, for example, that a similar range of difficulty exists between Bowfell Buttress and Asterisk, Asterisk and Kipling Groove, and K.G. and Astra. Conversely, our Classified List is apparently too exact to be true, and is to be condemned for the spurious impression of accuracy it gives. The List is intended only as a helpful opinion, but many climbers would have it discontinued; before discussing the alternatives, however, we must make suggestions about the Very Severe category. Here there appear to be only two possibilities—to downgrade climbs or create a new standard.

#### *Downgrading*

Again there are two possibilities.

- (i) To move a number of climbs to a lower grade.

In rewriting a guidebook a certain number of climbs must usually be downgraded, since a proportion of first parties writes up new routes while still excited. But if a considerable number of climbs were moved down, the Severe category would be distended in relation to Very Difficult. It would be necessary to adjust the whole range, at present fixed in climbers' minds, so creating confusion and disparities with other guidebooks and areas. What happens then, if the series

of guidebooks is issued slowly, through a period of years, as in the past? Inevitably, the top category becomes unwieldy again, if the later guides adopt the same standards as the first, as presumably they must.

(ii) To devalue every existing climb in the Lake District by one standard, dividing the top grade and combining the two lowest grades. This is a more serious proposal than it might appear. Whilst experts often talk about what is happening to the Very Severe category, they seldom pay any attention to the depopulated realms of Easy and Moderate. Where are the misty figures who debate whether an Easy or Moderate is correct, in view of the weather? Young climbers rarely start nowadays right at the bottom. The last guidebook had two Easies and two Moderates. It would be possible to unite these as a new Easy standard, to move everything down, keeping the hardest climbs as the new Very Severe. Like the new French franc, this is the sort of counter-inflationary measure that is easily handled. But similar objections to those raised to the first possibility apply here, and there would be the chagrin of the Welsh on finding Welsh V. Diff. equated with Lakeland Diff.

### *A new standard*

This has the advantage that existing grades need not be disturbed and it makes for agreement with Wales—useful both for the large proportion of climbers who operate in both areas and those familiar with one region on their occasional visits to the other. Against it, the adjectival system draws nearer its ultimate collapse since it seems impossible to coin a term superior to Exceptionally Severe (although this need not worry our generation unduly; the E.S. category has been found unnecessary in the latest guide to Clogwyn du'r Arddu).

We are left, however we deal with the spread of difficulty, with three obvious methods of grading: adjectival, numerical and combined. To consider each in turn:—

(i) *Adjectival*. As already mentioned, the Classified List disturbs many climbers. Perhaps, for the 'tickers-off' it has a certain therapeutic value, but this might still be provided by a list of recommended climbs, in alphabetical order. Sub-grouping is an alternative to the List, e.g. Just Severe, Severe, Hard Severe; or Just Severe, Medium Severe, Hard Severe, with "Severe" unqualified for those routes felt to be difficult



to categorise exactly. Routes are usually described this way in conversation and the supporters of this system appear to be confident of their ability to place climbs almost always within these categories. If so, the system would, in practice, provide an equally fine categorisation as the List.

(ii) *Numerical*. This is said to be the rational method, but is, in fact, the adjectival system in disguise. If it is possible to grade a climb as 5a, 5b, or 5c and plain 5 is not precise enough, why cling to our unscientific base instead of using 13, 14 or 15 as the case may be? Perhaps it is time to carry out the simple tests needed to establish the narrowest categories on which general agreement may be reached.

(iii) *Combined*. This system is used in descriptions of rock climbs in the Alps and in the Irish Mountaineering Club's guidebook to Glendalough. Each pitch is given a numerical grade based on pure technical difficulty, i.e. how hard the moves would be at ground level. The climb is given an overall adjectival classification relating all relevant factors: difficulty, protection, quality of rock, position, length; even reputation. It has the virtue of making possible the description of a climb as Severe, for instance, even while one of the pitches may be graded 5b—because it is a silly move above a broad ledge perhaps. Or a poorly protected climb with long run-outs may be classed as Very Severe without grading any pitches above 4c. In other words, this method shows at a glance where the technical difficulty of a climb lies without masking the fact that other elements contribute to the overall assessment.

Applied badly, the system would confuse with a 'proliferation of numerals', particularly with yet another set for artificial pitches; well, it could appear unduly mechanistic. It works best in an area of big, serious climbs, a proportion of which are also hard: in a recent *C.C. Bulletin* it has been applied quite well to Cloggy. In the Lake District the major climbing problems are frequently those of pure technical difficulty, so perhaps we can get along nicely without it. However, a few controversial examples (principal pitches only):—

F Route	4c	VS
Kipling Groove	5a	HVS
Deer Field Buttress	5b, 4c, 5a	HVS
Astra	5c, 5a, 5a	XS
Overhanging Bastion	4b	VS

Thirlmere Eliminate	4a, 4a, 5a	VS
Rigor Mortis	4a, 5c, 4c	HVS
North Crag Eliminate	5a, 5a	XS
Triermain Eliminate	6a	XS
Dovedale Groove	5b, 5a, 5a	XS
Extol	5a, 5b	XS
Hiraeth	5a, 5b, 5c, 3, 5a	XS

At this point it might be worth reminding ourselves that our arguments are largely about words and definitions. Why do we all get so excited? It would only be necessary to present a really thorough system of symbols to show what absurd lengths might be reached in struggling for a perfect system of classification.

#### PITONS AND THE LIST OF FIRST ASCENTS

There has been bitter complaint during the last decade that too many pitons are being used. New routes are being ascended with their aid which more expert parties could have climbed free. It has been suggested that the List of First Ascents encourages those who wish to see their names in print to use aid indiscriminately in order to get into history, and that we might discourage this by discontinuing the listing of first parties. But unnecessary pegs are now appearing increasingly in established climbs, particularly those in which a legitimate peg is already used, and beyond making an appropriate comment in the route description there is little the guide-writer can do. Are we justified in trying to establish a code of rules?

#### CONCLUSIONS

The authors of these notes have few conclusions in common. They hope that those who decide on these matters will produce some convincing arguments and case-histories. Failing that, the whole problem might be handed over to *Which*.

## CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

*David Miller*

Development has been somewhat limited on the big crags, although Joe Griffin and Allan Austin in their Guide-writing duties have climbed some new lines. Jack Soper has opened up a new crag in St. John's in the Vale called Bram Crag and also added two good routes to the right of Dale Head Pillar.

Possibly the biggest route done in 1963 is the Overhanging Grooves on Scafell East Buttress by J. Allison. It takes a direct line up the crag to reach the Yellow Slab mainly by artificial climbing but then gives a good free pitch above the Yellow Slab to the top.

There is a larger number of easier routes than usual which may prove of interest to a wider selection of climbers, although there seems to be nothing outstanding amongst them.

It is becoming increasingly noticeable on routes that use pitons for belays, that the cracks are becoming shattered by insertion and removal of pitons, which could in the future, render these routes unsafe. This problem would be at least partly overcome if climbers would, contrary to present practice, leave secure belay-pitons in place.

## BORROWDALE

### WALLA CRAG

WHITE BUTTRESS 315 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 29th April,  
GIRDLE 1962. P.R., A. Campbell.

- (1) 60 feet. Scramble up the gully to the right of the crag, until a steep wall of rock is reached on the left.
- (2) 60 feet. Climb about another 15 feet of the gully until a traverse-line left is reached. Follow this until small stance is reached on Southern Rib. Piton belay.
- (3) 80 feet. Climb up to left until easy traverse left can be made, then descend about 15 feet to small oak tree under a bulge at the foot of an open groove. Top of pitch 2, White Buttress.
- (4) 35 feet. Descend pitch below, which goes slightly leftwards, until small stance is reached below the slightly overhanging wall to the left. Stance of Obsession, last pitch. Piton belay.
- (5) 80 feet. Ascend pitch of Obsession to top.

THANKS 160 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 27th May,  
1962. R. Blain, P.R. (alternate leads).

- (1) 50 feet. Starts to the left of the White Buttress below some smooth overhangs. Traverse out underneath these to reach



a small ledge on the right (awkward). Continue right to oak tree.

- (2) 110 feet. Climb straight up from oak tree for about 20 feet, then traverse back left to the edge (piton for protection).

A fault is followed upwards and around the corner to the left, until small ledge under overhanging wall is reached. Then swing back onto right of the rib.

Make straight for open groove above. Climb this, on poor finishing holds, to the top.

### CASTLE CRAG

R.I.P. 175 feet. Very Severe. First ascent March 1963.  
1st pitch R. McHaffie. 2nd pitch (added April 1963). N.J.S., P. Nunn, A. Wright. Starts 15 feet right of Libido, an obvious groove.

- (1) 100 feet. Climb the groove to a peg on left wall. Bridge up above peg until it is possible to pull out left into a narrower groove (crux). Up this past a small tree into a corner, and up this to ledge on right. Tree belays. (Junction with Libido, which takes scrambling to right.)
- (2) 75 feet. Step back down the corner and traverse left a few feet. Ascend left (awkward to start) past a sapling to ledge and blocks. Then climb diagonally right to arête and follow this to top.

EPITHET 110 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 2nd December 1963. A. N. Boydell, T. Taylor.  
On the left-hand of the three buttresses. Start as for Disillusion.

- (1) 50 feet. Ascend the 'devil's wedge' to the overhanging roof. Pull out left onto the leaning arête (piton for protection) and bear slightly left to an earth ledge and a large pinnacle. Belay.
- (2) 60 feet. Step back right onto the arête, where awkward, sloping holds lead to the obvious overlap. Step delicately right below a hanging groove and climb it with the aid of a thin crack. Continue up to a large block, then step up right into a wet groove to a heathery finish which requires care. Tree belay some 15 feet above.

VORTIGERN 120 feet. Very Severe. First ascent August 1963. J. Roper, P. Shackleton (alternate leads).  
Start on the lower left-hand buttress at an obvious slanting groove just left of the tree at the lowest point of the buttress.

- (1) 100 feet. Climb the right wall of the groove, tending right to two small pinnacles. From the upper pinnacle step left and ascend the continuation of the groove to a piton (in place). Climb the steep wall above tending right to the ledge (2 pitons). Continue up the groove past a loose block until a traverse right leads to a small stance and piton belay.
- (2) 20 feet. Traverse right to a ledge.

EPITAPH                    180 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 19th November 1963. A. N. Boydell, T. Taylor. On the right-hand buttress above a huge block is an overhanging groove. The route starts at the lowest point of the block at its junction with a stone wall, and then follows the groove.

- (1) 35 feet. Climb the pinnacle which leans against the overlapping wall. Step up awkwardly onto the wall, then semi-hand-traverse right until it is possible to ascend the overlap on side-holds to a large ash stump. Belay.
- (2) 50 feet. From the block on the right, step up left into the bottom of the groove and work up to a resting place by a doubtful block. Above, and below the overhang, are 2 pitons for direct aid. Ascend the overhang and swing up on a hidden side hold on the left into a layback position and ascend to a yew tree. Belay.
- (3) 50 feet. Bridge up left of the tree to the finish of the groove. Step right and ascend heather and loose rock to a large leaning pinnacle. Belay.
- (4) 45 feet. Ascend the short wall ahead, just left of the loose overhanging corner, then traverse left on a heather ledge and ascend at its left end to finish.

#### GREATEND CRAG

CHARON                    310 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 11th May 1963. J. J. S. Allison, G. Arkless. Start as for the grassy gully of Styx and use the buttress and grooves on its left bank.

- (1) 90 feet. Climb the gully, occasionally using the wall on the left. Tree root belay.
- (2) 60 feet. Go up to the old oak on the left. Ascend a crack to another oak. Belay on left.
- (3) 60 feet. There are three grooves above. Ascend to the overhang in the central one. Move left and climb the left-hand groove to a ledge and flake belay.
- (4) 100 feet. Climb the wall on the left to reach the pinnacle. Ascend the steep wall above (peg for protection) to a slab which is ascended to the top.

## NATIONAL TRUST CRAGS (North Crag)

CAT GHYLL 160 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 25th May  
 GROOVES 1963. J. J. S. Allison, D. Moy. Climbs the  
 groove between the overhangs in the centre  
 of the North crag.

- (1) 60 feet. Ascend the slab and earthy gully splitting the lower tier of the big ledges.
- (2) 60 feet. From the belay to the left and below the groove climb up to the overhang and pull over it at the line of least resistance (steep, loose, strenuous). Traverse right into the groove proper. Pull over an overlap (peg) and bridge the short crack. Continue on better holds to the sloping ledge and peg belay.
- (3) 40 feet. Climb the slabs and short walls on the right to the top.

## BUTTERMERE

## HIGH CRAG BUTTRESS

GIRDLE TRAVERSE 300 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 28th May  
 1963. L. Kendall, R. McHaffie (alternate leads),  
 A. Liddell. Takes the easiest line from left to right and is well  
 sustained.

- (1) 75 feet. Easy climbing up pitches 1, 2, and 3, of Resurrection route.
- (2) 50 feet. The corner crack of Resurrection.
- (3) 80 feet. Descend a little to a traverse-line and follow this to a long crack (Samson, peg runner 10 feet up). Continue the traverse now slightly descending and on sloping holds to the edge of the buttress. Ascend direct for a few moves to a mossy resting place on the right. A long hand-traverse and a short ascent now lead to the recess above pitch 3 of High Crag Buttress.
- (4) 50 feet. Up the right-hand rib to a line thread below a bulge. Step right to a piton and after standing on this make a move to a resting place (crux of High Crag Buttress). Traverse awkwardly under the prominent roof to enter the long groove of Delilah just below the crux. Ascend a few feet on reasonable holds to a poor stance and small but good belay.
- (5) 45 feet. Continue up the original finish to Delilah. A bulging arête on good holds.

## BLEABERRY COMBE

The following climbs lie on the flat, isolated buttress at the left-hand limit of Chapel Crag, lying on the opposite side of the ridge to Grey Crag.



**NATO** 225 feet. Difficult. First ascent 29th April 1962.  
D.N.G., E.I. (alternate leads). Starts at the toe  
of the crag's left bounding spur.

- (1) 45 feet. The slabby right face of the spur. Bear right then left. Fine belays on grassy ledge.
- (2) 65 feet. Keep up the broad easy ridge ahead. Fine belay above an undercut niche on the right.
- (3) 35 feet. Continue for 15 feet on the same line then traverse left across a wall to a grassy crack. Follow this up and left to the large shelf with a block belay.
- (4) 40 feet. A chockstone chimney on the left to an immense block overlooking the gully.
- (5) 40 feet. Steeper rock above the block. Bear slightly right up the fault to finish left.

**INVAR** 250 feet. Severe. First ascent 10th June 1962.  
D.N.G., E.I. (alternate leads). Starts 10 yards  
right of Nato.

- (1) 50 feet. The slabby right face of the spur is climbed direct from left to right finishing up a crack. Scramble up to belay on left.
- (2) 50 feet. A water worn groove then move right and climb steep rib ahead.
- (3) 70 feet. The great nose ahead is climbed first by a scoop on the right and then by a short wall. A layback crack leads to crest of the nose. Continue up crest to block belay.
- (4) 35 feet. Move right up slabs to block belay.

**COSTATE WALL** 170 feet. Severe. First ascent 20th June 1962.  
D.N.G., E.I. (alternate leads). Starts 50 yards  
right of Invar and left of a thin scree chute.

- (1) 60 feet. The spur is climbed up its right edge to a ledge and belay to a short rib to the left.
- (2) 50 feet. An awkward move up into a corner, then mount the rib on the left and traverse left to the next rib which is climbed to a small grass platform. Belay on left.
- (3) 45 feet. Slabs above the belay, then scrambling to top.

## CONISTON

### GREAT HOW CRAGS

These are the broken-looking crags to the north west of Levers Water. The original route starts from the lowest part of the crag, and follows an interesting sharp arête, giving good climbing.

**ORIGINAL ROUTE** 225 feet. Very Difficult. First ascent 24th September 1961. D. Copley, W. L. Barnes, I.R.C.

- (1) 50 feet. From the cairn climb the broken wall to a large block terrace. Belay at a window.
- (2) 20 feet. Up the wall to a big grass and bilberry platform. Belays.
- (3) 40 feet. From behind the big block at the back of the platform, climb the slab to the crack; up this to the blocks above. Belays.
- (4) 50 feet. Cross the ledge, climb over the big flake and descend onto the block bridge.
- (5) 40 feet. From the block bridge climb up slightly left, then up to a grass ledge and belay.
- (6) 25 feet. Up the wall and into the scoop to finish. Good thread belay about 15 feet back in crack in the ground.

A further interesting route has been climbed up the centre of the slabs about 50 yards left of the Original Route. It is about 150 feet and severe.

## DOVEDALE

**DOVEDALE GROOVE** 70 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 2nd June (DIRECT FINISH) 1963. J.A.A., N.J.S. (alternate leads). Starts at top of second pitch, takes left-hand of three grooves in a direct line with lower two pitches.

- (3) 25 feet above is a ledge below overhangs. Go round to the left and up to the ledge. Peg-belay.
- (4) 45 feet. Above a short slab is a gap in the overhangs. Climb through this and step left onto slabby rock. Continue up the groove (peg-runner) not without interest, to the top.

**ENTITY** 320 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 6th June 1963. E. Metcalf, N.J.S. Start as for Inaccessible Gully.

- (1) 40 feet. Climb vegetated rock leftwards to a grass ledge. Poor belays—better to carry on as next pitch is well protected.
- (2) 35 feet. Gain a rock ledge at its left end (crux), move right and climb a steep groove on good holds direct to a rowan tree. Belay on it.
- (3) 35 feet. Climb the gangway on right and then a shallow groove left to a sheltered ledge and good belays in fine position.
- (4) 65 feet. Traverse right slightly downwards until it is possible to swing round the arête into Inaccessible Gully. Climb a shallow groove to the left of the gully bed, then traverse horizontally left to regain the arête. Up a short slab and

move right to a narrow ledge and awkward thread belay for line. (Wire thread useful.)

- (5) 65 feet. Mount a large flake on the right and pull into a short chimney. Climb a slab on the left and follow a grass rake until a step right leads to ledge and chockstone belay.
- (6) 80 feet. Up grassy trench on left and easy continuation chimney or the more interesting groove on the right.  
115 feet scrambling to the top.

Dovedale Groove and Hiraeth have had further ascents.

## DUNNERDALE

### WALLOWBARROW CRAG

MARILYN 130 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 10th August 1963. J. D. Johnson, H. Slater (alternate leads). Starts at an obvious corner above the birch trees right of Red Gully.

- (1) 30 feet. Climb the corner to a large belay.
- (2) 35 feet. Climb the belay. Turn the overhang above by a crack on its right and continue to a ledge. Walk right for 10 feet to a belay.
- (3) 65 feet. (Sustained.) Above the belay a crack (which continues the length of the pitch) is followed to a resting place below a prominent overhang. This last is surmounted direct until a line runner higher on the left can be used for direct aid. Continue with difficulty straight up and about 10 feet from the top escape by means of a delicate traverse to the left. Terrace and belay.  
An easy diagonal staircase then leads to the top of the crag.

PLURABELLE 135 feet. Severe. First ascent 13th July 1963. J. D. Johnson, H. Slater (alternate leads).

- (1) 60 feet. As for Bryanstone.
- (2) 35 feet. Step up to the overhang and pull over on the left. Climb the scoop for 10 feet then step left into a groove with loose flakes. Continue traversing to a small stance on the nose. The better of two belays is for line only.
- (3) 40 feet. Follow an obvious line tending right for 10 feet to a large flake runner. Step right and climb straight up to terrace and belay. Easy rock leads to the top.

BENEDICTION 140 feet. Severe. First ascent March 1959. A. J. Simpkin, A.H.G. On the extreme left of the left-hand crag is a large flake.

- (1) Climb up the right-hand side of the flake to a stance on top.
- (2) Traverse right for 30 feet, then up over an overhang to the top.



**MALEDICTION** 150 feet. Severe. First ascent, March 1959. A. J. Simpkin, A.H.G. Starts from the lowest point of the left-hand crag.

- (1) Straightforward climbing on big holds from the lowest part of the buttress to an awkward stance.
- (2) Up and left to flakes and a large brown rib to the right of a dead tree. To reach the rib traverse across a bulge.
- (3) Finish up the rib.

East Buttress Chain was Classified in Climbs Old and New (*F. & R.C.C. Journal*, No. 57, 1963) as Very Severe. It is actually Severe.

### SEATHWAITE BUTTRESS

**CRACKLE AND SNAP** Described in Climbs Old and New (*F. & R.C.C. Journal*, No. 52, 1963) were probably first climbed by A. J. Simpkin with Outward Bound Mountain School, Eskdale, and called Twin Traverses; and Slab, Chimney and Step. They also recorded the following climbs.

**SHATTERED CHIMNEY** Very Difficult. To the right of the dry stone wall is a chimney with shattered walls. This can be followed over two wide ledges to the summit with a finish either up a groove to the right or over slabs to the left.

**MOSSY CORNER** 100 feet. Moderate.

- (1) Climb the corner left of the wall to a large ledge.
- (2) Climb up the left-hand side of the gentle slabs above. Finish through trees.

**MOSSY SLABS** 110 feet. Severe.

- (1) Climb the slab a few feet left of the wall. It is short of holds in the middle. Finish on a large ledge.
- (2) Move to the corner on the right. Climb up to the holly tree.

**CRACK AND CREVASSE** 110 feet. Very Difficult. First ascent unknown. Twenty feet left of the wall a buttress can be found. The climb goes up the crack, between this and some large shattered boulders.

- (1) Climb the crack mainly by jamming.
- (2) Enter the crevasse and thrutch to the top of the buttress. From here step right and across to a ledge then climb a short wall to the summit.

### ESKDALE

**ESK BUTTRESS** The Central Pillar has had a second ascent.

## GRASMERE

## LOW RAVEN CRAG

This is on Helm Crag, just above the Travellers Rest.

BANTAM 140 feet. Very severe. First ascent May 1963.  
M. Burke, G. Page. The route takes the obvious groove up the centre of the crag.

- (1) 80 feet. Traverse diagonally from the right until the chimney is reached. Climb the chimney with strenuous exit.
- (2) 20 feet. Up the groove on loose flakes.
- (3) 40 feet. Up to left. Pull into niche below overhang (peg runner) and continue to top.

## GREAT LANGDALE

## GIMMER CRAG

THE POACHER 90 feet. Very Severe. First ascent July 1963.  
J.A.A., E. Metcalfe. Starts from the belay below the big pitch on 'F' Route.

- (1) 50 feet. Climb up 'F' Route for about 15 feet into a tiny overhang corner. Step left onto the face and climb up to a crack on the left. From a tiny ledge above the crack, climb the corner (probable junction with 'IF' Route; lots of peg marks hereabouts) to a good ledge and high chock belay.
- (2) 40 feet. On the right is a short steep wall almost overlooking "F" Route. Traverse out and climb this wall to a ledge above. Easier climbing now leads up to the top.

## BOWFELL NORTH BUTTRESS

THE GIBLY 180 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 1st June 1963. J.A.A., N.J.S. (alternate leads). Follows the left bounding rib of the Sword of Damocles. Scrappy and rather artificial but including some hard climbing. Start as for Sword of Damocles below the curving crack.

- (1) 20 feet. From the small pinnacle on left pull into a short steep crack and climb it to a stance and belay behind a huge pinnacle.
- (2) 30 feet. Climb the left hand of twin 'V' grooves. This is hard and not well protected. Belays up on right as for Sword of Damocles.
- (3) 45 feet. The six cracked wall above leads pleasantly to a grass ledge on the arête to the left. Belay on a higher ledge.
- (4) 35 feet. Easily up a grassy gully to belay below a steep crack on a nose on the right.
- (5) 50 feet. Climb the crack (chock runner) then move easily rightwards to top.

## WHITE GHYLL

FORGET-ME-NOT 220 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 8th September 1963. M. R. Sinker, R. J. Isherwood. Start 15 feet right of route 1.

- (1) 80 feet. Straight up, passing a few feet right of a prominent small overhang, and up two thin flake cracks to a bulge. Move up to a small spike (crux) and pull onto the traverse line (junction with White Ghyll Traverse). Go up diagonally left to a large spike belay, almost on Route 1.
- (2) 60 feet. Up a short crack behind the belay and over a bulge to the mossy upper regions of the slabs. Belay on a grass ledge.
- (3) 80 feet. Scrambling to the top.

## LONGSLEDDALE

## BUCKBARROW CRAG

THE SHACKLE 110 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 27th June 1963. D. Hall, F. Shackleton, J. F. Wadeson, T. Roper. Start midway between the Hogs Back and the right-angled corner on the left.

- (1) 70 feet. Traverse right and up to a shallow crack in a short smooth wall topped by a small ledge. Climb up to the ledge using a piton and traverse right and up to another small ledge. Step right and climb a short wall to easy rock leading back left to a recess in a groove. Piton or jammed nut belays.
- (2) 40 feet. Move down to the right and climb up the wall to join the final arête of the Hog's Back which is followed to the top.

NIMBUS 145 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 4th July 1963. J. Roper, J. F. Wadeson. Start above the chockstone in Cleft Ghyll where there are a number of grooves on the Dandle Wall. The climb starts below the second line of weakness from the right.

- (1) 65 feet. Climb up into a little niche from which a small sloping ledge is gained on the right. Traverse right to a crack and step round onto Dandle Buttress Route which is followed to a ledge and belay above Spike Minor and at the top of the initial grooves. The chimney groove may also be climbed direct to the stance.
- (2) 50 feet. Traverse right to a big spike. Descend for 10 feet and traverse right to the centre of a slab. Climb the thin crack and the scoop above to a ledge and belay on the right, or from the spike a diagonal line may be followed to the ledge.
- (3) 30 feet. Traverse left to a shallow groove which leads to the top.



## NEWLANDS

## DALE HEAD

## MITHRIL

300 feet. Very Severe. First ascent May 1963.

A. Wright, N.J.S. (alternate leads). The first pitch is the technical crux but the upper traverses give interesting climbing in very exposed position. Start about 25 yards right of Dale Head Pillar at a groove with a crack facing right. Scramble 20 feet to the foot of the crack.

- (1) 55 feet. Climb the crack until it is possible to move left into a subsidiary groove. Climb this to grass terrace and belays.
- (2) 70 feet. Up a short wall behind the belays to the foot of the left hand of two shallow corner grooves. Climb this until a swing left can be made onto the arête. Step up and traverse left to foot of a mossy crack. Climb this to grassy recess. Large belay up crack on right.
- (3) 50 feet. Climb the crack to another overhung recess. Traverse right with increasing difficulty until a pull over the vulge above leads to a niche. Peg belay.
- (4) 65 feet. Traverse the slab to the left between overhangs to gain a choked chimney. Climb this and move up to an iron spike or flakes further right.
- (5) 60 feet. Scrambling leads to the top.

## LITTLE ACRE

250 feet. Very Severe. First ascent May 1963.

N.J.S., A. Wright (shared leads). A steep and direct way up the crag. Immediately right of the start of Dale Head Pillar is a clean subsidiary buttress, the upper part of which is split by a groove. Start below this at a steep crack.

- (1) 70 feet. Climb the crack direct, pull into the groove and follow it until the arête on the left can be gained. Up this to grass ledge.
- (2) 20 feet. Gain a higher ledge with large block belay.
- (3) 80 feet. Climb the steepening groove from the left end of the ledge until a move left can be made into another groove. Ascend over a doubtful flake and exit onto slab. Above the slab another move left leads to a narrow ledge on the last pitch of Dale Head Pillar. Flake belays.
- (4) 60 feet. Easy rocks to the top.

## RED CRAG (Lower)

## CAPITALIST

120 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 19th May

## CRACK START

1963. J. J. S. Allison, L. Kendall. The climb

uses the steep crack to the left of Kremlin Groove.

- (1) 15 feet. As for Kremlin Groove.
- (2) 65 feet. Traverse left from the groove to reach few feet and pull into a niche. Adequate holds on left wall.
- (3) 40 feet. Ascend the easy grooves to the heather ledge.

## ST. JOHN'S IN THE VALE

## BRAMCRAG

About 1 mile from Threlkeld road from Castle Rock. 150-200 feet high (bigger than it looks from the road). Situated above Bramcrag Quarry. Dries quickly—useful when Castle Rock is wet. Very steep, rock doubtful in lower part. Needs more gardening.

THRALL'S WAY 140 feet. Hard Severe. First ascent 12th April 1963. N.J.S., A. Wright (varied leads). The left hand of two prominent chimney-grooves.

- (1) 80 feet. Climb groove direct to small overhang. Turn this by crack on right. Traverse left to tree. Belay.
- (2) 60 feet. Up a broken corner-crack to large nest. Pull out round bulge on right to easy ground. Scramble to belays.

PEASANT'S PASSAGE 150 feet. Very Severe (mild). First ascent 12th April 1963. A. Wright, N.J.S. (alternate leads). The right-hand groove.

- (1) 70 feet. Up the vegetated corner until it is possible to step right to stance and poor belay.
- (2) 80 feet. Return to groove, make ascending traverse of left wall to ash tree, then up the wall above to rejoin groove at the top.

SMERSH 200 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 21st April 1963. R.D.B., A. Wright, N.J.S. (shared leads). Start at the lowest point of the crag, right of the two grooves.

- (1) 60 feet. Climb the subsidiary buttress and scramble to stance below a shallow groove. Chock or piton.
- (2) 70 feet. Make an ascending traverse to gain the left bounding rib of the groove (crux), and ascend to ancient yew trees.
- (3) 70 feet. Climb the groove on left to a rake, then finish by arête on right.

MOONRAKER 150 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 21st April 1963. N.J.S., A. Wright (alternate leads), R.D.B. Starts on Thrall's Way.

- (1) 100 feet. Climb Thrall's Way for about 20 feet to runner (jammed knot). Traverse right to the arête and climb this until it is possible to move right. Then climb right edge, through some ivy and up a little groove until the ash tree on Peasant's Passage can be gained. Rock belay.
- (2) 50 feet. Climb the steep arête on the left to top of crag.

## SWINDALE

GOUTHER CRAG 300 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 25th May  
GIRDLE TRAVERSE 1962. C. Griffiths, R. K. Watson (varied lead).

Starts about 50 feet left of Sostenuto in a corner to the left of an upstanding flake.

- (1) 20 feet. Climb the wall, pull left into the groove, and up the groove to grass ledge.
- (2) 30 feet. Up right and traverse easily right to a green ledge.
- (3) 50 feet. Take the crack behind the tree to blocks and flakes, move up right on a small narrow slab, and pull right to a narrow ledge. Continue right slightly descending later and step onto a large ledge. (End of pitch 1, Sostenuto.)
- (4) 40 feet. Step down, climb the short wall to easier ground (pitch 2, Sostenuto) and continue up right to piton belay splitting pitch 1 of the Fang.
- (5) 80 feet. Step down, move right easily, step up and move to the nose. After some trying moves, pull blindly around right, step right, pull across and mantelshelf onto a 3-inch ledge. Up the wall to another narrow ledge. Wander easily right to a big ledge. (End of pitch 1, Kennel Wall.)
- (6) 30 feet. Take the wall to the right and after some delicate footwork step into Hindleg Crack. Perched flake-belay.
- (7) 50 feet. Up the overhanging crack to the top.

## THIRLMERE

## RAVEN CRAG

DELPHINUS Very Severe. First ascent June 1963. B. C.  
DIRECT FINISH Webb, R. Brown.

- (5) 80 feet. As Delphinus to start of shattered area directly above cave where a groove leads up through overhangs to ledge about 15 feet above normal traverse line. (The groove is awkward and badly protected.)
- (6) Ascend easily leftwards to top.

## WASDALE

## KERN KNOTTS

PYFO 175 feet. Very difficult. First ascent October  
1962. D.N.G., E.I. (alternate leads). Starts at the foot of small buttress 50 feet left of the Flake Climb.

- (1) 15 feet. To a fine spike belay.
- (2) 70 feet. Step right and climb awkward mantelshelves to a ledge. Traverse right until the ledge peters out at the foot of the chimney. Chock belay.
- (3) 25 feet. Chimney leads to large flake belay below the last pitch of the Flake Climb.



- (4) 65 feet. Traverse right along a ledge for 20 feet then climb directly up the stepped wall to the summit.

## SCAFELL

### SCAFELL

#### North Buttress

THE HANGING CHIMNEY 120 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 1st June 1963. J. J. S. Allison, R. J. Mansfield. The climb lies midway between Dr. Collier's climb and Petty's Rift.

- (1) 120 feet. From a pile of blocks traverse right to a thin break beneath the chimney. Climb strenuously up to the chimney (one peg in place). The chimney is difficult to enter (loose blocks). The exit holds are good and easier rock is ascended to the scree above Broad Stand.

SHAMROCK BUTTRESS 350 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 1st August 1963. L.J.G., J.W. Starts close to the same point as Rampart, traverses left onto the main rib which overhangs the base of the crag, and then follows as open chimney which runs up from the overhangs. It then carries on directly up the face in the line of the chimney which soon becomes a crack.

- (1) 80 feet. Up the open chimney and work left as soon as possible over grass ledges to a belay near the edge of the overhang. A harder but more pleasant alternative is to start up the overhanging wall a little to the left of the chimney and then traverse right along a ledge to make an entry into the open chimney.
- (2) 110 feet. Traverse left for 10 feet down the grass ledge and step onto the good rib which overhangs the foot of the crag. Climb this keeping close to the edge until a bottomless open chimney is reached. Climb this to the end of a terrace. Small belay.
- (3) 80 feet. The steep wall above is climbed up the cracks immediately above the belay, the large blocks being passed on the left. Stance in crevasse behind block belay.
- (4) 80 feet. From the top of the block climb up for a few feet and then step right onto the top of the overhanging nose. The rib soon leads to easy rock and grass ledges, which lead to a large terrace. Large block belay inset in terrace. Continue up pitch 9 of Tower Buttress and finish as for Tower Buttress.

## PISGAH BUTTRESS

MOSES TROD 470 feet. Severe. First ascent July 1963. L.J.G., J.W. Starts at right-hand side of buttress and works up and across to the top of the large block which is a prominent feature of the left-hand edge of the buttress. Starts immediately left of Bosuns Buttress.

- (1) 60 feet. Up the rib for 25 feet and then follow an easy groove which starts left to join the top of the first pitch of Pisgah Direct.
- (2) 50 feet. From the belay ascend directly past jammed blocks to meet the Ordinary Route at the crevasse.
- (3) 60 feet. Straight up for a few feet then traverse diagonally left crossing the traverse of pitch 4 Ordinary Route to reach the foot of a flake crack. Climb this to a stance and belay.
- (4) 70 feet. Climb up for a few feet then traverse left onto a rib. Climb this and then follow an obvious traverse line left to a large perched block. Descend a few feet to belay round this.
- (5) 60 feet. Move up and left from the belay around the corner overlooking Moss Ghyll and then ascend steep rock on good holds until the crack behind the large block is reached. Follow this to stance and belays at the top.
- (6) 60 feet. From the top of the block, traverse right immediately under the overhanging nose and then climb the rib above to a junction with Pisgah Buttress.
- (7) 110 feet. As for Pisgah Buttress.

VARIATION START First ascent 2nd August 1963. L.J.G., J.W.  
TO Starts up the steep crack 8 feet left of Gremlin  
GREMLIN GROOVE Groove.

- (1) 30 feet. Climb the steep wall on the left of the crack until entry can be made into the crack and the crack climbed to a stance and large belay.
- (2) 20 feet. Climb the wall on the right of the crack for a few feet, then move right onto the rib; up this for a few feet and then traverse into Gremlin Groove at the level of the first overhang. Continue as for Gremlin Groove.

ABSINTHE 145 feet. Very Severe. First ascent July 1963.  
L.J.G., J.W. Climbs the wall to the right of  
Tia Maria and Tio Pepe. It starts from the top of a rock step in  
Mickledore Chimney just to the right of the above two climbs.

- (1) 40 feet. Up the wall on good holds to a grass ledge. Belay.
- (2) 30 feet. Move along to the right-hand edge of the ledge and step onto the wall above. Climb diagonally left to a small rock stance with hook belay on the wall above.

- (3) 75 feet. Climb the steepening wall tending rightwards towards the triangular overhang above, and then finish up a crack on the immediate left of the overhang. Huge block belays.

Ichabod has had a third and fourth ascent.

Centaur, which is one of the easier of the modern routes, has had a number of ascents. It takes a direct line, crossing Great Eastern Route on its upper traverses and provides good sustained climbing throughout.

### EAST BUTTRESS

THE OVERHANG- 250 feet. Very Severe. First ascent June 1963.  
ING GROOVES Pitch 1, J. J. S. Allison, D. Moy. Pitches 2, 3,  
J. J. S. Allison, C.H.M. The climb starts at Morning Wall, crosses Great Eastern and the Yellow Slab and finishes at the same point as the Centaur.

- (1) 100 feet. Traverse right from the start of Morning Wall to reach the overhanging flake protecting the base of the first of three overhanging grooves coming down from Great Eastern. Climb over the flake to reach a natural chockstone runner. Traverse right across the overhanging wall using four pegs, a line sling and wire sling for aid to reach niche in the central groove. Natural runner. Move right onto a steep wall. Use an ace peg and pull up into a little groove on Great Eastern. Continue to the large spike belay.
- (2) 120 feet. Ascend pitch 1 of the Yellow Slab. Continue up the crack above and then traverse right into a big groove above the roof seen from pitch 4 of Great Eastern Route. Ascend the groove (awkward to start and at half height) to the large stance and pinnacle on the Centaur.
- (3) 30 feet. Climb pitch 6 of the Centaur.

### PIKES CRAG

MARES RIB 165 feet. Very Severe. First ascent July 1963.  
L.J.G., J.W. After a short subsidiary rib, the route follows the obvious rib running up to the centre of the face between two sets of overhangs. It then follows the easiest line up the face. Start at a large spike belay.

- (1) 120 feet. Up the rib straight above the belay for 20 feet, then step left onto the main rib which leads straight to a steep crack on the face. Climb this for 10 feet then move diagonally right to a good stance. Belay.
- (2) 45 feet. Straight up to the large overhanging block. Step left underneath this and climb the crack above. Easier climbing then leads to the top of the buttress.



**STEEPLECHASE** 365 feet. Severe. First ascent 3rd June 1963. D.N.G., E.I. (alternate leads). A direct route up the Horse and Man Buttress. Starts at the foot of 'D' Gully where a large cracked wall rises on the left. Begin at its left-hand side.

- (1) 35 feet. From the gully bed climb directly up the wall for 20 feet, then traverse right to a suspect block belay. Smaller, sounder belays available.
- (2) 25 feet. Continue up the wall bearing left to a grassy bay. Block belay.
- (3) 55 feet. Move right, then follow the easy ridge to block belays adjoining a steep rib.
- (4) 60 feet. The crest of the rib is climbed to a grassy terrace. Walk left 15 feet to a grassy corner, then climb the short slabs on the left ledge and belay.
- (5) 45 feet. Up the slabby rib, keeping right to its crest. Bilberry ledge and belays.
- (6) 50 feet. A vertical corner, then bear left up slabs to the edge of the chimney. Ascend a groove on the right wall then finish up a steep little face on the right. Chock belay at top of chimney.
- (7) 30 feet. Easy slabs to the door of a crack leading to a chimney. Belay to the left.
- (8) 30 feet. The steep crack leads to a small shelf. The fault ahead turns out to be more of a recessed crack than a chimney and its ascent is both awkward and strenuous. Belay in back of chimney.
- (9) 30 feet. The steep but wider continuation, leads to the Horse and Man cairn.

**ALTERNATE FINISH** (from top of pitch 6)

- (7) 30 feet. The steep wall on the left is ascended. Mount the arête and belays arrive in 10 feet.
- (8) 30 feet. The pleasant arête.
- (9) 35 feet. Blocks to Horse and Man cairn.

## WASDALE SCREES

**SHEERLINE** 135 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 9th July 1963. R. D. Brown, J. A. Hartley. The pinnacle is situated on the right-hand side of the second main scree fan which the path crosses from the head of the lake. It lies on the 1,100-foot contour. The top of the pinnacle, a sharp knife edge, can be attained by 30 feet of moderate climbing from the gap. Starts at the right-hand side of the pinnacle face, at the top of an obvious grassy gangway and follows, initially, a very steep crack to gain the obvious shallow groove running up the centre of the face.

- (1) 110 feet. Climb onto a grassy ledge and descend slightly left to the foot of the crack. To overcome the overhanging start, a sling on a jammed knot was used for aid. Continue strenuously up the crack (chock runner) till the angle increases slightly. Climb the steep wall a few feet right of the groove past a doubtful flake. Regain the groove, climb the overhang and finish up the awkward corner. Belay.
- (2) 25 feet. Scramble to summit.

## KEY TO INITIALS

J. A. Austin

R. D. Brown

I. R. Currie

A. H. Greenbank

D. N. Greenop

L. J. Griffin

E. Ivison

C. H. Mitchell

P. Ross

N. J. Soper

J. Wilkinson

## IN MEMORIAM

T. H. P. CAIN	..	..	1933 - 1964
G. L. DENSHAM	..	..	1944 - 1964
W. FENWICK	..	..	1939 - 1963
E. A. B. GREAVES	..	..	1938 - 1964
J. C. LYTH	..	..	1949 - 1963
Mrs. G. G. MACPHEE	..		1941 - 1964
Miss J. S. NEWBY	..	..	1956 - 1964
H. R. PRESTON	..	..	1936 - 1963
N. R. TEMPERLEY	..	..	1934 - 1964
O. TINDALL	..	..	1911 - 1964

### HARRY R. PRESTON 1936-1963

During the last four years the Scottish Meet has suffered some severe and unexpected losses, and one of these has been that of Harry Preston who died at a comparatively early age. Although not one of the original members of the Meet he had been a very consistent attender for many years and was very popular.

Harry never claimed any distinction as a rock climber but as a mountain wanderer he was amongst the best, and with him and his compass in the party there was no need to worry about getting down a mountain in mist or snow. As an Insurance Manager in Cockermonth, and earlier in North Lancashire, he was strategically well placed to explore the hills of Northern England and Southern Scotland and his masterly and detailed account of these little visited Scottish Hills appeared in the Journal some years ago. He had also ascended all Pennine summits over 2,000 feet, 171 in all. As he was very often alone on these wanderings, he developed a skill in topography and compass work which can be learned in no better way. He took part in Mountain Rescue work for some time.



Harry had an extensive knowledge of nature and no uncommon mountain plant, however small, ever escaped his keen eye. He was an excellent raconteur and, whilst he was quite abstemious in himself, if the bar at a Scottish hotel could be heard rocking with mirth it was more than likely that Harry was there telling some of his droll stories. On more than one occasion one of our more respected ex-Presidents has been known almost to roll on the floor in a positive agony of amusement. Harry meanwhile always looked on with mild astonishment at the devastating effect he was producing on his audience.

He was a grand fellow, always unselfish and good-tempered, and our sympathy goes out to his three young daughters. Harry's wife died suddenly not long before he did and he felt this blow severely.

GEORGE H. WEBB

#### E. A. B. GREAVES 1938 - 1964

Ernest Alexander Bryan Greaves died on 12th June, 1964, aged 47, after being in hospital nearly six months. My wife and I went to the hospital regularly, but it was obvious after the end of February that he would not get better.

I met Bryan over twenty-one years ago. I was sent to meet him at Widdop, about ten miles from his home, by my late proposer. I was second on the rope and I noticed that some climbers scraped about a lot, but Bryan went up in boots making no noise at all. We went from one climb to another right up to Very Severe. Not long after this I joined the Club and from then on we climbed all over the Lake District, the Western Highlands, Skye, Rum and Wales. Bryan also went to Austria, Switzerland, the Dolomites and Corsica. In fact he went by air to Corsica again only two years ago.

Bryan did a lot of work for the Club. He loved the huts, was frequently at maintenance meets and became the Booking Secretary when we had four huts. He performed this office until his mother died, when he had to give up the job.

He worked all his life for a large Brighthouse firm, at first

as a draughtsman but later in higher positions. He travelled a good deal abroad in the course of his work, and both then and on holiday he took many photographs of a very high standard.

As a friend Bryan was everything to me. He often came to see us, in winter with projector, screen and boxes of transparencies. His passing has left a large gap in my life and I am sure that all who knew him in the Fell and Rock will miss him as I do, very much.

ERIC BETTS

#### HELEN BRYAN (1934-1963)

By the death of Helen Bryan, the Club has lost an old and valued member. The daughter of an Indian Army officer, General Pirie, she and her sister spent many holidays in Kashmir, camping in the Himalaya, at a time when few English people visited this area. This gave her a love of mountains and wild country and without these she was never quite happy.

With her sister Evelyn Pirie she had camped and walked (she was never a rock climber) in many parts of the world, including Iceland, the Alps, the Pyrenees and in 1934 in the High Atlas with the late Bentley Beetham.

In 1932 they built a house and climbing hut at Parkgate, Coniston, which for some years was the main rendezvous of Fell and Rock members at a time when Coniston had fallen from grace as a Meets centre. Those who stayed there will have happy memories of crowded slide-shows and cheerful evenings round their sitting-room fire. They later moved to Great Langdale continuing to cater for climbers until after the war.

Helen's war service covered both wars. She was a nurse in France in the 1914-1918 war and between 1939 and 1945 first did hospital work and later joined the W.A.A.F., serving until the war ended.

In her later years though unable to walk on the high hills she retained her love of them and found recreation in landscape painting and in painting flowers with usually a mountain scene as background.

Helen Bryan was a most lovable character, full of energy and the joy of living. She was outspoken against any injustice and especially against cruelty to animals. Her advice was often sought by those in trouble, and never in vain. Her sudden death from a heart attack whilst in her garden was a shock to all who knew her and our sympathy goes out to her two daughters and her sister in their sad loss.

JOHN APPLEYARD



## THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

*Jack Carswell*

The Duddon Meet, held at the Newfield Hotel in January was very poorly attended but those present were rewarded with clear, cold weather. These ideal conditions were taken full advantage of and the Meet proved to be one of the most energetic of the year. The amount of ridge walking and number of tops is a tribute to the enthusiastic planning of the leader and the energy of the members. Tea at the hotel on the Sunday rounded off a most enjoyable Meet which deserved to be better attended.

A full attendance was recorded at the North Wales Meet in February when we were guests of the Rucksack Club, this despite snow-blocked roads and an unpromising weather forecast. There were two magnificent days of mountaineering under truly Alpine conditions. On the Saturday most of the Snowdon Horseshoe (including some of the Pinnacles) was done by most of the Meet with the aid of crampons, great quantities of rope and innumerable other items of equipment, including some most exotic Balaclavas. The day ended with the Fell and Rock contingent being handsomely entertained at the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel by the Rucksack Club. Sunday was devoted to the North Ridge of Tryfan including the North Tower, Brisley Ridge and ascents and descents of various gullies.

This year the Club returned to its traditional quarters at the Woolpack Inn, Eskdale. In superb, shirt-sleeve weather on the Saturday a party of thirteen completed the Upper Eskdale Horseshoe from the Crinkles round to Scafell while three others contented themselves with the Pike via Cam Spout and Mickledore. That evening the Woolpack's resources were stretched to the limit by a large crowd of diners.

On Sunday a few people pretended to climb on Overbeck, others walked into Upper Eskdale, while the main party of eighteen climbed Scafell by a scrambling route up Cam Spout Crag and the ridge above, descending by Fox's Tarn. A poor morning turned into a worse afternoon with icy rain and wind on Scafell and a thorough soaking for everyone.

At Easter, Meets were again held at all the huts and the indifferent weather did not deter members from spending full days on the hills. All the ridges and tops in the immediate vicinity of the huts and several further afield were done, as was the last snow gully of the season (?) on Pillar, but no swimming or rock climbing.

At Whitsun, members ranged as far afield as Birkness Combe to avoid the strong wind while Shepherds Crag and Combe Ghyll had their devotees from amongst the late risers. Later, in June the first Novices Meet to be held for several years was unusual in

providing more experts than novices. Shepherds Crag and Newlands were visited on successive days.

The Meet at Coniston in July coincided with two days of glorious weather which provided climbing opportunities rare in 1963. Full advantage was taken by the huge Meet and probably every route on the crag had a party or parties on it during the weekend and congestion was encountered even on the hardest routes.

The ever-popular August Meet in North Wales has its enthusiastic band of followers and this year it was as successful as ever. Probably the best summing-up came from a regular attender. "Please don't tell everyone how good it is."

September in Wasdale repeated the superb conditions of July in Coniston and every crag, climb and hill had its quota of the sixty or so people who attended.

Gale-force winds and driving rain greeted the hardy band who braved the fallen trees and flooded roads to attend the Ullswater Meet in November. Though some people did venture out, a thorough soaking was the only reward.

The year ended as it began in Langdale and the traditional fare and entertainment at O.D.G. was all we have come to expect. Some people also went on the hills.

North Wales Meet. A member writes: "The best Meet of all; it always is," said an ex-member of the Committee as he departed from Glan Dena. Such an heretical statement perhaps explains why the speaker is no longer 'persona grata' on the F. & R.C.C. Committee. The Meet has been a joint Meet with the Midland Association of Mountaineers at their comfortable hut, Glan Dena, for the last two years and has certainly not suffered in popularity since the two clubs have been associated over the August Bank Holiday. Geoff Barker, who has led the Meet for some years, and John Brown of the M.A.M. make a splendid team as joint leaders and in one respect at least the gathering serves as a model; it is a true joint Meet in that climbing parties invariably consist of members from both clubs.

The weather was, as usual, mixed, Monday being the best day. Saturday caught most of us half way up a climb when the rain came down in earnest and the hut's drying facilities were strained to the utmost.

The most ambitious climb undertaken was on Saturday when a party of four made the ascent of Main Wall on Cynr Las. Other parties on that day climbed Spiral Stairs and Flying Buttress on the Three Cliffs, Amphitheatre Buttress on Craig-yr-Isfa and another party visited the east face of Tryfan.

On Sunday a large party visited Cwm Silin and another party claimed to have completed all the routes on Bochlwyd Buttress. On Monday the main party undertook a 'mountaineering' expedition up Idwal Gully to the Nameless Cwm and then up Cneifion Arrete

on to the Gribin and down the Bristley Ridge of Glyder Fach. The serious climbers were to be found on Gribin Facet, Idwal Slabs and Sub-Cneifion Rib. A few lucky ones were able to stay over until Tuesday and enjoyed the best weather of the week-end.

The leader's son, Bill, was not in the party this year having received leave of absence to visit the Alps. Consequently the standard of climbing fell somewhat, but mention should be made of Joe Carruthers, a visitor introduced by the leader. He led the party on Main Wall, Cyrn Las, and the next day was to be found leading a more modest party on the Ordinary Route, Cwm Silin. An attempt on the Great Slab on the same crag failed owing to poor conditions so he finished off the day with a climb in Llanberis Pass. On the Monday a sadistic tendency appeared when Joe took three ladies up the Monolith Crack.

A most enjoyable dinner was attended by most of the party on Saturday evening at the Belle Vue Hotel, Trefriw, the arrangements for which had been made by Geoff Barker. The Meet was also notable for the presence of Cyril Machin who had been Hut Warden at Glan Dena since 1946 and whose term of office as President of the M.A.M. had terminated only in April. This was to be one of the last occasions that Cyril was to hold court at his beloved Glan Dena for this mountaineer with a national reputation passed away on the 14th September during the M.A.M.'s Anniversary Meet of the opening of their hut. Members of this club will be pleased to hear that Geoff Barker, attending as a visitor, paid tribute to Cyril Machin in some well chosen words on behalf of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club.



## THE SCOTTISH MEET, KILLIN 1963

*George H. Webb*

Arriving on a cheerless day in May, those hardy lovers of the fleshpots the seasoned members of the Scottish Meet observed, with more than normal interest, the well equipped and warm lounges of the Bridge of Lochay Hotel. These were to be a source of great comfort and encouragement in the days to come.

We have had years when it has rained as much and other years which have been colder and with more snow, but never have these been combined to such a degree as was the case at Killin and, throughout the Meet, perspiration was definitely at the minimum. The clearing of the skies in the evening was little consolation, and the classic words of Colonel Westmorland at Kintail in 1951 could well be requoted! "Why does the perishing sun shine at night instead of by day in these parts?"

On the first day the weather showed its hand and a proposed mass attack on Meall Ghaordie (3,407 feet) dwindled sadly down almost to extinction and only one optimist, followed by two faithful but slightly depressed henchmen, climbed the mountain in dreadful conditions. Two others took the consolation prize of Ben Bhreac (2,607 feet) on the other side of the valley, whilst the remainder seized a golden opportunity to get soaking wet by squelching up and down the Glen recesses.

A mountain most of us had seen from afar many times, but which none claimed ever to have climbed, was Schiehallion (3,547 feet) and on the second day there was a rush to climb it. Greatly pleased to see such a distinguished gathering gracing its flanks the mountain was good enough to greet us with a royal salute in two instalments. First there was a wet snow storm and later on, at the actual summit, an extremely painful hail storm which sent everyone cowering under quite inadequate rocks. We were then permitted to admire the view.

Partial disaster overtook our most aristocratic car on the way back due to the shortcomings of that motoring heel of Achilles, the electric petrol pump, and the car was towed in. Another car also broke down, but being in charge of our most accomplished climber-engineer, the incident was shrugged off as 'just one of those things' and it was not towed in. That evening a lady member was bitten ungratefully by a horse, showing how manifold are the perils of the hills. A theory that the horse mistook the lady's fingers for a bunch of bananas was considered to be palpably false.

The third day was damp and misty, Loch Earn, Crieff and Aberfeldy were visited by various parties and that was all.

During all these early days the snow speckled Meall nan Tarmachan ridge had looked consistently inviting and the next day produced the opportunity of climbing it. A very steep and roug

ascent from the Lawers—Tarmachan gap caused much anguish. Fulminations and imprecations at the leader's brutality at choosing such a route were only barely suppressed, as the slope of wet grass and greasy rock was very slowly overcome. Only the knowledge of the leader's usual impeccable judgement saved him from further rebellion. However, mainly in mist and wind, an excellent traverse was made of Tarmachan (3,421 feet), Meall Garbh (3,369 feet), Beinn nan Eachan (3,265 feet) and Creag na Caillich (2,990 feet) with a drop almost straight down to the hotel.

The following day soon demonstrated that climbing possibilities were nil and a collective visit was made to beautiful Glen Lyon. Incidentally, various fishing expeditions were made during the Meet, all unsuccessful, and it was therefore pleasing to meet sundry fishermen returning from the reservoir at the end of Glen Lyon with equally sad reports. The incredible Macgregor's Leap in the river Lyon was visited but whilst one or two members suggested repeating the feat on the next Killin Meet 'when there was more time' the exploit was on this occasion not attempted.

The only really fine day of the Meet was when the Lawers range was tackled and many happy feet scampered along in an orgy of Munro-bagging. All ascended Ben Lawers (3,984 feet) and Beinn Ghles (3,657 feet) whilst various odd parties climbed Meall Corranaich (3,260 feet), Meall a Choire Leith (3,033 feet), Meall Greigh (3,280 feet) and Meall Garbh (3,661 feet). Incidentally this group is almost at the centre of Scotland in relation to all points of the compass.

The day following reverted to normal pattern; it could best be described as a mean day with low cloud and a bitter wind. The Braes of Balquhiddy were visited if not much seen, and a reasonable amount of homage was paid at Rob Roy's grave, a hat being doffed by the only man wearing one, whilst the Literary Sub-Committee racked its collective brains for schoolboy memories as to the exact social value of Rob. The party leaving the spot was in a sombre mood, rendered thus almost certainly by the sight of the 1,500 feet cloud ceiling than by the sad end of Rob Roy. Further up the Glen a dutiful small group was later seen reluctantly disappearing into the mists to climb Ben Tulaichean 'and the rest', but a suspiciously early return showed that 'the rest' had not been climbed. On the way back a degenerate section called in at the Lochearnhead hostelry and after half an hour decided that the day had not been so bad after all.

On the final two days a very small and tough party, in shocking mist and wind, climbed Ben Dorain (3,524 feet), Beinn an Dothaidh (3,283 feet), Beinn Chabhair (3,053 feet) and An Caisteal (3,265 feet) and indeed the total score of mountains climbed was very creditable. For this reason, and socially, the Meet was an undoubted success but to have been able to sit down for a mountain lunch in reasonable

warmth, on even one occasion, would have been a pleasure indeed.

Members who attended (at various times): R. Cook and R. Shaw (leaders), R. C. Abbatt, C. E. and J. Arnison, G. Barker, W. Clegg, G. H. Cook, C. Egan, M. R. FitzGibbon, H. and E. Gerrard, M. Hicks, W. G. Milligan, W. G. and K. Pape, R. G. and K. Plint, P. M. Porritt, L. Pryor, E. Russell, H. P. and R. Spilsbury, W. R. Vandy, H. H. Vaughan, H. M. Warren, G. H. Webb, E. and A. Wood-Johnson.



## ANNUAL DINNER 1963

*F. H. F. Simpson*

First about the weather: all the gentle tints of the ageing year were brightened by a hazy sun. The weekend remained reasonably dry but a dense cloud layer prevailed on Sunday with a searching wind; better by far than the crude sun blaze of high summer are these days when the crags run up into a shawl of mist, the colours of the fell sides shine unhindered and one can look a squirrel straight in the eye from below and exchange winks.

Next about the people and the meet; every Annual Dinner is memorable for something, wet or dry weather, a good or bad speech, the first snow of autumn or a collision of personalities at the Annual General Meeting. 1963 will be recalled for the quantity of what may best be described as estimated draw-bar horse-power, generated and consumed by Dick Cook, President, in his various undertakings.

The routine business of the meeting was quickly disposed of and the assembly settled down to debate 'Bella Vista' or the fifth hut. During the previous two days members had swarmed over it in the guise of architects, builders, plumbers, electricians, joiners and domestic science boffins, approving this and damning that and wondering about car parking and how many would trip, laden with porridge, over the step at the kitchen door. Howard Somervell's dog was the only truly qualified specialist, searching out and recording an unsuspected number of enchanting smells. So, at the meeting, everyone knew what he was talking about. The Club had already been circulated with the alternatives and each was fully discussed, with particular emphasis on the future of the Salving House, and here the planning and highway pundits blossomed in technical eloquence. The final vote proved to be overwhelmingly in favour of a fifth hut in the Patterdale area where new climbs were many and accommodation scarce.

One missed the figure of Bentley Beetham in the front row, straining to hear it all and smiling hugely—surely he would have approved?

With improved space and accumulated experience we got to our dinner places in seven hectic minutes. The toasts to the Queen and absent friends were followed by the reading of telegrams from Dorothy Pilley and George Abraham and after the interval Sir John Hunt, chief guest, rose to propose the toast of the Club. He began by expressing gratitude, as the invitation had enabled him to avoid an address to the Women's Gas Federation, followed by the crowning of Miss Therm, 1963. He apologised to any members of that body who might be present.

He shared the Club's high regard for Dick Cook, enjoying his Presidency and happy in his retirement. For Sir John, his wife and

daughter this was something of a home-coming to a place where one might stand still and feel secure. This was something he had experienced most keenly at the outbreak of war in 1939 and he had found the past around him on his return. A change could be seen in the people, but all change was not decay. Climbing techniques had changed vastly, as had climbing attire, and every crag had its new routes and devotees and always there were those who loitered on the fringe, heavy laden with the latest equipment. As the numbers grew anxiety must be felt for the standards of safety and there was still much to be done in this respect. The change abroad was evidenced by there being only one 8,000-metre peak unclimbed. After Everest had been traversed by the Americans, Charles Wylie had sent a telegram to say the mountain was still there, a reassuring message at a time when a National Daily was reporting its impending removal, rock by rock, to the United States. For him this meeting had brought the past close to the present and for this he gave thanks and toasted us warmly.

When a President takes office most of his qualities are already assessed but the coming speech is a matter for much private speculation. In under a minute Dick Cook dispelled all doubts. His speech was friendly, informative and humorous. He felt honoured by the high office and greatly admired all those around him. As an enthusiastic gardener he said to himself, 'What a bunch!' The room was full of hardy annuals, some at their best in warm sunny corners, some needing protection from cold, some prospering on top of a wall and others easy in any position. Vigorous perennial plants were there in the shape of H. B. Lyon, J. B. Wilton and F. L. Cook. The President referred to the 50 years' membership of Eve Appleyard, the attendance of her husband, John, at every Annual Dinner and New Year Meet that ever was; and asked us to remember those who had passed on since 1962.

For anything he had achieved during his first year in office much of the credit belonged to the officers of the Club, some with many years of service, who had given loyal and unstinted support to make his duties easier and successful. When Dick sat down again we gave him an enormous cheer.

Alfred Gregory, proposer of the toast of guests and kindred clubs, whose speech had been perfected that afternoon on Castle Crag, drew on his photographic experience to give a series of instantaneous exposures of visiting personalities; in particular Sir John Hunt, professional book foreword writer, Howard Somervell who governed the Fell & Rock from Southern India, the Countess Gravina who roused her expeditions with a bugle, and Tom Weir, member of the Scottish establishment, straight from the golden age of nails and, as a special case, being the one who must reply to his toast, Dennis Davis, difficult because he thought more of climbing than of photographing others so engaged.

Dennis Davis thanked Gregory on behalf of the guests for the speech, the toast, and his willingness to interrupt a three-month long weekend to do it, it was remarkable that although coming to the autumn of life, he often spent a few weeks in England and could still display impressive fitness after a hard slog from Rosthwaite to Grange.

Sunday evening provided the entertainment we have learned to expect. Tom Weir and his colour slides of his own great mountains and the beautiful incidents among them provided an enchanting hour. Tom Weir without his pictures would have held an audience of climbers, and the two together proved a deep feeling for the hills, a rare skill and an oblique sense of humour. A whole evening would not have been too much.



## CLIMBS AND EXPEDITIONS

### ALPS

1963 was a moderate season in the Alps. Few members got more than a few days' climbing, except in the Dolomites, although there were brief periods at the ends of July and August when the bigger mountains were in condition. The following were among the climbs done.

Tre Cime di Lavaredo, Cima Ovest, North Face, Cassin Route.

J. A. Austin with E. Metcalfe.

Torre Trieste, Cassin-Ratti Route. J. A. Austin with E. Metcalfe.

Chamonix Aiguilles. A traverse from the Charmoz to the Plan.

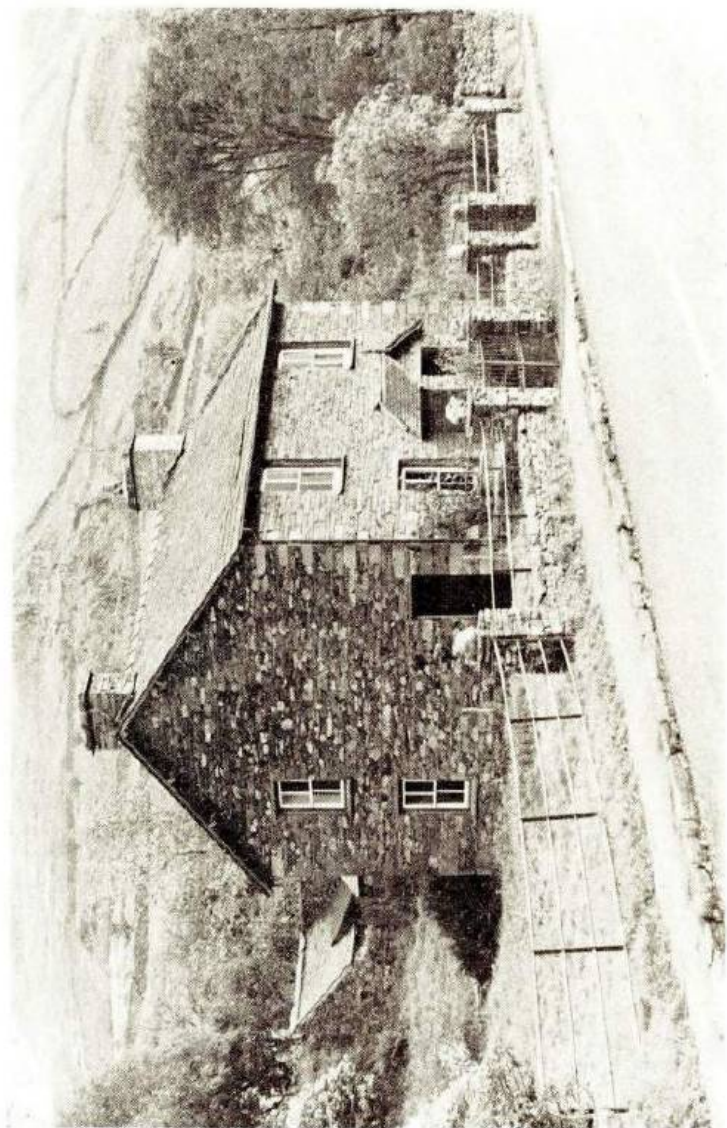
J. A. Hartley with R. D. Brown.

John Hartley sends the following notes on two routes in the Mont Blanc region, the South Face of the Pointe Gugliermina and the South-west Ridge Integrale of the Peigne. Evidently adaptability and an open mind (plus a considerable amount of push!) can still produce first-class routes even in a bad season.

'We left the Valais where a couple of routes in deep soft snow had convinced us that now was a time to take advantage of the magnificent rock aiguilles. The year before we had done some enjoyable routes on the Aiguilles and looked for the Drus, the Plan, Grépon and the rest as old friends. After a short stay on the French side of Mont Blanc we motored over to Courmayeur for an attempt on the Aiguille Blanche and the Peuterey Ridge, not by the usual route via the Brèche Nord des Dames Anglaises, but by the South Face of the Pointe Gugliermina. In this way we hoped to include an E.D. rock-climb in our ascent of Mont Blanc by a combination of routes which is rarely done.

The walk up to the Gamba hut is not unpleasant, the path is just steep enough, and unlike many of the ways up to French huts does not continue for miles in apparently superfluous zig-zags. The sacks were heavy and the weather fine and clear. We hoped fervently that it would last, for our projected route promised two days of magnificent climbing. The old guide at the hut made us welcome, a pleasant change from so many huts where one battles it out with the trippers to get food cooked and win a place at a table.

Cold damp air blew into our faces as we left the hut to climb over the Col d'Innominata. We pressed on hoping for an improvement; the cloud level was not very low, the summit of the Aiguille Blanche being just veiled from sight. The Fréney glacier and the lower rocks of the Pointe Gugliermina were crossed without incident and we roped up at the foot of the pillar which runs most of the way up the face. I started off up the first rope-length and found the climbing rather harder than expected. Perhaps it was the sack or the cold wind which quickly numbed the fingers. Rod also experienced the same degree of difficulty. I felt much better.



*Edward Wormell*

BENTLEY BETHAM COTTAGE, BROTHERS WATER

Instead of sunshine came cloud, driven by an increasingly strong wind. We reached the top of the pillar after 700 feet of pleasant delicate climbing and scrambled around some ledges to the left in an attempt to find the diagonal abseil which the route-description promised for our further amusement. We found it but on the way saw no sign of an A3 pitch which we expected to be lurking round every corner. The view across the wall on the left was absolutely appalling; the rock overhung and the landing-strip was small and at an apparently impossible angle—it looked more than  $45^{\circ}$ . Other people had managed to get across, so I eventually abseiled vertically down the bit and then saw a flake over to the left adorned by a mass of rotting slings. I paddled my way over to it and reclipped the rope through a new sling on to the flake to improve the angle for the next section, to say nothing of reducing the resulting scenic ride should I lose contact with the walk. The ledge over the left was still too far away. I descended a little further to a foothold and tied onto the end of the rope, so that Rod could lower me while I tried to pull over with both hands. A peg was hammered desperately into a crack and by leaning sideways on a sling a good hold came within reach; a mighty heave brought me onto the ledge. The rock hereabouts had literally taken quite a hammering as our predecessors also tried to gain some positive lodgement at the end of a long length of rope before gaining the haven of the ledge. The abseil rope was then rigged up as a traversing rope and Rod slid down and across with comparative ease.

After all the excitement of the rope manoeuvres, we continued up the pleasant rock of the West ridge and reached the summit nine hours after starting up the foot of the pillar. Later I read Gervasutt's account of his first ascent; apparently he nearly finished his days on the abseil—that made two of us at least!

We descended the summit tower in threatening weather, traversed the foot of the *Épée*, and gained the easy rocks of the *Aiguille Blanche*. Despite the poor conditions we were loth to lose any height in case of improvement in the weather and cleared out a comfortable bivvy-platform and settled in for the night. Three electrical storms passed our way before morning and a steady fall of snow finally destroyed our hopes of continuing. By nine in the morning the snow stopped and we floundered down to the *Brèche Nord des Dames Anglaises*, the *Frêne* glacier and the hut.

With a big rock-route in mind Rod and I decided to try a short hard rock climb to see just how much tackle we could comfortably transport up difficult pitches. The South-west Ridge *Integrale* on the *Aiguille du Peigne*, a fairly recent route put up by A. Contamine seemed to fit the bill. There was a description in the A.C.G. Bulletin and we did not know of any British parties having made the ascent. Enquiries in various quarters suggested that it would be quite difficult. The route description was translated from Contamine's brief



account and appeared rather inadequate, but the diagram was plain enough, the route running straight up the edge of a prominent ridge.

A gentleman's approach via one of the wonders of modern engineering brought us to the rocks at the foot of our prominent ridge. The first half-dozen rope-lengths were certainly en route but we became a little doubtful after selecting an overhang, according to the description 'prominent' or 'characteristic' or something like that, from about ten others, all of equal size and proportion. Then we saw the red wool. Any sign of the passing of previous climbers was now of the utmost importance, for I am sure we would have culled far more helpful information from any chapter of a James Bond than from the route-description. The hunt was up and we followed the wisps of red wool with fanatical zeal. 'Old red wool' soon had a bit of a thrutch as the sides of the chimney witnessed. Our respect for 'Old red wool' increased as he (or was it even she?) led us up a series of increasingly difficult pitches, right up the edge of the arête. I became worried lest our benefactor's jersey might have worn out before the top. It was my lead. I had just sweated over an overhang with the aid of a few pegs and was heading up a corner to some impossible-looking overhangs when I came to the peg. A large channel had been hammered into a fine crack and from it hung a short loop stretched into a V-shape showing that someone else had lost faith, just as we had done, and abseiled off. We duly retreated across part of the face on our right, and wondered if 'Old red wool' eventually did wear his jersey out abseiling all the way down to the bottom.

To our amazement we came to a feature on this face which corresponded to the description. If we were to put a spurt on we might reach the summit before dark. Apparently the route did not run up the ridge but up its left-hand face! About three pitches had been omitted from the original route, but these had been replaced by half a dozen of our red-jerseyed friend, and some of these had been really hard. We might be justified in claiming to have done the route. The rest of the climb was taken almost at a run and we were able to descend a short way from the summit and find a reasonable bivvy-site before nightfall.'

#### ANTARCTIC

Ron Lewis, now back from the Falkland Islands reports on his second year there as follows. (There is a sketch-map in his article in the 1963 *Journal*.)

'Last year conditions were not good in the Argentine Islands region, but I managed a fortnight's ski-mountaineering at the end of August. The weather was far better than in 1962 with fine cold days, a little too cold at times. One new peak, Mount Balch was climbed (3,900 feet) by an excellent ridge. In addition we explored the Bussey Glacier reaching 5,000 feet, but were prevented from gaining the Grahmland Plateau by a final 1,500-foot ice-fall.'

## EDITOR'S NOTES

This year Hilary Moffat takes over from Jack Carswell as Meets Secretary. Jack has filled this difficult office for four years with great success and should certainly be able to pass on to his successor a useful dossier on hotels and huts, not to mention members. David Cook has been appointed Assistant Secretary, to deal particularly with membership records and changes of address. At the last AGM the membership totalled 994 including 22 Graduating members.

Members seem very reluctant to give any information about their exploits at home or abroad. When the section 'Climbs and Expeditions' was started it was intended to contain reports of notable and worthwhile expeditions, of any standard, anywhere. In a club with such wide interests as ours this might well include not merely expeditions abroad but personal observations on standard routes and notes on fell-walking anywhere outside the Lake District. Guide-books and even maps are soon out of date, and the former often cluttered with routes of little more than historical value and members could render a useful service by publishing their own comments.

Devotees of the long cross-country walk should note from Sir John Hunt's article in this Journal that the Hellenic Alpine Club is always ready to help British climbers. Its Journals bear witness to considerable activity, both in summer and winter, and always contain a description (fortunately in French as well as Greek) of new routes on some most impressive limestone faces.

In October 1963 a letter was received from Mr. Torao Jinno, President of the Fellows' Rock Climbing Club of Japan, in which he stated: 'At the time of establishing our Club, we happened to know that your Club's name is F.R.C.C. so we named ours F.R.C.C. too in honour of yours, though it might have been an impudence on our part to do so.' Mr. Jinno wished 'to exchange friendship with your honourable Club, interchange members and correspondence, promote technique and knowledge about mountain-climbing'. He visited the Winter Olympic Games at Innsbruck in March 1964 and called on the President of our Club afterwards. He is a member of the Komatsuya Corporation of Japan, President of the Family Ski Club, and Instructor of the All-Japan Alpine Association. The President spent two days with him showing the Club's Huts and introducing him to many of our members.

He was also taken to the Outward Bound Mountain School, Eskdale and was most interested and very impressed at a demonstration on the Rope Training Course. Should any member be visiting Japan, we are sure that Mr. Jinno would go out of his way to be helpful and further, he would be most grateful for any information on new mountaineering techniques etc. which members might feel worthy of his consideration. The Secretary has his address (in Kobe).

Members who know Dick Wilson will be pleased to hear that he and his family are still very much alive in Australia. W. G. Milligan who visited him recently was conducted on a 6,000-mile drive round Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. Dick also sends news of John Béchervaise (see the article on 'Big Ben' in the 1962 *Journal*), who in August and September 1963 took a party of senior boys of Geelong Grammar School to camp on the summit of Mount Stirling (5,800 feet), hauling sledges and living for part of the time in an igloo. Readers of the *Journal* article may have noticed that this volcanic peak on Heard Island has recently been climbed by a private expedition, led by Major Warwick Deacock, which reached the island in a crayfish schooner skippered by H. W. Tilman.

After the decision of the AGM to devote Bentley Beetham's legacy to the acquisition of a new hut in the Ullswater area, a Sub-Committee gave considerable time and energy to plans and searching. A house has now been purchased on the main Kirkstone to Ullswater road near the village of Low Hartsop. Previously known as 'Brotherswater Cottage', it will now be called 'Bentley Beetham Cottage'. Plans are now afoot to convert it to suitable Club premises. In spite of its position on a main road Bentley would, one feels sure, have had nothing but praise for the view across Brotherswater to Dovedale and the hills beyond, while to the east one can set foot (and almost knee!) on the steep slopes of Hartsop Dodd, almost from the back door.

Bryan Greaves also remembered the Club generously in his will. It seems probable that this legacy will amount to about £900. There are no conditions attached to its use but as Bryan was Booking Secretary and a great lover of the huts, it might well be devoted to some scheme of major improvement in one of the Club properties.

Apart from the deaths of members reported earlier in these pages the death has also been announced of Mrs. Lucy B.



Abraham, widow of the late Ashley P. Abraham, the first President of the Club. She was 86. Mrs. Abraham was probably the first lady member, and certainly the first to speak at an Annual Dinner.

Another of the great pioneers of Himalayan exploration has passed with the death of T. G. Longstaff. Although never a member he was known to many as the almost legendary figure who first climbed Trisul and first saw the Nanda Devi Basin; he was one of the originators of the reconnaissance of Everest.

The Committee has elected A. B. Hargreaves to Honorary Membership. A.B.'s record of service both to the Club and to the Lake District generally is well-known to all. Few Honorary Members have done, and continue to do, so much.

It may not be generally known that the chairman of the company which built the new Forth Road Bridge was our member, J. F. Pain. As chairman of the A.C.D. Company, a consortium of three bridge-building companies, engaged also on the new Severn Bridge, he has had the ultimate responsibility for this new wonder of Scotland.

The illustrations and map for the article on the Cambridge University East Greenland Expedition, Robin Hildrew's account of which appears in these pages, were made available by the leader of the expedition, Colin Knox. It is sad to have to report that this fine mountaineer was killed in the Alps last summer.

The Committee remains as active as ever in defence of the amenities of the Lake District. In particular, in view of the unabated thirst of Manchester Corporation it has joined in concerted opposition to its more drastic schemes, such as that in the Winster Valley. There is no doubt that the late Lord Birkett's famous defence of Ullswater really stirred the national conscience, but conscience is notoriously fickle. We cannot afford to relax unless we want the Lake District to be a Reservoir District, with all the dales pierced by wide major roads.

ED. WORMELL

## LONDON SECTION 1963

Though memories may have become somewhat numbed with time, the opening weeks of 1963 will not be forgotten with the big freeze-up and conditions that were more Arctic than Alpine. One member at least had the memorable experience of ski-ing on Box Hill, and the January walk had to be diverted to the Kingston area, where the frozen Thames was viewed but not walked on. February brought deep snow in the Surrey hills, and the use of an ice axe on Ned Hamilton's walk was invaluable, if an unusual sight in this area.

We have had three climbing meets this year. The first two in North Wales were blessed with good weather conditions, making possible a very windy traverse of Cader Idris and the Arenigs and, later, an almost leisurely ascent of Amphitheatre Buttress. The third, in Derbyshire, was a joint meet with the Pinnacle Club, at which the ladies undoubtedly put up some very good climbs. The accent has thus been on quality, if not on numbers.

Our other expeditions have shown considerable variety. We visited Greenwich again this year, and under the expert guidance of the Borough Librarian had a most interesting tour of the Royal Naval College, the Observatory and other places before retiring to a real Lakeland tea with Winifred Goy. We are indebted for two other delightful teas after a country walk, firstly to Laurie and Gladys Pepper in their beautiful garden at Liss, and secondly to Countess Gravina in her cottage among the hopfields of Kent. Our Annual Walk with the Rucksack Club brought us to Ivinghoe Beacon, and we have not neglected the Downs with their rolling views—a day on the North Downs with Ruth Gelber and on the South Downs with David Hill.

Our autumn slide show this year featured two expeditions to more sunny and distant parts—one by Margaret Darvall with the Ladies' Alpine Club to the Taurus mountains in Turkey, and the other by Peter Ledebøer to the High Atlas. We also hear that Mabel Burton took many pictures on safari from Addis Ababa to Kilimanjaro and that she stayed at 'Treetops': these we can hardly wait to see.

We are pleased to welcome two new members elected this year—Pam Waterworth as a Graduating Member and John Dempster as a Full Member. There have been two changes among Committee members: Jim and Joyce Beatson have to our regret resigned, and Margaret Darvall and Ruth Gelber have been elected in their place. This brings us to the change of Chairman, for at the Annual General Meeting on 14th December Robert Tyssen-Gee retired at the expiry of his office after three years distinguished service. We extend our warm good wishes to Ned Hamilton, who was elected to succeed him.

At the Annual Dinner, which was held at the Connaught Rooms on 14th December, 50 members and guests were present. We were honoured to have with us as principal guest E. Wood-Johnson, Vice-President of the main club. Other guests included Dorothy Lee (Pinnacle Club), George Robinson (M.A.M.), Michael Baker (O.U.M.C.), and D. Leggatt (Borough Librarian, Greenwich). Mrs. Garrod most disarmingly proposed the toast of the Guests and Kindred Clubs, to which Michael Baker responded with an enviable wit. After the time-honoured toast of Absent Friends the new Chairman reviewed the events of the year, mentioning particularly the death of C. Markbreiter. Warm greetings were also sent to Dr. Hadfield with a signed menu.

As a result of a resolution at the Annual General Meeting, subscriptions were made at the Annual Dinner for the purchase of a new rug to replace the one presented by the London Section to Brackenclose some years ago. We are glad to be able to say that sufficient funds were raised during the evening to enable the Warden to purchase a rug of his choice.

URSULA MILNER-WHITE  
PETER LEDEBOER



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1963 - 1964

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