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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Goodbye to All That	<i>George S. Sansom</i> 119
The Herford Memorial Window	<i>Muriel Files</i> 125
Skiing in Scotland	<i>John W. Cook</i> 126
Episodes in New Zealand	<i>Margaret Duke</i> 130
Salathe Wall—El Capitan	<i>Paul Ross</i> 135
This Year, Next Year, Sometime	<i>Angela Faller</i> 140
Wanted: A Speed Limit on The Fells	<i>Ian Bowman</i> 143
A Midsummer's Tale	<i>Jim Duff</i> 147
Jottings from Down Under—1972	<i>Eric Arnison</i> 150
A Week in Skye	<i>K. Bennett</i> 153
A Climb in the Transvaal	<i>David Hughes</i> 158
A Holiday with a Difference	<i>Mike Burbage</i> 163
Annual Dinner Meet	<i>Bill Comstive</i> 168
Editorial .. .. .	.. .. . 170
Scene From London	<i>John Whitehouse</i> 173
New Climbs and Notes	<i>Ed Grindley</i> 174
In Memorial .. .. .	.. .. . 181
The Library .. .. .	.. .. . 189
Reviews .. .. .	.. .. . 193
The Journals 206
Officers of the Club 211
Meets 213

Editor

T. SULLIVAN
15 BURLEIGH ROAD
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Library and Reviews

Mrs. MURIEL FILES
FIR TREE COTTAGE
21 PROSPECT DRIVE
HEST BANK
LANCASTER

New Climbs

E. M. GRINDLEY
c/o NORMANDY
17 THE ESPLANADE
FLEETWOOD
LANCASHIRE

Obituary Notices

A. M. DOBSON
POUT HOWE
KENTMERE
KENDAL
WESTMORLAND

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GOODBYE TO ALL THAT

George S. Sansom

In 1907 I first visited the Lake District and was charmed with the lovely scenery. I had read Mason's splendid book, *Running Water*, and that had given me a longing to climb mountains. Then an article in the press, describing the ascent of the Napes Needle, focussed my attention on the Cumberland rock climbs.

We were staying in Keswick at the time, and naturally I found the pictures in Abraham's shop most interesting. I told George Abraham that I was longing to do some climbing. He very kindly suggested that I should go to Wasdale with his youngest brother, who had some experience on the moderately difficult climbs. In due course, John Abraham and I drove up to Seathwaite and walked over Sty Head to Wasdale Head, where we stayed for some time. He took me up some of the moderate climbs on Gable, Scafell and the Pillar Rock. I enjoyed them immensely. That was the first of many visits to the Dale.

Wasdale Head Hotel was a rock-climber's Mecca; for it was within easy walking distance of Great Gable, Scafell and Pillar Rock, where most of the finest climbs were to be found. The entrance hall was full of ropes, boots, ice axes and tattered climbing clothes. Mr. and Mrs. Whiting who ran the hotel were always most friendly and helpful. Mr. Whiting was an expert chess player; I believe he played for the county. Some people considered the accommodation too primitive, as there was only one bath, but I was introduced to Mosedale Beck, where one could dive into the wonderfully clear water and swim against the stream. I remember once on New Year's Day, when the fields were covered with snow, diving into the icy water and thoroughly enjoying it.

I am sure most climbers found the hotel quite comfortable. There was a pleasant smoking room, in which was kept the 'climbers book' in which one entered descriptions of new climbs. I wonder what has happened to that?*

The so-called billiards room was mainly used for a hectic game called billiard fives, but it also served as a piece of gymnastic

* Muriel Files has traced the whereabouts of this book and attempts are being made to secure it for the Club library. It is, however, thought that many of the most historic entries have been cut out by people wishing to possess a piece of climbing history.—*Ed.*

apparatus, as also did the wall of the barn, which had its 'barn door traverse'. The hotel charges were quite moderate, (very cheap compared with these days). Here are some of the hotel's tariffs culled from the old F.R.C.C. advertisements:-

Inclusive terms 10/- per day

Luncheon 1/9 Dinner 2/- to 3/6 Tea 6d to 2/-

The Cumberland teas were simply wonderful!

One thing that I shall always remember, was the most friendly and helpful attitude of the residents of the hotel to newcomers. They were always ready to assist an inexperienced man by offering him the opportunity to join their party on climbing expeditions. I have always felt most grateful to the brothers Woodsend; I climbed with them a great deal. We were all anxious to learn to climb well and we used to go out in any weather to do climbs that we felt we could tackle. In those days one accepted rainy days as normal and did not complain of them at all. I remember one day, when we were returning from Scafell, in pouring rain, I was so wet that when I came to the beck I waded through it, instead of using the bridge. It was a foolish thing to do, as Mrs. Whiting told me very emphatically, on my return to the hotel. Incidentally, the hotel staff were very good in getting our clothes dry, although they had none of the modern facilities or equipment to facilitate the work.

There are many other climbers to whom I feel grateful. H. C. Bowen and A. E. Field, both experienced members of the Alpine Club. Gibson, Hazard and Botterill who very kindly took me, a beginner, up the Napes Needle and the Abbey Buttress; both of which gave me great pleasure. I was very impressed with Botterill's elegant, effortless climbing; in fact I have never seen a neater climber. H. B. Gibson was a very pleasant climbing companion; a very good climber himself and a most excellent judge of climbs. We had many pleasant days together. He introduced me to Brunskill, a delightful man in every way. He was a strict vegetarian; he appeared to wear the minimum of clothes, even in cold weather, and he always climbed with bare feet, very skilfully too, but I am sure stockings gave a safer grip on wet rocks than the bare skin. He was a most expert photographer; I have several of his climbing photographs still hanging on the walls of my room. J. Hazard, a friend of Gibson and Brunskill, was often at Wasdale. He was a fine climber; some people thought him the leading man at that time. I recall one day when Hazard

and I explored Pier's Ghyll, from end to end, in search of a missing man, who later turned up in Bootle, or some such place! I was very impressed with Hazard's climbing on the steep vegetation covered rocks; personally I did not like climbing in such places.

Other regular visitors to the hotel were the Sanderson family, the father, who was headmaster of Oundle School, and two sons. The elder son, Roy, was one of the strongest men I have ever met. He was a good climber and used to lead the party; his strength must have been very useful, as his father was a heavy man and often required help. A. R. Thompson was a very frequent visitor. It was remarkable that he should have taken up rock climbing, as he had a partly paralysed arm, which must have been a great handicap, yet he enjoyed very difficult climbs. J. Laycock, the gritstone expert, first introduced me to Herford. We soon became friends; a friendship which lasted until his death in the war. I do not think we ever had a quarrel or serious disagreement, and I felt his loss greatly. He was tall, slim and graceful in movement and when I read Kipling's description of Kamal's son—"That dropped from a mountain-crest. He trod the ling like a buck in spring and looked like a lance in rest", I felt that it was a suitable description of S. W. Herford.

I had by this time an intense love for Wasdale and the fells around it. The delightful view of it from the Napes Ridges often appeared to me during the long war years, and I longed to see it again, as one poet expressed it:- "There are no hills like the Wasdale hills when Spring comes up the dale." My great love for Wasdale prevented me from wishing to visit other regions, although my friends enthused about Skye, Scotland and Wales. I did climb in Wales for a few days but strangely enough, I cannot recall a single day's climbing there that I really enjoyed. For some reason, which I do not understand, the Wasdale mountains seemed friendly, whilst the Welsh ones seemed hostile. Fortunately, Herford also preferred Wasdale, and we had many holidays together; we were both under-graduates, he was in engineering and I was in biology, so were usually able to get away at New Year, Easter and Summer vacations.

Herford was a most generous climber. He was much better than me yet he always offered me the lead; he also gave me the credit for new climbs, which I had only planned, and he had led. I remember after we did the Girdle Traverse of Scafell,

H. B. Gibson was writing up the account of it in the Wasdale book, he rightly put Herford's name first. Herford protested and said "Sansom planned the whole thing; he ought to come first". I supported Gibson; at that time I would not have tried to lead Botterill's Slab. I was perhaps better at planning new routes, but Herford was a bolder climber. He was essentially a very safe leader and I never felt any anxiety when he was climbing.

Scafell Pinnacle Face had always attracted me and one day I got a friend to hold my rope at the Crevasse, while I explored it. I gradually worked my way down and across the slabs to the foot of Lord's Rake. I found the rocks far less difficult than I expected, and the climbing very enjoyable. I felt surprised that no one seemed to have tried it since the accident to Broadrick's party. I had previously asked Botterill if he had tried and he said that the rocks were unsuitable for climbing. It is possible he tried in nailed boots, which are not advisable on very sloping holds. Herford and I thought it delightful. I remember, one wet day on the Pinnacle Face, Herford said "You would be safer than me, leading The Mantelshelf Pitch, on these wet rocks". As a matter of fact a tall man does find that pitch very hard, whereas with my short height it goes quite easily. One man asked me how I did it so easily and I said:- "Imagine there is a foothold on the wall two feet up. Step up on it with your right foot and put your left knee on the mantelshelf". It sounds rather absurd to tell a man to step up on an imaginary hold, but that is what one actually does, the weight being taken by downward pressure of the hands.

Several eminent people used to visit the Dale. There was Dr. Aston, the physicist, famous for his original work on isotopes. He was a keen climber and we had some jolly days with him. Dr. Mills, a brain surgeon, and his wife, were often with us. Bower and Basterfield were rock experts capable of leading anything. Bower did some magnificent guideless climbing in the Chamonix district, after the war. His lead up the Mer de Glace face of the Grépon and the Col des Nantillons, were fine expeditions and I greatly envied him being capable of doing them guideless.

Another very nice man, with whom we climbed, was Jeffcoat of Buxton. He lent valuable aid when we were exploring the Central Buttress on Scafell. Herford and I were so sorry that he was not with us when we completed the climb.

However we were glad to have H. B. Gibson, who was such a sound, steady man.

Central Buttress was the best climb we did, and we all enjoyed it. I gather the modern experts do not have much trouble with it, but I think they consider it a fine rock climb.

After the war, I revisited Wasdale and met some of my old friends; H. B. Gibson, Dr. Mills and others, but I greatly missed Herford, and I often climbed alone. One of the first climbs I did was the North West on Pillar, descending by the New West. It was an enjoyable day's solitary climbing. I think the North West is one of the most pleasant climbs in the district. George Abraham had originally described it as most dangerous, (from a report given him by H. Raeburn) but after he had been up the climb behind Herford, he admitted that he had been misinformed and that he considered it a fine route. However, it had a reputation for great difficulty and I remember some people criticised me for taking a girl, Miss Dorothy Payne, up the climb. As a matter of fact she did it splendidly and I believe she could have led it safely.

Herford was a very efficient leader under icy conditions. I well remember him leading over the Nose, on the North Climb on Pillar, when the rocks were covered in snow, and also up Walker's Gully, on a New Year's Day, when it was coated in ice. Had he lived, I am sure he would have done some fine work in the Alps. He enjoyed his one holiday there with G. W. Young, when they climbed the Gspaltenhorn by the West Ridge.

When after the war, the Club asked me to collaborate with Holland and write a new guide to the Scafell climbs, I felt that it was not really practicable. I had at that time, not been married long and it would not have been possible for me to get away for long visits to Wasdale. I also felt that a man like Kelly, a magnificent climber, was a more suitable choice. I was sorry to find that Holland resented my decision. However the work was most efficiently carried out by Holland, as I think most people will agree.

I have been asked what Herford would have thought of the modern trend of climbing; the use of pitons, expansion bolts and similar devices to permit the ascent of places impossible by unaided methods.

I am quite sure he would have been entirely opposed to them. Personally, I think it destroys the whole idea of mountaineering, which is to find and climb a practicable

route up the crags. I gather from some recent articles, that some men prefer to climb on loose or vegetation covered rocks. Personally, I do not; I consider that an ideal climb is up firm, clean rock.

As I am 87 this year, I fear that my climbing days are over, but my love for the Wasdale Fells will endure for ever.

S. W. HERFORD MEMORIAL WINDOW

The existence of the window came to the notice of the committee after Siegfried Herford's sister, Mrs. Brauholtz, wrote to the Secretary about her anxiety as to its future because she had heard that Platt (Unitarian) Chapel in Manchester, where the window is situated, was threatened with demolition. The committee felt great concern about the possibility that the window might disappear and, to make sure that there was a record of it, asked the Trustees for permission for Ian Roper to photograph it.

In fact, there proved to be no immediate threat to the window although the chapel is indeed no longer needed by the Unitarian Church and the Trustees are seeking a suitable purchaser. In the meantime Mrs. Brauholtz is negotiating with the Unitarian College in Manchester, which is also a Hall of Residence of the University, to have the window transferred to the chapel there.

The window was given in memory of Siegfried Herford by C. E. Montague of the *Guardian*, known to some mountaineers for his essay 'In Hanging Garden Gully'* , surely one of the most entertaining climbing tales ever written. Of the figure representing her brother Mrs. Brauholtz writes: 'It was based on a photograph taken by a fellow climber and is a very good likeness of my brother, even to the shock of fair hair described by Geoffrey Winthrop Young. The window makes his face look a little more bony than it actually did—after all he was only 24 and still had a boyish look'. Of C. E. Montague she says: 'He was of course a much older man. When he first heard of S. W. H.'s solitary climbs in North Wales he took it upon himself to watch over the young climber's bold but dangerous initiation and went climbing with him many times. Eventually both served in the Sportsmen's Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers and indeed the same company'.

The two articles describing the first ascent of Central Buttress (G. S. Sansom's in *Journal* No. 8, 1914 and C. F. Holland's in *Journal* No. 15, 1921) and the article on 'The Climbs on Scafell Pinnacle' by Sansom and Herford in *Journal* No. 6, 1912 must be well known to members; as must also 'A Short History of Lakeland Climbing' in the Lakeland Number (1936-37) where Kelly and Doughty stress the key role Herford played in the development of rock climbing. John Wilkinson, who devoted considerable space to Herford in his article on Scafell in the November 1973 issue of *Mountain*, supports this view.

In the Library there is a memorial booklet to Herford, who was killed in action in 1916, containing tributes by Geoffrey Winthrop Young, C. E. Montague, John Laycock and others. John Laycock's contribution begins (as does the obituary notice he wrote for *Journal* No. 10, 1916): 'In November 1914 he (Herford) wrote me jokingly: "I'll write your obituary for the F. & R. J. You can do the same for me" '.

Muriel Files

* C. E. Montague. *Fiery Particles*, Chatto and Windus, 1923.

SKIING IN SCOTLAND

John W. Cook

A thin, grey ribbon of gritty, wet snow
Struggles to the foot of Coire Cas tow —
It's Hogmanay!
Fields of powder, shimmering white
Make Cairngorm a skier's delight —
Is it really May?

Or something like that. There was that race weekend in Glencoe in February, doing duty beside the course, when the rain was horizontal and, as the competitors slithered blindly through an ice-cold swamp imagining it was snow, one tried with a frozen hand to mark a sodden gatekeeper's sheet while the water seeped through nooks and crannies into all one's inner clothing. Who would ski in Scotland then unless he had been black-balled from every Alpine resort or wanted to prove he were a member of the S.N.P.? But then there was that weekend afterwards when we skied everywhere from the top of M & B (Meall A'Bhuirdh for Sassenachs) on perfect hard pack under a blazing sun. Who could bear to be anywhere else on such days? No! Scottish skiing is, whatever other epitaphs may be appropriate, quite definitely unpredictable.

There have been times in this season of generally little snow when we have thought of putting our skis away or, at least, only bothering to go as far as the artificial slopes of Hillend — but there was no need. Even though Cairngorm, after a promising start in November, only erupted into real splendour when most people were looking for sun-warmed rocks for climbing or were well involved in the sailing season and, although Glenshee suffered an even worse fate and staged no come-back. There was Glencoe almost always offering its full quota of runs, with the great gulch of the Haggis Trap so full of snow that one just skied over it month after month. But perhaps the bog-trot from the top of the chair lift to the main ski area or the lack of a 'loo' or the possibility of meeting a MacDonald (if you were a Campbell) kept the mass of the Cairngorm and Glenshee habitués away from the Coe until it was too late and Philip Rankin cried, 'enough!' and put his set of distinctively lumbering tows to rest until next season.

There really is only one line to take when asking for advice about the worthwhileness, in general, of a Scottish skiing

holiday — don't risk it! Your money and talents are better invested in a package trip to a large and reliable resort abroad. That doesn't mean, of course, that folk shouldn't be encouraged to cross the Border for that weekend or extra holiday at one or other of the Highland resorts: they may even have the best skiing of their lives there. We sometimes find, to our surprise, that continentals, especially from the Lowland countries, give such resorts as Aviemore a trial instead of say, Obergurgl and have no regrets. We're pleased about that, of course, but glad we didn't advise them in the first place.

There is, however, one aspect of skiing, at least, in which I think Scotland scores handsomely in comparison with any other skiing country I know and that is instruction. We may not have an endless supply of high level trainers capable of producing future Russis or Prölls to win Olympic medals, but we do have a nucleus of these rare beings and, much more important, we have, in the main, first class and well qualified instructors who give service to the public and know how to generate and maintain enthusiasm even when conditions are at their most off-putting. So it is a good place to learn to ski, especially if one has the traditional climber's resistance to unpleasant weather. And, of course, there is always the plastic slope to fall back on — not just in Edinburgh — which really does offer the best opportunities of all for teaching the basic skills.

At the other extreme, there is the kind of experience which is surely going to become much more popular if only the costs can be kept within bounds, exploring the more remote slopes from the air. You hire your helicopter, with pilot, on a 'no reasonable weather, no payment' basis and spend an hour, an afternoon or a day skiing where nobody else has skied that season or, quite possibly, ever before. It's easy this way to ski off all the 4000 feet Cairngorm summits in an afternoon, going down slopes which land you literally nowhere but with the knowledge that the 'chopper' will be waiting to whisk you on to the next summit or, after a particularly memorable run, to take you back first for a repeat performance.

This February, when the snow was so very scarce in the central and eastern hills, a group was encouraged by the distant view of Ben Alder to arrange a flying visit. A perfect Saturday materialised for the event and eight people had a superb day out from Dalwhinnie, sampling all the skiable flanks of the mountain and its neighbours until the hot sun

made the snow too heavy for real pleasure. For that kind of day's skiing it would cost nearly twenty pounds a head but a larger party, with slightly longer rests between descents, could reduce that cost materially. One could always, as an alternative, walk in to such mountains, I suppose, as once was necessary anyway, but days not hours would be required and the amount of skiing would be negligible compared with that available through the possession of one's own uplift. But pick your conditions and your party for these occasions: several miles over and under breakable crust may not be to everybody's liking.

Apart from the sophistication of touring from the air, common or garden cross-country skiing is gathering some momentum albeit more slowly than perhaps might have been expected in a country which one tends to compare more readily with Norway than with the Alps. The trouble, of course, is that general snow cover over the Scottish hills is something of a rarity, certainly not a condition one can plan for weeks ahead. Consequently, ski touring expeditions in the grand manner have to be planned with enormous flexibility on the basis that they may well become mountain walks on the day. Nevertheless, good tours are practicable for the opportunist and, with more guidance and encouragement from clubs and the provision of some simple, well-sited accommodation and marked tracks in the Scandinavian manner, many more piste skiers may be tempted to seek peace and quiet and the joy of comfortable footwear and simple ski bindings. In the meantime, one of the areas which has offered some of the elements at least of cross-country skiing, Coire na Ciste and the back of Cairngorm, is now beginning to succumb to the overhead cable and the piste machine. We shall no doubt regret it when the 'moguls' appear but, with luck, we shall have the compensation of a lot more good skiing of the production line kind.

The most significant development in Scottish skiing, I think, has been its recognition as a native sport. Not all Scottish schools are as fortunate as some in and around Aviemore and Blairgowrie, for example, with skiing on the snow featured regularly on the timetable much as in an Alpine resort but for great numbers of pupils, especially in the cities, there is now an awareness that skiing can be, for many, a normal recreation and, for some, even a career. For them there are training facilities on local plastic slopes, close links

with the snow resorts and teachers and instructors who know what it's all about. To see the ten year olds by the dozen training to race on the natural and artificial pistes is to see the future of skiing as a competitive sport in Scotland, and for each one who races there are a score who are happy just to turn their skis into and out of the fall line when they feel like it, to negotiate, if they can, natural hazards rather than slalom poles and to have fun on the mountain in their particular way.

Yes, it is worth coming a long way to ski in Scotland but bring your axe and crampons just in case. The whisky, at any rate, is usually reliable.

EPISODES IN NEW ZEALAND

Margaret Duke

The essence of New Zealand mountaineering is its variety. For the diversity of experiences available it can hardly be equalled. In a land sparsely populated, almost totally deficient in Adventure Centres, Gear Shops and Rescue Teams, the mountaineer is still required to be an independent, hardy and resourceful individual. True, there are National Parks with huts, Rangers, ski planes and all the paraphernalia of organised leisure, but even within these exist 'wilderness areas' and outside them lie vast tracts of land traversed at most once or twice a year by musterers, foresters or hunters. Here the wandering hill-walker, or 'Tramper' in Kiwi parlance, has unlimited scope.

Let it not be thought, however, that conditions are always ideal for such activity. The weather is not, as some seem to think, perpetually hot and sunny. As a group of isolated islands New Zealand is subject to all the usual meteorological influences of the ocean, coupled with the effects of a hot desert neighbour one thousand miles northward and an icy desert neighbour three thousand miles southward. Thus the wary mountaineer must watch constantly for brooding nor'wester storms bearing down upon him from the Tasman Sea and be aware of the rock-rotting frosts and deep snowfalls that threaten from the south.

By far the greatest population is concentrated in the North Island, and here lie bush-clad hill ranges of tortuous navigation, volcanic peaks and beautiful coasts. For the mountaineer, however, the South Island is the only place to live. I was lucky enough to spend two years centrally placed in the Mackenzie Plains about two hours drive from Mount Cook, the main centre of mountaineering activity throughout the country. Perhaps the following episodes may give some idea of the possibilities available.

Mount Cook

Mount Cook is every New Zealand climber's aspiration but it is not easily to be won. What is needed is utmost fitness, competent technique, kindly weather and a pinch of luck.

Suddenly the weather was set fair. On the spur of the moment we crammed gear into sacks, stumbled clubfooted through endless grey moraines and clawed our way up the four thousand foot Weetabix of the Haast Ridge. We were

bound for Plateau Hut and no-one dared tempt fate by voicing more hopes than that. We crossed over the shining ice of Glacier Dome and eventually into the confines of the hut where all was activity and suppressed hope. Why did no-one seem exhausted but me?

I lay sleepless on a bunk as boots tramped in and out through the night. At last it was 1.0 a.m. and we left in the chilly darkness, on clanking crampons. New snow had fallen masking the crevasses of the Linda Glacier. There were no footprints to follow so Dick wound a cautious route by torchlight whilst I watched the rope like a hawk and tried to recall the principles of crevasse rescue. At last we were through the worst area and plodding upwards watching the pale light reflecting from the ice cliff which leaned so threateningly above us. The Linda Glacier is the 'tourist route', but unfortunately it also offers the greatest objective danger. We were so anxious to get past the 'Gunbarrel' before sunrise, that we pressed on too fast and soon my strength ebbed and my psyche wilted. As fast as I tried to urge my legs the faster the sun's warmth rose, until at last we realised the time margin for a safe expedition had become too slim. Lack of fitness and the handicap of having to find our own route through the crevasses by torchlight had beaten us. Regretfully we retreated, but it had been a great experience.

Skiing the Tasman Glacier.

Two days were spent sitting at the airstrip watching the lowering cloud base. On the third morning — a 'recce' flight reported all clear on the Tasman Saddle. Up, up and away we went, our skistraps clattered in the slipstream where our skis hung beneath the wing racks. There was a bit of new snow, so first we made a test touch-and-go landing. We banked sharply and the peaks reared up to port as we pivoted on the starboard wing. Then the frail Cessna hurtled in across the slots, jolting and slewing as the skids ploughed up dry powder snow. Everybody got out, the gear was put into a pile and the strip cleared for take-off. The plane roared away and silence descended. We became aware of the cold. In ten minutes we had come 6,000 feet from a warm lounge to an arctic plateau. We snapped on skin-clad skis and began the arduous slog up to Aylmer Col. The Col isn't on the usual tourist schedule but we wanted to see the West Coast and take our first steps on the Main Divide. At last, as the wind strength grew stronger,

we reached the Col and saw far below the deep lush green of West Coast bush as it spread toward the sandy beaches and the Tasman Sea. Then we turned the skis, swooped and whistled as we sped down the steep upper slopes that earlier we had climbed so laboriously. I am no expert skier, I viewed the drop with trepidation and cautiously traversed and kick-turned my way to gentler ground.

Always ahead was the tiny expert figure of the ski patroller who guided our party safely through the icefall and down, down, down, to the delightful lower glacier where even the novice can enjoy the exhilaration of graceful control. And all the while the mighty peaks slid by. Upon our right lay The Minarets, De La Beche, Elie de Beaumont and Aorangi herself; and on our left the Malte Brun range. As I stood straight and relaxed, I imagined myself upon a mighty white escalator moving effortlessly past this magnificent panorama. But eventually the way led to ice patches, the moraine and the mud, where only the memory lingered of those fifteen miles of whispering skis.

Up the Waiau and into Nelson Province.

On another occasion I made a solo foray into the tussock lands and over a high pass to the Nelson Lakes National Park. A heavily laden 'Mountain Mule' pack and a pair of stout 'tackety' boots are the necessaries for this sort of trip.

Taking the risk of bad weather, I dispensed with my tent and primus and counted on finding musterers' huts for shelter if it were necessary. Once I was in Nelson, the Park huts would be plentiful. Following little used pony tracks I wound my way through thorny Matagourie scrub, occasionally climbing minor peaks for views to supplement the inadequate navigational aid provided by my out-of-date map. The first two days were hot and dusty but on the second night it rained and I was glad to be snug in an ancient mud-brick bothy slinging my blackened billy over a deerdung fire. Heavy rain over the hills had made the Waiau River too deep to wade so there was no alternative but a tedious trail break up the 'wrong' side, frustrated all the while by constant sight of the excellent Land Rover track which was on the far bank. Twenty miles on, and in brightening conditions I struggled tortoise-like up and over the Waiau Pass and down to the National Park with its red disced tracks. Here some nights were spent in the sociable muddle of overcrowded huts;

watching Kiwi bushmanship and believing only half the tall tales that were spun to me. Wildlife didn't stop with the bedbugs and sandflies but included rats and possums; the latter slithering desperately inside the corrugated iron chimney, grabbing our food and leering red-eyed from the corner as we aimed boots, broomsticks and evil language in their direction.

I trekked by rocky heights, blue lakes and mighty falls, always seeking the next red disc or axe-blazed trunk. Once, in deep bush, I came upon a forlorn candle stump lodged upright in a rotten tree where some wanderer who had been benighted had made a dark and lonely camp.

As the path grew wider and the huts more sordid I knew I was coming to civilization. I made a visit to Park H.Q. at Lake Rotoiti to pay hut fees and watch the jet boats and caravan sites carve up the wilderness.

The Darrans.

In the south-west corner of South Island lies the most spectacular scenery of all. Unfortunately, it also has the wettest climate. Here is the Kiwi rock climbers' Mecca — Homer Hut. As a hut it is abysmal — dark, sordid and sandfly ridden; with no water supply in dry weather and unreachable in wet conditions. It happens, however, to be surrounded by the most awe-inspiring mountain scenery one can imagine. The rocks are volcanic in origin, and are the oldest in New Zealand. They also happen to be grey, ice-smoothed and holdless. For me they are a frightening prospect; for the Hard Men they are a challenge. There gathered here one weekend a band of intrepid brethren, and great were the understatement, the gear gossip and the alcohol intake. Rurps, bongs and chocks were all displayed and admired; competitive 'bouldering' was accompanied by much chaff and hammering, and huge amorphous stews of doubtful content were consumed while sitting in grotty sleeping bags. By late afternoon of the third day there were signs of serious activity. As the Tigers disappeared in the direction of Moir's Mate and similar XS horrors, my long-suffering leader chivvied me patiently along a rocky and delightfully exposed ridge to Mount Barrier. This most exhilarating scramble does not quite require a rope and is a worthy, but gentle introduction to the area. The views can only be compared to the Norwegian fiords, but here there is so much more of it, and the plummeting valleys are totally uninhabited, untracked and seldom visited. Indeed,

many require rock climbing skill just for access. The weather was perfect and I had a photo mania. Apart from views, I took shot after shot of the clownish keas (mountain parrots.) Their antics can include rolling themselves inextricably into a roll of bog-paper, sliding down a corrugated tin roof to land splash in the water butt, as well as neatly removing the wind-screen from your car with their tin-opener beak technique.

The descent was steep and exciting. It was by slippery boiler-plate slabs and a bit of bogbashing to arrive back at the hut. A film crew were just moving in ready to make the next TV spectacular for those armchair addicts of the great sport of climber-watching.

Tourist tracks.

The world famous Milford Track, which is dotted with hotels is the delight of the Organised Tour Operators. The track is a five-day bog trot through sandfly-ridden bush and its only highspot is when the trail briefly ascends the Mackinnon Pass to provide tantalising views of inaccessible peaks on all sides. During early Autumn, when the track is officially 'closed', it is possible to enjoy its delights better. The start and finish however, normally require boat transport so some deviation may be necessary. In our case we inveigled a local fisherman into conveying us in to the start and we planned to exit by crossing a high-level pass.

The track itself was traversed uneventfully, the huts being open and in the main untenanted except for a few trophy seeking shooters keen to gain good heads of deer and wapiti (a kind of elk) now that the tourists were safely out of the way.

Upon viewing our intended high pass exit, however, we received a shock. The recent heavy rain had fallen as snow above 2,000 feet and the pass was closed. We were short of food and overdue at work. Just as things were beginning to look serious, a wealthy hunter arrived via a plane which landed on the lake. His pilot took out a message and next evening a very welcome launch arrived to convey a crowd of stranded Trampers which had by this time swollen to about a dozen. This was fortunate because the launch fee proved to total about £30.

If you ever find yourself thinking that most of the adventure and much of the interest has been pressured out of the British mountain scene, I recommend a visit to the Kiwis. They're twenty years behind the times and all the better for it.

SALATHE WALL — EL CAPITAN

Paul Ross

'Richard's here — he was looking for ya.' McHardy, I hadn't seen him for years.

Henry, my American friend, was wanting to go climbing *again* and this was a prime excuse.

'Sorry! Got to go and see my old pal Richard, see you later.'

Henry simply pounced on the nearest climber and they shot off together towards the hills in a cloud of dust.

Look out you energetic two-routes-a-day-men if Henry ever arrives in Britain!

The British camp seemed a little more tranquil than the 'orange juice-pullup' mob at our end of the woods. I spotted Richard and soon we were exchanging our views of times and events both old and new.

Once the pleasantries were over, Richard tried a bluff. 'Do you want to go climbing?' he asked mildly.

Frantically, I tried a counter bluff. 'Bloody hell, Richard, I'm trying to escape the rock for just *one* day. But I suppose we could, if you *really* want to.'

So eventually we went to the Cookie and I had to climb another awfully painful hand-jam crack. My hands were already mashed owing to Henry's taking me up my first two routes in the Valley, both of which were 5.10!

Luckily for me after Richard and I got down from our climb, Henry and his friend were passing by at great speed towards their second route, so I pushed Richard in behind them, and slipped off to fester in the sun with another equally energetic Englishman.

Richard first impressed Henry, then took off, solo, up another route, so impressing everybody. We watched his style through binoculars. He eventually came to rest amongst us and immediately cracked a very unfunny joke by asking me if I fancied doing the Salathe Wall on El Capitan.

'Yer bloody joking, mate — up that thing?' Then I regained my cool. 'It's higher than Cloggy, you know.' He had no reply to that.

After a few days to get over the shock, I said 'maybe'. It really did not look too big to a guy used to Shepherds' Crag. We started looking for a third member of the team. Henry had a tight schedule and just didn't have the time. 'I wonder

if George Homer wants to go?' We asked, and George said yes. I began to have second thoughts, but it was too late — word had got round about the veteran British team, who were going to knock Salathe dead.

We fixed-rope four pitches, then waited three days to see if the Yosemite monsoon period would end. Don't believe all that hot weather bull the guide-book tells you about. The weather eventually seemed to get a little better; so we took the one-hundred-pound bag of everything up the four pitches we had prepared earlier. Upon being introduced to El Capitan sack-hauling I really did begin to have doubts about the route. I was just too light. The only way I could haul the monster was to throw myself off the stances and hope that the ensuing counter-weight would raise the sack.

The next day we gathered some determination and took off towards the top, which seemed miles away. At 6.00 a.m. we tangled (literally) with an American party setting off up the same route. (Their route was the Triple Direct, which uses the Salathe start.) Soon insulting words were being passed back and forth, and it ended when I pulled out a knife and threatened to cut down their haul bag. The Valley is such a friendly place! Finally, piton, karabiner, and waterfall sounds were once again the only noise that broke the stillness of the dawn.

Pitch followed pitch; I tried to stay at the rear, but mismanaged it all by being pushed into the lead up a couple of long, unprotected chimneys. The rest of the time I took lots of photos, and passed approving comments to those two keen lads up front.

After a fifty foot rappel, we arrived at Heart Ledge, where, as they say in America, we all went to the bathroom. Also, in American style, we threw down a fruit can in which we put loads of pegs and 'crabs' as well as our names and addresses. There are some honest people somewhere in the States; so the gear may be returned to us.

George suggested that I should fix-rope the next pitch for tomorrow morning, and after some argument I set off. George must have known it was a really awful pitch. It had so many little tension traverses and pendulums that eventually, owing to rope drag, I ground to a halt. The guide-book described the pitch as complex. It's a good job I had done some British practice routes like 'The Horror'.

Anyway, I got back to the ledge as dusk fell on the Valley.

After an evening meal of roast chicken, cans of coke, tinned fruit and all sorts of goodies, we fell asleep. It's a tough life on El Cap!

By now, for some masochistic reason, I was beginning to like being up here. The bivouacs fascinated me. I was most reluctant to leave them. Sitting on this wall, looking down on the Valley, having mountains of grub, and two good blokes to crack with (there was only one thing missing), I was enjoying the 'above it all' feeling.

The second day was hot, and the haul bag appeared to be alive and sticking. The climbing seemed to go so slowly. I led up on an A1 pitch (usually on El Cap a pitch means one hundred and fifty feet.) I felt listless. We were all glad that this was the only really hot day.

I looked down from our perch; it felt really good to be here. I never really liked the ground. It was all those distracting things that were on its surface that kept a fellow from climbing.

Suddenly we were brought out of our festering thoughts. Hell, it's getting late. Richard was climbing the 'Ear'. He shimmeyed up and out on nothing for about thirty feet. I was nervous belaying him and I imagined him coming off and crumping on the wall beside us.

As I savoured the drop between my legs, George shouted that we had to make the next pitch before we reached a reasonable bivouac ledge. Before I got up to Richard it was dusk, and George, somewhere below, was still muttering something about the next pitch and a ledge. He knew his 'festering' would not be very good tonight.

Eventually we were all hanging around in our harnesses, looking at one another and thinking what a really rotten spot to kip. After not too many minutes we were all sort of swinging around with Richard and George in hammocks and I was in a tent flysheet, which settled comfortably on Richard's head. At least I thought it was comfortable.

We skipped eating until we reached the ledge above the next pitch. It was a festerer's paradise. A long breakfast followed, and just for once I felt inspired, awoke George and told him to hold my rope.

The pitch was a spectacular chimney behind a large seventy foot block pinnacle called El Cap Spire. The protection was not good, and in the event of a fall I would have banged myself badly by landing in a pile of boulders at its

foot. The only worry I had on the whole wall was if I had to be rescued because of something like a broken ankle. Apart from feeling a twit, it would have meant all this sweat and blood for nothing.

Richard was having trouble with his Jumars. He was cursing them and moving much more slowly than he could have actually climbed. A quick Jumar refresher course on top of El Cap Spire made Richard love them, and from then on he enjoyed this contemporary non-effort way of climbing.

We left the comforts of El Cap Spire by presenting Richard with the only dirty pitch of the climb. While he led on George and I photographed the frogs that live on this incredible face of rock.

One of the sounds of El Capitan is screeching swifts which dive-bomb a few inches from your head at speeds of up to 200 m.p.h. This at times wrecks your nerves, as they can be mistaken for falling rocks. At night the bats take over and squeak around your head, looking for something or other, or maybe nothing.

By mistake, Richard was trying to free climb a vertical aid crack at the end of the horrible pitch, while we just shouted up to him that it was only 'H.V.S.' After the harrowing experience of hanging from a loose nut, he eventually requested some pegs and did what he should have done in the first place. Finally he reached a really good ledge. Far below we could see the crowds watching the various epics being played out on El Cap.

We decided it was bathroom time again and gave a grand display. Although we didn't realize it at the time, George's girl-friend, who had borrowed a high-powered telescope was watching us.

It started to drizzle with rain; so while Richard fixed up the camp site, George and I fixed the next pitch. This pitch, which involved a pendulum and some A3 'nailing', ended on Sous le Toit Ledge.

At first I managed to pendulum into the wrong crack system, but after much swinging and sweating and cursing, I ended up in the right place. Luckily the A3 was not too bad. I made the ledge fairly quickly and then returned to the bivvy site for goodies and the usual bull about old times, which we all now believe we enjoyed.

The next day passed uneventfully. We bivouacked on some small ledges below the big roof. I woke up to a grey day,

looked at my watch, which was the only one we had — it was 11.00 a.m.

'George, it's eleven a'clock!'

He then convinced me that it was only 6.00 a.m., so I put my watch back five hours. It turned out to be a pretty short day, but we still did not accept that we could sleep that long. Our friends who were watching us could not understand what we were up to. That day we went over the great roof. I had my only unhappy moment of the whole climb on those roofs. I underestimated them by putting on my back a rucksack and a rack of iron. Consequently I was top-heavy, and I had a desperate time trying to prevent myself from turning upside-down. With a 2,600 foot drop below you it tended to create a somewhat stimulating situation. We felt really good when we reached the headwall. It is perhaps the most spectacular piece of rock on the whole climb, being gently overhanging for about three or four hundred feet. The temperature had dropped and it was really cold with a strong wind blowing. I shivered uncontrollably. George took a fifteen foot fall when a pin came out. It was a good place to fall.

We reached our last bivvy just above the headwall. The ledge was just over shoulder width and perfectly shaped to the body. There is no doubt that El Capitan is unique; it's a whole new pastime compared to both the Alps and short crag climbing. We still had plenty of food, at least if you counted mixed bags of Smarties, raisins, and nuts, which taste awful after the first day. Our water also was still holding out.

The next day we reached the top. Richard did a good job on the last pitch, a jamming crack of XS standard. We took photos in an attempt to capture the high feeling. It was really beautiful on the top. The descent led down into woods which were spattered with large snow patches and criss-crossed with hundreds of little streams. It is eight miles to the Valley, but apart from the first few wobbly steps on level ground we all felt really good and enjoyed the walk. I'll say that again. We enjoyed the walk. I think that is right. We were surprised when we checked my watch by asking a hiker the time and this confirmed our late morning rise. No wonder we felt fresh and rested. Well, we had an excuse; it was the first all-British of Salathe, and you know how veteran British climbers love their traditional late start.

THIS YEAR, NEXT YEAR, SOMETIME . . .

Angela Faller

My first visit to Pillar Rock was heartbreaking; I burst into tears and cried all the way back to Gatesgarth. My companions had promised that I could lead them up the New West climb and I could hardly reach the crag quickly enough. But they dawdled along in the heat of the day, festering and paddling at every stream. When at last we rounded the base of the Rock another party was just starting the route. Nothing I could do or say would convince my friends that we had time to climb; they wouldn't even scramble to the summit. In those days I didn't know that there is always another time; I had no philosophy for disappointment and the tears flowed freely.

Many years later I did climb the New West, in the evening of a long mountain day. On that occasion there were fell-runners in the party. We had started in Langdale at first light, reached Pillar via Bowfell Buttress, Moss Ghyll and Tophet Wall, and included the associated summits, namely Bowfell, Scafell Pikes, Scafell and Great Gable. The shadows were long in the forests of Ennerdale and the sun was slipping into the sea as we finished the route. If only the unhappy girl of the early days had known . . .!

It is strange how some routes remain elusive for a very long time and others occur again and again. This is a very personal matter; for instance I have never been to Skye without traversing the Cuillin ridge, whereas many better-deserving people have tried for years, always to meet hopeless conditions. But I must have been up six times to attempt White Slab on Clogwyn du'r Arddu only to prompt rain or queues of parties. Ken Wood had also met this jinx. We felt we were the only two climbers in Britain who had never 'done White', but perseverance was rewarded when eventually we climbed it together. If ever a route was worth waiting for, it was White Slab. There was no-one in front to keep us waiting, we christened a brand new red and yellow double rope, and Ken lassoed the notorious spike at his first attempt. The long slab pitches were exquisite. Perhaps some day my turn to enjoy them will come round again.

Ben Nevis has been fairly kind in winter, but never in summer until 1973, when Andy Long and I went up to camp in the Allt a Mhuilinn. It was amazing to see grass and

tiny flowers instead of snow and ice. A good policy for indifferent weather in Scotland is: 'climb today, tomorrow may be worse', so after a showery night we approached Carn Dearg Buttress to look at Centurion. Incredibly, the rock was clean and dry. We led through, making sure that Andy took the long and crucial second pitch. Never have I climbed on better rock. Fantastic situations occurred on the lips of overhangs; then came a straightforward section of slabs not apparent from below. Only from a distant viewpoint can one appreciate the perfection of line of Centurion; it is just too big to take in when one is climbing. As we broke through the upper overhangs I decided that these Scottish routes of almost a thousand feet are the ideal; they are never boring, but perfectly satisfying at the rate of one a day.

It is even more exciting when a 'big hill' yields. When, as a hitch-hiking student, I first saw the Matterhorn, I didn't know ordinary people like me climbed. Walking from the Youth Hostel to the Hörnlihütte was a major adventure, being a personal highest at the time. Guides on the balcony of the old refuge offered to lead us to the summit. In our shorts and plimsolls we didn't dream that they were serious; we laughed shyly and shook our heads. My photographs of that occasion show the Matterhorn remarkably free from snow.

Not so in the Year of the Alps. It was my second season as a climber and I passionately wanted to climb the Zmutt ridge, but the weather was atrocious for the whole precious fortnight and serious routes were out of the question. With the original Pillar Rock team I went up the Riffelhorn, the Wellenkuppe, the Alphubel, by the ordinary routes. Most of the time the Matterhorn sulked in the cloud, only memory convinced me that it was there.

So it was that in 1973 I had nearly a decade's more climbing experience when I went to the Zmutt with a friend called Peter. We sorted our gear in a lay-by near Täsch and spent a delightful day strolling through the Alpine meadows beyond Zermatt and studying the route as we went. We passed the Schönbiel hut, slithered down the moraine, crossed the Tiefmatten glacier and scrambled up unpleasant snow-covered rocks to gain the point Sattelti. Flat stones near a melt stream showed that people had bivouacked here before. So far, so good!

In the silvery full moonlight avalanches poured from the Dent Blanche and Dent d'Herens; the temperature was well

above freezing. We could see to set off before first light, following a line of cairns. A long scramble up tedious rubbish brought us onto the snow ridge proper, which needed crampons as a good Alpine ridge should. We took the crampons off again to negotiate the Zmutt teeth and reach the Tiefmatten slabs which form the crux of the route.

Somehow I'd expected a sort of Trilleachan, but these slabs were quite different; snow covered, with loose holds and negligible protection. Crampons were definitely not appropriate. Gloves would have been welcome yet we felt safer without, despite the risk of frost-bitten fingers. Peter and I took great care and plenty of time. We moved together, roped, with the occasional poor runner between us. Although the climbing was technically quite easy, a slip would have deposited us on the glacier two thousand feet below. I was thankful that fate had intervened between the inexperienced me and this route.

We turned the Zmutt nose by Carrel's Gallery and traversed back to the ridge using all our ice-weapons. The scale of the mountain was hard to comprehend but we could hear climbers on the Italian ridge. We put away the rope and soloed to the summit to find it unoccupied. Visibility was perfect, except for a heat haze over Italy. As we rested at the summit cross of the Matterhorn I looked at the splendour of the Alps, looked back at my own climbs, and tried to look into the climbing future. For if an ordinary person like me, who started climbing by accident, can climb the Zmutt ridge, who knows what else is possible?

WANTED: A SPEED LIMIT ON THE FELLS

Ian Bowman

Given: (1) a July day at Brackenclose, and (2) perfect weather, sunny, the glass rising, with just a whisper of a breeze.

Problem: what possible circumstances might spoil such an auspicious beginning?

The answer is in two words: two notorious members of the Club who have already featured in several sagas of the *Journal*. I refer, of course, to (1) Engineer (retired), and (2) Headmaster. You will, no doubt, recognise Engineer at once. Headmaster may be elusive, until I mention that he usually conceals his identity in *Journal* articles by writing under the nom-de-plume F - - - - A - - - - . Let justice be done. He is wont to take pen to paper and write scurrilous articles about Engineer, Chorister, Toothwright, and others. Now, at last, the truth will be told about the perpetrator of these calumnies.

Meet Engineer and Headmaster in a dale-head pub and they appear to be quite reasonable, humane, normal blokes.* They have even been known (at least on the first of the month) to stand a round. Converse with them over the dinner-table at the end of a meet and they might almost be accepted as human. But — I write, as they say, more in sorrow than in anger, to warn the uninitiated — go with them on the fells, and you will rue the day you ever met them.

Let me tell you what happened to me on that July day at Brackenclose, perfect weather, sunny, etc. (see paragraph one above).

I met the terrible pair at Brackenclose after an early morning drive down from Workington. They and their better halves had been having a few days' holiday, and I had hastened to join them in reply to a kindly phone call from Engineer. 'The glass is rising' says Engineer, brightly, as we meet. 'It's going to be a scorcher' adds Headmaster. I think I detect a sadistic tone in his opening remark, but my mind is set at rest as he adds, 'too hot for anything ambitious; just a gentle saunter, I think, and maybe a couple of half-hour kips on the way'. All of which sounds very encouraging. Just how wrong can a man be?

*I've met them on several occasions, but they didn't strike me as reasonable, humane, or normal—subhuman, maybe.—*Ed.*

Now let me explain. I am not a hypochondriac — far from it, my courage in the face of adversity is second to none. However, on the day of my journey to Brackenclose I am something less than A.1. For one thing, three weeks previously I had twisted my ankle on those Eigers of the Lake District, the notorious Lorton Fells. My wife dismissed the injury as 'a slight sprain'. I knew better, and had already diagnosed at least three broken bones. For another thing, the previous day I had suffered the beginning of an infection (again lamentably underestimated by my wife as 'a bad cold') which I knew to be double pneumonia. What with one thing and another, it was, you will agree, pretty brave for me to turn out at all.

I hasten to make all this clear to Engineer and Headmaster, and they, the fiends, make suitable sympathetic noises. Comforted by this, and by the cup of coffee kindly provided by Mesdames Headmaster and Engineer, we sally forth, leaving the two ladies behind. Again, a little alarm bell sounds somewhere at the back of my mind. 'Why', thinks I, 'why aren't they coming with us if we are going for nothing more than a gentle saunter?' Fools never learn!

Everybody in the F.R.C.C. knows the Brown Tongue track: first, over the bridge; then up to the steps over the wall; and thence to the crossing of the stream and the foot of Brown Tongue. Now, for a chap with a broken ankle and double pneumonia, that in itself might be considered a fair walk. I mean, you do *ascend*. And with only one foot to walk on, and no breath at all, it is a pretty stout effort. Give Engineer and Headmaster their due, they are very considerate: the pace is a stately half-mile-an-hour; the kindly enquiries about my health are both regular and soothing; they stop at least half a dozen times to let me catch up; and Engineer plies me with disgusting grey things from his pocket which he calls 'Imperial Mints', and which, he says, build up strength and energy. All in all, you might think, a good beginning.

So to the foot of Brown Tongue. 'Let's have a break, men', says Headmaster. Gratefully, I sink towards the grassy turf. I don't make it. 'On tha feet, men!' says Engineer, and they leap up. They look up the Brown Tongue track with gleams in their nasty eyes.

The 'tha' in 'On tha feet, men' is etymologically interesting, and after considerable research I can assure you that it is

authentic. Engineer and Headmaster are both Yorkshiremen, and therefore entitled to say 'tha'. They are, they say, intensely proud of their native county. I should add, just to set things straight, that they both live in Cumberland.

However, I have no time to pursue this interesting linguistic consideration. With eyes swimming and muscles crying out for rest, I pull myself vertical. I think (mistakenly) that, fierce though the struggle may be, they will at least proceed at the same leisurely pace.

If ever a man was wrong. Engineer goes off up Brown Tongue like a Cape Canaveral rocket, with Headmaster and Erk in close attendance.

Now I have not previously mentioned Erk. Erk is my own eldest offspring, a disgustingly fit twelve-year-old with the pace of a mountain goat. I had hoped that the said Erk would, in time-honoured manner, have due respect for his *pater*; carry the rucksack, allow me to lean on his shoulder, etc. Not so — the modern generation is sadly lacking in parental respect. Erk goes bombing on close to E. and H., leaving me with the rucksack, which is heavily overloaded with Erk's gear — food, pop, clothes, Meccano, weight-lifting equipment, and so on. To add insult to injury, as I gasp and wheeze up the track behind them, young Erk is actually chatting with the other two. I haven't enough puff even to croak 'help', and those three show-offs are actually *talking* as they ascend.

When I am half-way up Brown Tongue, seeing double and desperate for an oxygen cylinder, the other three have already disappeared past that big cairn at the top of the grunt. At last I stagger up to them. They are all magnificently relaxed in recumbent postures. Engineer sees me coming and leaps to his feet. 'On tha feet, men', says he, and off they go again at a rapid rate of knots.

Several thousand feet higher up, I cry out for water. At this point, Engineer is standing with his two big feet planted on either side of a delightful little stream, cool, clean and inviting. 'Tha wants a drink, does tha?' says he (note the authentic Yorkshire accent again). He looks about him with eagle eye, and then points up the Scafell precipices, and, I may add, in the opposite direction to our track to Hollow Stones. 'There's water up there' he says, and goes bounding off again. When we get there, the water is a miserable green dribble dripping off a dank overhang, and utterly undrinkable.

Later again. I am struggling up the scree to the foot of

Lord's Rake. At last I am feeling a little happier. My three companions have been out of sight for so long that I imagine that by now they are probably somewhere in the vicinity of Crinkle Craggs. I can go at my own pace. But as I come up to Lord's Rake, I am foiled again. There they sit, the remnants of their dinner all about them, Headmaster puffing contentedly at his foul pipe. Headmaster sees me coming, and nudges the other two. Hastily, they begin to pack their bags.

'I'll get you yet' I think. 'I, too, am not without cunning'. Now note my subtle plan. 'Sit still', I gasp as I totter past them. I stagger on up Lord's Rake. 'Feeling better now?' enquires Headmaster, solicitously. 'Just looking (gasp) for a place (gasp) to sit down' I reply, all the time putting precious feet, in height gained, between myself and the three sadists. I get all of thirty feet above them before a coronary thrombosis forces me to stop. There's a nice chair-shaped hollow in the rocks. I look back, there they are, thirty feet below me. 'Now', I think, 'I'll sit and watch them. When they get up, I'll get up, and with this start in the narrow rake, they can't pass me. They'll have to go at my pace all the way up.'

I am not kidding you. As I start to lower my backside towards that inviting chair-shaped hollow, Engineer is full thirty feet below me. As I sink into a blissful sitting position (for the first and last time that day), there is Engineer right beside me. 'On tha feet, man' he cries, scorching on up the Rake with Erk and Headmaster close at his heels.

I mustn't prolong the agony too much. I mean, there might be other chaps who have something to print in the *Journal*. But I mean, there are limits. One might expect to *stop* at the summit of Scafell, after blasting up West Wall Traverse at such rock-shattering speed that they now have a notice at the bottom prohibiting L-drivers and mopeds. We didn't. You might expect to *stop* at Burnmoor Tarn, having come down from Scafell via Slight Side in seven minutes flat. We didn't.

Sad my tale may be, but I haven't told you the half of it. Suffice it to say that every time I hear 'on tha feet, men' I am reduced to unmanly sobs.

But let me warn you. If ever Engineer or Headmaster (not to mention Erk) invite you to join them for a gentle saunter on a hot day . . . DON'T.

Another afternoon's stroll by this contingent!—*Ed.*

A MIDSUMMER'S TALE

J. Duff

Some of us can climb, some of us can't. Most of us walk, but don't. Occasionally a person does both and doesn't talk about it in the pub, and of course there's the likes of myself who do neither and like to write about it.

Act One

The scene is set, our principals are in a suitably alpine valley, which is full of extras, the hour is early afternoon and the heat is on. The principals tread a path past the people-who-don't-count and they wear a grim expression suitable to their hard calling.

Two are in front of you and one is behind. Why do you feel so ill I ask myself. You are young and fit but feeling like a dinner guest at Cesare Borgia's pad. Your person is a subtle interplay of pain, heat, sweat, burning throat, aching lungs, sore shoulders all perched on tortured legs. Snot mixes with dried sweat in your moustache. Will this day never end?

Up and up no time for a rest or it will be three in front and one way behind. Now don't think just concentrate on that fat backside which walks relentlessly up the hill ahead. Oh Christ, not a sign of strain on those brown cord features in front and they are slowly gaining on you. Well, the brown cords are out of sight now, so just let your mind transcend your flimsy frame.

Wilbur's laconic voice speaks from immediately behind me. Something to the effect of move over or be crushed. How can he speak without gasping? What a cheek, show him, burn him off. Pull your hat hard down, set your teeth in a perfect imitation of Hermann Buhl. Your speed is great for a zig, a zag, and then it's move over or be crushed yet again. Let him go. He is only five foot nothing with all the cooking gear. These hardy types (I got in the club by using terms like this) never see the countryside, but that's why *you* are here.

Slow up, take it all in, the greenery and the vanished glaciers. It is all so incredibly remote. Perhaps you have something loose in your muscle fibres. That screaming pain is unique to your metabolism. There are unnatural toxins sapping strength from your body.

The other three principals are out of sight now, so it's no use. You can't push yourself without an audience. You need

the incentive. Just five minutes rest, no more. You get that funny-forward-falling-feeling as your sack slips from your shoulders. That's it, sit on it, put it in its place. Now, even with your pulse at 160, your breathing ragged it does somehow feel better. Fade out the scene, ring down the curtain. End of Act One.

Act Two — Same scene

A little yellow flower with five assegai petals and further off a sun-shot cascade is running over a vein of pure quartz. Your pulse is 120 (i.e. normal). There are sounds from insects ticking, from your breath rasping, from cow bells ringing, from water gurgling, from Swiss ravens whirling and from muted motors roaring. You will all know how it is when you really listen. You do, don't you?

The sun gives out both heat and light. The heat creates a blue haze over the enormous depths of the valley. A haze which films over those jiggling ant-like molecules which from here must pass for people and their methods of transport; God, the heat. The light pours like molten brass on to the jumble of ice, rock and fluted snow; God, the light. You have wangled an extra ten minutes from yourself. (Pulse 80 — below normal). You get into harness, into your hat, and you are on your way!

It is not exactly Heigh-ho Silver! We all know how it is when muscles have stiffened. There is one hour gone and five more to go; God, the heat and the light.

Millions of years later body numb and feet stumbling you limp into the hut, trying to make a grand entrance. But it is slightly marred by tripping over in those canal barges euphemistically called hut slippers. There they are (and always will be). Three other principals grinning evilly, mugs of tea in their hands.

'Did you lose your way? Was it a tricky path?' 'Get stuffed.' You only made half an hour on me. *Chorus*. 'An hour you mean.' 'Three lumps in mine.' And you get it, but only because they know you need the extra calories. Do we call this friendship?

Act Three

During the night you have the nightmare. You fall into a crevasse. It has been there, snow-hidden all this time just waiting for you. Flailing sideways you pull half a ton of

moraine in after you. First you experience a micro-split second of terror followed by anguish as you think of how your old acquaintances will laugh wryly at the news; and then the crash of rocks spells doom. All around was a terrible glacial cold; God, the cold. In the middle of it all you see a worried face with a body attached. The body makes pathetic spider-like movements and it must be worried by that awful laboured breathing. The poor sod is dying. It's you, you fool, you realise this as the cold departs and pain and fear flood in. You are wedged above another steep drop so get into that harness. Hours (one hour actually) later your face bashes through the melting crust. Big friends help your battered frame back to the hut in which the table makes a bed. Telephone conversations take place and at dawn a great bird, a man-made job this time — comes for you. Deft hands strap you and your tortured breathing into the heart of the helicopter.

You cross the Eiger in record time, you park in front of a very smart hotel and cool firm hands strip you and fix you into bandages.

Act Four

Two days later Rod looms into your room and helps you out on stolen crutches for a beer or five. Unfortunately you collapse and have to be ferried back to bed again.

You spend a week with a French actress, convalescing. Then a crutch on clutch journey to Chamonix and you catch up with your friends.

Back home you climb Troutdale Pinnacle with John Syrett and swear to each other it's the last time.

Last Act

You wake up to hear an orthopaedic specialist saying your back is broken in two places. You mustn't strain if for half a year or so.

JOTTINGS FROM DOWN UNDER — 1972

Eric Arnison

I started to write a description for the Journal of climbing the highest mountain in Australia — all 7,316 feet of it, but the expedition was so dull (merely a slow slog for six hours in the face of a cold wind, up a gently angled snow slope), that it obviously had no entertainment value for anyone; it was even a poor 71st birthday present to myself. Well, perhaps not much entertainment value, except that Tim and I were ill provided with gear, not even a pair of long-johns (see *Fell and Rock Journal*, 1970), nor had we any food. The former we overcame by wearing all our summer shirts (three of 'em), topped off with a cagoule and windproof trousers. We had hoped to pick up some food at Higgins Hole, but this Australian Ski Resort was completely devoid of life at its off-season time; so we begged what we could from the occupants of two parked cars, with some success, and we proceeded at the rate of one very dry cream cracker each half-hour, and two very passé iced cakes for afters. The stone-built refuge hut, two hours before the summit, showed that the last occupants had been three Roman Catholic priests doing a long distance ski tour. We had five minutes for a cracker and then progressed to the Summit for no view whatsoever.

So, we'll switch to bears: the first type because of the press account from an alert young reporter who heard me telling a Police Superintendent-naturalist-pal, after the Court was over, the following incident which took place earlier in the holiday, which included a stop over in California.

'I was never so frightened in my life, as when going to get my climbing boots out of the back of the car at Ahwahnee Lodge, prior to a climb near the famed El Capitan in Yosemite Valley, I saw a damned great bear snuffling about amongst the stones beside the car park. 'I raised my eyebrows, made suggestions of defensive tactics, but I shot back into the Hotel, with no heroics.'

Well, the Reporter made it into a grizzly bear, which it was not; and I was credibly assured, later on, that it was a brown bear, and harmless too.

The next type of bear was the koala. Like my grizzly they

are a bit of a swindle as they are not bears at all, despite their appearance of being cuddly dwarf bears; no! they are marsupials carrying their young in a pouch in accordance with the popular Australian habit. Our friends at Toowoomba had a colony around their house. The beasties live only on the tender tips of young eucalyptus trees, and the dim witted creatures do not move as their food grows less, they prefer to starve to death. At Toowoomba they had a thriving colony (plenty of tips) of about forty, and I was able to get some good photographs of the attractive looking creatures.

The other 'Bares' were the very attractive and beautiful bronzed girls on the Manly and Bondi beaches; they all wore bikinis, but these were most demure garments, quite unrevealing. The reason? There are Beach Inspectors who have authority to turn them off the golden sands if their costumes are too provocative to male eyes. This is related somehow, but I cannot quite work it out, to the egg laying mammals, the spiny anteater and duck billed platypus, both unique to Australia. We saw both in their wild state.

From the cool of the Pacific Ocean beaches, we took our self-drive acreage of metal, provided by Mr. Hertz, to a cattle ranch on the Darling Downs, where Andy McWilliams runs his herds of Aberdeen Angus steers in bunches of five hundred, and visits some of his outlying lands in his private Cessna. And then on to the Opal Mines at Lightning Ridge near the Victoria border. Here the dust was really trying, especially to the distaff side. By playing on the kindly feelings and thirst of a miner called Val, I spent some hours underground — descending by a swinging ladder strangely like Bar Pot — hoping to dig a super gem. Val dismissed any hard won efforts as 'trash', but I was able to buy a few opals at reasonable prices, and have since had them made up into rings for my girls. Lightning Ridge was like a film set for the Westerns — clap board shacks and primitive camps for the miners and one each of Church, Police Station, Cemetery and Pub (I even saw opals being traded in for drinks).

We retraced our steps, stopping on the way back to Sydney. We descended a well lighted and cool cavern — 'organ pipes', 'wedding veil' and 'angel wings', it had the lot; we also had a splendid day's walk in the National Park forest of Warrumbungle with its curious 'breadknife' 500 foot rock pinnacle, complete with awful warnings about not climbing it — although it looked extremely interesting I was law abiding.

Moreover the 'Wineries' of the Barossa Valley called. A great area, this fertile valley near Adelaide, where a Doctor Penfold founded the wine growing industry more than a century ago (old by Australian standards). The firm of his name still flourishes and dispenses free wine at 'tastings'. Many of the growers, as we also noticed in the Californian wine fields, are of German and Austrian origin — dare one suggest that those countries must have had convicts too! The small 'Wineries' — one thousand bottle jobs — were probably the most interesting, as the producers are still experimenting with their types of wine, and liked to have one's views on their products. Visions of lip licking fellow members.

If you bring yourself to ask people who are interested, really interested, about their jobs, they will usually tell you lots of interesting things. I had fished all day near Launceston in Tasmania, caught nothing and finally gave it best, seeking consolation in a milkshake supplied by a little garage man. Opposite was a *wild life park*, so I wandered into it and presently asked a chap who was feeding the animals about some dingos. He turned out to be the boss, and was properly proud of the wild animals he had successfully bred in captivity, not the least being the Tasmanian devils, a cross in appearance between a black bull terrier and a huge rat, with villainous inset teeth. The devil's method of killing his victim, is to take hold of a tender protruding appendage with these locking teeth and hang on until death does them part.

The zoo man explained how the kangaroos bring up their young, an exciting procedure for all concerned. The few weeks old embryo makes its way over land and fur from the seat of birth to the pouch where it fastens onto a nipple small enough to match itself! it hangs on and grows in size until it is big enough to pop out of the pouch and feed off the grass — popping back again to sleep and rest and perhaps take a mouthful of milk. Meantime, another small 'Joey' has been awaiting his turn and by the same method of progression takes over the small so far unused teat. It is a continuous process for the female kangaroo. No wonder she goes hopping mad at times.

We came home in one continuous flight of 33 hours — a method not to be recommended, particularly being pitchforked from brilliant sunshine into slush and snow; moreover, 'jet lag' almost prevented my writing these jottings, perhaps it would have been better if it had.

A WEEK IN SKYE

K. Bennett

Ever since Rick and I traversed the Skye Ridge in 1970 from Glen Brittle and back, we had considered an attempt on the Greater Ridge. I was rather doubtful whether or not I would still be capable of coping with this, having read various accounts, but encouraged by Rick and a very successful trip around Glen Nevis last summer, I began to feel more confident.

Our pattern, used successfully on other occasions, involves only last minute preparations if, and when, the weather seems fitting. The great advantage is that no climbing time need be wasted, but one has to be completely self-supporting for the period involved. It is obviously no good going to Skye to organise, and wait, with the fixed idea of doing the Ridge, let alone the Greater Ridge. We had no time ambitions except to get back to Sligachan by the evening of the second day. As our attempt was to be right at the end of July or the beginning of August it was clear that on this occasion we must bivouac on Gars-bheinn to have time to complete the main ridge and then reach a second bivouac somewhere under Clach Glas before darkness. We felt that an overnight rest there would make the minor ridge and back to Sligachan a comparatively easy day. This was our only planning, the rest depended upon the weather.

I had great misgivings about our transport in the form of Rick's old 15 cwt. van, but it behaved wonderfully, and of course it had considerable advantages for camping. We drove up to Skye overnight from Tyneside, in unsettled weather, and with three drivers were at Glen Brittle camp site by 7.45 a.m., twelve hours after setting off. The morning weather was doubtful, but improved steadily. Having organised ourselves by noon we decided it was too good an opportunity to miss and set off to climb, John and myself in Coir a Ghrunnda, and Rick with Dave on something harder above the Cioch. This set the fatal pattern of late starts and later finishes. Sunday, a miserable cold day with mist well down, saw us away again about noon, just as it started to rain steadily, to do the northern end of the ridge from Bruach na Frithe to Sgurr nan Gillean and arriving back to a still later finish. I think we were still brewing up after 1 a.m.

No one was up early on Monday, but when we did stir the

weather looked different — there was a cool northerly breeze, the grey clouds were lighter and higher, there was even a hint of sun and we debated. I decided to have an off-day, or rather off-afternoon, while Rick and John looked at Window Buttress, which neither had done. A reasonable forecast from neighbouring campus at 6 p.m., was sufficient for us to risk starting in spite of possible showers and a mention of frost on high ground at night! We left just before 8 p.m. each carrying spare woollen clothing, cagoule and large plastic bag for our bivouac. The food might be regarded as rather meagre by some standards, but we had sufficient for 48 hours and if need be it could be stretched further. No cooking facilities were required and water was picked up at the last stream. A hundred feet of three quarter weight rope, a couple of slings, karabiners and anti-midge cream completed our gear.

On a cold evening with the light very slowly fading we made very good time up the worst section of our trip, the Gars-bheinn screes. We seemed to follow a better line than on previous occasions and bivouacked just below the summit. We only saw the last remains of the sunset but with the awe-inspiring views of dark hills and islands against the background of the sea, we decided already that the effort so far had been worthwhile.

Darkness lasted a long time that night and the forecast was nearly right. Admittedly we weren't frozen, but lay in a chilly coma. Later a remnant of moon appeared and made its pale contribution to the cool magnificence of our position. Neither of us seemed to sleep, yet at the finish we were later than we anticipated and were very slow in getting going. Cold water is not my favourite early morning drink, nor I gathered was it Rick's and it was after 5 a.m. before we had breakfasted and started moving rather clumsily on our way, having regretfully poured away our excess water, retaining only a quart apiece.

It was a perfect morning with the sun coming up casting long shadows from the tops stretching away across the sea to the west. About the time we approached the Thearlaich-Dubh gap we realised we were just pottering along, but the increased interest seemed to waken us up. We became conscious of time and began to start moving. Before long we were on the top of Alisdair and then back across the top of the Great Stone Shoot of Thearlaich.

We were round Corrie Lagan before any climbers had

appeared, and in fact we only met two people over the whole walk, until a party arrived when we were sitting on top of Blaven. The next stretch from Sgurr Dearg allowed us to relax and enjoy the views, and then came the interest of route finding over the tops of Mhadaidh and Bidein Druim nan Ramh—a stimulating section. We had an extremely late lunch of bread and cheese on the col below An Caisteal, but every two hours or so we had a handful of dried fruit, nuts and chocolate. There had been some mist around the northerly tops, but the lack of sun in the afternoon and a fresh northerly wind resulted in our water bottles being well stocked. Our previous Ridge-day was very hot, not a cloud in the sky all day and no breeze, and dehydration had been a serious problem.

The pull up to Bruach na Frithe is really the last of the donkey work, and by then the northern end of the ridge was clearing. Naismith's route was soon over and a few minutes later we were on the top of Am Bhasteir with Sgurr nan Gillean ahead, in sunshine. We moved fast on the easy descent and kept it up on a final rush along the West Ridge to reach the top just after 6 p.m. (Incidentally we deliberately missed the Inaccessible Pinnacle).

John and Dave were waiting for us having brought the van round to Sligachan and a pleasant hour was passed on the table top of Gillean admiring our surroundings, eagerly consuming a tin of sardines which was presented to us on our arrival, and discussing the immediate future. They were very keen to bivouac with us and do the second leg. Rick and I were going at our best and it was going to be an enjoyable party affair.

The next section to the Glen Sligachan path was unknown and rather reluctantly we left the top and progressed down the crest of the south east ridge and along towards Sgurr na h'Uamha turning down into the corrie east of Sgurr Beag. From the map and from memories of views from the Sligachan path we were fairly sure it would be better than a descent via Lota and Harta corries. It proved successful. There were some bouldery sections but we did get a long excellent scree run, and to avoid a steep lower gully we crossed to the right descending shoulder and found over the side an easy grassy descent to the Glen bottom. The rough flat ground between us and the path was not quite as bad as it looked, and with a few detours we were across with only an easy slog

along to Loch an Athain, ahead of us. John set a good pace and we arrived about 10 p.m.

In view of our experience of the previous night we decided to bivouac low down, which decision was backed up by a strong cold northerly wind blowing down the side valley, and not a hint of midges. A little prospecting and we found an ideal site a short distance up the burn. There was still a wonderful pink light just touching the Blaven tops and contrasting strongly with the sombre shadows of the valley, but this had disappeared by the time we were bedded in troughs of deep dry heather. It was a different climate from that just a few inches above and it was wonderfully comfortable, perhaps too comfortable for it was 6 a.m. before the first and eldest member of the party stirred.

It was a lovely morning and after a leisurely breakfast of boiled eggs, we set off at a reasonable pace for Clach Glas, a much more attractive grind than that up to Gars-bheinn. Once on the ridge we were met by a very strong blustery side wind, enough to slow us down while traversing Clach Glas, but at least it made it more interesting, and later it decreased to a reasonable breeze. With regard to both scrambling and route finding, the lesser ridge can hold its own with the best of the Main ridge. With a party of four we were moving more slowly, but it didn't take long before we were sitting on the top of Blaven on the sheltered side of the cairn with the whole of the Main ridge, and much of the best of Western Scotland, in sun and shadow. The Cuillins viewed from the east were still in sunshine showing up the detail of the higher eastern corries, and looking strangely different yet still familiar. After a leisurely lunch we left John, who was beginning to feel the effects of too many long days and too little sleep, to finish his photography, while we went along to the south summit, and then we all retraced our steps to Great Gully just south of the chimney, which is the key to Blaven from Clach Glas. This gully is the quickest descent, and though it brought us rapidly down to the corrie, the unstable scree is unpleasant and so keeping close together we stepped warily. This could have been our undoing as a boulder, from away up above us, hurtled down and shot straight through the party. It was a relief after that to move on to easy rock and grass to avoid the final steepening.

Once in the corrie we were soon back at our overnight site. This called for a picnic meal, mainly the remnants of our

fruit and chocolate, and eventually we set off in high spirits on a pleasant late afternoon stroll back to Sligachan, arriving at 7 p.m. The two younger members hurriedly passed their elders on the last stretch on the pretext of ordering our drinks. These were limited as somebody had to drive back and our main thoughts were on the meal we visualised at Glen Brittle, as well as a supply of certain pint tins, attractive to some of the party. The meal lasted off and on till at least midnight.

The next day was an off-day for swimming. Our time was coming to an end, but the following day, our last and hottest, was no anticlimax. We crossed the Main ridge into Coire an Lochan, down to the head of Coruisk for lunch and a swim, then back over the Dubhs to swim in Coir a Ghrunnda. We have certainly never had a finer mountain day, and to trot gently down over dry peaty ground to the camp in fading light just rounded it off.

Saturday a.m. — the tops had disappeared into damp mist and we were on our way home.

A CLIMB IN THE TRANSVAAL

David Hughes

Readers of the *Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa* might be forgiven for thinking that all South Africa's climbing takes place in the Western Cape or the Drakensberg Range in Natal. In fact the Transvaal has been developed with equal intensity and there is a lot of good climbing within easy reach of Johannesburg. The routes tend to be two to three hundred feet long, but if one is prepared to travel a bit further afield some really big, serious routes can be found. Possibly because of the easy access, the best of these are in the Waterberg Range about one hundred and fifty miles north of Johannesburg. The most popular venue is Krantzberg at the western end of the range where the escarpment ends in a smooth sheer face which is over five hundred feet high at its highest point. There are some really fine lines; Black Eagle, which is about five hundred feet long, bears comparison with any Lakeland classic, and in the best possible taste the crux is reserved for the last move round an overhang with an unbroken line to the scree below. A great challenge herabouts is Robin and Tony Barley's Armageddon which is a hard, serious route in the modern idiom and has had no subsequent ascent to date.

At the eastern end of the Waterberg range the routes are even more impressive, although perhaps lacking the elegance of those at Krantzberg. The escarpment here is a thousand feet high and the rock lies in a series of horizontal bands with few breaks. Consequently the routes are long and strenuous and the route finding intricate. The most notable climbs are: The Prow Hanglip Frontal and Zimbabwe Frontal. It was here that Dick Barry in 1937 and at the height of his short but brilliant climbing career forced routes up both Hanglip and Zimbabwe in a single weekend; two thousand feet of V.S. climbing — spectacular even by today's exacting standards. Tragically he was killed shortly afterwards in the Drakensberg and left no details of the routes. The gripping accounts of the attempts at second ascents are a fitting tribute to an amazing climber. Previously Barry had shown himself to be an outstanding climber in Britain, getting a long way up Dier Bield Buttress and finding the Grooves Traverse variation of Hiatus on Gimmer.

The challenge of Hanglip had been on my mind ever since

1971, when I first saw the cliff, but unfortunately no convenient opportunity had arisen to fulfill the ambition. Eventually, however, one April evening saw me driving north through Pretoria, Nylstroom, and Naboomsfruit to a camp site tucked under the great walls of the Waterberg. The next morning my companions John, Phil and George, and myself crawled out of our respective tents and surveyed the scene. Normally in the Transvaal April mornings are crisp and clear, but this morning was blustery and a great bank of cloud swirled around the summit of Hanglip. Undeterred by the unseasonable weather, John and Phil set off for Zimbabwe while George and I trudged off in the opposite direction towards Hanglip. The sight was anything but inviting, the whole upper section was covered in mist, and anyone could be forgiven for thinking that he was looking at Pillar Rock in November. After an hour and a half we arrived at the foot of the route where we went through the usual procedure of donning P.A.'s and sorting slings. I had the route description on a piece of paper, reminding me of those epic days of the fifties and early sixties, when route descriptions were handed down by word of mouth, and lovingly transcribed onto the back of cigarette packets.

The rock of the Waterberg is hard sandstone, and is not unlike the Roches in texture and character. Upward progress is by way of cracks linking the horizontal bands, which form the structure of the rock, or by swarming up the sides of large blocks which threaten to become detached at any moment. The whole nature of the climbing favours those who are tall, strong and can mantelshelf. Since none of these adjectives could describe me I resigned myself to a long drawn out struggle. The first twenty feet seemed to substantiate my worst fears as I hung in a precarious semi-layback position trying to get onto a ledge above my left ear. After one abortive attempt, I discarded technique and resorted to brute force (I really dislike this type of move first thing in the morning). The next few hundred feet all seemed very similar — up a groove until stopped by an overhang, round a corner and then up another groove. We had just reached the top of the third pitch when we noticed another party struggling to the foot of the climb. One of them was unmistakably Merv Prior, Chairman of the Transvaal section of the Mountain Club, and a man noted for his brilliant climbing and his appalling route finding. Sure enough he immediately attacked a groove

to the left of our start and ended up on top of a block from where progress seemed problematic. After passing the time of day, we left him to sort out his own salvation and continued upwards.

After some five hundred feet of climbing we reached the grass band which divides the climb into two sections. Above, the wall looked steep and intimidating. I found it difficult to relate the route description to the actual rock and engaged in a series of tentative explorations. While I was trying to extricate myself from one unusually ambitious position, the other party caught us up and Merv, showing unusual acumen found the right line straight away. In view of my remarks earlier in the day he had little sympathy for my predicament and rushed into the lead. After retreating, somewhat ruffled, to the ground, I set off after him. This proved to be the key pitch of the climb; it was full of delicate step-ups and culminated in an exposed traverse to the left followed by a bold mantelshelf.

The description of the next pitch had a certain whimsical charm. The advice was to traverse along a ledge and cross an open gap by climbing down six feet in an exposed position, or alternatively climb up and jump down from a sling point. The former method demonstrates the better technique and forms the original route. As the open gap was a great gaping hole, with the ground six hundred feet beneath, the intrinsic delights of the first ascent had little appeal for me. As with Linnell's Leap, on Cloggy, one did not actually have to jump, but one could climb down, and so the pitch went without excessive drama. The next hundred feet involved some strenuous climbing to the left followed by a long easy diagonal traverse to the right. I was ambling happily along a com-modious ledge, when it ended abruptly at an overhanging corner with a good ledge high up to the right. I could see Merv belaying on the ledge so I moved up hoping to join him, only to retreat in some confusion. With the exception of laybacking there can be no worse move than mantelshelving onto an undercut ledge. Still, the only answer was total commitment so I hurled myself upwards and rightwards and by dint of arms, elbows and thighs I eventually ended lying on the ledge like a stranded fish. Merv seemed amused by my antics, but consoled me somewhat by confessing that he had also arrived on the ledge with a certain degree of inelegance.

There followed a steep wall with three successive mantel-

shelves, each one harder than its predecessor, then an awkward stride round a bulge to a cubby hole, above which was a short vicious overhanging crack. Theoretically one was supposed to 'take a shoulder', but a chock placed high in the crack and a long tape simplified matters somewhat.

Only the final pitch awaited us, but now that we were through the overhangs we became aware of gentle persistent drizzle. Real English stuff — not two inches in one hour then the sun again as is typical of the Transvaal. The last pitch seemed interminable; my arms were like lead and the angle never seemed to relent. First, an eight foot wall had to be negotiated by an upward lurch and the inevitable mantelshelf. Then followed some steep unprotected wall climbing culminating in a crab-wise move to gain a small ledge, above which some thoughtful soul had placed a peg. Obviously he had been feeling as psychologically distressed as I was. A few more moves, then up a V groove through an overhang and I could see the top. It only needed one final mantelshelf and I was there. This last one nearly finished me; I got my body half up and my arms seemed to lock solid. By an all-out effort I managed to get over the equilibrium and collapsed on my face. Never has water tasted so sweet as that proffered by Merv. I expected George, full of youth and vigour, to shoot up, but he also must have been feeling the strain and it was a relatively subdued young man who eventually emerged grovelling round my ankles for the finishing holds.

By this time it was raining heavily and we had to get off before dark. Apparently there was a fairly quick descent involving an abseil from the first saddle behind the main peak. However, on looking over the edge nerves failed; it looked as if the descent could possibly be a little too rapid. We, therefore, contoured round the rough bushy slopes of the next rise to descend a steep grassy gully breaking the rock face. It was not hard, but exciting enough in the wet P.A.'s.

By the time we arrived back at the camp site it was dark and very wet and John and Phil had not returned from Zimbabwe. As the evening got steadily wetter and blacker it became obvious that they had decided to have a night out. Anita and Bonney, their respective wives, started to make agitated noises and were only calmed by my assuming my smooth, unruffled pose. Fortunately Anita and Bonney have never had the misfortune of climbing with me so they were partially convinced. On returning to my tent I found to my

horror that it was leaking badly. Fortunately I was able to persuade Bonney to move in with Anita for spiritual comfort — no sooner had she left her warm dry tent than George and I took over; it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

I was awoken next morning by the sun streaming through the tent entrance and Bonney proffering me a cup of tea. After accepting this obvious bribe we all set off for Zimbabwe armed with a pair of binoculars to try to locate the missing pair. I had just established myself in a comfortable position for surveying the place when our two heroes emerged from the foot of a grassy gully, wet, but unscathed. As they strode across the meadow into the arms of their awaiting women-folk, nobody spared a thought for my getting up early. It's an ungrateful world.

HOLIDAY WITH A DIFFERENCE

Mike Burbage

Following several years of courting and eighteen months of marriage, I finally persuaded Kath, my wife, that three weeks on the Alps could give a tan as good, if not better, than a similar trip to the Riviera.

One afternoon in July Bill Young, his wife, Kath and I set out for the Alps, but had not reached Dover before our first incident occurred — the exhaust system on our car fell off delaying us in London for half a day. We then had incident-free motoring all the way to St. Johann in Austria, although we did have our share of rain travelling through Germany. We camped in St. Johann on the municipal site, which had changed somewhat since my previous visit to this excellent centre situated on the fringe of the Kaisergebirge.

'So this is the beautiful, clean, sunny Alps, with the smell of pine and the pleasant clang of cow bells', Kath declared as she entered the tent following a visit, in the pouring rain, to the stinking toilets. This was her first morning and she had been awakened, first by thunder and lightning during the night, and then again at 6.30 a.m. by a bulldozer working on the next site — I was already beginning to feel guilty. This state of affairs was to continue for two or three days, until Bill and I decided that the weather was improving a little and that it was time to do a route as we were behind our schedule (I never seem able to keep to one in the Alps). Our first route was to be the Mauk West Wall, one of Buhl's routes, on the Maukspitz. To save a day we did the route from St. Johann, leaving at 3 a.m. and hoping to get back the same day. It was a twenty minute car ride and a three hour flog to the foot of the face. We took a stove hoping to have a brew at the bottom of the face, but we couldn't find water anywhere. Eventually I found some snow, but then discovered that I had left the matches behind, so we put the snow in our water bottles which were empty, and cached the stove and some food under a boulder. We set off feeling parched and somewhat annoyed.

After a rope's length the difficulties began; a series of very steep, and sometimes overhanging, chimneys made up the first third of the climb. We emerged from the chimneys somewhat dehydrated, to be met by a clap of thunder and an

instant storm. We sat on a ledge for over an hour until the storm abated; we were wet through and undecided whether to continue or not. The next section was smooth limestone slabs which were running with water and spattered with hailstones, but the thought of retreating down those chimneys led us to believe that the continued ascent might be easier. Another storm and several hours later we emerged on top, wet and a bit weary, but content (although we didn't know it then, this was to be our only climb of the holiday). An easy descent returned us to the bottom of the face, and, so we thought, to our cache of food, but this was not to be; a herd of stinking goats must have spent most of the day digging it out from under the stones where we had buried it earlier. It was annoying to say the least; they had also smashed Bill's Gaz stove and had excreted all over my sweater. Now I am usually friendly towards animals, but that herd of goats is probably still bruised from the stones I hurled at them. It was raining by the time we reached the valley. However, having got to grips with an Alpine route again, I felt that the holiday was at last under way.

It was still raining two days later as we left for the Dolomites and Cortina d'Ampezzo, but our hopes for an improvement in the weather in that region of the Alps were soon shattered—we stayed only one night. Over a week of our holiday had gone without a single dry day, so we decided to leave the hills and head for the Riviera. This meant another epic drive. We passed through storm after storm as we crossed the Italian plains, and in one particularly bad storm, only 50 kilometres from the coast and Genoa, we ground to a halt on the motorway with our engine completely flooded. There were cars flooded out about every ten yards; it was almost unbelievable, the rain was so heavy that the drainage could not possibly cope, and the incessant thunder and lightning seemed to give emphasis to the drama. This continued for what seemed like hours whilst we sat helplessly in the car drinking a bottle of gin to help pass the time. It was almost 11 p.m. and eight hours since leaving Cortina. Eventually the storm abated and, after drying the engine, we drove on; unfortunately the car had developed an electrical fault and the alternator was not working. I drove on until the lights faded which left us miles from a campsite in yet another violent storm. It was 3 a.m. yet I didn't feel like sleeping, so when the storm ceased Kath and I went for a walk. At daybreak, after push-starting the

car we drove on to the nearest town where, in a cafe, we sat drinking coffee and eating salami rolls at 6.30 a.m. We were haggard, tired and disappointed for, apart from the increase in temperature, the weather was just as foul after our 200 mile drive. However, after finding a good campsite, complete with shower, the weather cleared and two glorious days of sunshine followed. The car was repaired and we were beginning to feel human again. However, we had only managed one route and the holiday was now half over; we were getting itchy feet again. Two days of sunshine and thoughts turned once more to the Alps. It would take us a day to drive back and by then the conditions would be improving, so we departed for Courmeyer. The weather held until we arrived, and then broke. Within twelve hours there was fresh snow down to the tree tops, by which time we were so sickened that we decided to try a low-lying area — the Dauphiné.

We crossed the Little St. Bernard Pass, down to Albertville, but owing to poor map reading we got lost and ended up having to go over the Col du Glandon and the Col de la Croix de Fer, and once again we met with violent storms, sheet lightning everywhere, hail and snow on the tops of passes and rain in the valleys. It was whilst descending the latter pass that we experienced the worst moment of our holiday. We were passing through a particularly narrow part when we came across boulders, obviously washed down from the fell-side in the storm, strewn all over the road. Some were so large that we had to drive round them. It got worse as we went along and I got the impression that if one of these larger boulders were to hit us that it would pierce the roof of the car — one or two had buried themselves in the road surface. Shortly we were stopped by an amazing sight, a waterfall, which had normally broken out some ten feet from the road, was now streaming out over the road and blocking it. One could even see stones coming down in the waterfall and bouncing off the road at incredible speed — a frightening sight. Bill inspected the waterfall before any decision was made. We decided that to go on was no more dangerous than remaining where we were so we edged forward slowly in bottom gear. We had padded the car interior with sleeping bags, except the windscreen, in order to protect ourselves. There was a feeling of tension inside the car, in fact Kath and Val were so frightened they couldn't speak. It was all over quickly; I just drove slowly through, giving the engine full

revs at one point as we became lodged on a submerged boulder. As we emerged we passed a Citroen that hadn't been so lucky as ourselves, I only hope that the occupants survived. Crossing the two passes had taken a long time and darkness was approaching as we arrived in Bourg-d'Oisans. We had planned to have a meal there, but the town was in darkness owing to an electricity failure, so we pressed on in the pouring rain towards la Bérarde, our ultimate destination. The route winds tortuously up a narrow valley where once more we were met with a boulder-strewn road. Thinking that the valley would widen out I drove in and out of the boulders only to find that, not only did the valley get narrower, but that the road got worse, and when one large stone just missed the car I turned round and drove back. By now my nerves were shattered by the day's events, and with the need for food and sleep we returned to Bourg-d'Oisans to find the lights back on. We dived into the first hotel which was pretty rough, however, after a few drinks its appearance improved so we decided to stay the night. Throughout the night we were wakened by claps of thunder, but awoke to a very still morning.

We headed for la Bérarde once more and were pleased to see our section of the road had been cleared of boulders, but higher up the mountain side had collapsed onto the road completely blocking it. A bulldozer was already at work doing its best to clear this enormous landslide, and at first didn't seem to make much impression as the mud and boulders collapsed onto the road, but eventually the bulldozer won through in spite of the hordes of jabbering workers, each intent on directing operations. When we finally got through to la Bérarde it was plastered with fresh snow; so almost immediately we departed for la Grave on the other side of the range where we made camp in the afternoon sun. Our gear was in an appalling state and that night it was like being under a wet blanket hanging from a clothes line. That evening it looked as though we might get on the hill, but dawn brought a watery sky and the inevitable deluge had started by breakfast. Disappointed and frustrated we thought we might try the Dordogne in Western France; the weather would be better there!

We were wrong; we were three hundred miles from the Alps and that night Bill and Val were washed out of their tent; it was time to head for home. In the north of France we stayed the night in a hotel where Bill and I had rather a lot

to drink. I woke at 5 a.m. and felt very sick. In an attempt to avoid this I left the hotel to get some Alka-Seltzer from my car. The hotel front door was locked but I managed to get out into the back garden where I scaled the wall by climbing a tree from which I dropped into the street. I was still feeling the effects of the drink. After obtaining the tablets the task of getting back over the wall presented a problem. I finally climbed it with difficulty, but the strain had been too much and I was ill just after dropping into the garden, thus defeating the object of the whole exercise. As we neared the coast the engine began to give trouble but we managed to drive onto the ferry where the engine stopped for the last time. We had to push the car off the boat to Customs, then we were towed away by the R.A.C. who fixed us up with a hotel for the night paid for by our insurance. The next day I was informed that a new engine was required, so I decided to phone the firm as it was a company car. They arranged for me to go to London on expenses to pick up a new one. In London the people at the garage were most helpful; they had a new Cortina waiting for me with a tank full of petrol and tax disc in position ready to drive away.

Back in Dover we changed the load over and drove home. It was the best day of the holiday, a new car and sunny all day.

THE ANNUAL DINNER MEET

W. A. Comstive

The weather on this occasion was fine, dry and cool with a good deal of sunshine which displayed the richness of the autumnal tints in all their glory. I heard it said that it was one of the finest autumns for some years, this is difficult to assess as the memory of past years soon fades, but certainly the colours on both days were magnificent.

The party of which I was a member traversed Blencathra on Saturday by way of Sharp Edge, returning down Hall's Fell. Scrambling up the gully on the final section of Foule Crag to The Saddle, we were confronted by Bobby Files's party on their way down. Some remarks passed about the lateness of the hour and we defended our presence at that time by reminding our venerable friend that the mountain forms part of his back garden. There were smiles all round and we departed on our way to the summit where lunch was taken. Other parties ranged far and wide, one Vice-President and son climbed Tophet Wall on The Napes, and there were climbing and walking parties out on the Borrowdale Fells.

The Annual General Meeting was again held in the Battersby Hall in Keswick attended by over ninety members with The President, Charles Tilly, in the chair. Affairs moved smoothly and quickly, the officers reported briefly and to the point, the heads of department and committee were duly elected. As the meeting progressed towards any other business it was felt that some item of dissension may have upset the calm, but no breeze ruffled the surface and it was all over in thirty-five minutes.

We all retired to the lounge of The Royal Oak to liquefy ourselves, and as friend met friend the general hubbub reached a crescendo just as dinner was called before eight. It's amazing how we suffer the heat and noise of such a cheerful gathering and it was observed that many jackets were surreptitiously removed as the temperature rose. Perhaps it is because mountaineers are, on the whole, solitary people that they are prepared to be gregarious only on odd occasions each year and rub shoulders (literally) with fellow members and their guests.

The toast to absent friends is always a poignant moment and this year it was coupled with the thought that the club's last two original members, Arthur Gimson and Jonathan Stables, passed away during the year.

The toast to The Club and Our Guests was proposed by The President. During an eloquent and witty speech it was apparent that he was not only well versed in The Thoughts of another Chairman in high office, but he had also recently read in some detail the biography of a famous royal lady who lost her head subsequent to making good her escape with the aid of the Lord of Unreason. During the course of his speech The President paid tribute to

Geoffrey Wilkinson for his outstanding achievement in being awarded a joint share in the 1973 Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

The equally humorous response by our chief guest, Mrs. Jane Taylor, was not without its moments. Owing to the inability of the males to reply, she was unfettered in her assault on what remains to be the last sanctity of man, the all male club. Light entertaining stories from her profession accompanied by climbing anecdotes brought to an end the more formal proceedings of the evening and allowed us to continue the remaining business until the small hours.

Sunday was, if anything, a better day, with clearing skies from the north west. Cameras were no doubt clicking everywhere as the glories of autumnal Lakeland were framed in viewfinders. Parties were out in force and groups of members and their guests were ranged on High Street, Fairfield, Blencathra, the Newlands area and the fells and crags of Borrowdale.

In conclusion, as I motored home that evening my thoughts were of a happy active club seemingly unchanged. Although its membership changes imperceptibly the fine traditions remain to carry it into the future.

THE SANDFORD REPORT

Editorial

The Sandford Committee Report on National Park Policies was published in early 1974. They were asked: to consider how far the National Parks had fulfilled their original purpose; to what extent changes have occurred; what further changes were likely; and what policies should be adopted for the National Parks. The original aims of the Parks were twofold: first, the preservation and enhancement of natural beauty; and secondly, the promotion of their enjoyment by the public. The public, at that time, were taken in the main to be those who would engage in the 'highly active' pursuits of climbing and walking. These two aims can be simply summarised under the titles of 'preservation' and 'access'. The main instrument for preservation has been the control of many kinds of development, especially buildings.

The Report points out that a conflict now exists between the two aims owing to the increasing use of the Parks for leisure and recreational purposes. To quote the Report, 'People have begun to destroy the very qualities they have come to enjoy'. There are of course other conflicts: preservation versus mineral extraction and road building; access versus overcrowding; and preservation and access for the nation versus the economic and social well being of the inhabitants of the Parks. It is pointed out that the pattern of access to the Parks has changed in that those who come to picnic, sightsee, take short strolls and engage in 'less active' pursuits now far outnumber climbers and walkers.

Some of the main recommendations of the Committee are: first and most important, that in any conflict between access and preservation the latter must have priority; secondly, they suggest much stronger control of development of all kinds. For example before mineral extraction, road building, opening more outdoor pursuits centres and reservoir construction, not only should the (new) 'National Parks Board' be fully consulted but investigations should be made as to how far alternatives are available and to what extent existing facilities are being utilised. And more, where individuals refuse to comply with planning authority requests there should be powers of compulsory purchase available in the last resort; thirdly, in view of the changing pattern of access, the 'less active' outnumbering the 'highly active' there should be a policy of creating leisure centres that utilise local facilities (this would take some pressure off the 'natural' recreational facilities and benefit local inhabitants to some extent); fourthly, there is a recommendation by a minority of the Committee that special and even more stringent protection should be given to 'national heritage areas' within the Parks themselves; finally, the Committee recommends that more country parks be provided so that the leisure seeking population will be less concentrated into the current Parks areas.

I shamelessly use my position as joint editor to applaud these measures but personally I recommend that we as a club do not merely endorse them but suggest that they do not go far enough. One of the most important areas where preservation and enhancement is in danger is in the introduction of industry—mining operations in particular—of various types into the Parks. One might suggest going further than Sandford and saying, not just that the economic importance of materials and goods be ascertained and that the onus should be on the firm to show that there are no alternatives in non-Park areas, but that the firm should have to demonstrate very clearly before a highly experienced and qualified tribunal that the social and economic benefits to society (not just the firm) very clearly outweigh the costs of detracting from preservation and enhancement of the Parks. Further, one might suggest that the operations of these firms be monitored to check that the benefits are in fact coming through and no unacceptable destruction is taking place. And then, when and if operations are finished—as with open cast coal mining—the area should be returned to as near its natural state as possible. This latter standard should not be determined by the firm.

Perhaps the major weakness of the Report will be seen by many as the low priority it seems to give to the needs of local inhabitants. It is significant that in an Appendix of Social and Economic statistics nothing is said about domestic incomes of those living in the Parks; about the growth of employment opportunities, about the level of unemployment; about the overreliance on tourism with its cyclical and seasonal fluctuations; or about how the housing problems of local people can be solved financially. While remarking on this it is perhaps not a subject that can be discussed here.

Some controversy existed within the Committee over the creation of an 'inner Park' which would be declared a 'national heritage area'—rather as are ancient monuments. The cost of conserving such areas would be borne by the Exchequer and no development or change would be permitted without reference to a Parliamentary body. One reason for this could be said to lie in a wish to balance the benefits to the nation against the costs to the inhabitants of preserving the Park areas, and of providing amenities for visitors. Any attempt to balance these factors usually means that preservation has to suffer to some extent even when fairly stringent controls exist. A second reason is due to the pattern of access. Places such as Keswick and Bowness are areas of people, commercial or publicly provided leisure, and vehicles. While the hills are natural, relatively empty, and recreation is provided by the individual (and a few friends). These two areas of varied 'activity' should be seen to be different and kept different from each other.

Those who disagree with this argue that there are problems of definition and selection: special status for an 'inner Park' would

depreciate the standing of the 'outer Park'; creating special areas would encourage even more access and so endanger preservation; the system would be financially and administratively difficult.

In reply it could be said that in any attempt at categorisation there are problems of definition. It is not outside our abilities to draw boundaries if we so wish. If the distinction between 'highly active' and 'less active' is real—and most Club members will likely feel that it is—then such areas will not become overcrowded as they will lack the amenities that the 'less active' seek. It would not be a question of different status but simply that controls are more stringent in one area than another. In practice one suspects this to be the case. Controls being less tightly applied at the periphery of the Parks than in the heartland. Finally—as with boundaries—it is not impossible to work out satisfactory financial and administrative relations between organisations especially when they have common objectives.

In short I would endorse the proposal of creating natural heritage areas in which one could engage in the 'more active' pursuits. This could be seen as maintaining the original aims of the Parks. Also, when and if traffic controls became necessary it may help to organise such measures and decide on priorities. This raises a critical question for us as a club. Are we simply to endorse (or reject) the Sandford Report and do nothing? Or should we attempt to play a more active part by seeking direct representation on the body that will implement any measures and so try to influence as well as be aware of the course of events?

Terry Sullivan

SCENE FROM LONDON

John Whitehouse

You will not wish to be bored by the customary catalogue of Sunday walks; but you may find a limited insight into what it otherwise means to be a Fell and Rock member in London slightly more interesting.

From London, Lakeland is a vision at the far end of 300 miles of haze-hung road, negotiated with mixed feelings. For those of us who drive up fairly often it is not always easy to justify adding to the pollution. We are thankful for the motorway that stretches for over two-thirds of the journey, reducing it to a long evening's drive but at the same time we think of the extra thousands it and its feeders carry to the same goal. Better roads have their drawbacks within and without National Parks, M6 or A66.

Despite the shortening of travel-time, however, and the ease with which we square our consciences (not using the motorway wouldn't make it go away) two serious deterrents still stand between the Lakes and us in London—the strain and the cost of a journey which lasts not less than six hours, and perhaps as long as eight hours, according to whether the venue is Beetham or Brackenclose. Once, at Raw Head, a northern member, whose car is no slouch, supposed that Langdale to London would take about four hours. Let us not quibble about a timing which puts even the average speed above the legal limit. The practical point is that it can be done, but usually isn't, and we don't recommend it. Most people and their cars need more time. More time means a longer journey, means more refreshment stops means, more time. The ever-rising cost of petrol bears on us in the south incomensurably. It is surprising, in the face of all this, how many still leave London regularly on Friday evening for a week-end in the hills. Perhaps most of them, because they arrange collective transport, will be able to carry on in spite of the ever-mounting economic and nervous strain (although in the London Section it has not been possible to make arrangements of this sort). It seems more likely however that the millions of Merseyside, Selnece and the West Riding will be pushed by the pressures of inflation, and poor foreign value for the pound, into local holidays in Lakeland while we in out-of-the-way London feel more than ever estranged from it; more than ever appreciative of literary links such as the *Chronicle*, Harry Griffin's and Enid Wilson's *Guardian* pieces and, of course, this Journal.

NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES

Ed. Grindley

This year's section is, unfortunately, rather short for two reasons: firstly, very few people have sent in descriptions and secondly, the new routes book at the 'Packhorse' in Keswick has disappeared again.

Some very good routes have been discovered in Langdale but, at present, the number of generally known big, worthwhile lines seems to be down to two. They are both unclimbed at the time of writing. Several teams are interested so no doubt their descriptions will appear eventually. Outside Langdale the major discovery is Phobos on Dove Crag: an extremely hard and impressive climb made by Colin Read and John Adams.

Publication of the new Scafell guide is imminent so no descriptions to that area have been included.

DOW CRAG AREA

DOW CRAG

Lynx

170 feet. Extremely Severe. Follows the slim groove between Tarkus and Murrays before crossing that

route to take the overhangs above.

(1) 30 feet. As for Tiger Traverse.

(2) 65 feet. From the belay traverse left into the groove. This soon steepens and leads to a crack slanting right (peg and hammer marks). Climb the crack strenuously and swing right to junction with Murray's Route.

(3) 75 feet. Follow Murray's Route for a few feet until it is possible to step right onto a small slab capped by an overhang. Swing right around the arête and hand traverse to a layback crack which leads to an overhung niche. Exit strenuously leftwards to easier ground.

M.G.M., M. G. Allen 14.9.74.

This route had been climbed previously but pegs had obviously been used on the crux.

Catacomb

Variation to second Pitch. Fine climbing and nice situations.

(2a) 75 feet. From a stance on Giants Crawl (about 20 feet higher than normal stance) step right and climb a short wall to a roof (poor flake runner). With difficulty gain a ledge on the left. Traverse horizontally left to join the grass ledge below the final crack.

M.G.M., M. G. Allen 14.9.74.

GREY CRAG

The Clown

130 feet. Very Severe. Climbs directly up the clean steep buttress to the right of Culloden which lies at the right-hand end of the crag. A good route.

(1) 80 feet. In the centre of the buttress is an obvious leftward-slanting crack. Climb this, strenuously, passing two spike runners, to the point where it forks. Step left and climb the left-hand crack direct until the angle eases and a belay can be taken.

(2) 50 feet. Climb directly up the slab above, passing a small grass ledge on the left and then delicately to the top.

First ascent: K. Jones, B. Hasling, 19.8.72.

ERIN CRAG

Erin 105 feet. Very Severe (Hard). Start at the foot of an obvious wide crack, at the extreme right end of the crag.

- (1) 80 feet. Climb the crack to below a short overhanging groove on the right. Enter this groove to an awkward resting place (peg runner). Move out boldly on to the right arête and climb this to a large grass ledge.
- (2) 25 feet. Climb the obvious flake crack in the wall above.

First ascent: K. Jones, D. Goddard, 19.8.72.

NOTE: Silence has had a second ascent by R.M. and D.M. and two other teams. It was found to be very hard.

EASTERN CRAGS

RAVEN CRAG, THIRLMERE

Empire 270 feet. Extremely Severe. Start at the pinnacle, as for Totalitarian.

- (1) 60 feet. Move right and climb directly up (loose) into a shallow groove. Now straight up on to grass and make a hard move to gain a ledge system. Belay (peg) 10 feet to the right.
- (2) 80 feet. Start up the depression and move left across the scoop. Make an awkward move to gain an obvious flake crack and bridge up until a hard swing right can be made. Follow the fine ramp and up quartz and flake holds to a small ledge. Peg belay.
- (3) 40 feet. Climb the slab, trending right, into an obvious, steep groove (peg runner). Bridge up and move left to cross Communist Convert and up 10 feet to the belay of Totalitarian.
- (4) 40 feet. Bridge up steeply to the overlap and make an awkward reach to a peg (in place) which is used for aid. Move right into the shallow groove and use a sling on a tiny spike to reach small holds. Traverse across the slab to finish on the nose of the buttress.

First ascent: K. Myhill, K. Jones (varied leads), September '73.

DOVE CRAG

Phobos 230 feet. Extremely Severe. Start at the foot of the scramble up to Hiraeth.

- (1) 100 feet. Climb vegetated rock to reach a clean crack which leads to the traverse of Hiraeth. Make the mantelshelf move. From the highest of the flat ledges climb leftwards for 20 feet up the steep wall; then move right to a shallow niche with good holds. Step back left and climb the groove above. Make a long reach over the bulge and use a peg (in place) to gain the overhang above. Turn this on the right and gain a grass ledge. Peg belay.
- (2) 50 feet. Step right and climb a short groove to gain a gangway. Go left up this and the chimney above to a stance above the crux pitch of Hiraeth.
- (3) 80 feet. Climb the short corner of Hiraeth and move right. Climb the steep corner above until a traverse right (peg runner) leads to easier ground.

First ascent: C. Read, J. Adams (alternate leads) 19.8.72.

GIRDLE TRAVERSE

The description to pitch 6 in the last journal is incorrect. It should read:

- '(6) 40 feet. Step down and cross above the bulge of Hangover to reach a doubtfully wedged flake. Reach across to a peg and use it to place an aid-sling around another doubtful flake. Step up to another wedged flake and continue the traverse to a small bay. Peg belay.'

NORTH BUTTRESS

The second pitch requires more aid than described in the last issue.

BUCKBARROW, LOW CRAG

Express Crack 100 feet. Very Severe (Hard). This is the impressive corner of Low Crag. Start a few feet left of The Shackle and climb the corner. There is a stance at 60 feet. First ascent: J. A. A. and party.

NAB SCAR, GRASMERE

Colostromy Direct Start. 75 feet. Very severe (Hard). Start at the foot of the buttress, at its centre and some 30 feet left of the ordinary route. Climb a leftward-slanting ramp; then move up right to the second stance. First ascent: E. G., P. Cavanagh, 5.5.73.

NOTES—Both North Buttress (A.L.) and Phobos (E.G., I.R.) have had second ascents. The former was found gripping and the latter hard but good. Mordor had what is possibly its third ascent (E.G. and Cynthia Heap). The route was found difficult and the direct (original) start much better than the one described in the guide book. Little Buttress (Birk Crag) has been climbed without its aid-sling (K.W. and G. Jones). The Last Laugh has been reported as being climbed completely free. All aid has been removed from Gouther Crag, Swindale; Foss being climbed completely free by R. V., J. A. A. and E. G.

GREAT GABLE AREA

THE NAPES

Crinkler's Cracks 265 feet. Very Severe (Hard). The climb starts in Needle Gully, about ten feet left of the start of Eagle's Corner. A climb of interest with good protection.

- (1) 65 feet. A steep and strenuous crack, which is awkward to start and to finish, leads to a grass stance and a large bollard belay (top of pitch 1 of Tricouni Rib).
- (2) 75 feet. The rib of Tricouni Rib, pitch 2, is split by a well-defined crack on its right side. From the belay, move 6 feet to the right to the foot of this crack and climb it, crossing Tricouni Rib, to the belay at the beginning of the traverse (pitch 4) of Eagle's Corner. Traverse 15 feet to the right over grass, to a large block belay.
- (3) 65 feet. A splendid pitch (crux). Descend a few feet to the right on grass; then climb cracks to a small ledge, which is clearly visible on the skyline. Move up to the overhang and make an awkward move left into a steep corner-crack, which runs up between overhangs. Make an exit on the right to a grassy niche with a thread belay.
- (4) 60 feet. Continue up easier cracks to an open V-groove, which leads to the crest of Eagle's Nest Ridge.

First ascent: R.V., J.W., 19.5.73.

LOWER CRAG, BUCKBARROW

This crag lies 200 feet below and some yards west of the 'Mysterion' crag. The routes are described from left to right.

Interjection 100 feet. Very severe (mild). Starts on the left of the steep wall at a dirty corner.

- (1) 55 feet. Climb the dirty corner and traverse out left for 30 feet. Climb the wall (peg) to a ledge.

- (2) 45 feet. Move right and up the corner.

First ascent: R. Bennet, R. Lavender, 6.5.73.

To the right of this is a steep wall with an undercut groove on its left. This was climbed in 1962 by J. Wilson and is very severe.

Lothlovien 240 feet. Very severe (Hard). To the right of the steep wall lies an obvious, cleaned line with a prominent overhang.

- (1) 120 feet. Climb the slab and move right to a sharp-edged block at the foot of the overhang. Climb the overhang and crack above to a resting place. Step left across the wall into the cleaned corner which is climbed direct to a bulge. Cross this and continue in the same line to a large juniper belay.
- (2) 50 feet. Cross to the yellow wall and climb it on the left to an easier slab.
- (3) 70 feet. Continue up slabs above.

First ascent: L. Goldsmith, D. Banks, 15.6.70.

The Owl 185 feet. Very difficult. Starts in the centre of the crag, at an obvious easy break, 20 yards right of an overhanging wall.

- (1) 55 feet. Climb the cleaned crack and slab. Move right to a nut belay below a steep wall.
- (2) 60 feet. Traverse right across the wall and up to cross a large glacia. Flake belay.
- (3) 70 feet. Go left, then up, move right and up through the break on to a slab above. Climb this on large but doubtful holds.

First ascent: R. Bennet, D. Fryer, May 1972.

Hecate 200 feet. Very severe (Mild). Starts in the centre of the crag, just right of 'Owl'.

- (1) 130 feet. Go up and right into a short groove and pull over on to slabs, up the left edge and on to a slab. Cross this and belay on a large flake.
- (2) 70 feet. Climb into the steep corner on the right and up it until at half-height a step right can be made to the rib. Step up, then right, and left into the shallow groove above. Climb this until forced right up a line of flakes. Continue diagonally right but finishing to the left.

First ascent: R. Bennet, R. Lavender, 18.5.73.

Dang-a-ling 200 feet. Severe (Hard). Start 20 feet right of 'Owl'.

- (1) 70 feet. Climb the slab, trending left, then the clean slabby groove to a belay below a large square-cut overhang.
- (2) 100 feet. Move down and traverse right below an obvious crack in the wall above. Climb up and move left again. Ignore the crack (which has been climbed) and continue left above the overhang. Climb diagonally left and climb a groove to a small stance.
- (3) 30 feet. Traverse right below the overlap on good holds and take the first break which leads to the top.

First ascent: J. Wilson, 1962.

NOTES—Numerator, Fangorn and Landlubber on Boat Howe have all been repeated by W. Lounds. Only one point of aid was used and this was a peg on Fangorn. Iago (Heron Crag) has been climbed without the second peg (E.G., G.H.).

GREAT LANGDALE

GIMMER CRAG

Whit's End 75 feet. Extremely severe. From the stance at the start of the traverse of Whit's End (about 8 feet right of F route) climb directly, via a thin crack, to the left end of the overhangs. Pull round to the left into a short overhung corner and then right, on to the front of the face above the overhangs. Up more easily to the top.

First ascent: J.A.A., R.V., 2.10.72.

PAVEY ARK

Sinistral 120 feet. Extremely Severe. Several parties attempting The Hobbit have traversed left at too low a level (beneath the first overhangs). To avoid more confusion we give the following description.

- (1) 120 feet. Move up the rib, as for the Hobbit, to the obvious horizontal break under the first overhang. Follow this break to the left for 30 feet to the foot of a short overhanging corner. Climb this and move left to a tiny ledge. Climb steep cracks to an overhang and move leftwards to a large ledge on Stony Butress.

Probable first ascent: P. Long, S. Michniewski. 10.8.71.

Aadvark 180 feet. Very Severe (Hard). Start 30 feet down to the right of Gwynne's Chimney on a small quartz glacia. The climb takes the steep arête to the right of the chimney.

- (1) 110 feet. From the glacia climb straight up the steep arête to a peg (aid) below a small overhang. Move leftwards and up with difficulty to reach a small sloping ledge. Move up rightwards across a wall to a small spike runner on the arête. Follow the arête to a ledge and spike below.
- (2) 70 feet. Climb a short wall on the right to meet Cook's Tour. Move right again and climb the obvious crack.

First ascent: P. Long, D. J. Harding, 30.9.72.

Brain Damage 225 feet. Extremely Severe. Start 30 feet to the left of Red Groove, at a large spike and below some black streaks coming down from an overlap.

- (1) 75 feet. Climb the left-hand streak to a downward pointing flake in the overlap. Step left under this; then straight up the wall to gain the foot of a steep, green groove which leads to the 'tiny ledge' on the Red Wall section of the Girdle. Peg and thread belays.
- (2) 150 feet. Gain the steep groove above and climb it to a standing position on a sharp flake on the right wall. Move right around the rib and climb the wall to a peg, which is used to consolidate a resting position below the overhang. Climb the overhang (free) and up steep rock above, until the angle eases.

First ascent: E.G., G.H., P. Long, 23.8.73.

Risus 155 feet. Extremely severe. Start at the thread belay below pitch 2 of Red Groove.

- (1) 90 feet. Climb the first 15 feet of Red Groove and continue up the overhanging groove just right of the detached block at the start of Red Groove's traverse. The groove fades out and after 20 feet a poor resting place is reached. Step left and climb by doubtful holds to a grass terrace which leads right to a stout juniper belay on Hobson's Choice (pitch 3).
- (2) 65 feet. A steep gangway slants right above the tree. Climb this and gain a grass ledge above. Go diagonally left to a small rock ledge

(peg runner, in place, at foot level), and from the left side of this ledge climb a shallow groove to the overhang. Move around the left side of this to the top.

First ascent: E.G., N.J.S., D. Harding, September 1972.

Fallen Angel 235 feet. Extremely severe. Start 20 feet down the gully from Hobson's Choice.

- (1) 85 feet. Move up and left on to the slab and climb slightly leftwards to gain a shallow groove. Move right where it steepens then back left to a ledge. Traverse 15 feet right and down to a grassy ledge below an impressive groove.
- (2) 75 feet. Climb the wide crack leading into the 'pod' and continue with increasing difficulty to a peg in the steepest section. Use this for aid, pull over the bulge and move up a few feet to another peg (used for gardening and resting). The right wall now gradually eases in angle and curves rightwards below a grass ledge. Follow the corner until 15 feet below the ledge and move right to a poor stance on the slab, almost level with the ledge and below a thin crack. Peg and nut belays.
- (3) 75 feet. Climb the thin crack until possible to move rightwards to a large bollard, overlooking the direct finish to cascade. Move left into a groove directly above the stance and follow it to the top.

First ascent: E.G., I.R., 21.10.72.

BOWFELL

Mindprobe 180 feet. Extremely Severe. Climbs the grooves in the arête to the right of Sword of Damocles.

- (1) 50 feet. Climb a slabby groove to below two steep grooves. Up the left-hand one and make an awkward move into the right-hand one to finish on good holds.
- (2) 40 feet. Move left and climb the green, open groove to a peg runner (in place). Make a hard move up and left to good holds. Move up to a belay at the spike on the right.
- (3) 90 feet. Climb to the foot of the overhanging corner on the left. Start with difficulty on finger jams to gain good jams and a pinnacle. Move up left; then immediately swing right on to the arête to finish.

First ascent: K. Myhill, K. Jones, 25.8.73

DEER BIELD CRAG

Pearls before Swine 180 feet. Extremely Severe. This climb takes the stepped arête between Hubris and Easedale Groove.

It is difficult and sustained and the only protection is from small nuts. Start as for Hubris below the 12 foot corner.

- (1) 150 feet. Pull up on to the smooth slab on the right and climb it to the foot of a short steep corner leading on to the crest of the arête. Climb this past an abandoned nut runner, to a difficult exit. Step to the right and climb up to a good foothold below the first overlap. Move round to the left and go up on to the right of the crest again and up to a fine foothold. Move left again round the crest and climb straight up to a large doubtful block at 120 feet. Pass over this and continue up the crest past a tree-branch to a ledge.
- (2) 30 feet. Up the blunt arête above to a good tree belay.

First ascent: P. Long, D. J. Harding, 9.9.73.

PILLAR ROCK AREA

Solitron 200 feet. Very severe (Hard). After the initial scramble the route gives some steep wall climbing on the right wall of Walkers Gully. Start 200 feet up the gully at a belay below the steep upper half of the gully.

- (1) 100 feet. Traverse out of the gully and across mixed ground to the foot of an obvious crack and groove line on the right wall. The start of the crack is vegetated and turned on the left. Traverse back right and climb the continuation of the crack to a short chimney and good grass ledge on Grooved Wall.
- (2) 100 feet. Traverse along the grass ledge to its left end and continue the traverse around a bulge and up a steep mossy ramp. At the top of the ramp is a short, blank groove in the wall. Starting with a handhold on the right edge of this groove make a diagonal rightwards traverse across the wall to a good foothold. Continue up the wall above to a groove which leads to the top.

First ascent: W. S. Lounds, J.C.E. 26.8.72

BUTTERMERE AREA

GREEN CRAG

The Wray 260 feet. Extremely Severe. A good route, but poorly protected climbing. The main pitch takes the narrow slab overlooking Saraband.

- (1) 100 feet. The steep wall directly below the peg belay of Saraband is climbed on good holds. Belay as for Saraband.
- (2) 120 feet. From the belay traverse right to reach the foot of a short gangway which leads to the foot of the slab which overlooks Saraband. Climb this to where it steepens at a small pillar (good runners), then traverse the steep wall into a short groove. After a few feet in this transfer to the arête on the right and climb steeply into another groove which leads more easily to a good stance and belay.
- (3) 40 feet. From the stance move right and climb the wall above the top.

M.G.M., R.F.A., 16.4.74.

The Tax Collector 230 feet. Very Severe (Hard). The obvious corner right of Paper Tiger.

- (1) 100 feet. As far as Paper Tiger to a big grass ledge below the corner.
- (2) 130 feet. Climb the corner to an overhung niche at 30 feet (Matador goes right here). Climb the slab on the left to another niche. Leave this strenuously and swing right on to the steep arête. From this trend right to a groove which leads to the top.

M.G.M., R.F.A., 20.4.74.

KEY TO INITIALS

R. F. Allen	A. Liddel	N. J. Soper
J. A. Austin	R. Matherson	R. Valentine
J. C. Eilbeck	D. Miller	J. Wilkinson
E. Grindley	M. G. Mortimer	K. Wood
G. Higginson	I. Roper	

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. E. M. BINNS	..	..	..	1913 - 1972
C. H. TAYLOR	..	..	..	1970 - 1974
C. E. F. DEE	..	..	..	1943 - 1973
Sir JOHN DODD	..	..	..	1930 - 1973
R. A. EWIN	..	..	..	1939 - 1973
A. GIMSON, Original Member	..	..	..	1906 - 1973
Miss E. W. GOY	..	..	..	1946 - 1973
H. A. IZANT	..	..	..	1940 - 1973
D. W. JACKSON	..	..	..	1939 - 1973
T. H. G. PARKER	..	..	..	1910 - 1973
Rev. W. P. PHILLIPS	..	..	..	1914 - 1973
G. H. PICKERING	..	..	..	1956 - 1973
A. F. POOL	..	..	..	1945 - 1972
Lt. Comm. G. K. RYLANDS, O.B.E.	..	..	..	1946 - 1973
L. G. SHADBOLT	..	..	..	1908 - 1973
J. STABLES, Original Member	..	..	..	1906 - 1973
J. F. WELLS	..	..	..	1923 - 1973

MRS. ELEANOR M. BINNS 1913 - 1972

Mrs. Eleanor M. Binns was one of the earliest lady members, joining the Club in 1913 and continuing as a life member till her death in 1972, in her 89th year. Her husband, Alfred H. Binns, became a member in 1907, and after their marriage in 1903 Mr. and Mrs. Binns climbed with many of the pioneer Lakelanders in the early years of the Club's history. They numbered among their friends most of the original members, to whom Nellie Binns was known as a charming hostess and a sweet singer as well as a competent rock-climber.

She took part in many ascents in Lakeland, Arran, Jura and North Wales, but her favourite routes were those on Gable, Pillar, Scafell and Dow Crag. One of her proudest memories was that she went several times climbing with Harold Raeburn; in fact, when he was on the Everest Reconnaissance Expedition of 1921 he sent postcards from Sikkim and Tibet which are still treasured by the Binns family.

Mrs. Binns continued her fell-walking and climbing as far as possible, while bringing up her son and two daughters, but in the twenties a change to the life of farming made it very difficult to attend Club gatherings. Her best climbing was done in an era when women climbers, like women drivers, were much rarer than they are today, and when many a climber's wife listened to the long debates on 'whether Everest will ever be climbed'.

By the death of Mrs. Nellie Binns the Club has lost one of its

oldest members, a warm-hearted and gracious lady, and one whose long life was surely enriched by her enduring love of the mountains and by the friendships formed in those long-ago days when the Club was young.

Mary L. Abraham

COLIN TAYLOR, 1970-1974

On 15th August, 1974, Colin was killed instantly when a section of the South Face route of the Obergabelhorn collapsed on him; he was buried in Zermatt. A first-rate mountaineer and skier with a fine record of ascents in the Alps and Himalayas extending over almost every season since his student days at Oxford University, he was well known in climbing circles. He was Treasurer of the Climbers' Club, Guide-book Editor of the Alpine Club and the A.C. representative on the Mount Everest Foundation Committee of Management and the British Mountaineering Council, where he was an active member of the Future Policy Committee. He was a tireless worker when it came to presenting information on Alpine Climbing to English-speaking mountaineers. For a time, he was Editor of the Alpine Climbing Group's bulletin *Alpine Climbing*, and he was also heavily involved in the translation of foreign guide books and in the production of guides for the A.C.

He began to spend more of his time in the Lakes when he moved north, first to an appointment with the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority at Culcheth, then to a lectureship in mathematics at the University of Salford. He joined the Fell and Rock about this time, and in the short space of four years, had become well known by the active members of the club. At the 1973 annual dinner, his wife Jane was chief guest and Colin gave the Sunday Lecture. Colin was a warm-hearted person and had a great sense of humour. He was a good man to have on the rope or on a committee, having great strength and ability, both physical and intellectual. He will be greatly missed by his colleagues at the University and by climbers of many clubs. The sympathy of the club goes to his wife and baby daughter.

John Wilkinson

A. GIMSON, Original Member

Arthur Gimson was the second of a family of four boys and a girl. Three of the boys were rock climbers, all were engineers. Arthur worked for Alfred Herberts, of Coventry, and later joined the family engineering firm of Gimson & Co., Leicester.

His rock climbing was confined to the Lake District, except for an expedition to the Cuillin. The brothers were often led by Dr Sloane, a very good climber, and the party sometimes included

walkers as well. The men slept in tents, and the others in farm-houses, where we paid 5/- per day, inclusive!

Later, Arthur became deaf. This became so bad that eventually he could not hear at all, and was cut off from normal life. In 1928 he moved to London, where he took a flat. He died in December, 1972, aged 89.

Nora Gimson

DAVID WILLIAM JACKSON, 1939-1973

When, as a boy of fourteen, I began climbing at Widdup, one of the local experts was pointed out to me. He was a slight bespectacled man with wispy hair whom I had often seen walking round our home town of Todmorden: David Jackson. Every Sunday, without fail, during the following three years, until I went off to university, David and I walked the seven miles of moor to Widdup, climbed all day, then walked back. He was a great talker, well read and well informed on almost any topic; I learned a lot about life during those walks. With a first class brain, his brilliant promise was frustrated by his acutely defective eyesight. He was told by his doctors that if he went to the university to study medicine, as he wished, he would probably go blind. He came to terms with life in a characteristically realistic fashion, and I never heard him complain.

His working life was spent in his father's draper's shop, but his other activities amply compensated for an otherwise dull existence. Climbing, music, fishing, poetry, literature, and above all painting, at which he excelled, these were his life. Not particularly strong, he was a good mover on delicate rock climbs, and his abilities were noted by G. R. Speaker in *Skye* in 1939. G. R. S. put him up for the Club. He had a great sense of humour, and I clearly remember how he needed it on his first Alpine climb, the traverse of the Grand Combin, when we got bogged down in waist-deep snow on the descent and had to spend a frustrating night in a trench in the snow within sight of the hut. He had several Alpine seasons, mainly in the Valais, then took up skiing. He also climbed and walked extensively in the Lakes and Scotland.

David never married. Some years ago he retired and, with his brother and sister, took up residence in Strontian. There, in the Highlands he loved, he was able to enjoy the last years of his life walking, fishing and painting. He died in hospital in Inverness in the summer of 1973 after a short illness. I shall never forget him nor will many members of the Club, who, as young men, received unstinted help and encouragement from him.

John Wilkinson

ELIZABETH WINIFRED GOY 1946 – 1973

Late one summer evening in 1952 I arrived at Raw Head to find the door locked and myself without a key. When I knocked, someone came down the ladder and let me in. A shy smile, no need to apologise, no trouble, would one care for some tea? It was Winifred Goy. Thus began a friendship of twenty-one years, broken only by her sad and sudden death in October 1973, following a fall at home.

At the time of that first meeting, and for many years afterwards, Miss Goy was a probation officer in south-east London, at Greenwich and later in Lewisham and Catford. Her work involved her in a complex of relationships with people of all ages in various kinds of difficulty or distress: young delinquents; married couples drifting towards rocks; the feckless and the down-and-out; the old and poor and lonely. In this often sad and sometimes crude, but occasionally comic setting, Winifred moved delicately and, if need arose, with strength and decision: either way, with insight and sympathy. One case by coincidence actually brought her to Halifax and one found oneself rushing her round the town in between trains. To see her thus in action was to know the ultimate goodness.

It was also to be made aware of a fascinating paradox: how odd it seemed that a person so sensitive to the refined and delicate aspects of life could immerse herself in the turmoil of a huge conurbation, in the mess and the muddle and the sheer hell of it, and yet remain apparently so undamaged by the bruises and strains. Perhaps the one experience compensated for the other, producing a lovely balance; a photograph of Klemperer or a painting of Zermatt, a ticket for the proms and Barbirolli invading the Albert Hall with the Hallé in Sibelius, 'phone calls from friends or the merest mention of the Fells — all these soothed the mind and reinforced the spirit to go on coping with the legal niceties in court or with neurotic people about to go to pieces yet again. For whatever life offered of its beauty and joy, Winifred was always 'unfeignedly thankful'.

By dint of an enormous wrench she left London for retirement in Ambleside at Easter 1967. She went the rounds of those sad goodbyes when, as Day Lewis, one of her Greenwich friends, says, it is 'as though the heart had gone ahead, or were staying here for ever'. Her London self seemed as if it would indeed refuse to leave the city and at first she was unable quite to settle in her new home — 'temporary' she called it almost to the end — and when at Easter 1973 she said that after all one could not base one's whole life on the fells — 'could not live on them' — one understood. It was entirely understandable, too, that every year after her alleged retirement she went back to do a locum in Catford or Greenwich. Perhaps it was the war years, when she was in charge of all the cleaning ladies at Guy's Hospital, which had knit her heart for ever with the city. Yet still the pull of the Fells brought her back from these working excursions, as in earlier years it had led her to phone Euston in

moments of nostalgia, merely to ask about trains to Windermere, even though she had no holiday and in any case knew the time-table by heart. 'It helps to keep me going', she would explain.

At 65 she kept going to the extent of following happily along the tops from Wetherlam round to Brim Fell and the Old Man in the wake of a sixth-form party of Yorkshire lads who thought her quite a character and called her 'Miss Goya', a tribute which the artist in her greatly enjoyed. We came down to Goats Water and Walna Scar and looked up at the buttresses of Dow where ten years earlier she had climbed half way up "C" Ordinary, her first ever rock-climb, until her tentative voice from below had suggested a halt and a retreat because she had a tea engagement in Langdale. I had felt rather fed-up at the time, but it was funny for years afterwards and rather typical.

Typical too was her idea of 'retirement'. Besides the annual locum and occasional trips to Greece and Washington, she helped in the office of an Ambleside hotel, sang in the local choral society, taught backward readers in the village school, where the children loved her, acted as part-time guide at Rydal Mount and catered for an endless stream of friends at No. 7, Edinboro. Absolutely anyone might turn up there, from Ambleside dignitaries to London Section Fell and Rockers, on whose committee she had served for some years. It was almost like London days again: there one had tried not to feel too astounded on being asked to have coffee with the Greenwich magistrate between cases, or sherry with the then Poet Laureate and Mrs. Day Lewis. For Winifred, people mattered more than even the most precious places and when the two loves came together, heaven was recreated.

Now one can only remember and be thankful, some in London, some in Washington, some at Wasdale where her ashes lie. In Ambleside her neighbours had found in her a priceless friend and she in them. 'There's nobody now can take her spot', said one old lady. And nobody can.

Geoffrey Whiteley

GEORGE HERBERT PICKERING, 1956-1973

I first met George when as an office junior I was transferred into the General Engineering Drawing Office at Vickers, Barrow, about 1947. In common with most of the office 'characters', he was not native-born, but was imported into Barrow during the depression years for his specialized knowledge of the design and manufacture of colliery and mine winding gear. He was one of the old-style engineering all-rounders, and his bold, legible and workmanlike drawings were always welcome on the shop floor before the modern cult of specialization reduced the appreciation of the artistic in the working man.

So far as I know, he did not aspire to high office, but was content to do his job thoroughly and encourage the apprentices to do likewise. He was a loyal and sometimes outspoken trade unionist, who did not suffer fools lightly; and this approach was somewhat disconcerting to those whose immature judgements needed to be corrected with mildness. An old-fashioned virtue he cherished was that of giving value for money—and in this he practised what he preached.

His building operations at his home, High Beanthwaite, undertaken jointly with Lyna, were the talk of the village, and the admiration of his friends.

He was a kind and dutiful son, visiting his aged mother regularly until her death, and was to my knowledge extremely generous to the children of Grizebeck school.

I did not have the pleasure of his company on fell walks or climbs, but was on the committee which elected him to membership. He was rather eclipsed in Club affairs by the eminence of his wife; but, as with Queen Victoria's Prince Consort, his guiding hand, common sense, and boundless energy were behind many of Lyna's wise decisions when in office.

To the close circle of friends gathered in St. Cuthbert's Church, Kirkby Ireleth, the minister spoke of a last illness bravely borne, and of the happiness marriage, a son, and the everlasting hills had given to George. Surely a country as rich as ours will always cherish the
 'Beauty (taken) from those who loved them
 In bygone days.'

Oliver A. Geere

ALEC F. POOL, 1945-1972

Alec Pool was probably not known to many of our members, but he was recognised, by those who did know him, as a true lover of the fells and crags. With his wife, his son Dick and daughter Kristin, both members of the Club, he spent many happy holidays among the hills. He will be well remembered by those who attended the New Year Meets at the O.D.G. and also the Scottish Meets. In his modest way he would never have made any claim to special ability as a rock climber, but he climbed up to a good severe standard with enjoyment. All who knew him were very sorry to hear of his death in 1972, but we are glad to know that his love of the hills lives on in his son and daughter and in his grandchildren, to all of whom, and to Marie his wife, we offer our sympathy.

J. Robert Files

LT-COM. G. K. RYLANDS O.B.E. 1946-1973

Geoffrey Rylands, a director of the Warrington firm of wire manufacturers, joined the F.R.C.C. soon after the end of the war. Though he never took any active part in Club affairs, and seldom

attended meets, he made many visits to the district and became happily familiar with our hills.

He never pretended to be an expert climber, but he climbed with enjoyment and appreciation. On each holiday he arrived with a list of climbs to be done, leading up to some worthy Severe as a climax. The leader was usually Rusty Westmorland, and I sometimes made a third or fourth. My chief memories are of unhurried conversations on sunny ledges, where Geoffrey and Rusty talked entertainingly of experiences in distant countries; only Kern Knotts Crack left all but the leader too breathless for words.

Membership brought Geoffrey many hours of pleasure and enrichment.

Morley Dobson

L. G. SHADBOLT, 1908-1973

Leslie Shadbolt was born in 1882. I am not sure where he was climbing on the day, early in the century, when as he came down he met for the first time Alastair Maclaren, who had just carried his bicycle over Styce Head Pass because it was marked as a road on his primitive map. This was the beginning of a long friendship and career of climbing in Scotland, a notable occasion being the first traverse in a day of the Cuillin Ridge, in 1902.

In the later years of my husband's climbing life he was one of the 'Guideless Four', the other three being the late Raymond Bicknell the late Sir Claude Elliott, and Harold E. L. Porter.

Lavinia Shadbolt

Maclaren and Shadbolt made the first ascent of the Bhaisteir Tooth by the North Chimney in 1906. In later years Shadbolt climbed with Mallory, who invited Shadbolt to join the 1924 Everest expedition. Unfortunately the offer had to be turned down. Shadbolt also explored the sea cliffs of Sark and seems to have attempted to virtually girdle traverse the whole island. He invented a 'limpet' technique whereby after tapping a limpet which was in place it could be relied upon to provide a sound hold.

JONATHAN STABLES, 1906-1973

Jonathan Stables, Johnty to some and Uncle Johnty to others, was born in 1878 at Walthwaite, the farm almost at the foot of Raven Crag, Chapel Stile, where his father was a farmer and shoemaker.

Jonathan attended the Langdale school at Chapel Stile, from where he went to train as an architect in Leeds. He later found employment in Kendal where he met his future wife and his climbing companions, H. B. Lyon, A. S. Thompson, Oliverson, Darwin Leighton—to mention but a few.

In 1907, with H. B. Lyon and A. S. Thompson, he did the first ascent of Lyon's Crawl and B Route on Gimmer, and in 1908 he ascended a route on Blea Rigg. In the same year, with Turner he did the first ascent of Deer Bield Chimney.

I recall Jonathan reciting the account of this ascent of Deer Bield; he and Turner waited in Grasmere for Thompson to arrive, eventually they decided to go on ahead slowly, they looked back and saw Thompson in the distance following them, but they arrived at the crag and the figure did not appear. The two of them, after completing the climb, returned to Kendal; that evening they learned that Thompson had been killed in his car during the morning, at precisely the time that they thought that they had seen him. This was a disturbing experience for two fifteen-year olds.

In more recent years it was always a pleasure to welcome him at the O.D.G. Up to the year of our retirement, after the Club's annual dinner, we would have the pleasure of Uncle Johnty, and his friend Harry Lyon, for tea and a 'reet' good argument.

Jonathan was an original member; he was an architect, mountaineer, farmer and a true Lakeland character. Not only will he live on in the minds of Langdale folk and others, but his work, Hell Garth, Copt Howe, Raw Head Barn, High House, and his own home, Halfway House, remain as memorials.

S. H. Cross

The photograph of a climber on Amen Corner, in our first Journal, is of Jonathan Stables.—*Ed.*

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MEETS, 1973

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Venue</i>
C Jan. 27-28	Mr. and Mrs. H. Ironfield	Beetham Cottage
Feb. 9-25	F. H. Falkingham and O. R. Spence (Prior booking with leaders essential)	Inverlair Lodge Glen Spear
March 2-4	P. L. Fearnough (Prior booking with leader essential)	C.I.C. Hut, Ben Nevis
Mar. 31-Apr. 1	M. H. Dawson	The Woolpack Inn, Eskdale
M April 7-8	E. N. A. Morton	Beetham Cottage
April 20-23 (Easter)	E. A. Shepherd	Brackenclose
C May 5-6	W. Smith	Raw Head
M May 12-13	T. Meredith	Raw Head
May 11-21	J. A. Kenyon and E. N. A. Morton	The Ledgowan Hotel Achnasheen
May 26-28 (Bank Hol.)	D. Lee J. S. Whitehouse	The Salving House Scotland (camping)
M June 9-10	E. Ivison	Brackenclose
June 23-24	T. Sullivan	Beetham Cottage
C July 7-8	Mr. and Mrs. J. Walton	The Sun Hotel Coniston
L July 14-15	H. Sixsmith	The Berkshire Downs
C Sept. 8-9	The Vice Presidents	The Wastwater Hotel
M Oct. 6-7	H. H. B. Berrie	The Salving House
L Oct. 13-14	Miss M. Southgate	Beetham Cottage
Oct. 27-28	The President	Annual General Meeting and Dinner
Nov. 10-11	H. S. Thompson	Birkness
C Nov. 24-25	I. H. Bowman and A. Scott	Birkness
Dec. 1-2	T. Meredith	Glan Dena (Joint Meet M.A.M.)
Dec. 31-Jan. 1	The President	To be arranged

C—Committee Meeting
M—Maintenance Meet L—London Section Meet

MEETS, 1974

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Venue</i>
C Jan. 26-27	M. Burbage	The Salving House
Feb. 9-10	D. Hamer	Beetham Cottage
Feb. 15-16	P. Fleming	Lagangarbh, Glen Coe
Feb. 17-21	J. A. Hartley	(Prior booking with leader essential) C.I.C. Hut, Ben Nevis
Feb. 17-23	A. G. Cram	(Prior booking with leader essential) Inverlair Lodge Glen Spean
March 2-3	B. Johnson	Brackenclose
March 16-17	H. K. Gregory	Raw Head
March 30-31	W. A. Comstive	The Woolpack Inn Eskdale
April 12-15 (Easter)		
	P. Holt	Birkness
M April 27-28	E. N. A. Morton	Beetham Cottage
C May 4-5	G. Grandison	Raw Head
M May 11-12	T. Meredith	Raw Head
May 10-20	R. Cook and E. Ivison	The Balmacara Hotel Kyle of Lochalsh
May 18-19	E. M. Grindley	Beetham Cottage
May 25-27 (Spring Bank Holiday)	W. J. Everett Miss M. Duke	The Salving House Appin (camping)
M June 8-9	E. Evison	Brackenclose
June 22-23	T. Sullivan	Brackenclose
C July 6-7	Miss M. P. Linton	The Sun Hotel Coniston
July 20-21	Miss M. C. Pearson	Birkness
Aug. 24-26 (Summer Bank Holiday)	I. Roper	Ynys Ettws
	(Prior booking with leader essential)	
C Sept. 7-8	The Vice Presidents	The Wastwater Hotel
Sept. 21-22	R. Valentine	Beetham Cottage
M Oct. 5-6	J. S. Huddart	The Salving House
Oct. 12-13	J. Umpleby	Raw Head
Oct. 26-27	The President	Annual General Meeting and Dinner
M Nov. 9-10	H. S. Thompson	Birkness
C Nov. 16-17	H. Ironfield	The Salving House
Dec. 7-8	Mr. and Mrs. H. Berkeley	Birkness (Joint Meet M.A.M.)
Dec. 31-Jan. 1	The President	To be arranged

C—Committee Meeting M—Maintenance Meet