

# THE RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL

1953



Six Shillings



THE  
RUCKSACK CLUB  
1953

---

*LIST OF OFFICERS*  
(elected 30th January 1953)

*President*

JOHN WILDING

*Vice-Presidents*

J. H. ENTWISLE

C. H. ASHLEY

*Hon. Secretary*

J. E. BYROM, Highfield, Douglas Road, Hazel Grove

*Hon. Assistant Secretary*

W. H. PICKSTONE, Parkgate, Whitefield

*Hon. Treasurer*

J. H. HIRST

*Hon. Librarian*

F. COLLINS

*Hon. Editor of Journal\**

P. E. BROCKBANK, 51 Palatine Road, Manchester 20

*Hon. Warden of Club Hut*

E. T. ROBERTS

*Hon. Outdoor Organizer*

E. MOSS

*Committee*

J. F. BURTON

H. K. HARTLEY

J. N. MATHER

J. P. COOPER

R. S. HORSMAN

A. S. PIGOTT

E. W. COURTENAY

R. R. JENNINGS

H. P. SPILSBURY

*\*Hon. Assistant Editor*

R. BURNS, 2 Roselands Avenue, Sale

*Hon. Commercial Editor (Sales)*

G. W. S. PIGOTT, Hill House, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport





# THE RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL

Vol. **xii** No. 2

**1953**

Issue 46

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
The Péteret Ridge ... .. by J. N. Mather ... ..	113
The Tan Hill Walk ... .. by E. W. Courtenay ... ..	121
On Guidebook Writing ... .. by V. T. Dillon ... ..	129
Alpine Initiation ... .. by V. J. Desmond ... ..	135
Jubilee Celebrations :	
1. The Langdale Meet ... ..	142
2. The Dinner ... ..	145
Some Zermatt Four-Thousands by Allan Allsopp ... ..	153
Editorial Notes ... ..	163
In Memoriam ... ..	165
New Climbs and Notes ... ..	171
Proceedings of the Club, 1952 ... ..	176
Officers and New Members	
Indoor Meetings	
Mountain Picture Exhibition	
Mountain Rescue	
Accident Report	
London Section	
Committee's Report	
Outdoor Activities	
Climbs and Excursions ... ..	188
The Ogot Direct	
Moffat to Peebles	
Winter Colne-Rowsley	
Reviews ... ..	193

Obtainable from the Commercial Editor, G. W. S. Pigott, Hill House, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport (business 'phone DEAnsgate 5831), or from Messrs Sherratt & Hughes, 34 Cross Street, Manchester





*B. R. Goodfellow*

The Péteret Ridge

# THE PÉTERET RIDGE

BY J. N. MATHER

I arrived in Zermatt on July 20th to meet Donald Hopkin and George Boston (non-member), who had travelled out a week previously with the Club contingent. It was our intention to do the High-level Route to Chamonix, bagging a few peaks on the way, and spend the remainder of the holiday in Chamonix and Courmayeur. That evening we walked to the Schönbühl Hut.

The following day we traversed the Col d'Hérens to the Rossier Hut. The weather was unsettled; the afternoons were cloudy, whilst snow fell in the evenings. After waiting a day we climbed the Dent Blanche by the south ridge and then traversed the glaciers Ferpècle and Miné to the Cabane de Bertol, arriving there in a thunderstorm.

Next day we agreed that the Haute Route was a good holiday for ski-mountaineers but not for us. After descending to Les Haudères we were transported to Châtelard, whence we walked to Chamonix.

It appeared that Mont Blanc had been enjoying better weather than we had, and on our arrival it still looked settled. After a night at the Montenvers we made the classic traverse of the Grépon, regretfully leaving Donald (who was suffering from his own peculiar mountain malady) on the Nantillons moraine. The celebrated Mummery Crack went very easily, although the traverse into it at half-height is quite delicate. I made the mistake of carrying my axe and crampons on the rock-climb and consequently felt muscularly tired owing to these impediments in the Grépon's constricting chimneys.

On Sunday (the following day) Donald and George decided to go home, the former on account of ill-health and the latter through lack of francs. Before they departed I was introduced to a lady Fell-and-Rocker, Valerie Stevens, who proved my able companion for the next few climbs.

As soon as a violent 24-hour storm had cleared, we walked up to the Réquin Hut with provisions for four days. Our first expedition was the Pain de Sucre by the ordinary route, where we failed by 50 feet to reach the summit owing to an accumulation of ice and

snow in the final chimneys. Unwisely we had left both our axes on the glacier.

This disappointment was soon displaced by elation on our ascent of the Dent du Géant. I had once been told that this was not worth climbing because of its fixed ropes but I certainly do not share this view. The Dent is marvellously exposed and sound, and the purist may avoid the ropes if he so desires. I thoroughly enjoyed the aerial gymnastics, though I think my companion was rather apprehensive.

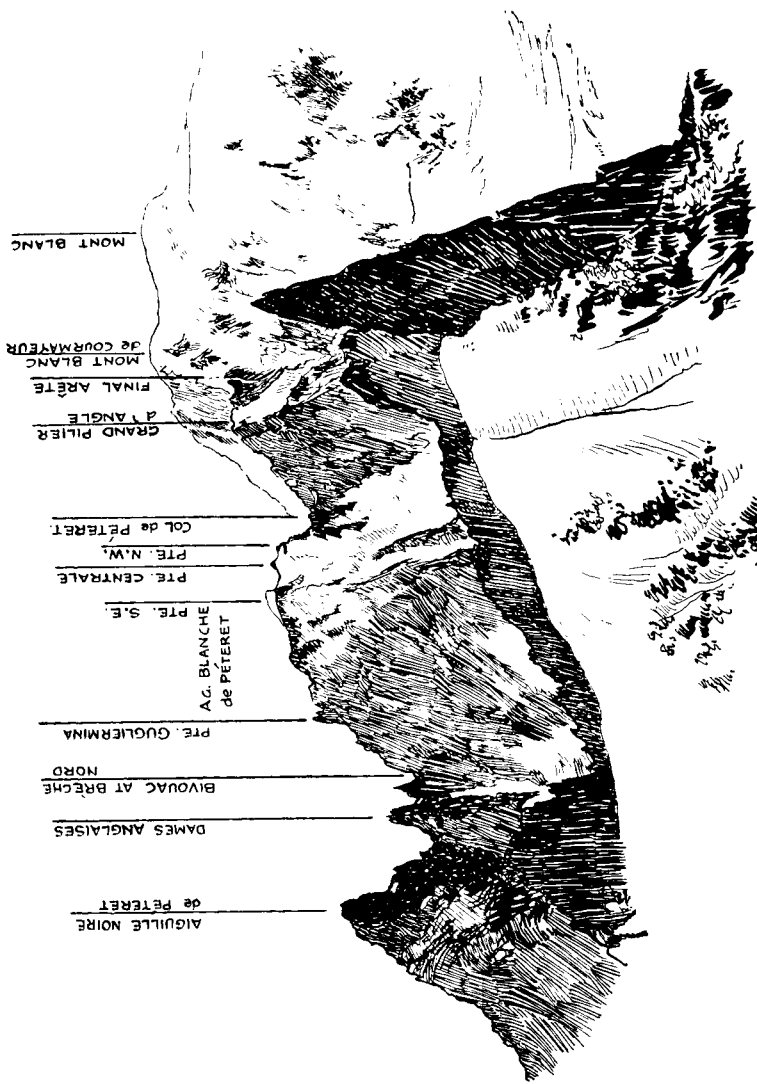
On our third consecutive day, we climbed the Réquin by the Plaques Route, which we found an interesting rock-climb. In descending the *voie normale* we miraculously found an envelope containing cash and cheques which had been lost by a friend of ours a week previously. We returned to Chamonix that evening after dining at the Montenvers.

My climbing up to this juncture had been pleasant without being really satisfying; by now I was longing to climb one of the great routes of Mont Blanc. I was accordingly fortunate in now meeting Ian McNaught-Davis, who was of a similar frame of mind. We casually discussed several possibilities. Someone, I don't remember who, suggested the Péteret Arête. With no more ado we packed, and were bound for Courmayeur on Mac's motorcycle by four o'clock that afternoon.

During the ride we encountered several thunderstorms, each one calling for a halt and a drink or a meal at some convenient *bistro*. We were late over the Petit St Bernard and around midnight were forced to seek shelter for the night in the Italian village of La Thuile, with the result that we did not see Courmayeur until ten o'clock the following morning.

As there had obviously been considerable snow during the night and the ridges were cloud-covered, we decided to spend a day in the valley before ascending to the refuge-bivouac Craveri at the Brèche Nord des Dames Anglaises.

The Péteret Arête is one of the three great ridges on the south side of Mont Blanc. From the pinewoods of Val Veni it soars up to reach its first top, the Aiguille Noire de Péteret (3773 m.)—a gigantic black fang. Next, at a deep gash in the ridge, are the Dames Anglaises, a cluster of graceful slender spires. Beyond is the Aiguille Blanche de Péteret. The ridge now drops again to the



H. Taylor

The Péteret Ridge  
(From the Col du Géant)





Col de Péteret before steepening at the Grand Pilier d'Angle to rise to the summit of Mont Blanc de Courmayeur. The Aiguille Noire and the Dames Anglaises are long and difficult climbs in their own rights and are not usually climbed with the remainder of the ridge.

The route attains the ridge at the Brèche Nord, the little gap which separates the Isolée of the Dames Anglaises from the Aiguille Blanche. The usual starting point is the Gamba Hut, but this requires the party to move extremely rapidly if a bivouac is to be avoided. Since 1933 the climb has been made safer by the erection of a small refuge at the Brèche Nord. This is used by most parties, though some still choose to bivouac at the Col de Péteret. The Vallot guide allows from 13 to 27 hours from the Gamba to Mont Blanc and quotes the fastest recorded time of 10 hours.

Our rest day over, we motorcycled to Fresnay, where we left the bike and at 12.30 p.m. on August 4th we set out for the Gamba. The walk to the hut is one of the nicest I've done, not least of its merits being its shortness. The track goes gently upwards through the pines, crosses the Fresnay torrent, and mounts by slabs, first easily and then more steeply by the aid of fixed wires, to arrive on grassy slopes where the little cabin rests in one of the grandest amphitheatres of the Alps.

During the course of a meal at the Gamba we were approached by an Austrian youth with a polished American accent. Were we going to try the Péteret-Grat and was it safe to go to the Brèche Nord today? He was one of a party of three Austrian students living in the American zone who wanted to climb the ridge but needed some reassurance. He told us alarming stories of a Swiss party bivouacking (for the second night) on the Col de Péteret after having taken 6 hours over the descent to it.

We left the Gamba at 3.15 p.m., closely followed by the other party. After kicking steps in the snow for two or three hundred feet we were overtaken, just below the Col de l'Innominata (3100 m.), by one of the Austrians, who politely thanked us for our steps and gallantly offered to break the trail up to the col; this we reached in one hour and a quarter.

As the sun was still on the couloir that drops from the Brèche Nord we lingered on the col for half-an-hour or so before following the others down the loose rocks and across the Fresnay glacier, where we put on crampons and the rope.

The rimaye on the far side was quite tricky and led to a very steep ice slope which we had to traverse to the right to reach the foot of the couloir. The Austrians didn't make this traverse but instead took a line up the flank of the Aiguille Blanche some 50 yards to the left of the couloir. We were extremely relieved by this, especially after sampling the rotten rocks on the right bank ; to have had another party just ahead would have been unhealthy. However, we made good time till we reached the bifurcation with the couloir from the Brèche Centrale. From here we had to climb the gully by its bed. This season, with very dry conditions, there was no snow in it and its recesses were lined by a snake of ice two or three feet thick and steel-hard. We climbed this with difficulty for some two hundred feet before we could break out leftwards onto easier rocks which led to the Brèche (3490 m.) and the bivouac as darkness fell at 8.45 p.m.

Our Austrian friends had arrived about ten minutes previously. They assured us that their line was easier and safer than the couloir, which, during the latter part of our ascent, had been an inferno of crashing rocks and ice.

The bivouac is admirably situated on a tiny ledge just overlooking the Brèche. We were soon ensconced in its snug interior, where we melted ice to prepare our evening meal. A last peep outside at 10 p.m. revealed the Brenva face and the savage landscape round to the Grandes Jorasses bathed in dazzling moonlight. Never have I spent a night feeling closer to the mountains.

The night within was warm and comfortable and the air outside very cold ; so it was 5 a.m. before we tied on, 60 feet apart. The sky over Mont Blanc was clear but a weird yellow light in the direction of the Jorasses looked unhealthy ; farther eastwards a mushroom-shaped mass over the Grand Combin sprouted like an atomic explosion. We agreed to climb so long as the weather did not deteriorate.

Mac led off along ledges traversing the Fresnay flank ; where it steepened we moved singly. Climbing quickly as second, I pulled out a boulder as big as myself ; this shot glacierwards in a series of terrifying bounds in which it was followed by literally tons of other rocks and ice, leaving me shrouded in dust.

The route seemed fairly obvious, first on the Fresnay side, then crossing the ridge at a gendarme to traverse the Pointe Gugliermina

fairly low on the Brenva side. An easy rib led back to the ridge, which we followed till the snowy S.E. summit (4107 m.) rose up in front. This is steeper than it appeared and was very icy, thus calling for crampons. Even then, we had to cut a few steps before we reached the summit at 8.30 a.m.

Without pausing, we continued our aerial traverse, first by a short rocky descent, then by an appalling ice slope which turns the Pointe Centrale (4112 m.) on the Brenva flank. The ice arête continues to the N.W. Pointe (4104 m.), which is turned by rocks, again on the Brenva side.

We were now confronted by the descent to the Col de Péteret (3948 m.), to which we had looked forward with some misgivings. The Vallot guide allows from 45 minutes to 6 hours for the descent ; 2 hours normally. We were reminded of the Swiss party of which the Austrians had spoken ; this didn't encourage us to linger.

The drop is a steep one and for the most part is rock ; but the last two hundred feet to the col are of ice. We climbed down the rocks by corners and grooves for about 300 feet until we noticed a peg decorated with slings. This being too good to pass, we made a 50-foot abseil down to a small ledge ; here we found a second piton, from which another 50-foot abseil landed us on the ice. Wearing crampons again, we kicked steps to the col, which we reached at 11.10 a.m. Our time for the descent was 1 hour 40 minutes.

Standing on the snowy rim of the col we found it hard to imagine that in 1920 a tremendous rock fall had lowered its level by some 39 metres.

Our next problem, the shoulder called the Grand Pilier d'Angle (4244 m.), seemed to frown down on us. Its rimaye and lower ice slopes looked forbidding, but, as always when viewed face-on, appeared steeper than in fact they were. There are two methods of gaining the Pilier. That which is less exposed to stonefall and also '*la plus élégante*' crosses the rimaye on the Fresnay side, attacks the sound rocks above, and then regains the arête, which it follows to the shoulder. The other, which is quicker but more exposed to stones, traverses farther to the left before striking directly to the shoulder by the rocks on the flank. We chose the former route and had to cut steps most of the way up to the rocks ; these were steep but were the firmest we encountered on the whole climb.

Once on the arête the angle eased and as we climbed we were aware of new snow on the rocks. Mac continued to press on at a remarkable pace, whilst I wearily dragged along behind. As it was obvious that I needed a rest, we called a halt for food.

The next fifty minutes were heavenly as we reclined in the sun and feasted on vast quantities of cheese and chocolate. All too soon, for me at least, we were back at work, moving together on easy rocks to reach the shoulder, marked by a gendarme, at about 3 p.m.

We turned this gendarme on the Brenva side and continued on the rocks beyond, which were becoming increasingly difficult owing to the new snow. In places this lay perhaps six inches deep on top of ice, which in turn covered the rocks. Laboriously, steps had to be cut. So treacherous was this combination that we moved one at a time until we reached the incipient snow ridge that rises to Mont Blanc de Courmayeur. Progress was slow; some 150 yards of almost level ridge engaged us for nearly an hour. Throughout this time the sun was leaving us and mists were drifting round the summits. It became very cold.

Our friends the Austrians were now visible as they followed our steps down to the col; they were five hours behind us. We thought they would be looking for the bivouac spot on the col.

My spirits were low as at 4 p.m. I surveyed the last 500 metres to the drifting summit of Mont Blanc de Courmayeur whilst I strapped on crampons again. On several occasions I have stood on the Snake road on a cold wet winter's day after a gruelling walk from Marsden and gazed at the bulk of Kinder with a heavy heart. It has needed a lot of self-persuasion to forsake the road and start the grind over to Edale. On the Grand Pilier d'Angle there is unfortunately no road, nor even an easy way off; retreat would be worse than retracing one's steps from the Snake to Marsden. I picked up my axe and plodded on.

The ridge, which is merely the meeting of the Brenva and Fresnay faces, zig-zags its way upwards, getting steeper all the way. Steps had to be kicked through the layer of new snow and crampons forced into the ice beneath; frequently there was that energy-sapping check when the points did not bite; we found ourselves making about 100 steps between halts. Away to our right a party of climbers could be seen forcing a way through the séracs below



Aiguille Blanche

*B. R. Goodfellow*



Col Major ; we hailed them and waved and were cheered to get a reply. Below us, our line of steps looked quite impressive. Our spirits began to lift and we started estimating our arrival at various points on the ridge. This was fatal, for after another 15 minutes of slogging, during which our pace dropped to about 35 to 50 steps between halts, the ridge petered out, leaving us on an ice slope that was quite the steepest I have ever been on.

This was to be our introduction to the well-known Mont Blanc rubber ice, which requires 20 or 30 blows of the pick to fashion a step. Steps there had to be, for the hardness of the ice repulsed the crampon points. We placed our steps diagonally to the left—big, flat, comforting steps, for there was no question of belays and our slope went non-stop down to the Brenva glacier. For 100 feet or more we cut until a tongue of thicker snow allowed us to kick steps for a short distance, after which the ice continued for about 50 feet to regain the ridge.

With the easier angle and deeper snow, kicking was resumed and a steady pace maintained until we drew level with some rocks on the left. To gain the foot of them we traversed horizontally in deep snow. They were rough and sound ; we climbed them for 50 or 60 feet—including a pull-up that was very severe for the altitude—to reach their upper limit below an overhanging sérac. Traversing right to rejoin the snow arête, we dared to look upwards. To our delighted amazement we were a mere 50 feet below the cornice, through which the sun shone, giving it a delightful golden colour. Hardly able to refrain from running, we stamped our way to a point just beneath it. Here, with Mac belayed, I kicked a platform, then thrashed at the cornice. After two blows there was a swish, and a mass of snow tumbled down which, had I not been so well placed, would have swept me with it. That was the last resistance we encountered. From here we pulled out into the sunlight on the plateau (4748 m.). The time was 7.5 p.m.

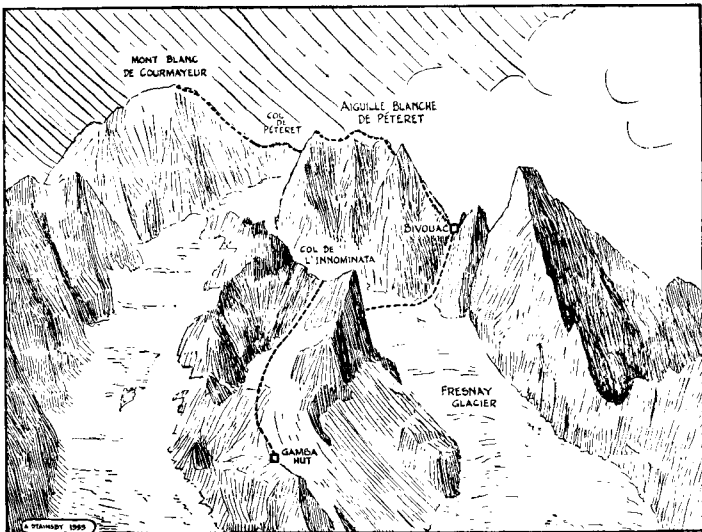
The cold was intense and powder snow was torn from the slopes at our feet and whirled into our faces by a vicious south-west wind. Mont Blanc (4807 m.), a gentle mound from here, was trampled at 7.35 p.m. and the Vallot Refuge, that sanctuary of the needy, we reached at 8 p.m. So cold were we that we clambered into the hut still roped and wearing crampons ; ten minutes elapsed before numbed fingers could untie frozen knots and unfasten crampon straps.

We met some friends over supper—two English parties who had climbed the Route Major, and to whom we had waved from the upper slopes of our ridge. We all settled down for a most uncomfortable night's rest; to call this sleep would be an exaggeration. When at 5 a.m. the others rose to descend to Chamonix, we grabbed their blankets and slept fitfully for two hours.

Surprisingly, the Austrians had arrived at 9 p.m.; they were thus only one hour behind us, after having been four hours behind us on the summit of the Aiguille Blanche and five hours on the Col de Péteret. They thanked us profusely for the steps we had made and offered to lead us back to Italy via the Dôme route, which offer we gratefully accepted.

Leaving the Vallot at 8.30 a.m., we traversed the Dôme du Goûter and descended the Dôme glacier to its junction with the Miage glacier, where we left the Austrians searching for crystals. After an interminable moraine we rounded the corner into the Val Veni and were soon strolling through its pleasant pine woods to reach Fresnay at 2.40 p.m.

Our Italian escapade ended on rather a sombre note, for we motorcycled the 120 miles back to Chamonix in heavy rain. We had only just snatched our climb in time.





## THE TAN HILL WALK

BY E. W. COURTENAY

Early in 1952 I mentioned to some friends in the Club the idea of a hundred-mile hill walk, to take place sometime during the Jubilee year. To my surprise they appeared very keen; in fact one of them, after I had told him over the 'phone of the plan, found when arriving home from the telephone kiosk that in his excitement he had carried off, with some other of his books, the telephone directory. These friends were soon enquiring for details of the route. After many possible walks had been thought of, hardly any of which seemed satisfactory, Fred Heardman, to whom I had mentioned the idea, came forward with the grand suggestion of a walk linking the two highest inns in England—Tan Hill in north Yorkshire and the Cat and Fiddle in Cheshire.

Fred's suggested pub-crawl seemed to be exactly the type of walk required; it would go completely along the Pennines, where we were used to doing our week-end walks, and, with the exception of one or two very small sections, the route would lie mostly over rough moorland country. After purchasing a  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch Ordnance map of northern England, we soon got down to deciding exactly the route we were going to take. We realised by now that the walk would be somewhat longer than one hundred miles and therefore we wanted to make it as least artificial as possible, but at the same time cover country interesting for the hill walker.

It was finally decided that from Tan Hill we would go along to Hawes in Wensleydale by way of the upper Swale, Great Shunner Fell, and Hearne Beck. This first fourteen or so miles appeared from the map to be quite straightforward, but the next section, from Wensleydale to, say, the Aire gap, required a little thinking about. From Hawes we could go several ways; we could, for instance, follow the main watershed of the Pennine over Dodd Fell, Peny-y-Ghent, and Fountains Fell to Malham. This way, however, would not be very direct, it would be all in the limestone country, and it would also involve a wide crossing of the flat and pastoral area between the Ribble and the Aire. Instead, we decided to follow the high ground on the east side of the Wharfe, first by

crossing Wether Fell from Hawes to Marsett near Semer Water, and then continuing to Grassington over Kidstones Moss, Buckden Pike, Tor Mere Top and Great Whernside. At Grassington we could cross the Wharfe, carry on over Rylstone Fell, and eventually drop down into Skipton.

From Skipton the next objective was Todmorden; and once there we should be back on our home ground with a clear route down to Edale that we reckoned we knew quite well. We therefore decided from Skipton to climb over to Cowling via Lothersdale, though the route appeared from the map to be through uninteresting country which would probably involve some road walking. From Cowling we should soon be back on the moors—Keighley Moor, the Wolf Stones, Boulsworth Hill, and Jackson's Ridge down to Widdop Reservoir—whence a cross-country route would take us to Todmorden. Leaving Todmorden we should pick up the Old Hebden Bridge to Edale route at the White House and carry on along Blackstone Edge and Buckstones Moss to Marsden, then by way of Black Hill, Bleaklow and Kinder Scout to Edale.

The last section from Edale to the Cat and Fiddle is, I must admit, a little artificial; but it would be very easy going, and by the time we'd reached Edale that was what we'd be wanting. The route would go by way of Chapel Gate and Castle Naze to Combs, then across the top of Long Hill and Burbage to the old road above the Goyt, to finish at the Cat and Fiddle.

The total distance by this route worked out at approximately 120 miles, the net ascent being about 19,450 feet.

With all details of the proposed route settled, the next business, and probably the most important, was to arrange an approximate time schedule for the whole walk. I estimated that the total time required, including stops for food, would be between 48 and 50 hours. This would involve two nights out and I wasn't sure whether we could manage it, for I had never before heard of anyone doing a hill walk covering that length of time. I knew from an ordinary night-walk such as the Colne-Rowsley that one begins to feel a little sleepy by 2 o'clock on the first morning, so I was afraid to think what I should feel like at that time on the second morning of this walk, after having been walking all the previous day and night. The only thing to do was to give it a trial, and hope that we should not drop to sleep in our tracks.

I also knew from previous walks that we could get a very late meal in the evening at Blake Lea, Marsden. It was therefore decided to have a late supper there on the second day and fix the other meals from that basic point. Working back, we should thus require to leave Tan Hill about 2 p.m., have supper in Hawes, walk through the first night to have early breakfast in Grassington on the second day, lunch at Cowling, have tea at Todmorden, and so to the late supper in Marsden. Working forward, we should breakfast on the third day in Edale, lunch at Combs, and finish at the Cat and Fiddle about 6 p.m.

Those who proposed to take part in the walk were Philip Brockbank, Vin Desmond, Neil Mather, Frank Williamson, and myself. The party would have included John Harvey, but we were robbed of his very pleasant company by his tragic death in Scotland. Frank Williamson should have been on his class Z call-up, but decided to come with us when he was failed as medically unfit.

Transport to Tan Hill was the next problem. One could go to Kirkby Stephen by rail, then walk to the Inn and stay the night ready to set off next day, but this would be costly, besides being a little impracticable. Then Roy Horsman and Bill Pickstone came to our aid by putting their cars at our disposal, themselves to act as chauffeurs. They undertook to run us straight from Manchester to Tan Hill on the first day of the walk, and pick us up two days later at the Cat and Fiddle and run us back home. I don't think the walk would have been possible without these transport arrangements and we all appreciated very much this fine offer of help.

With transport all fixed and the proposed route thoroughly mapped-out, it was now necessary to do a little reconnaissance. There are those who think that on a walk of this nature a reconnaissance of the unknown sections is not necessary, and that you should go straight out and do the walk without it. But you are then liable to waste much time route-finding, and we, being limited to time, could not afford to lose any of it by getting lost through insufficient knowledge of the country. The sections that require rehearsal are not so much those over the open moors, but those through towns and villages and cultivated country, where much time can be consumed finding suitable routes to take one quickly back to the open fells with as little road-walking as possible. A

reconnaissance is also needed to enable an estimate to be made of the times of arrival at places where meals had to be booked in advance.

Each member of the party went over one or more sections of the route during the winter. Neil and Vin were the first to go up to Tan Hill itself. This was with Roy Horsman, during March. They did the crossing from the Inn to Hawes under appalling conditions of pouring rain, thick mist, and melting snow.

A few weeks later Philip and I took the 4 a.m. Saturday train to Garsdale, where we breakfasted. We then caught a bus to Hawes, to explore the way over to Semer Water and, farther on, to Buckden Pike and Great Wherside. Eventually, after spending what seemed to be hours climbing over countless limestone walls on the slopes of Great Wherside, we reached Grassington and by devious bus and train connections arrived back in Manchester at midnight.

Early in April three of us—Philip, Vin, and myself—tried out the first night section of the walk. We left Tan Hill around 3 p.m. on the Saturday, having been driven up there by Bill Pickstone, and reached Hawes without any trouble. Whilst we were at the local supper-bar, however, rain began to fall. We set off into the night, and as we gradually climbed higher the rain turned to snow. On reaching the Buckden-Aysgarth road in near blizzard conditions the party split up, Philip, with foot trouble, carrying on by the valley roads whilst Vin and I went on over the tops.

Grassington, where we met again, was a very dead sort of village at 7 on that wet cold Sunday morning. The three of us huddled together in a doorway in the market square and gazed intently over the roof tops at the chimneys, for the first sign of smoke to show that somebody was up and cooking. At last smoke curled up from one of the chimneys; I knocked at the door and very soon we were sitting down to breakfast. After we had finished it we asked the very sympathetic and hospitable lady of the house if she could manage a 6.30 breakfast on the first morning of the walk itself and were fortunate enough to fix this important halt before departing for home by bus.

Neil later explored the tricky sections from Skipton to Cowling and Todmorden. On another occasion Frank and I checked the route from Grassington to Skipton, by way of Rylstone Fell.



Grange Bridge

*C. D. Milner*



The time-table for the walk was now sorted out so that we could book meals at definite times. Gradually everything was arranged. The date was fixed for the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Whit-week, 5th—7th June. We could now only wait for the start.

The Thursday dawned wet and cloudy; but by the time we had been conveyed to Tan Hill, the weather was beginning to change, and prospects of good conditions for the walk were hopeful. After we had all had a pot of tea, whilst being doubtfully eyed by the landlady, who by this time had heard of our proposed exploit, our chauffeurs and Hirst junior took a few photographs; they made sure to get not only us but also the name of the Inn on their pictures, as proof that we really had started there. At a few minutes to 3 p.m. we set off.

The weather being now gloriously fine, the view on reaching the summit of Great Shunner Fell was exceptionally good, with the Lake District fells showing up clearly; we were surrounded by hills as far as the eye could see. Very soon we were hurrying down alongside Hearn Beck towards Hardraw, to reach Hawes in time for our evening meal at 7.20.

The lights of this small Wensleydale town were soon left behind as we climbed over the ridge to Bardale, where darkness and a slight mist gave to the sleepy hamlets of Marsett and Stalling Busk, a mile up the valley from Semer Water, a ghostly aspect in keeping with the legends of this lonely lake. A light drizzle had already started before we took first breakfast on the Buckden road. With the night now much darker we used our torches on the tussocky going of the long steep slope of Buckden Pike. Great Whernside is also a steep pull from this northern side but we were on the top for the dawn. The rain stopped with the coming of daylight and Wharfedale was filled with low-lying mist being gradually dispersed by the emerging sun. The first 36 miles to Grassington had been carried out according to schedule.

After breakfast, in ideal conditions of bright sunshine and a cool breeze, we crossed the Wharfe and followed the rocky edges of Rylstone Fell towards Skipton. Unfortunately we gradually discovered that the time allowed for this and the next stretch had been cut too fine, and although we walked reasonably fast we were nearly an hour behind schedule when we sat down at 2 p.m. for our

lunch in Cowling. Bill Pickstone met us here to see how we were progressing. On hearing of our bad time-keeping he saved the day by offering to motor round first to Todmorden and then to Marsden, to inform the people preparing meals for us that we should arrive somewhat later than the times arranged.

We left Cowling to follow Neil's route over Wolf Stones. Then came some very rough going to Boulsworth Hill—the long tramp the length of Jackson's Ridge—finally descending to Widdop Reservoir, where we had a break for a few minutes for tea at the waterman's cottage. Leaving Mystery Buttress behind us we took a quick cross-country route and were soon dropping down, late on the Friday evening, into Todmorden. We had now covered about 70 miles—the length of a Colne-Rowsley walk: the fight for the last 50 miles was now to begin.

The meal in Todmorden had been ordered at the Youth Hostel at Mankinholes. Mrs Archer, the Warden, had received Bill's message of our late coming and had prepared for us a fine meal; this included a salad dish. Quite naturally there was cucumber in the salad, and for some unknown reason I ate it, not thinking at the time that it might be hard to digest after so much walking. It was to make me suffer for the next 24 hours. With some of us changed to plimsolls, although nobody yet had developed any really sore feet, we set off at 10.15 into our second night, wondering how we should feel by the time the next morning had arrived.

The route along the reservoir to the White House is not particularly interesting at the best of times, and it was only through the cucumber's beginning to take its effect that I kept awake. On reaching the White House about midnight we stopped for a minute or so to eat some chocolate before tackling Blackstone Edge. We still thought we were walking at a reasonable pace, whereas in fact we were walking fairly slowly. The moon by this time was very low in the heavens directly in front of us. By dazzling our eyes and casting strange shadows it made us lose our sense of depth and distance; consequently, being sleepy, we had to go very carefully to avoid stumbling down groughs. I was now walking in a sort of trance and had the feeling that there were many other people doing the walk besides ourselves. Neil had an impression that we were walking to some town on the south coast of England.



By the time we had crossed Buckstones Moss we were really suffering, others with sore feet, I with indigestion. Philip was the fittest here ; the lack of sleep didn't seem to affect him a great deal. After stumbling down the track towards Marsden, about three hours behind schedule, we arrived at Blake Lea at 3.30 a.m., to find to our surprise that Mrs Walker was still up, and that our meal was ready even down to the milk pudding that had been ordered. Mrs Walker did a magnificent job for us, and though by then we had got beyond appreciating it, we did so later.

The meal over, we snoozed awhile in our chairs, but soon got down to the job of doctoring each other's feet, some of which were now very sore. Philip and Vin left a little before the rest of us, for we were still wasting time bandaging ; we eventually set out just before 5.30 a.m. Having by now all changed into plim-solls, we decided to try and step it out a little on this last day, which had already dawned bright and clear. Frank, Neil, and I had one more attack of sleepiness going up the Wessenden, but that was to prove the last ; quite soon we were across Black Hill and on the Holmfirth road, eager to get to Bleaklow and our hundredth mile.

Near the George we again met Bill, who regretfully informed us that Philip had had to fall out, owing to suspected trouble with the arches of his feet. This must have been quite a blow after coming all that way. He had covered about 92 miles.

The three of us stopped for pints of tea at the George and then crossed the Woodhead reservoir and carried on up Stable Clough, whilst Bill and Philip went round to Edale in the car, hoping to see us arrive. The cucumber effect of the previous night returned to me on the way up the clough, making me slow down to a very steady plod. On the descent of Upper North Grain Neil's knee began to give trouble ; it gradually became worse as we went down the Snake road and by the time we had climbed up to Seal Stones on the short crossing he was in much pain. Here on the southern edge of Kinder above Grindsbrook, with over a hundred miles of rough moorland behind us and Edale at our feet, we realised that it would now soon be all over, with the last section nothing more than a footpath walk.

Fred Heardman was quite overwhelmed when we reached the Nag's Head, having given us up altogether until first Bill and

Philip and then Vin had arrived and told him that we were coming on very soon. As Neil's knee had not improved, he decided he would have to fall out here ; this was bad luck indeed, so near the finish. He had however the satisfaction of having covered over a hundred miles. Fred and Mrs Heardman had prepared a marvellous breakfast for us and we were now enjoying it—in the middle of the afternoon. Vin had carried on alone, for he was beginning to stiffen up when he waited about too long and wanted to make sure that one at least of the party got through. I was not too certain of the paths from Edale to Combs and would have had to do most of it on roads had not Philip come forward with the grand offer to start off walking again to pilot us over to Combs village. It was arranged that he should be picked up here by Alfred Williamson, who had kindly motored out to assist in transporting us home after the walk.

Leaving Edale we climbed up over the track to Chapel Gate, I feeling greatly refreshed after the meal at the Nag's, with my digestive troubles cleared completely. Philip had the route well planned ; soon we were passing under Castle Naze and descending to the village.

After a light meal, Frank and I set out on the last stretch, whilst Philip and Alfred went round to the Cat and Fiddle by car. On reaching the top of Long Hill, near White Hall, we could at last see our goal on the distant skyline. With dusk falling on our third night out, we descended to the old railway track in the Goyt valley in high spirits. It was quite dark when we reached the old road at the top of the Goyt, with only a mile separating us from the finish. As we walked up the road we were met by our guardian angel, Bill Pickstone, and other Rucksackers who had come out to meet us ; they brought the good news that Vin had arrived an hour and a half earlier. By 10.30 p.m. we had all arrived and were congratulating each other on the success, regretting only that Philip and Neil were out of it. Vin's time from Inn to Inn was 54 hrs 10 mins ; Frank and myself had taken 55 hrs 40 mins.

The Jubilee walk and all its planning and preparation had proved to be well worth while, every bit of it ; but thank goodness a Jubilee only comes once in fifty years !

## ON GUIDEBOOK WRITING

BY V. T. DILLON

Do you see the way the fibres glisten and swell under water? said Kelleher, who was still in the first flush of enthusiasm. That's how a guidebook should be, he said obscurely, a lure and a flame to bring men to the foot of a cliff with awe and apprehension and pleasure. It's not a spotlight we want on the rocks, it's a candle; a smoky fitful light. A what light? we said patiently. We were becoming accustomed to K, who had joined us on liking, much as the innocent young waiter in Dickens. Fitful, repeated Kelleher, ejecting the water from one ear with a sharp blow on the other. How much have we done? he said. About forty feet, we replied.

Kelleher said nothing, suddenly pensive, watching the ice-cold water swelling his fibres. Small spouts marked his footholds; one blue hand held mossy rock below the fall, the other dabbed around in spray beneath the top. Fingers like wood, said Kelleher, and we heard a sharp intake of breath; we knew the water had followed his invitation to the armpit. What does Edwards say about the left-hand branch? he asked, half to himself. Steeper and looser the higher we go, we assured him.

Ah, well, said Kelleher. At least we'll be able to write a damn good description. His small body flashed arcs of freezing water over us as he wedged up to the fall. We all shouted the customary shouts, Kelleher loudest of all. He fell off, and the fall roared triumphantly again. We hauled him in. Thanks, old man, said K, well schooled in the minor formulae, and we squatted together on the streaming ledge. Curtains of water, swung by the wind, reeded over bent shoulders. A gull screamed over Silin.

Between wind and water K's voice came clear. Guidebooks, said K confidently, taking one from his soaking hip pocket, should be literature. Mountaineers, he said, and particularly climbers, are a people of beginnings, for whom the abstract is the strongest motive, the process of infinite courage and variety, and the end nothing. Shelley, said Ted. 'Up the slab for thirty feet' said Kelleher mournfully, consulting a damp page. Would you ever know of a more colourblind and moribund word-group to describe the beauties of a mountain route? 'Traverse left for a few feet,

difficult ' he said, and the sad shriek of the gull was as nothing to his melancholy. I know that traverse well, he said, and it's only by the grace of God I can stay on it at all ; and the ribbed and groined architecture of the ferns for handhold is the finest I've ever seen : D'you know what, said Kelleher, tossing the guidebook into the fall, we're going to write the first of the new literary series. But, K, I said, there's the paper shortage . . . Ted was face downwards on the narrow ledge, making a long arm in the effort to retrieve his guidebook ; it was given to him by one of the founders of the Club. He offered a bubbling noise as the water ran up his nose. Paper shortage be damned, said Kelleher, we don't have to shovel adjectives onto every page ; but the description of every route should be written as carefully as it's climbed, every word chosen as carefully as every handhold to give the maximum of atmosphere and beauty and information in the minimum of space. Ted got up on his knees and sneezed. You must have thrown the bloody thing right to the bottom, he said. It was a good excuse for going down.

It's all very well, K, I thought, banking neatly round the icy corner at Pentre Foelas on the way home, but it's not the paper shortage we'd have to fight. We'd have to fight the arbiters of the present style. Mountaineers fear change, K, more than anything, I thought, picking up the two-stroke and remounting. Their imaginations are vivid but not creative ; they're content to clothe bony sentences with remembered days. On this climb it rained, on that the mist stood all day, on another a delicious trickle of water solved a hot afternoon. And you're right, K, I suddenly said to the rabbits momentarily encompassed in the headlamp's circle, it's not enough. A guidebook should stand in its own right as literature, not serve merely as a prick to memory or a stolid signpost. But what a problem, K, to present the climb as everyone would see it ! It can't be done. Maybe we'd better play safe and write ' Up the slab for thirty feet ? ' But I know what you'd say to that, K ; did Manet or Renoir or Gauguin or Joyce in painting or writing subdue themselves to that most deep and biting social discipline, convention ? Ah, but K, Manet and Renoir and Joyce weren't common clay, and anyway where should we be if Lliwedd had been written up by Joyce and illustrated by Renoir ? It's bad enough as it is, I thought fretfully, taking the wrong turning in



|  
Dent du Géant

|  
Aig. de Rochefort

Entrèves

*B. R. Goodfellow*



the effort to remember where Purple Passage begins or Avalanche ends. Besides, aren't we the last persons, K, to attempt an advance on the excellence of guidebooks? For if we, I said severely to the trees near Corwen, compare ourselves with the professors of literature, we are not merely ignorant, we do not exist. What we need, I reflected, is scholarship and selfconscious gravity; and I sat a little straighter in the saddle until a wet leaf got under the back wheel.

We met Kelleher in the Coffee Pot a week later. It seemed on listening to him as he sat there, like an amiable if small volcano in happy eruption, that you just said 'guidebook' overnight, and next morning it came in with the tea. He had a description of Bedrock Gully all written out. But, K, we said helplessly, we didn't finish it. The description is finished, said Kelleher, waving this frivolous objection away, and can't we always verify it from the top? Well, let's read it, said we. It needs pruning, said K. Producing two closely written sheets of paper he began to read: 'A narrow cleft closed by a book of shards . . .' Ted choked into his coffee. Ah, no, said K, shaking the drops off his manuscript, and looking with mild reproach at Ted, that's the start of Five Cave Gully.

Ted borrowed K's writings and began to look through them morosely. He appeared to agree with what Mr Venus said to the boy in *Our Mutual Friend*: 'You've no idea how small you'd come out, if I had the articulating of you.'

We took our mutual friend across to the corner by the window, and came to an understanding. Look here, K, we said, remember Marx: all great changes are wrought qualitatively. Quantitatively, said Kelleher. Anyway, we said, 'a book of shards'? The old-timers would rise in their wrath. Do you want to get us kicked out of the Club? Rubbish, said K, intellectual myopia. What about Archer Thomson's description of the Lliwedd girdle? It's the only thing that makes the climb worth while. All right, we said, forget Bedrock Gully and we'll give you a free hand on Upper Slab. It's a wonderful climb; and we think we've solved the problem of the start. It's something worthy of you, K, and Ted can go down on the back of your motorcycle.

So three weeks later we found ourselves together in the basin below Craig Cwm Silin, sharp and theatrical against the moon.

In a ruckle of boulders we lay out of the wind on woollens, and measured out our filched supplies. The night was dry ; a high cold star shone steadily. Over above us in the shadow lay the great pile of Silin, with somewhere on it Kirkus' route, the Upper Slab ; three previous attempts we'd made to weave a way through the slanting buttresses below, and gain the great shield of rock high up on the main slab. Three attempts, I thought, and now we have you.

K came up with thick cocoa, his gnomish face blurred in the colourless moonlight. Would you believe it now, he said, but Edward didn't return my descriptions of the climbs ? No doubt, I said, he's learning them off by heart. Ted was using them, till something better turned up, as an inner sole for his leaky boot, but it would only have taken the heart out of Kelleher to tell him. Tomorrow was going to be the real start, as far as K was concerned, of the new type of guidebook. We ate and drank peacefully. D'you know what ? said K, who could never be quiet for long. We waved our cocoa in gentle negative. For this new guidebook, said Kelleher, kicking one leg in the air, we'll have to go to new sources. Undoubtedly, we murmured. Clausewitz, Jomini, Mahan, and Foch, said K, rolling the names over his tongue ; and the wars of Belisarius. Write it all out, on thick paper, said Ted. When you come to think of it, said K, rubbing his knee reflectively, the theory of mountaineering is very like the theory of war. Considered in its structural aspect, which is strategy ; in its arrangements, which are tactics ; and in the sentiments of its participants, which is psychology, it's very like war. Consider a long and strenuous walk, said K, getting up as though to start one immediately, it's a campaign in brief. We have an aim, a leader, previous intelligence, a plan, supply points, equipment : we need morale, discipline, courage, training. We advance, said K in high oratorical good humour, all day (and night, we reminded him sourly) against a hidden adversary who retreats steadily before us, and whom we never see except vaguely at dusk or palely at dawn or small on the rim of the next long hill. We halt, eat, take up the pursuit ; rest, begin once more ; together and cautiously ; in extended line ; in echelon. Not all who start out, finish, said K gravely, overcome by his own eloquence. Bunk-ho, said Ted, and we turned in.



‘What’s he that wishes so?’ I murmured, taking in another half inch of rope. Ted and I were leading through with K safely in the middle. By leaning slightly forward I could see one hand describing a complicated polygon on the rock below the good hold; below that, Kelleher’s fringe of fiery hair. His bosom was stuffed with notebooks, and so he stood well off the rock, which was vertical. It was a fine morning, bright but cold; and we were half way up the narrow route to Upper Slab. The hostile buttress, all loom and slants, had yielded the way at last; once fairly on it, we wondered why its discovery had taken so long; now pitch by pitch we were moving in and up behind the black defence, up and left towards the slab itself. ‘Take the mossy wall on the left’ our scrap of paper had informed us, and Ted, crammed below us into a narrow crack with a trembling turf for stance, wondered aloud why K was so long in availing himself of this permission. May the eyes of your understanding be enlightened, muttered Kelleher, toeing like a ballet dancer. There was a squeak of rubber, the rope sang, and he tumbled up the wall without using the good hold. Just needed a bit of initial velocity, said K modestly; and sat down to write a description of the pitch. Ted came up efficiently. We trod carefully among the notebooks and climbed a step or two of rock to the next bit. ‘A wet corner’ our piece of paper advised us ‘leads to a slab with an excavated stance below its apex.’ Ted slithered up the corner, and we looked round for K. He was still scribbling. K, we said, there’s only four weeks left to finish the whole guide! Belloc knew, said Kelleher peacefully, what comes of hurried beginnings: discouragement, anger, vexation, irritability, bad style, and infinitives split from helm to saddle. Inaccuracy, he continued, looking far out over Anglesey in search of the absolutely right word, feebleness, paleness, a certain . . . Ted hauled him up in a shower of pencils. A certain unsatisfying superficiality, said K, spitting the earth out of his mouth.

You may be right, K, I thought later, pushing a shoulder up to the knot to keep it on the belay; but where’s the guidebook writer can capture this in a sentence to be the key for everyone? Kelleher, twenty feet above, poised as carefully as if he were of Sévres on an irresolute grass pedestal, paid out the rope to Ted. Ted, small and high on the steeps of Upper Slab, was putting a

slung on somewhere. His voice faintly floated down; he was repeating the first of the three phrases of Belloc's which steady and balance a man's mind in positions of stress. This phrase, by the way, I first heard in Rhodesia, when I hung with K to the back of a leaping lightless truck driven by a drunken steelworker at night down a bush road full of buck moving up with the rains, and leopard moving up after the buck, and this phrase—'After all, it is not my business'—is a very powerful sedative.

Ted had ninety feet of rope out, and sedatives were in order. I changed feet on the three square feet of thick wet ferns and grasses. You may be right, K, I said again; but what word-web will you make to hold this jutting bastion of rock, this sea of scree, the water dripping on my shoulder, the hazy rivers of light between the clouds, the blowing of the wind?

K, out of hearing, a lonely champion of the new literature, balanced between earth and sky, loosed another foot of rope. There came a long shout from Ted. We're up, he called.

We came slowly down from Silin in the evening from our camp site. At Tyn-y-Weirglodd, while we lit gas jets and primus stoves and peeled potatoes and opened tins, Kelleher spread his books over the table and wrote and wrote. His fiery hair grew wet with the weight of translating atmosphere and climb into print. Now and again he tore up a sheet of paper. God help us, said Ted, who was well pleased with the day, are we going to have a separate guide book for Upper Slab?

At last K threw down his pencil and drew a breath. That's it finished, he said, and it's no immodest presumption to say that I've captured the soul of it. Have some soup, we said. Now I'm going to cut, K said, and cut and cut again until there isn't a wasted word in it, not a word that isn't carrying its full weight of subtle woven meaning.

And while he ate and drank, his pencil scored out here and chopped there, and the little pile of sheets shrank like a spending allowance in Switzerland. And while we washed up he sat there with a slower but still deadly pencil; until at last he said Boys, it's Biblical; it's simplicity itself; it tells everything. He went out into the tangled ruin of the garden.

We leapt to the one sheet that remained and read with clashing shoulders. 'Up the slab,' it began, 'for thirty feet . . .'

## ALPINE INITIATION

BY V. J. DESMOND

The first Alpine peak I saw was the Dent du Midi, from the corridor of our train on the way to Zermatt this year. It was not only as high as I had visualized the Alps these last sixteen years, but higher. It seemed utterly remote and quite impossible to climb. I suppose we were looking up most of its 10,000 feet, if not all of it, and as that height is three and one-third times higher than anything I had previously looked at I was naturally overwhelmed. I may never have such a sensation of wonder again, for I don't think it's possible to gaze up a vertical height of 33,000 feet. Another thing was that the whole scene was in colour; it looked like a Robin Gray colour-slide.

I was very impressed, but also a little pessimistic. Climbing a thing like that surely demanded extra aids to the usual two hands, two feet, boots, rope, and axe. I knew Ted C. had an ice-piton with him, but that wouldn't get us up. Fortunately the scenery is not so startling again on the rest of the way to Zermatt, the big peaks being mostly concealed by the attractively-wooded foothills with the exception of brief glimpses up side valleys. When we arrived in Zermatt the Matterhorn was there just as I expected it to be; all those thousand and one photographs and verbal accounts of its appearance took away the surprise factor and it was just there as a mountain to admire. I made a mistake in not climbing it; perhaps I ought to have climbed it on the first day, because the only time it ever looked real was in the late evening from the Arben glacier, when its head appeared above a layer of cloud curled across the north face. It looked very real indeed then; otherwise it had much the air of a Belle Vue backcloth, and I grew rather tired of its non-stop demand to be looked at. Anyhow, it didn't frighten me as much as the Midi; nothing I saw in the Zermatt region ever looked so bewilderingly high.

All that is not to say that other impressions did not strike me so forcibly. They did, of course, but in a different way. That view of the Matterhorn, for instance, from Arben: although bathed in yellow light from the declining sun, it looked savage and impregnable behind an armour of ice, a fearsome mountainside.

The day on which we saw that view had been unforgettable for many things. For the second time in the holiday we had ascended the Wellenkuppe, a flattering peak, for on each ascent we improved on guide-book time. It's a jolly climb, too, with a mixture of most Alpine mountaineering ingredients—firm glacier névé, a few crevasses, a bergschrund, a snow saddle, pleasant rock (some loose, some firm) and a snow-ice slope to finish to a narrow crest of a summit. The views backwards to the Rothorn, showing the sharp curving crest of the Rothorngrat as it lifts beautifully to the spire of the summit, are remarkably fine. The Rothorn from this angle must be amongst the sharpest of Alpine peaks.

On this occasion we did not descend the Wellenkuppe again but walked easily down the icy crusted snow towards the Obergabelhorn. For perfect beauty this ridge would be hard to beat. It soon narrows and slopes up steeply, and the smooth icily-grooved slopes on the right hand are just beneath the boots. Steps were cut and the snow was good; we had merely to walk in the steps; but Baddeley would have said that a steady head was essential. The Gendarme is certainly an obstacle, or at least it must have been before the fixed rope was placed. I found this strenuous; but it is not too severe, for where the rock offers little hold for boots it is slabby and at an angle, and where it is steep at the top it has good footholds which allow you to push with the feet to take your weight off your arms. I was very glad that Ted C. led all that day, for I was just recovering from underfeeding and probably lack of acclimatisation.

After a tricky little rock drop beyond the pinnacle one is on honest arête again and is soon on rock all the way to the summit. Appearances deceived me here; there is still a long way to go before you are eating your lunch *on the top*, and *the rock is not all easy*. We were on the top before mid-day. Luckily the weather was still good.

We hoped to be down in Zermatt for 6 p.m. at the latest; but we underrated the Arbengrat and overrated ourselves. Whether the Arbengrat bears much snow or ice in other years I don't know, but this year it was almost all clear rock. Joe Walmsley, who had come down here with his guide the previous day, later said that they 'fell down' this ridge, that being his graphic description of their rapid and efficient descent. Perhaps it was that very thing we



*D. T. Bernick*

The Cairngorms



wished to avoid ; we certainly took no chances of falling down ; indeed, we descended with some circumspection in all places and rather more in others. The second great tower going down gave us a very long abseil, the full length of our joined ropes. Actually we need not have abseiled the full 100 feet, but it seemed a good thing at the time to go the whole length. The launching platform was an airy foot-wide ledge on which we four perched precariously whilst untying and joining the ropes. I went down first, then came a huge bundle of sacks and axes. These stopped on a ledge 50 feet above me, and for 20 minutes would not drop over the lip of the ledge. When they did descend, the knots were so tight and so wonderfully constructed as to make me wish that Houdini was a member and on the meet. Ted C. came next, then the other Vin, who got into difficulties when the rope became trapped between the karabiner, his coat-tails, and a delicate portion of his anatomy. Ted D., who was making his first abseil, came last. The rope, when pulled, ran beautifully through the loop, only to stick some distance up. The gallant Ted D. climbed up unroped and threw it down. In such a manner did we lengthen our active hours and curtail our afternoon naps.

Now our trouble was to find the 'veritable path' described in the guide. After several false casts and anxious peerings over the ridge through the cold mist that now blotted out distance, we eventually came on the spot—a tiny path in a vast mass of crags, on which, to set all doubts at rest, reposed orange peel and a rusty tin, wonderful evidence of civilized man ! We were anxious no longer ; we slapped each other on the back and sang happy songs, and hurried rejoicing down the easy descent to the Arben glacier, on the dry ice of which I slipped onto my posterior twenty-five times in ten minutes and surprised my friends by the force and richness of my language.

There was great joy in getting down to grass and flowers and the scent of both, for we had been above the snow line for five days or so. Soon we were on the path down to Zermatt, going at a great pace. Darkness fell, and once in the woods we could see little.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable month endows—

I could not see the perishing big boulder that I tripped over,

either. I described a neat double-somersault and came down on my feet with a crash that threatened to split my spine. After that I gave up running and let Ted C. take the lead, hoping that he might find the next boulder and warn me in time.

When we got to Biner's about 10 p.m., I glanced in a mirror and was appalled at the reflection of the Old Man of the Mountains that I saw there. A seamed, lined, gaunt and unshaven visage leered at me, a sure proof of the rigours I had undergone during the last few days. You will not believe that a few days could cause such a change in a young man in the prime of life unless I tell you about our adventures on the Rothorngrat, which I have withheld up to now.

This was our second climb, the Rothorn by the Rothorngrat, in the hellish programme devised by Ted C. and approved by me on paper only. It had all sounded so easy in England.

We were away at 4 a.m., mounting quickly up the deep grooves of previous tracks in the steep glacier. A short icy chimney, a steep snow traverse, and rocks, brought us to where we thought the Frühstückplatz should be. Unfortunately we kept too low across a further snow slope and so got onto the Nameless glacier too low and had to mount by its right-hand side to gain the glacier basin. We crossed a large bergschrund by a good bridge, went up a steep snow wall, and after an awkward first step gained a fairly easy crescent fault in the rocks, which, though needing care on account of loose rock, brought us fairly quickly to the Ober-Rothornjoch at 9.45 a.m.

We thought that now we were on the ridge we would make quick time, that all this pure rock was just our cup of tea, and so on. We were very unaware then that we were not acclimatised and that the ridge is all but infinite in length. Ted D. was ill on the whole of the ridge to the Gabel, and the climb must have been an unpleasant nightmare to him. Actually the ridge is magnificent, of gloriously firm red rock, pinnacle after pinnacle. The standard of climbing is not high by British standards, but it is consistently at a fair level of difficulty, with passages of extra interest thrown in. It is enjoyable for about three hours, but after that one needs to be fully acclimatised and brimful with energy. Through sheer tiredness we were glad to do much of the climb in pitches. It was about 5-5.30 when, very thankfully, we reached the Gabel. As Ted D. elected



not to come to the top we were faced with the difficult decision whether to leave him here and go on to the top without him, or whether to go down straight away with him.

We eventually left him, tied on, wearing several pullovers, and half buried under our sacks. We hoped to get up in the half hour that the guide-book says is the minimum. Again we were slow; the top was a long time in appearing. We hurried down almost immediately. Not liking the nasty condition of the snow slope leading down to the Biner Platte, we descended the slabs instead, which were not amply provided with holds. The other Vin came last; he has the ability to descend rocks as easily as he goes up them. We had been on the last section nearly two hours, and Ted D. was getting worried about us and about two birds of prey, who had been regarding him hopefully for some time.

The sun being by now well on its way to the horizon, we awoke to the seriousness of the situation and moved off down the couloir as quickly as we could, which, as you will have gathered, was not at all too fast, but rather the reverse. I now became very tired indeed; perhaps this was because I had eaten so little that day, having felt no desire to eat. Whatever the reason was, my own pace was now even slower, and slowed up the whole party.

When night fell we were still on rocks above the last snow slope, which is itself above the rock wall leading to the Rothorn glacier. The crossing of that snow slope was to me a nasty experience; Ted C., that man of iron, saw me down rope-length by rope-length, and as I crouched over my axe to take in his rope as he descended, I had each time to fight a battle with imperious sleep. With much relief we gained the last rocks, where Vin and Ted D. had waited for us. They had tried to find the way off, but without success.

Until the moon rose we divided our time between stumbling about the rocks, sitting down, debating on whether to bivouac or continue, and in watching a most impressive lightning display over Monte Rosa, which continued all night and into the dawn. A sickle moon rose later (much later), and by its light we saw a way off to the glacier, and were at last sliding and slipping down its steep icy slopes to the comfort of the hut, which we reached at 4 a.m. as the day's parties were setting out. Our friends at the hut were relieved to see us, and Albert Dale produced bowls of tea for the weary. We had taken 24 hours for the trip.

Come, heavy dreamless sleep, and close and press  
Upon mine eyes thy fingers dropping balm.

In contrast to these strenuous expeditions, the next week was comparatively restful. I was very glad, for my own sake, that a thunderstorm prevented a grand tour of the Monte Rosa peaks, but I daren't tell my ardent companions this. Not to have to get up was sheer delight. Later that day we set out to climb Castor, not realizing that it is farther from the Bétemps Hut than it looks, and that it is a 4000 metre peak. Furthermore, it is guarded by an intricate glacier, the Zwillingen. We spent hours trying to find a route through it to the snow shelf above, which leads round to the Felikjoch and the peak. All that afternoon, as we roamed the glacier in different directions, we were visible from the hut. Our efforts must have appeared the reverse of experienced, and when one of us fell into a crevasse we guessed that among the watchers at the hut the odds against our returning at all rose sharply. However, we gained much valuable glacier experience and found the route through. We then decided we owed it to our pride to climb Castor the next day, which we did. It was snow all the way, with a delightful snow ridge to follow to the top; cumulus clouds added grandeur to an already superb view. This was one of the occasions when we had tinned pineapple on the summit, which also helps to make the climb a happy memory.

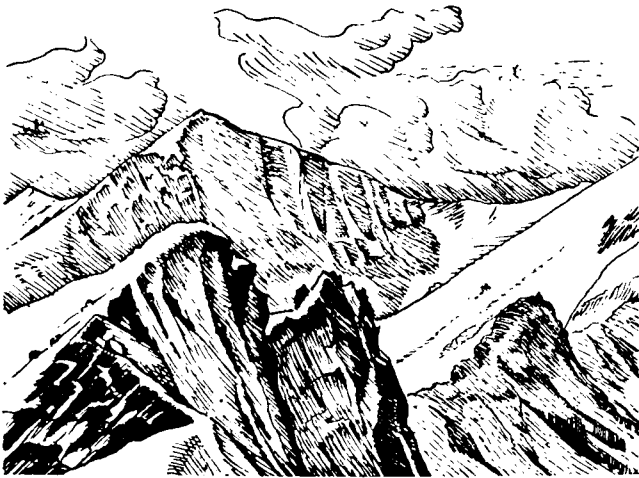
The descent was memorable for two lessons: firstly, that crampons in softening snow are dangerous; secondly, that one must be out of the way of hanging ice when the sun gets hot. The shelf above the glacier was bounded by a wall of rock over which there was now periodic ice-fall; we had left the shelf only ten minutes before the daily discharge began.

Our last expedition was the Dent Blanche, up and down from the Schönbühl. We would not have done it without a day spent in reconnaissance had it not been for the excellent company of Eric and Jessie Byrom, who were able to lead us in the dark up what appeared to be an involved moraine maze to the Schönbühl glacier under the Wandfluh. As we climbed the 1,000 foot wall of the Wandfluh—easy, but with loose rocks—a beautiful Alpine dawn spilled a profusion of colour, so that the halt for food on top of the wall was memorable for the kind of view one hopes to see sometimes.

The ridge from here was much longer than it looked, as are all Alpine ridges to the beginner ; it provided a glorious scramble along a sunlit edge when we were lucky but along the sunless and icy side when we were not. The sunless side of the Grand Gendarme gave us the only really hard move on the climb ; but it was all interesting to me and it still seems, in retrospect, a finer climb than some of our tigers are prepared to admit.

This was our highest mountain, and although by now we were going well, yet we felt the height near the top and were glad to go slowly. Eric and Jessie, climbing together and leading alternately, were the first to reach the summit, thus realizing for Jessie a long cherished ambition.

Our descent was made more easy by the clearing of ice from the ridge by the sun and the increased warmth of the rocks. We were enveloped in mist on the Wandfluh, which is a dangerous and disagreeable place to descend because of the looseness of the rocks ; nor did I feel happy when we came under possible fire from the suspended glacier above it, which looked to me ready to avalanche. The Schönbühl glacier was now a scene of dreariness compared to the crystal clarity and cleanliness of the morning. Now the snow was dirty and stone-swept, the mist was low, and all colour had gone. But we were not depressed, for we'd climbed a grand peak and had a grand holiday.



# JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

## I. THE LANGDALE MEET

Langdale was a happy choice for our special Jubilee Whitsun week-end, for it was here that we had our first Easter Meet. It was Frank Kiernan's doing and the idea began modestly as so many good ideas do. It was to be an appendage to the Easter Meet so that those of us who were prevented by whatever fell circumstance from joining the Club in Scotland might have another chance of basking in the warmth and friendship of a major meet. It was to be held in the longer days of late spring. Sid Cross joined in the conspiracy and turned the Old Dungeon Ghyll hotel over to us from 30th May to 3rd June. The Wayfarers, sensing an occasion, lent us the Robertson Lamb Hut for the overflow.

The rain had stopped when John Wilding and I drove up Langdale. We had left our wives at the Langdale Estates and never was there a more romantic setting. Even Capability Brown or Joseph Paxton non-members could not have arranged the water vistas to better advantage or scattered the old millstones more artistically. The clouds were lifting and the hills beginning to emerge with magical clearness against the delicate, washed May sky ; but our hopes for fine weather were shortlived.

Saturday greeted us with a downpour that looked as if it meant business and even the President, with whom I was sharing a room, seemed in no hurry to call for sandwiches. As I looked across at him I could not but think of my progress in the Club : in my novitiate I was always quartered with Horrocks who had every good and kindly quality except that of silence during the night, and now after a long strenuous apprenticeship I was privileged to share the Presidential chamber.

The O.D.G. had provided some milestones in that pilgrimage : I had slept there with Morley Wood when Langdale was a gateway to adventure ; I had read my Penguin in bed by the light of the flickering candle, which Wilson Hey always carried for that purpose ; once, long ago, I returned to find Eustace Thomas stretched on my bed, the mud from his shoes staining the counterpane whilst

Lawton pummelled him in preparation for the next stretch of the Fell record. Having been brought up strictly in a family that looked upon mud on the quilt as the equivalent of blood on the moon, I was not surprised to hear that his success had had to be postponed for a year. In the anxiety produced by these reflections, I glanced again at the President and happily his bedclothes were as white as snow.

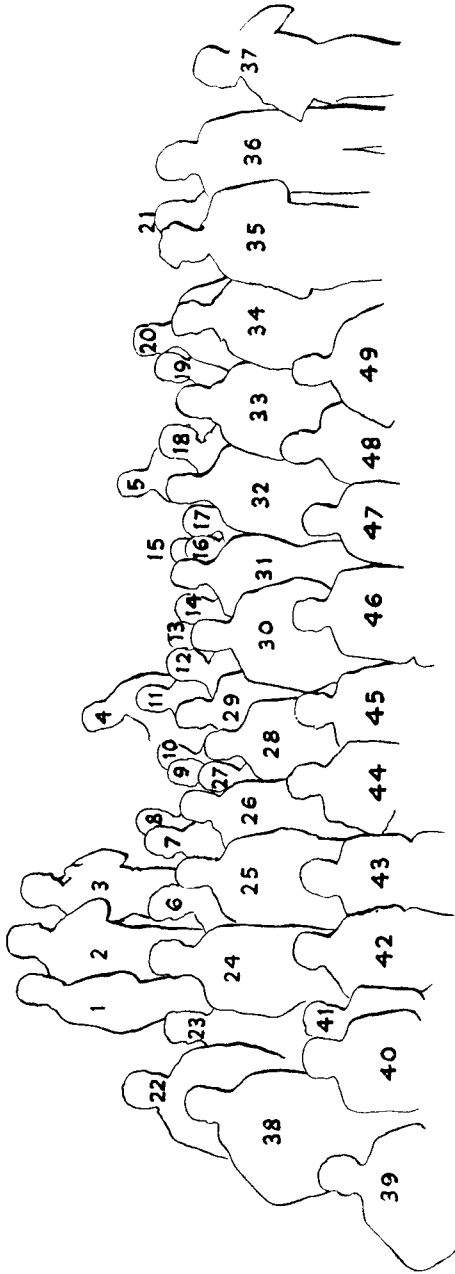
The dinner was a great success ; sixty-one well-fed guests agreed that Mrs Cross had excelled even her reputation for good cooking. Outside, wan faces pressed against the panes gave silent testimony of what happens to those who send their names in too late. There was some informal speaking. Geoffrey Winthrop Young told us of his thoughts as he approached the realms of gold and complimented the Club on reaching a respectable middle age. John Wilding paid tribute to those who had laid our foundations and to those who have built so sturdily upon them. Douglas Milner entertained us with a few excerpts from his mountain philosophy.

The climax of the evening came when the cake was brought in. Given by Walton Tattersall, it was resplendent with fifty shining candles. Roger Shaw was detailed to blow them out and old Charles Pickstone would have been a happy man if he could have seen his grandson doing it so effectively. It would have made ample amends for that legendary, draughty night he spent in Rake End Chimney.

The meet seemed to attract many of our rarer migrants some of whom had travelled far to be with us. Alf Schaanning and Norman Begg came with a considerable contingent from London, Harry Summersgill from Burton, Bill Humphry from Falmouth, Fred Cooper from Southampton, Frank Bennett from Edinburgh, and Ralph Dean from Glasgow. At the other end of the scale Edmund Hodge walked over from Elterwater, and Ken Barber, who could then claim local status, came with him.

One final note : Frank Kiernan worked unremittingly to make this meet a success and we are all grateful to him for it. It is to be hoped that his frail constitution will have recovered in time for him to arrange another for us next year.

A.S.P.



- 1. Hirst, J.
- 2. Goodfellow, B. R.
- 3. Pigott, G. W. S.
- 4. Byrom, J. E.
- 5. Thomas, E.
- 6. Barber, B. K.
- 7. Moss, E.
- 8. Cooper, F.
- 9. Prendergast, B. F.
- 10. Bennett, F. G.
- 11. Bullough, A. S.
- 12. Roberts, E. T.
- 13. Tarbuck, K.
- 14. Jennings, R. R.
- 15. Colley, F. H.
- 16. Harris, J.
- 17. Burns, R.
- 18. Wickham, C. G.
- 19. Courtenay, E. W.
- 20. Hopkin, D.
- 21. Stainsby, A.
- 22. Hirst, J. H.
- 23. Dean, R. H.
- 24. Upton, C. R.
- 25. Kiernan, F.
- 26. Begg, N. F. B.
- 27. Collins, F.
- 28. Tattersall, J.
- 29. Pigott, A. S.
- 30. Wildings, J.
- 31. Mather, J. N.
- 32. Kirkman, N. F.
- 33. Ferguson, A. D.
- 34. Dean, J.
- 35. Wordsworth, N. E.
- 36. Isherwood, R. L.
- 37. Davidson, K. R.
- 38. Robson, G. R.
- 39. Lawton, J. B.
- 40. Spilsbury, H. P.
- 41. Hartley, M.
- 42. Horsman, R. S.
- 43. Hartley, H. K.
- 44. Dillon, V. T.
- 45. Shaw, R. D.
- 46. Foulds, T.
- 47. Gerrard, H.
- 48. Milner, C. D.
- 49. Basford, A. T.

*E. Moss*



The Jubilee Mect

*D. T. Bernick*





## 2. THE DINNER

The Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner was held at the Midland Hotel on Saturday, 8th November, 1952. The President, John Wilding, was in the Chair and 193 members and guests (a record attendance) were present; among them were three original members—the President, Entwisle, and Ashley.

The principal guests were Eric Shipton, J. L. Longland, and W. H. Murray. A. P. Wadsworth (the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*) was also invited but was prevented by indisposition from attending.

The kindred clubs were represented as follows: Alpine Club—J. H. Emlyn Jones; Climbers' Club—J. A. Martinez; Derbyshire Pennine Club—R. C. Jewell; Fell and Rock Club—A. B. Hargreaves (President); Gritstone Club—A. Garvie (President); M.U.M.C.—D. McDonald; M.A.M.—A. H. Robinson; S.M.C.—J. S. M. Jack (President); Wayfarers' Club—F. Lawson Cook (President); Y.R.C.—D. Burrow (President); Y.M.C.A. Rambling Club—W. B. Howie.

The toast list was as follows:

'The Queen'	..	..	The President
'The Rucksack Club'	..	..	J. L. Longland
Response	..	..	The President
'Guests and Kindred Clubs'			Geoffrey Winthrop Young
Responses	..	..	Eric Shipton
			J. H. Emlyn Jones
'The President'	..	..	A. S. Pigott
Response	..	..	The President

At the request of Shipton, however, the first response for the guests and kindred clubs was made by Emlyn Jones, Shipton seconding him.

The speeches, a précis of which is added below, were consistently good and greatly appreciated. Each speaker gave a memorable performance in his own individual manner whilst doing full justice to his subject and to the occasion.

In the first of two musical interludes, John Hirst, accompanied on the piano by J. D. Thornley, sang the following song, composed in celebration of the Jubilee:

## THE RUCKSACK CLUB

(' My Old Shako ')

The Rucksack Club first came to light in nineteen hundred and two,  
 With rules to tell us what we might, and what we never should do.  
 It's changed a lot ; perhaps it's not what Entwisle then desired.  
 If that be so I wouldn't know ! At least he's not retired !  
 If that be so I wouldn't know ! At least he's not retired !  
 Heigh Ho ! Nobody seems to know  
 Why some delight to scale a height, while others stay below.  
 But we get thrills from climbing hills, it always has been so.  
 Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago.

We've roamed about on Kinder Scout, we've tramped the Cumberland Fells,  
 And lurid tales of walks in Wales the Rucksack *Journal* tells.  
 We've climbed the crags in filthy rags on Lliwedd, the Napcs and Dow,  
 And year by year we've scared the deer to bag the bleak munro.  
 And year by year we've scared the deer to bag the bleak munro.  
 Heigh Ho ! in sunshine, rain and snow,  
 Some would race and set the pace and some go very slow,  
 And some would pick the smallest nick for fingertip and toe,  
 Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago.

At climbing and at walking we have set the world ablaze,  
 At the noble art of talking we have had our Doughty days,  
 Though some are taken from us, Freddie Pigott's over there,  
 And we still have Eustace Thomas, and John Wilding's in the Chair.  
 We still have Eustace Thomas, and John Wilding's in the Chair.  
 Heigh Ho ! Our President's watched it grow  
 From humblest of beginnings to the grandest club we know.  
 Let us drink to all the veterans who've helped to make it so,  
 Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago.  
 Let us drink to all the veterans that helped to make it so,  
 Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago.

As an encore, Hirst repeated the imaginative version of the President's career (in the mode of the First Lord's Song from *H.M.S. Pinafore*) with which he had enlivened the previous Ladies' Evening.

In the second interlude, that incomparable pair Hirst and Spilsbury delighted the assembly with Milner's *Tales of Tarbuck*, a composition which deserved the highest praise one could bestow, namely, that it was fully up to the Hirst standard.

It is needless to record what they gave as an encore.

## THE SPEECHES

The health of the Club was proposed by **Longland**. His task, he said, might be thought to be a work of supererogation, for on looking round the assembly the rude health of the Club, especially of its younger members, was fully apparent. It was for him an embarrassing occasion, not only because such a toast should really be proposed by a Mandarin long in the tooth—for which rank his own mere 27 years of membership of that inferior body the Climbers' Club did not qualify him—but also because he was haunted by the thought that some of those present on this occasion might have heard his previous after-dinner speech delivered to the Club five years ago.

How was he to pluck the heart out of the last fifty years? It was a large slice of British mountaineering history, ranging from the beer, blondes, and slings that embodied the affections of so many of the moderns, back to the days of 15 feet of stout hemp between climbers. What to outside admirers were the Club's main characteristics? Firstly, its advantage of having a local habitation and a name; in contrast to the Climbers' Club, which though it had its prim virtues had as its centre only its huts and the bar at P. y G. The Club's second characteristic was its richness in personalities and characters, in the peculiarities to watch for and love; no other club could equal it in this respect. There were Kelly's feats on the west face of Pillar; Doughty keeping himself young by training the young to climb—Doughty with his precise love of the English tongue and his rough kindness, appreciated as much by himself (Longland) as by the Club; Morley Wood, the Mr Standfast of the Club, the first man that the speaker would think of for his second on the rope in a sticky place; Harry Scott, brave jester even when times were not well with him, with his ferocious *brasse* of hair masking his natural good nature; Eustace Thomas, mastering with easy grace and boyish enthusiasm the technicalities of many sports in his sixties and seventies and eighties—and nineties too, the speaker hoped—and performer of a series of extraordinary feats in the mountains; John Wilding, wise counselor for many years and still a man to reckon with on the hills; Pigott and Hey—how great was the debt owed to them for their mountain rescue work. Maurice Linnell, that beautiful mover on rock of any kind and any angle, with his astonishing performance on the Narrow Slab; John Jenkins, with a manner that concealed his real seriousness; Harry Spilsbury and Bill Roberts—all that hut custodians should be, who would scorn 'Hutmanship,' which might be defined as the art of appearing to do all the washing up whilst really leaving it to everyone else. The list of great names was like the roll of chivalry in Froissart: the speaker knew of no other Club that could match it.

The Club went on though memories might grow dim. The particular torch-bearer was less important than the torch he carried in continuing the traditions of the Club and the keeping of good methods and manners in the hills. The newer gospels held that it didn't matter if one fell off and that the traditions of the established clubs need not be attended to. But the rôle of the established clubs was of the greatest value still. Care should be taken to see that the keen young members felt at home in them: for this reason they should not be run solely by those whose climbing days were over. The clubs should, of course, still contain the older members who still went to the hills and such elder statesmen should spread the gospel which they themselves had learnt. He looked forward to another fifty years during which the rôle of the Club was more important than ever.

After thanking Longland for the eloquent tribute he had just paid the Club, the President, **John Wilding**, in response, said that when he had joined as a shy and retiring young man fifty years ago, he had little thought that he might live to see it attain its Jubilee, and had far less imagined that he should occupy the Chair on such an occasion. At most of the Dinners in the past he had been happy to sit back among his intimates and enjoy the proceedings untouched by any sense of responsibility. Now in the serene and yellow leaf of life he found himself—as Harry Scott had remarked on a similar occasion—‘pushed up here in the House of Lords.’ He felt proud indeed to stand there that night, if only to reaffirm his allegiance to a Club and to a pursuit—for mountaineering was to him much more than a sport—that had exercised the greatest influence on his life.

The Club had travelled far from the days of that first Easter Meet in Langdale when it was but a few months old, when a dozen men—in all innocence and good faith—had traversed Rake’s Progress on one rope. But in judging our ‘prentice efforts of those days, one should not forget that as a Club we were born in quite an early period of British mountaineering; as Longland had pointed out, how immense had been the progress that the sport had made since that time! Learning much from men like Tony Stoop and Reuben Brierley, the Club had made good headway from its start. From the outset it had cast its net wide. It had opened its doors to all who had a genuine love of the hills and without any conscious effort on its part it seemed to attract the sort of men best calculated to make any mountaineering club a success. There was no doubt that it had derived much of its strength from its broad attitude to mountaineering and from the good feeling, tolerance and comradeship which had always existed between members with varying ideas in their approach to mountains, and between the expert and the man of humble attainments. For this happy state of things the Club was largely indebted to the well-chosen officers, especially the early Presidents and the two founders. Other important contributions had been made by the fine idealistic attitude of Charles Pickstone, the all-embracing friendliness of Philip Minor, the enthusiasm and ability of our first editor, George Ewan, and the talents and wit of Harry Scott.

As with all societies, the Club had had its slack periods, but it had been fortunate in that whenever it had seemed to be on the decline some fresh dynamic had appeared. Eustace Thomas was a case in point. After his famous first appearance in evening dress at one of the Dinners, he had vanished from the Club, perhaps because he had not liked the look of us. But when towards the end of 1918 he had reappeared, the whole tempo of the Club had undergone a change. It was needless to stress all that Thomas had done for the Club. The speaker had it on the authority of Bill Humphry that nowadays wherever Thomas went he invariably carried in his pocket two things: a dirty well-thumbed Club *Handbook*—and a screwdriver. In the early part of the present year it had evidently occurred to Thomas that he had never climbed in the Andes, and as he had left it rather late in the day he had decided he had better traverse them in an aeroplane; no doubt during the journey he carried with him the same dirty Club *Handbook* and the screwdriver. And now in the evening of his days, after so magnificent a record of mountaineering achievement, that same questing, indomitable and always stimulating spirit remained a potent influence in the Club.

In the matter of the infusion of fresh blood, the Club had had its vintage years. Douglas Milner had pointed out that 1936 was *the* vintage year; that happened to be the year when he himself had joined. There had however been earlier vintage years—for example 1919, when Pigott, Pryor and Hirst had joined; a

little later had come Doughty. Throughout the Club's history it had been blessed in a succession of Rucksackers in the royal line who had left and were leaving their mark on the Club. Another great source of strength was the M.U.M.C. When that club had been founded by Wilson Hey few of us had imagined what might be coming to us as a consequence; for throughout the years since that time we had received a steady flow of keen and expert young members from the University.

Of course we were a curious mixture, as one would realize after listening-in to the sort of conversation that went on among any group of members at a meet. One might expect to hear some climbing or walking shop, but it was much more likely that one would hear some other kind of talk. In the old evenings at Tal y Braich or Tunstead one might find that Eustace Thomas had got someone in a corner of the room—Harry Summersgill was his favourite victim—and be thrashing out some problem in mechanics or physics. If Dick Jennings or Robin Gray were of the party one would be in for a lengthy session of argument. Happily in such a case one could usually rely on that fine picture of rude health, Frank Kiernan, that bogus hypochondriac, to divert the discussion to his newest complaint.

What of our present activities and younger members? The speaker could not recall any time in the Club's history when it had had so ardent and strong a representation of youth as at the present time, or one so rich in mountaineering promise. During the past summer the various parties at the Alpine Meet, splendidly organized by Eric Byrom and composed almost entirely of young members, had done even better than in previous years. At the September Club Night the speaker had listened to the modest account by Neil Mather of his great guideless ascent with one companion of the Péteret Ridge, and to the fine saga by Allan Allsopp of his party's traverse of so many of the major Zermatt peaks, and had gone home from the meeting with a renewed feeling of pride in being a member of the Club. The outstanding thing about several of those recent Alpine expeditions over first-class peaks was the fact that they had been undertaken under adverse conditions of mist and snow closely approximating to those frequently met with on our homeland mountains in winter but rarely faced even by strong parties in the High Alps. And those conditions had been faced by our members not in any reckless or foolhardy spirit but with a confidence born of the knowledge that they could be overcome by the methods learned and with the stamina acquired on our homeland hills. That stamina had not been gained without pain and sweat; the prodigiously long walks over rough mountain country which had always attracted our tougher members, and which had become one of the Club's major activities, had borne their fruit. The walk last Whitsuntide from Tan Hill to the Cat and Fiddle over much of the high and rough Pennine watershed—a walk of 120 miles in two days and nights—had been done by the men who were applying that training to the bigger game abroad.

'We elderly members' concluded the President, 'can sit back and watch with admiration and with pride the soaring achievements of our younger brothers, to whom is entrusted the future of our Club. And when we ourselves are no longer able to set foot on our mountains, we can still cherish the memory of those "kingly days" of the past; we shall hold the heights, however modest, we may have won; we shall still lift our eyes unto the hills and in the contemplation of them and in the memories they evoke we may draw from them that solace and refreshment of spirit that few things in life so richly give.'

The health of the guests and kindred clubs was proposed by **Geoffrey**

**Winthrop Young.** He confessed that he had proposed this toast at the coming-of-age Dinner and did not feel he had got much farther. On that occasion he had had some amusing exchanges with C. E. Montague; he much regretted that Mr Wadsworth was not present for a similar encounter. Of the other guests, Eric Shipton had no idea how much we thought of him, or how much those who knew him loved him. He was the greatest mountain explorer ever produced by this country, yet he always appeared unconscious of having done anything at all; and he could write more perfectly about mountains than could anyone else. Jack Longland was very difficult to talk about; he (the speaker) had known Jack since he was so-high. Since then Jack had grown higher and nigher so that it was now very difficult to pat him on the head. He it was who had led the newer school of climbers. He was a man who talked rather faster than anyone else and most of it was almost worth hearing. The speaker had known of Bill Murray before knowing his name—through reading something Murray had written about Scotland. Murray had produced by far the best book on our island mountains; he had made them seem like mountains and like literature. Emlyn Jones also had considerable literary attainments: he had found more than sixty typographical misprints in the speaker's last book. Jones had however then come out of his province and attempted to correct a Greek name, but the speaker and the poet Homer had been too much for him.

After some references to others of the guests, the speaker expressed his fondness for the Rucksack Club. He had known it since it was founded; he had talked to it at intervals; yet it had seemed to survive. One should not regret that one should have to make an effort to preserve that which is good and not let it pass with the generation. Mountains were symbols, like written words, representing great sounds, great silences and great beauty. Modern books seemed reluctant to preserve enthusiasm about the hills themselves, and were largely confined to facts. Climbing was however a means of enjoying the mountain feeling; divorced from this, climbing was only a self-satisfaction. Nowadays climbers seemed to ask what was the importance of having the mountain feeling if you had the mountain action? And nowadays they seemed to get little from mountaineering but the pains. When he himself first began climbing, most of the pioneers were still alive; they at any rate enjoyed mountaineering. They would take on a younger climber because it was assumed for granted that all who had the mountain feeling would prove a good friend. Since the days of Mallory and Herford the feeling for the magic of the mountains had not seemed worth preserving and so the class of friendship had become of poorer quality; an eminent mountaineer had in fact said recently that one did not suppose that every companion one climbed with was a friend.

In the Rucksack Club there had been no doubt in the early days that what counted was the mountain feeling. The Club had been almost unique in the way it had preserved that feeling, with forgetfulness of self in the mountains and absence of over-exaggeration in the performance. In this respect the Club could have no better representative than its present President. The tradition should be kept alive and physical performances not exaggerated except in so far as they aided the interpretation of our relations with the mountains.

There is a joy in climbing. But more deep  
Lies the delight in mountains: it instils  
Faith between man and man. You who would keep  
Our mountain freedom, must  
Hold this in trust—  
Friendship, deep-rooted in the love of hills.



Eustace Thomas

John Wilding

Geoffrey Young

W. M. Humphry

Elder Statesmen

*Photo by C. D. Milner*





Before calling on the next speaker, the President announced that at the request of Eric Shipton the first response would be made not by him but by Emlyn Jones.

**Emlyn Jones**, in responding to the toast, hoped that the change in the order of speaking would be accompanied by a corresponding change in the accommodation at Hill House, whose hospitality he and Shipton were to enjoy, and that he (Jones) should now be promoted to the best bedroom, from which Shipton should be relegated to the attic.

The speaker said that, like Longland, he was in the difficult position of having used up most of his ammunition. He was in the position of a conjuror who, having sawn a woman in half, had to give an encore, and so was faced with the alternatives of either repeating the trick with the risk of letting it be seen through, or sawing the woman in half in real earnest.

Rucksack Club members were of various types: University; Industrial; and the Press; with various originals and oddities. Anyone could be excused if, on looking round the room tonight, he should think that the first three were no longer as important. With regard to the Universities, they had just heard of the importance of the M.U.M.C. He himself had memories of a university meet in Skye to which six men and six women set forth and from which six engaged couples returned. He had always had some sympathy for the last man, who must have felt that something was expected of him but whose choice was so limited. He was not clear whether the industrial type of Club member was a cigar-smoking tycoon or a horny-handed son of toil; he was however reminded of Oscar Wilde's remark that work was the curse of the drinking classes.

The speaker then turned to his official task. By some streak of fortune, he said, he was there tonight representing the old lady of South Audley Street. The A.C. was not as moribund as was reported; in illustration of which statement he recounted an anecdote concerning the reactions of two decrepit A.C. members to a bit of Zermatt glamour, which was much to the taste of the more virile part of his audience.

In conclusion, he felt it a privilege to be invited to the Jubilee Dinner; he was very conscious of the honour of joining the Club on this occasion. The Club was held in the highest esteem throughout the whole climbing fraternity and it was the wish of all to extend to it their very heartiest congratulations and their very sincere wishes for the next fifty years.

In seconding the response, **Shipton** said that his long absences abroad had put him out of touch with the English climbing clubs. His last contact with the Rucksack Club was a pleasant memory of 25 years ago, when he had been successful in persuading Kelly to join him in the Alps. He then referred to the mountaineering achievements in the Alps of the Club's younger members. If they were looking for wider fields the Himalayas offered a much more accessible one than many people imagined. He himself had taken out a small expedition before the war to prove that the cost need not be high. This was equally true nowadays. He strongly recommended the Himalayas to the younger members, for these mountains offered an enormous scope for light expeditions.

Referring to Everest, the speaker commented on the latest news of the Swiss expedition; coming as they did from such a unique authority, his views on this matter proved of great interest to the gathering. He concluded by thanking the President and the Club for the great honour done to him and to his fellow guests in inviting them to the Jubilee Dinner.

The toast of the President was proposed by **Pigott**. He modestly thought that after the great speeches and songs they had heard, he himself must be looked

on much as an eleventh man going in to bat as the stands were emptying. To consider the President in relation to the Club, one had to go back to 1902, when it was formed by Arthur Burns and Harry Entwisle. That was one of the great civilizing events in British history, comparable only to such events as the landing of St. Augustine. We had all heard of the historic letter in the *Manchester City News*; nowadays it would have appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*—or would it? He was not surprised that Wadsworth was absent tonight, after what he had done to the *Guardian* recently. Monkhouse did have the decency to clear out to Kenya. Toilers at the crossword puzzle, for example, could now no longer refresh themselves with *Miscellany* but had to put up with the less enlivening features of the obituary notices.

Referring again to the Founders, he would like to whisper in Harry Entwisle's ear to say how proud we were that he was there tonight and what a warm place he held in our affections. And of the original members there was also Ashley, who had paid them the compliment of coming all the way from Hertfordshire.

The third of the original members present was the President. The speaker had first met him shortly after the close of the first world war. Like all great men he had his idiosyncracies. The speaker described one of these, and told how it had led the unfortunate President into a romantic imbroglio, redolent of Mr Pickwick's adventure with the lady in curlpapers, with a woman climber at an Easter Meet before the war. The speaker had been introduced to the Club by Percy Cookson, but had been left high and dry there, like a foundling on someone's doorstep. The President had then taken him in—these words being used in a charitable sense—and had taught him to climb. More than that: the President had passed on to him part of his own great love of the hills. In his company one could imbibe at first hand that part of the Club tradition they had heard of tonight. This could be summed up by saying that it was not agility on difficult rocks that makes mountaineering, nor climbing more peaks in a short Alpine holiday than was good for us, but rather a mixture of these things. The President was the living embodiment of this tradition. The speaker wanted to say how pleased he was to see John Wilding in the Chair and what a happy chance it was that his Presidency had coincided with this great event. The speaker would rather see the Club in John Wilding's hands than in anyone else's, for the best traditions of the Club were safe in his keeping.

In a very short response, the President expressed his gratitude to his old friend Fred Pigott for his generous words, and to the assembled Club members and guests for the very kind reception given him.

The singing of Auld Lang Syne brought the evening to an end.

P.E.B.

## SOME ZERMATT FOUR-THOUSANDS

BY ALLAN ALLSOPP

Before the 1952 meet at Zermatt, I had already visited this centre several times and had enjoyed such satisfying climbing that it had become one of my foremost mountaineering ambitions to make guideless ascents of all the 4000 metre peaks in the district. It had soon become evident that this aim was a greater undertaking than I had at first imagined, for no other region in the Alps is surrounded by so many major peaks. In fact, of the 83 four-thousands recognised by Eustace Thomas in his article *My Four-thousands* (R.C.J. 1929), 41 may be described as Zermatt peaks. Certain of these four-thousands, such as the so-called Felikhorn, or the Grenzgipfel and Ostspitze of Monte Rosa, can hardly be treated as individual summits, but even after the elimination of minor points of this kind, there still remain 34 distinct peaks, or 35 if one includes Il Naso, a doubtful case.

Over a period of years, however, I had accounted for a fair proportion of these four-thousands and it seemed that this year it might just be possible to cover the remaining Zermatt peaks in a few sustained traversing expeditions.

My climbing partners, Gordon Robson and Ron Smith (non-member), raised no objection when I suggested that the Dürrenhorn would provide an excellent initial outing. I have since found that this is one of the three least-climbed mountains of the district, the others being the Täschhorn and the Dent d'Hérens. All are troublesome to approach, and it is perhaps this reason rather than any intrinsic climbing difficulty which accounts for their comparative neglect.

After some discussion we decided to attempt the climb from the Pierre Bordier Hut. The approach to this was fairly long but pleasant. From St Niklaus we followed a steep track to the hamlet of Gasenried, whence a wooded valley brought us to the long moraine of the Riedgletscher; this was easily crossed to the hut on the opposite side. We were the only party staying for the night and were pleasantly received by the quiet, bearded guardian, Josef Fuchs. There was little opportunity for reconnaissance since clouds were obscuring the peaks, but when we rose at 2 a.m. the sky had cleared and at 2.45 we were on our way with a thin crescent

moon providing sufficient light for the ascent of the glacier. At the upper snowfield we turned right in the direction of the Hohbergjoch, which was guarded by a snow-slope set at an intimidating angle. The slope was grooved by deep furrows gouged by falling stones, but in the belief that it would be reasonably safe so early in the day we skirted the avalanche debris from the great seracs on our left and started to climb a steep snow rib projecting between two of the stone chutes. We were rather more than half way up when a sizeable stone whistled down the chute on our right. This incident encouraged us to traverse to the rocks at the side, which were rather loose but led us without great difficulty to the skyline above. From this point we followed an easy narrow rock ridge as far as the summit (4035 m.). A cold wind was blowing and soon drove us to the sheltered side of the ridge, where we lunched in some discomfort on rather insecure rocks.

Beyond the summit we continued along the ridge in the direction of the Galen pass. Patches of fresh snow added to the difficulties of an awkward descent over rotten rock ; as first man on the rope I cringed inwardly as Gordon and Ron followed me down over piles of insecure boulders. The weather had been deteriorating for some time and before long our route had become obscured by cloud. We almost missed the pass, but the cloud cleared just as we had started down on the wrong side of the ridge. Unfortunately our descent route from the pass was still completely hidden and we had to start off blindly in the hope that we should hit the correct route down the steep valley wall below us. Luckily we were able to descend to the glacier without too much trouble and were back at the hut early in the afternoon.

It had been an excellent day, though rather longer than we had expected. We had been particularly impressed by the isolation of this region, for during the entire traverse we had seen no signs of any recent climbing parties.

We had originally intended to follow the traverse of the Dürrenhorn by an ascent of the Weisshorn but decided instead that we should have a good opportunity for resting without wasting any time if we changed our plans and took the train to Rotenboden, whence it is but an easy walk to the Bétemps Hut. We were pleased to find that this hut was by no means full and that only one other party would be leaving for Monte Rosa in the morning.

It was intensely cold but clear when we left the hut at 2.45 a.m., our rucksacks bulging with three or four days' supply of food. The moon was now reduced to the thinnest possible crescent but still enabled us to dispense with the glacier lanterns. Conditions were excellent and the firm dry snow squeaked under our feet like fine sand—a very different state of affairs from the previous year, when we sank to our knees at every step and were forced to abandon our attempt on the Nordend. Perhaps influenced by this experience, we had decided to approach the Nordend this year again by the easiest route, i.e. by first ascending to the Silbersattel, then continuing along the ridge to the summit. Our line to the Silbersattel passed within a few hundred yards of the great north-west bastion of the Nordend, and noticing that the rocks were clear of snow we decided to leave the Silbersattel route and seize the opportunity of ascending by the Morshead Buttress. After crossing the bergschrund and cutting our way up the steep ice slope above, we climbed easily up the broad rock buttress, the rough red granite providing excellent friction for our Itshide soles. At one point we came across a bulky coil of rope and several large pitons, which looked surprisingly new considering that, according to Kurz, they were left there round about 1910 by some guides from Macugnaga. Presently the ridge steepened and we traversed right to a steep couloir, which was loose and fairly difficult; we were glad to reach the top without damage. We now joined an easy snow ridge which soon brought us to the summit of the Nordend (4612 m.).

From the Nordend we examined the route to the Grenzgipfel, our next objective. The connecting ridge was very spectacular; great cornices overhung the tremendous precipices which plunged almost vertically downwards, eventually disappearing into the mists of the Macugnaga face. We were now in crampons and could move quickly along the Zermatt side of the ridge, keeping at a respectable distance from the corniced edge. At the far end of the ridge the ice slopes leading up to the Grenzgipfel looked anything but easy. Appearances were not deceptive; in places we had to flog away four or five inches of treacherous mushy snow before reaching the underlying ice, which in its turn was of doubtful character and broke away in large flakes at each blow of the axe. Keeping near the rocks on the left, we made for the ridge too soon and only gained the Grenzgipfel after some rather sensational rock-climbing

above an uncomfortable downward prospect into the depths of the Marinelli Couloir.

Our route continued along the frontier ridge, but since one of our party had not previously visited the highest point of Monte Rosa, the Dufourspitze (4638 m.), we made a slight diversion to this point, crossing the Ostspitze (4630 m.) on our way. After retracing our steps we descended easy rocks to the Grenzsattel before climbing an easy snow ridge to the summit of the Zumsteinspitze (4573 m.). We were now in cloud and were afraid that we might miss the hut, but a sudden clearing dispelled our anxiety and after a short descent we struggled wearily up our final peak of the day, the Signalkuppe (4561 m.), and into the welcome shelter of the Regina Margherita Hut.

We were the only party at the hut and were soon sitting down to some hot soup prepared for us by the two resident Italians. This isolated hut is considerably higher than the top of the Matterhorn, and I had been warned that we might have an uncomfortable time. We all slept fairly well, however, and felt much better when we got up at 4 a.m. than we had on our arrival the previous evening. Putting on crampons at the door of the hut, we were on our way by 5 a.m. and descended the frozen slopes below the hut in the direction of the Sesiajoch. It was a superb morning, and on all sides the great snow peaks shone dazzlingly white against the cloudless blue of the sky. Thanks to our crampons we could admire the glorious scene as we walked in comfort along the wonderful frontier ridge, never dropping below the 4000 metre level, and crossed first the Parrotpitze (4463 m.) then the Ludwigshöhe (4344 m.). The Schwarzhorn (4322 m.) presented more of a problem, with a steep ice slope leading up to the final rock ridge. Using the same route for the descent, we continued to the Pyramide Vincent (4215 m.). From this point many parties descend to the nearby Gnifetti Hut, but it was still early in the day and we decided instead to cross the Passo del Naso to the Quintino Sella Hut, missing the Lyskamm, which we had traversed during the previous club meet. From the pass we left the route for a time to take in the summit of Il Naso (4272 m.); I have since regretted that we missed the opportunity of continuing along the Cresta del Naso to the summit of the Lyskamm, whose traverse would have added little extra effort to the day. Not realising this at the time, we descended



The Schwarzhorn  
(From the Ludwigshöhe)

*G. R. Robson*





to the west arm of the Lyngletscher, which soon led us to the Sella Hut.

Apart from a few Italians we were the only visitors. The sun was still high, but it was so cold outside that we were glad to stay indoors. Since we had a hard day awaiting us we did not delay long before settling down for the night.

We got up at 3.30 a.m. and were on our way by 4.20. The crisp morning air encouraged a good pace and soon we had reached the Felikjoch. Continuing along the ridge in the direction of Castor (4230 m.) we failed to notice the Felikhorn, which Kurz rightly dismisses as '*un mythe inconcevable*,' and had reached our first objective by 6 a.m. From the top of Castor we descended by the frontier ridge, which involved us in some unusually steep ice-work and considerably reduced our rate of progress.

The direct ascent of Pollux from the Zwillingsjoch looked loose and uninviting so we swung left to the W.S.W. buttress, which provided pleasant climbing on warm dry rocks as far as the final snow-ridge. The summit view was magnificent; but time was pressing, for we intended to traverse the entire ridge of the Breithorn. Those who have ascended the Breithorn by the ordinary route, which is certainly the easiest route up any of the Zermatt four-thousands, will perhaps hardly realise that the ridge of the Breithorn is one of the longest in the Alps, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  km. in length, and offers one of the finest climbs in the district. Having studied the account in Kurz we had some idea of the task awaiting us, and so shortened our halt at the summit of Pollux (4094 m.).

After reaching the glacier again our first problem was to gain the Schwarzfluh (4089 m.) at the eastern extremity of our ridge. It was now the hottest part of the day and streams of water rushed down the cracks in the icy slope before us. As the slope had been stripped of snow, it was only after hundreds of feet of tiring crampon-work that we were able to reach the crest, although fortunately the pitted surface enabled us to dispense with the labour of step-cutting. We were now on a magnificent ridge with huge cornices projecting far over the great north wall. After moving back for a few hundred yards to the summit of the Schwarzfluh, we retraced our steps and continued along the ridge, which provided excellent climbing on both rock and snow. Beyond the east peak (4148 m.) we arrived at the deep depression whence it is possible

to escape to the glacier below. The party was unanimous in wishing to continue. By this time we were moving as one man and climbed without pause up the steep firm rocks of the central peak (4160 m.). A pleasant snow ridge then led us to the culminating point, the west peak (4171 m.), which we reached at 7 in the evening. The view was superb, with the great peaks standing out as dark silhouettes against the crimson light of the setting sun. As we quickly descended by the ordinary route we had little fear of losing our way, for we were following a deep groove stamped out by our numerous predecessors. It was quite dark by the time we reached the Théodule, so on hearing a shout 'Here is the refuge' we gave up the idea of returning to Zermatt that night. Soon we were sitting down to plates of hot soup; then the idea gradually dawned that we had completed our three-day traverse—an expedition which had approached the superlative and would live long in our memories.

In the morning it was almost an anticlimax to descend to Zermatt. But we needed to restore our reserves by the adequate meals that only the valley could provide. During the following off-day Gordon indicated that nothing but the Matterhorn would now satisfy him. Ron and I had both been to the summit twice already, but although I suspected that its ascent would result in a failure to complete my programme I could hardly object, for the Matterhorn presents a constant challenge to those who have never climbed it. In any case, neither Ron nor I had descended by the Italian ridge and no one can really know the Matterhorn unless he has traversed this historic ground. We decided to go up by the Hörnli ridge, for the idea was at the back of our minds that we might continue the traverse over the Dent d'Hérens on the following day. At the Hörnli, both hotel and hut were full to capacity, but we were eventually found room on the floor of the hotel.

Next morning we delayed our start, catching up with the main stream of traffic at the Solvay Hut. Here we tried to nip neatly into the lead, but were forestalled by two Swiss parties, who delayed us considerably for the remainder of the route to the summit. Once we had moved over to the Italian summit we left the crowd behind, for no other party was descending by the Italian ridge. Clouds had been massing during our ascent and the Italian ridge was now completely concealed. It was not without some feeling of appre-

hension that we moved to the top of the ridge and started down the first fixed rope, which disappeared into the gloom below.

To our surprise the rocks on this side were plastered with ice and snow, much of the latter evidently having fallen during the last few days. After a fair amount of rope-work we eventually reached the *Échelle Jordan*, which was encased in ice and rattled during our descent. Visibility was down to a few yards on all sides, but the route had been so well-described by Kurz that we were rarely in doubt. Presently we heard faint voices and a strange noise, which was explained when we encountered an Italian party who were so liberally supplied with pitons and karabiners that they emitted a jingling sound at every movement. They were debating whether or not to continue and gave up the ascent on hearing that conditions were no better farther up.

Some distance lower down the ridge we arrived at the steep pitch that was formerly protected by the *Corde Tyndall*, the breaking of which the previous summer had led to the death of the well-known guide, *Otto FÜRrer*. Since this unfortunate accident the rope had not been replaced; using the double rope, however, we abseiled down the most difficult section of the pitch; the remainder then yielded quite easily to ordinary climbing methods. At the foot of this pitch we arrived in the midst of a group of three Italian guides who were just cementing in place a plaque to the memory of *Otto FÜRrer*, the anniversary of whose death would fall on the following day. Beyond this point we had a little difficulty in route-finding but eventually hit the right line and followed the ropes over steep rocks almost to the door of the small Italian hut. It was not a very attractive place, and since we had now given up the idea of doing the *Dent d'Hérens* on the morrow we continued to the *Pavillon de Riondet*, where we spent an excellent night. In the morning we returned to Zermatt by way of the *Furggloch*, enjoying en route magnificent views of the south face of the mountain and its *Furggen* ridge.

After this enjoyable traverse we had two off days, one of which I was glad to have, while the other was dictated by circumstances beyond my control. It was now time for Gordon to return home, so Ron and I were left together to attempt what we hoped would be a splendid expedition—a traverse of the *Weisshorn* by the *Schalligrat* and the north ridge.

It was an excellent morning when we left Zermatt, but as we toiled up the steep track to the Weisshorn Hut a formidable bank of black angry-looking clouds was building up around the Matterhorn and the surrounding peaks. By the time we had finished our evening meal flashes of lightning were piercing the gloom.

In case our original plan should still be possible we had set the alarm clock for 1 a.m., but when I looked out at that early hour it was raining heavily and we settled down for what we thought would be a good long rest. At about 3 a.m., however, the somewhat hard-bitten non-resident guardian of the hut (who was also a guide) announced that the ordinary route might go, and at 3.30 he was away with his party. Since our original scheme had been necessarily abandoned we were lukewarm, but after a leisurely breakfast we started out in the pale light of a dull grey dawn at about 4.30.

During two previous attempts on the Weisshorn, in which I had been equally unlucky with the weather, I had unknowingly taken the guide-book route, which has since been abandoned as too dangerous. Today, however, we took the line recommended to us by the guide; this starts off along the route to the Biesjoch, then follows the east ridge from the lowest point, to join the old route at the breakfast platform. At this point we made up for our late start by catching up with the guided party, who had started out an hour before us. We were now in cloud, but decided to continue as I had previously covered this section of the route. At the end of the rock ridge we put on our crampons, for the snow was frozen hard and a strong wind was blowing. Unfortunately there was no view; but it was not without satisfaction that I stepped on the summit, having failed on the two previous attempts.

Considering the conditions, we were rather surprised to encounter a Swiss guided party and several English parties who had come up the north ridge from the Cabane Tracuit. They were fortunate in having completed the most difficult part of their day, and now had only the comparatively easy descent to Randa before them. Ron and I should undoubtedly have returned by the same way, for the weather was getting worse and visibility was reduced to a few yards. But we were both reluctant to give up the north ridge and were equally at fault in deciding to continue.

As it was obviously necessary to move quickly, we started out down the narrow snow ridge leading from the summit at almost an

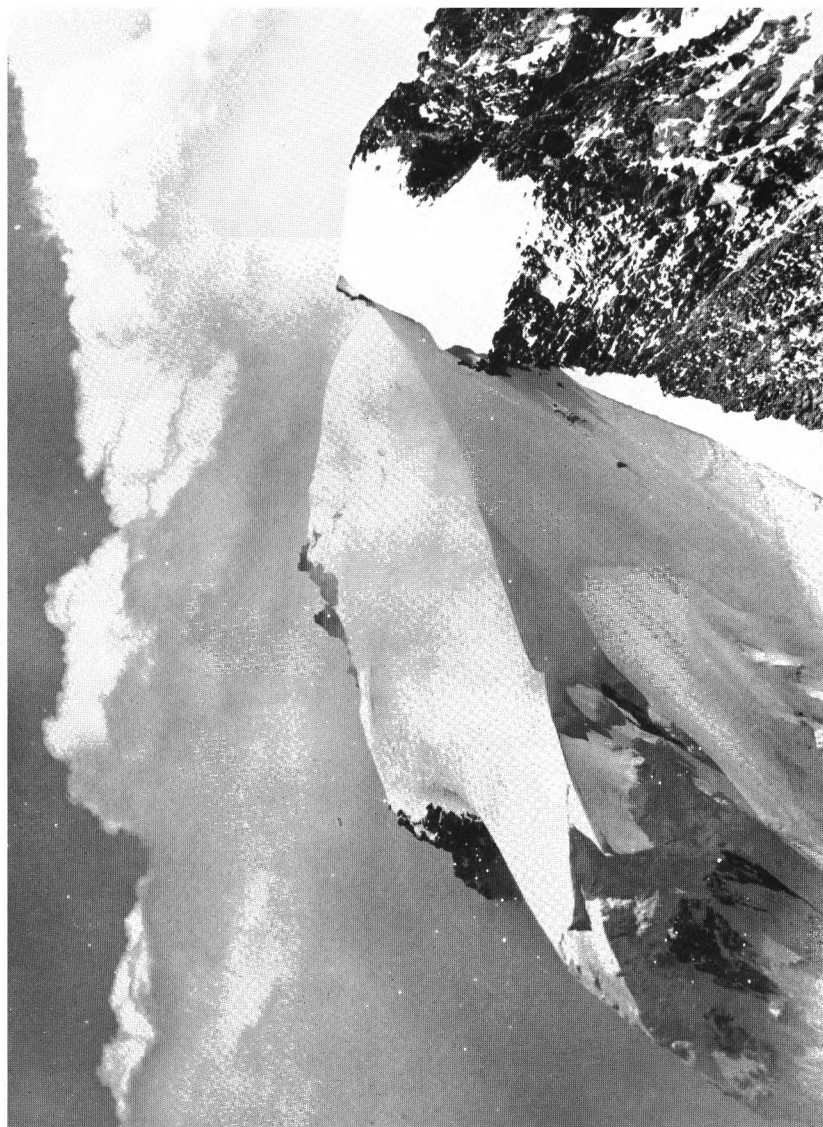
ordinary walking pace. It had now begun to snow quite heavily. Spurred on by necessity we reached the great gendarme in a surprisingly short time. As we were without spare abseil rope and were unwilling to unrope under such conditions, we climbed down the rocks, keeping the pitches short and belaying to the frequent pitons left by previous parties. Beyond the gendarme the open ridge was snow-covered and required great care ; but two vertical pitches indicated that we were approaching the end of the ridge and before long we had reached the first summit of the Bieshorn (4161 m.). We had actually gained this point in under the normal guide-book time. In normal conditions we would have been down at the hut in another hour or so, for the ordinary route up the Bieshorn is but a simple snow ascent. Unfortunately visibility was now down to a few feet, with the result that we were unable to find the beginning of the usual descent route, which drops from the saddle between the main and subsidiary summits. With the driving snow stinging our faces and almost blinding us, we made several fruitless attempts before returning to a narrow rib of treacherous rocks which we had previously tried and rejected. After descending this for some distance, we decided to leave it at the first opportunity. With Ron fairly well placed on the rib, I started to traverse the steep snow slope to the right, where a slight thinning of the mist had suggested we might find easier climbing. Suddenly a wide crack appeared in the slope above me ; with a terrifying rush the entire snow covering for yards around swept beneath my feet, leaving me still upright and balancing precariously on crampon tips on a slope of bare ice. But the going soon improved and we were glad to find ourselves on slopes set at an easier angle. Our satisfaction was short-lived, however, for presently we were arrested by an ice-fall split by innumerable crevasses. Somehow we worked our way down through the fall and eventually reached the level glacier below. Had we but known it, we were now within a few hundred yards of the hut ; but visibility was as bad as ever and we continued past the hut and down the glacier until we were brought to a halt by the great lower ice-fall. Uncertain of our position, we again tried to force a route through the fall, which became so steep, broken and complicated that a retreat was obviously necessary. By this time we bore a close resemblance to snowmen ; our anoraks were frozen rigid and ice had formed on our eyebrows and hair. Night was now rapidly approaching. A

spectacular display of St Elmo's fire contributed weirdly to the grim atmosphere ; at one point Ron was outlined by a halo of purple light and shortly afterwards we both saw snake-like flames flashing across the ice with startling rapidity.

When it became obvious that we were doomed to spend a night on the glacier we looked around for a sheltered crevasse, but all were unpleasantly bottomless. Finally we halted at a flat platform protected above by a vertical wall of ice, but with a tremendous crevasse below. We were without bivouac materials or much spare clothing, so our preparations for the night were few and brief. After changing our socks and eating a little food, we blew out the glacier lantern and settled down to await the dawn. We were sheltered from the wind, but the fine snow blowing over the top of the wall settled around us and on us. The outlook was depressing ; but fortunately the snow soon stopped and surprisingly enough we were able to sleep for much of the night, though at intervals we would wake and try to restore a little warmth by vigorous stamping and arm-waving.

Just before dawn it became bitterly cold. When we eventually stirred ourselves at first light the cold was so intense that our fingers stuck to the crampons, which we handled as lightly as possible as we put them on again, in preparation for a reascent of the remainder of the ice-fall. We were worried at first by the persistent mist ; but the skies eventually cleared and before long we had located the Tracuit Hut, where we had to tell our tale as we disposed of the remainder of our food and drank a gallon or so of excellent tea.

It was a delight to descend to the Zinal valley ; we followed it as far as Vissoie, where we caught the bus for the start of the return journey to Zermatt. We then enjoyed a couple of rest days before ascending to the Rossier Hut, whence we hoped to climb the Dent Blanche by the Ferpèclegrat. The weather was hardly suitable, however, so we contented ourselves with the ordinary route, which seemed pleasant and easy after our recent experiences. Our time (and money !) being now at an end, we had to leave the district with one peak, the Dent d'Hérens, still unclimbed. But we could return home with the feeling that we had had a wonderful climbing holiday, probably the best that either of us had ever experienced.



The Margherita Hut

(From the Grenzpfel. Zumsteinspitze in right foreground.)

*G. R. Robson*





## EDITORIAL NOTES

Lest our younger members should be suspected of conceit—and a large part of the present number of the *Journal* is theirs—I should perhaps record that such was their modesty that to extract from each an article of length appropriate to his subject proved an operation worthy of the wrist and dexterity of a Horsman.

\* \* \* \*

It was a shock to hear an eminent speaker at the Jubilee Dinner make a remark—quite casually, as if it almost went without saying—to the effect that the humour of Dickens had dated and held little for us nowadays. I remained for the rest of the proceedings in a partial daze, wondering whether I was wrong, after all, in one of my strongest beliefs. It was past 2 a.m. when I got home but I made straight for my battered *Pickwick* and looked up the first favourite passage that came to mind, that romance of Alfred Jingle's which so affected Mr. Tupman; ('he thought of Donna Christina, the stomach-pump, and the fountain; and his eyes filled with tears'). Then I recollected Alan Stewart's whisper of 'Sawyer, late Nockemorf' at another of our Dinners, when, on receiving a message from a waiter, one of the medicos present made a theatrically furtive exit. No, I decided, it was the eminent speaker that was wrong. This conclusion was confirmed some weeks later when the leading modern among our contributors interrupted the consumption of his third beer to reprove me gravely for ignorance of a certain imaginative remark of Mr Venus's, quoted elsewhere in this issue.

\* \* \* \*

Reference must be made to one event of the past year which has escaped a more official commentator. Most of us will have learned by now that our member Forrester, "Mac" of that ilk, retired during March 1952 from Tunstead House in order to live with his sister at Knutsford.

Long though Tunstead may continue to offer friendly hospitality to hill folk—and it still does so, at the moment of writing—it will never be the same to us without the one-and-only Mac, with his unique sense of humour, his Rucksacker's sympathy with our mountain aspirations, and his beaming grin of welcome. During the twenty or so years of his reign Tunstead saw many

a noble concourse of Rucksackers, ranging from the immortal occasion when a weekend party played Murders (with the present President as corpse and Doughty as the detective) to the recent days of the walking revival when almost the sole topics of conversation were the exploits of the past and the plans for the future. Since we left Tal y Braich there have been no fireside gatherings of active Rucksackers as zestful as those in Mac's kitchen of a winter Sunday's evening.

Miss Bryan, his partner since the end of the last war, has retired also. Her arrival resulted in a mellowing of the interior aspect of the place, then somewhat like a club hut. She even went so far as to introduce a piece of scented soap into the bathroom; but this was too much for the asceticism of her partner and the customary hunk of carbolized detergent soon reappeared. She brought good literature and good music to solace us on wet days. She too was of the walker's breed and her welcome was as heartening as Mac's. For each of them we wish all happiness in the future.

By the time these lines are in print Tunstead will have suffered a further loss by the removal to Marple of Mr and Mrs Lowe and their family from the farm next door. Dearly shall we miss the gay and handsome company of Shirley and Alison Lowe in the Tunstead kitchen. We shall miss too the friendly word with their parents on our way through the yard and the glimpses of Lesley, Vernon, and little Jimmy around the farm.

For those of us of the regular Rucksack and M.U.M.C. visitors who were accepted with an especial warmth, for whom Tunstead was a second home where one was always welcome and always found congenial company, a woefully large amount of the delight of Derbyshire days has departed with our Tunstead friends.

*Articles, photographs, etc, and publications for review should be sent to the Editor, P. E. Brockbank, 51 Palatine Road, Manchester 20. Copy may be either typescript or manuscript; double spacing should always be allowed. Copy should be sent in not later than December.*

*Distribution and sales are in the hands of the Commercial Editor, G. W. S. Pigott, Hill House, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport, to whom inquiries on these subjects should be addressed.*

## IN MEMORIAM

### CYRIL J. WARD

Cyril Ward joined the Club in 1922. Like many other climbers I first met him about that time at Stanage. The intensive exploration of all available gritstone had called into being a number of groups of which an outstanding example was the Sheffield team led by Rice K. Evans with Ward, L. Coxon and Phil. Barnes as chief aiders and abettors. Ward was fortunate in living almost at the foot of the crags in a pleasant house above Hathersage; later I was frequently to spend a happy week-end as his guest, well looked after by his mother and his sister, who took my arrival in wet and dirty climbing clothes as a matter of course.

From the first meeting we became very friendly, and similar ideas on motor cycling, light-weight camping, walking, and climbing threw us more and more together when I went to live in the West Riding. For many years we spent much of our spare time together, climbing and walking in winter and summer in the Pennines, the Lake District, and, especially after Tal y Braich was opened, North Wales. On several occasions we joined forces for our annual holiday in Skye, Corsica, or the Pyrenees. They were always successful, and some of my happiest days were spent in his company.

I cannot remember that Ward ever did any serious climbing in the Alps; but he wandered through the Dolomites and Switzerland, enjoyed such snow and ice as we found in the Pyrenees, and on one occasion had an eventful walking holiday with the Rice Evans team looking for non-existent crags in Donegal.

As is so often the case with short men, Ward made up for lack of reach by neat footwork, and as he was very strong and determined he made a first-class leader. Although he loved sound open slabs and steep ridges he made a good show in confined spaces and on loose rock. He is not credited with many first ascents but he pioneered several of the Stanage climbs, notably the Inverted V—a route which at the time was judged to be of considerable merit. He was equally at home on hot gabbro in summer and on streaming gritstone in winter, rarely ruffled; I never saw him out of temper. I was only once in disagreement with him and then he won a

wordless dispute by setting off down a hot Pyrenean valley whilst I, hot, tired, and dispirited, sulked in a shack. I soon came to my senses and set out to overtake him ; there were no recriminations, just a map consultation and a laugh. (See R.C.J. 1930.)

He was interested in every aspect of open air life ; bird watching, farm life, native customs, were as important as the more obvious interests of the mountaineer, and he had the artist's eye for form. He was a photographer of more than average ability ; in 1930 he furnished a self-portrait. He was doubly fortunate in being able to make pleasant sketches of many of the things that interested him, his skill as a professional draughtsman enabling him to provide sketches for the *Journal* for many years.

He was an asset in any party. Many of our older members will hear of his passing with regret and recall happy memories of a golden age in Club history.

H.V.H.

### JOHN HARVEY

The tragic death of John Harvey in the Cairngorms early this year deprived us of one of our most promising members. He had only recently joined the Club but had already made a name for himself as an extremely good long-distance walker. His first outstanding performance was the Edale-Marsden and back in company with Ted Courtenay. Later on he planned and carried out a walk from Grassington to Langdale (R.C.J. 1952) and a winter walk from Todmorden to Hayfield.

John's stamina and endurance on these expeditions were considerable and only an enthusiast could have carried them out. He was very keen to take part in the now famous walk from Tan Hill to the Cat and Fiddle of 120 miles and I feel sure that he would have completed this also.

My first contact with him was when he joined the Y.M.C.A. Rambling Club. Here he soon established himself among the 'sweat-worshippers' and became a valuable member of the committee. His enthusiasm for the mountains was broadened by experience in rock-climbing and by his first Alpine meet at Zermatt with the Rucksack Club in 1951.

There are two aspects of John's personality which I shall long remember. The first was the rather dapper person who each winter arranged a Dinner at the Palace Restaurant to which he invited a

small number of personal friends known as the 'High Mountain Group.' The second was the besweatered and hooded figure which appeared in the Y.M.C.A. lounge on a number of Friday evenings prior to departure on some mysterious errand. The purpose of this was at last revealed when he made the first guideless ascent of the T.V. mast on Holme Moss.

John graduated from the London School of Economics and was employed as a statistician at the British Rayon Research Association. His parents, who live in Kent, have thus been deprived of a son with a bright professional future who was as well a keen mountaineer. Our sympathies are with them.

A.D.F.

J. H. SMITH

J. H. Smith was an active member of the Club in the days of Sansom and Herford, and throughout his life he took delight in his three M's—Mountains, Music, and Mathematics. He climbed in Wales and Skye, and had one season in the Alps before the 1914—18 war. But his especial love was the English Lake District; I recall my first climbing holiday with him in the Easter of 1925, the feeling of absolute confidence when he was leading, and long enchanting evenings in Borrowdale when he talked of this country, which meant so much to him.

He believed in the traditional equipment of rope and boots, was neat in his climbing, and was sure with his belays. There was always the certainty that a rope he was handling would run clean. In these things, as in his work, there was nothing slipshod or half-done. He had the broad shoulders and slight stoop characteristic of an oarsman, a fine headpiece, and eyes of that clear blue one associates with wisdom and truth.

I have never known a man more ready to listen to opinions differing from his own, and less influenced by fashions in thought. Those of us who had the privilege of his friendship will remember his complete integrity, the originality and clarity of his mind, and his fortitude.

F.B.

GEORGE S. BOWER

It is with deep regret that we record the death on 6th January, 1953, of George Bower. A memorial notice will appear in our next issue.

## ALEXANDER TAUGWALDER

Alexander Taugwalder was one of the greatest guides since the first world war, and the first to become notable in these pages. His greatness was not more widely known because he was the most modest of men and because I am the slackest of writers. He who had taught me how to ride an avalanche was himself killed by an avalanche on the Dufour-Marinelli, which he was descending on June 26th, 1952. In an avalanche area he always believed in climbing early in the day and early in the year—as, for example, his ascent with Karl Biner in June of 1935 of the south face of the Täschhorn. His account of this ascent was controversial and contradicted. But Alexander never told a lie; and a friend of Franz Lochmatter (who led the first climb) told me that he thought that Alexander had come out on the south-east ridge a little nearer the summit than Franz had done—a matter of 60 feet.

Besides being a great guide he was a great man. He was full of religion and philosophy. As a fervent Catholic he would not begin a climb until one minute past Sunday midnight. He thought of the friends of the fallen when we went to a rescue, and he nursed me when I was ill. When I went to the Alps year after year, I gave him my purse; and I always felt on the return journey that it held much more cash than it ought to. He was so friendly, sympathetic, and understanding, that everybody treated him as an equal and on the mountains as a superior. If he thought that his passengers had too much in their rucksacks he picked out some things and put them into his own. He would even put my light rucksack inside his own. (Incidentally, his usually contained *fleisch* of two or three years' standing; and I do not believe that he ever emptied his sack.) Yet he was a master as well as a friend. He made me cut ice-steps when he was tired; but he wore his crampons in my crude steps. He had his frailties: he was delighted when I insisted that he should dine with me at Montanvers and not with the guides, when Armand Charlet, the doyen of Chamonix, was dining in the glass house with a millionaire American. To please me once he did the high level route from Zermatt to Chamonix on sugar, tea, and cognac. He passed no verdict on the experiment beyond saying that we got to bed earlier at night and left the hut sooner in the morning; but I did notice at Montanvers that he had two helpings of every course!



‘ Alexander ’ *Photo by H. P. Spilsbury*





Climbers from almost every country in Europe demanded him. The Rucksack Club and the Manchester University Mountaineering Club have every reason to be proud of him and to remember him with affection because he taught them as well as led them. His English became nearly as good as my own. Indeed he climbed in England, Scotland, and Wales, and reached the highest point in each country—he always longed for summits. He is perhaps the only man in the world who, acting on Fred Pigott's provocative and impish advice, began the ascent of Scafell Pike from the Lord's Rake by Botterill's Slab in boots. I had to make him go back, explaining that it was only done in rubbers or socks; and I had to ask Fred to go up and tie on to his rope. He always said how much he enjoyed his one visit to England; and I think on that visit that he enjoyed himself most at Lewis's and the British Museum.

He was not a graceful rock climber, but as far as I know he never fell. He scratched and spoiled the rock like so many members of an ancient Club. On ice he was superb, and he wondered why the great ice guides of the past had been so scared on many ice ridges which we passed. The war stopped him from making new climbs in Norway. He made new routes up rock everywhere from Skye and Derbyshire to Southern France, from the Eastern to the Western Alps. He was at home on strange mountains, but he always preferred local information to the classical guidebooks. For example, he had heard about the Mummery Crack on the Grépon since he was a boy and he held it in such veneration and awe that when we first did it he made me carry both sacks and both ice-axes up it, and he insisted on my belaying him whilst he traversed to the top of the first pitch.

One of his Swiss friends writes me that his specialities were the great ridges and faces of Zermatt. He was compelled to climb the Matterhorn—that gold-mine of Zermatt—about two hundred times. Seven times he did the Schalligrat and four times the north ridge of the Weisshorn, nine times the Viereselsgrat, six times the Furggengrat of the Matterhorn, six times the Younggrat, and four times the south face of the Obergabelhorn. The Ferpècle ridge of the Dent Blanche he did five times: he might have been the first to do it without disaster if he had not been a man who could not resist the desire of a lady climber to do it first.

In addition to the second ascent of the south face of the Täschhorn, he did the second ascent of the Eiger by the north face, and the fourth ascent of the Matterhorn by the north face; and he traversed the Matterhorn and eastern ridge of the Dent d'Hérens in one day—and all with safety. He was the first to do the traverse of the whole of the Monte Rosa ridge from the Colle delle Loccie to the Jägerjoch by the Signalgrat—Signalkuppe—Zumstein Spitze—Dufourspitze—Nordend—Caterinagrät in one day. When Eustace Thomas wished to finish his '4,000 metres' he employed Armand Charlet, who, for his services and journeys, must have cost him a pile of money. Charlet, the first leader of Les Diables, failed; but with Alexander the last of the 4,000s were won without any difficulty at the first attempt. He was quick: he did the east face of the Grépon in less than four and a half hours and the south face of the Marmolada in under three hours. On over thirty holidays he led members of the Rucksack Club.

He was an excellent technical photographer, with an eye for beauty and effect; his collection of coloured slides is almost unrivalled. He kept bees; he was so fond of them he would talk about them on the top of a mountain, and they would crawl on his hands without hurting him. His brothers' cattle, which he helped to look after, would follow him like dogs. He was the ambassador for Zermatt in its purchases at Zürich for the winter.

He was unmarried, although all the girls fell for him. His father, Gabriel, was the nephew of old Peter who helped Whymper down the first descent of the Matterhorn—in spite of what Whymper has said. His mother was Veronika Perren, the sister of Peter-Anton Perren—a great guide but a lesser one than Alexander.

Alexander had exactly thirty years as a guide. He was buried in Zermatt on July 1st, with *all* his friends and Swiss clients present. We shall all miss him. The Rucksack Club and the Manchester University Mountaineering Club pay their tribute. *Requiescat in pace.*

W.H.H.

# NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES

Edited by GEOFFREY PIGOTT

(Names of non-members are marked by an asterisk)

## WALES

### CWM SILIN

#### THE OGOF DIRECT

245 ft—*Very Severe*.

Even with considerable artificial aid the crux is high in the Very Severe category. There is an unusually fine degree of exposure.

Start: Climb to the cave by the interesting buttress beneath it, which is Severe if taken direct. The climb proper begins from the left of the cave where the first steep groove comes down to the grass ledge. Piton belay.

- (1) 75 ft. Climb the groove to a piton; there is a loose block at the top of the groove which should be treated with respect. Mantelshelf with difficulty onto the sloping ledge on the right. A diagonal line steeply up to the right leads with consecutive hard moves to another grass ledge beneath the second overhang. Belays.
- (2) 50 ft. Move right, and pull up and across under the overhang. After a long step right, pleasant slabs lead to a stance and belay at the level of the chimney on the ordinary route.
- (3) 120 ft. Straightforward climbing, with intermediate stances etc., to the summit ridge.

First ascent, 5th July, 1952: A. J. J. Moulam, G. W. S. Pigott (sharing the lead), W. Bowman.\*

### CRAIG LLYN DINAS

#### HYBRID

160 ft—*Severe*.

The most prominent buttress is at the left end of the crag; it protrudes down into the woods farther than any other. The right-hand side of this buttress is less broken than the rest of the crag. It is divided by an easy gully going diagonally up to the ridge.

Start: In the wood at the lowest point of the buttress; against the face is a 15-ft flake with ivy growing behind it.

- (1) 100 ft. Climb the edge of the flake to its tip, and then leftwards, delicately, up the wall above for 20 ft. Move right round a corner with some loose flakes and up through a juniper bush to a small oak tree. Belay.
- (2) 30 ft. A grassy groove on the left leads to a ledge with some loose blocks on the edge of the ridge. This may be difficult as there are few holds to start with, and the grass is rapidly coming away.
- (3) 30 ft. Step left, and then climb the slab to heather ledges. The rest of the ridge offers boulder problems interspersed with heather.

A groove was descended into a gully on the right.

First ascent, 13th April, 1952: R. Burston,\* D. H. Haworth,\* J. Duckworth.\* Haworth led the last two pitches.

## MATCHLESS BUTTRESS

140 ft—*Severe*.

This buttress is really the top tier of the long prominent rib on the opposite side of the gully from Lockwood's Chimney; it is the uppermost buttress on the right of the route from the latter to the Teryn Slabs.

Start: In the middle of the face below a small holly.

- (1) 50 ft. Straight up the wall, steeply, to a poor stance and loose belay beneath an overhang.
- (2) 30 ft. Move down and traverse left across vegetation and some rocks. Swing onto the rib and up it to a stance etc.
- (3) 60 ft. Right, and up into a mossy groove, a difficult mantelshelf is followed by easy rocks to the top.

First ascent, 25th November, 1951: C. R. Upton, A. J. J. Moulam. Leading through.

## THE LAKE DISTRICT

## ESK BUTTRESS

## TRESPASSER GROOVE

445 ft—*Very Severe*.

Start: As for Bower's Climb.

- (1) 100 ft. As for Bower's Climb.
- (2) 35 ft. As for Bower's Climb.
- (3) 50 ft. As for Bower's Climb to a stance and belay at the right-hand end of a large slab.
- (4) 90 ft. Move left for a few feet along a grass ledge; ascend the slab diagonally leftwards; climb the crack in the corner to a shallow niche and continue over a bulge into another niche; a second bulge leads to a minute stance and spike belay above.
- (5) 40 ft. Climb to a small ledge on the right and up the exacting wall above to a flake, whence a traverse right leads to a grass ledge and belay. (This is the variation to pitches 9 and 10 of Great Central Route.)
- (6) 40 ft. Climb the corner on the left to an overhang. A long and awkward step right leads via good holds to the Waiting Room on Bower's Climb.
- (7) 50 ft. Climb Frankland's Crack, and then diagonally left to a stance and belay.
- (8) 40 ft. Move left and climb the steep crack in the corner to the top of the crag.

First ascent, 6th September, 1952: A. R. Dolphin,\* D. Hopkin.

## PILLAR ROCK

## LIZA GROOVES

410 ft—*Just Very Severe*.

Start: From the green ledge, about 50 paces west of the North Climb in a prominent Bilberry Corner.

- (1) 35 ft. Climb the crack on the right until it is possible to traverse to the crack on the left which leads to a large ledge.
- (2) 25 ft. Scramble up grassy ledges to a corner.
- (3) 25 ft. Ascend the steepening corner. Belay to the right.
- (4) 35 ft. The steep crack in the corner on the left is climbed to large ledges.
- (5) 50 ft. Straight up to the V groove to a chockstone belay on the right.
- (6) 25 ft. Over the overhanging chockstone and up the grass to a belay on the wall above.

- (7) 30 ft. Climb the steep wall to the left of a groove into a small corner and then up to good ledges. Belay 8 ft above.
- (8) 15 ft. The wall above leads to a grassy recess and belay.
- (9) 45 ft. Climb the corner and then move left across a black and mossy slab until a difficult move leads to a groove on the left, which is followed to grassy ledges. Belays.
- (10) 25 ft. Traverse leftwards and up to more grass ledges.
- (11) 35 ft. Up the V groove above to a spike belay.
- (12) 25 ft. Follow the steepening crack above with difficulty. Stance and pinnacle belay overlooking a stony gully.
- (13) 40 ft. Climb the steep wall above to finish at the cairn on the summit of Low Man.

First ascent, 25th May, 1952 : D. Hopkin, J. N. Mather.

## BOWFELL

### THE SWORD OF DAMOCLES

180 ft—*Very Severe.*

Start : There is a steep but broken buttress above and to the right of the Cambridge Crag. This has been named the North Buttress ; on it are three prominent open grooves ; scramble up broken rocks to a belay below the right-hand groove.

- (1) 30 ft. From the left end of the ledge an upward hand traverse into the groove is followed by easier climbing to a stance and belay behind the pinnacle.
- (2) 30 ft. Up the groove on the right until a long stride right leads to a ledge and belays on the edge of the buttress.
- (3) 15 ft. Climb up until a semi-hand traverse across the groove leads to belays.
- (4) 45 ft. The crux. The groove above is climbed to a large detached flake, The Sword. This is used as a running belay and is the only means of progress until an awkward move below a steep chimney enables one to pull round to the right, delicately. The situation eases, and a stance and belay are reached at the top of a short slab.
- (5) 60 ft. The very steep flake crack leads up and then rightwards to the top of the crag.

First ascent, 23rd August, 1952 : A. J. Greenwood,\* A. R. Dolphin,\* D. Hopkin. All sharing the lead.

## RAVEN CRAG, WALTHWAITE

### HARDUP WALL

90 ft—*Severe.*

Start : At the holly tree, as for Route 1.

- (1) Instead of traversing left, climb straight up and then right to a stance and small belay.
- (2) Move left onto the rib and up until a small mantelshelf is reached on the right wall. Bear left to the top.

First ascent, 18th November, 1951 : P. R. J. Harding, C. R. Upton. Leading through.

I am indebted to E. C. Pyatt of the Climbers' Club for providing material for the majority of the following notes. Space allows only the briefest mention of most of the routes ; fuller descriptions of many will be found in the 1953 Climbers' Club Journal.

## CLOGWYN DU'R-ARDDU

OCTO 160 ft—*Extremely Severe*

Takes a direct line up the east wall of the Pinnacle, about 40 ft from its right edge, and is flanked on both sides by clean-cut vertical walls.

First ascent, 15th June, 1952 : J. Brown,\* M. T. Sorrel,\* D. Belshaw.\*

THE SPILLIKIN 135 ft—*Very Severe*

Starts at the groove on the Pinnacle above Sunset Crack and works gradually rightwards.

First ascent, 7th June, 1952 : J. Brown,\* D. Whillans\* (alternate leads), J. R. Allen.\*

PINNACLE FLAKE 135 ft—*Very Severe*

Starts at the foot of the direct finish to the East Buttress and takes a direct line up the Pinnacle via the flake.

First ascent, 6th June, 1952 : J. Brown,\* D. Whillans\* (alternate leads).

LLITHWRIG 245 ft—*Extremely Severe*

Starts at the foot of the Sunset Crack. The first two pitches are mainly rightward traversing. The final pitches take a direct line up the cliff via the most prominent corner at the top of the face.

First ascent, 14th June, 1952 : J. Brown,\* J. R. Allen.\*

THE CORNER 180 ft—*Extremely Severe*

The corner to the right of the Pedestal.

First ascent, 20th June, 1952 : J. Brown,\* J. R. Allen,\* D. Belshaw.\*

THE BLACK CLEFT 345 ft—*Extremely Severe*

The black corner to the left of Longland's Route.

First ascent, 3rd May, 1952 : J. Brown,\* D. Whillans\* (sharing the lead).

RED SLAB 300 ft—*Exceptionally Severe*

The red slab to the right of Great Slab by a direct start.

First ascent, 10th June, 1952 : J. Streetly.\* (Details are in the Ynws Ettws log book.)

## DINAS CROMLECH

CENOTAPH CORNER 120 ft—*Exceptionally Severe*

First ascent, 24th August, 1952 : J. Brown,\* D. Belshaw.\* 150 ft of rope.

JERICHO WALL 245 ft—*Hard Very Severe*

Follows the break up the right wall of Ivy Sepulchre.

First ascent, 28th September, 1952 : J. Brown,\* D. Cowan.\*

NOTLANDS 140 ft—*Hard Severe*

Starts on the right of the gully to the right of Castle Gully at the steep narrow nose of rock ; follows the corner and later a crack on the left.

First ascent, 7th September, 1952 : E. Marshall,\* M. J. Ridges.\*

## CARREG WASTAD

OVERLAPPING WALL—Variation Finish 90 ft—*Very Severe*

A rising traverse to the right after pitch 2. Ascend the overhang and continue to the top of the cliff.

First ascent, November, 1951 : J. Brown,\* R. Moseley.\*

## SKYLON

200 ft—*Very Severe*

Starts as for the Wrinkle, but instead of the long traverse right goes straight up the wall by a shallow crack.

First ascent, 13th April, 1952 : R. Handley,\* E. Phillips.\* (Details are in the Glan Dena log book.)

## SPECTRE. Direct Start

40 ft—*Hard Severe*

First ascent, 12th April, 1952 : R. Handley.\* (Details are in the Glan Dena Log book.)

## CRAIG YR YSFA

## MUR Y NIWL

250 ft—*Hard Very Severe*

The wall of mists, the Lower Amphitheatre wall.

First ascent, 26th April, 1952 : A. J. J. Moulam, J. B. Churchill.\*

## CREIGIAU GLEISION (COWLYDD)

Details of a number of routes from 150 ft to 200 ft long climbed in 1936 have been discovered. The leaders were C. H. S. R. Palmer\* and J. H. Bechervaise.\*

## TRYFAN

The Glan Dena log book contains details of several new routes.

## CRAIG DDU

ZIG-ZAG, 225 ft—*Severe* ; CANOL, 240 ft—*Very Severe* ; and ANTHROPOLOGY, 200 ft—*Very Severe*, were discovered by J. Brown\* during 1952.

## CLOGWYN-Y-BUSTACH

Several new routes and variations led by J. M. Edwards\* and C. R. Upton are recorded.

## MOEL YR HYDD

## CHIC

500 ft—*Very Difficult*

Starts at a subsidiary rib 40 ft to the right of a corner with ivy. Leftwards at 100 ft, then back to the right and up.

First ascent, 1952 : A. J. J. Moulam, W. R. Craster, C. W. Brasher.\*

## OUTLYING CRAGS

The Rivals on the Lleyen Peninsular, Twr Du in the Cader Idris group, and Craig Cowards in the Aran Group, are the scenes of a number of new routes.

Careg Ddu in the Elan Valley in Radnor, undiscovered until 1952, has provided many climbs up to 200 ft long.

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

1952

## OFFICERS AND NEW MEMBERS

The Hon. Officers during the year were as follows:—*President*: John Wilding. *Vice-Presidents*: C. H. Ashley; J. H. Entwisle. *Secretary*: J. E. Byrom. *Treasurer*: J. H. Hirst. *Librarian*: F. Collins. *Editor*: P. E. Brockbank. *Hut Warden*: E. T. Roberts. *Outdoor Organizer*: E. Moss. *Committee*: A. Birtwistle; J. F. Burton; A. D. Ferguson; H. K. Hartley; R. R. Jennings; F. Kiernan; W. H. Pickstone; A. S. Pigott; G. W. S. Pigott.

The following members were elected during the year:

H. A. Clixby, Prestwich.	J. D. Lovelock, Davenport.
C. H. French, Bury.	G. R. Robson, Hazel Grove.
T. T. Hardwick, London.	D. H. Smith, Keighley.
J. R. Hastings, Sheffield.	F. A. Smith, Bebbington.
J. H. Henson, Capel Curig.	A. S. Wilson, Buxton.

## INDOOR MEETINGS

Our friends from Liverpool miss a lot when, as they boast, they hold and complete their Annual General Meeting in five minutes. At ours, only the firm hand of our new President Dictator, elected with the loudest and longest acclaim of our august gatherings, enabled the business to be carried through in under two hours. Obstructionists from Manchester and red herrings from the Wirral were in plentiful supply. At times we even discussed the business of the Club.

In February we were honoured by a visit from Dr R. C. Evans, a member of the 1953 Everest party, who told us about the Manang Expedition in 1950. Although they were not successful in attaining their summit, much useful information was gathered about Himalayan climbing, and told to us very modestly by Dr Evans. Those younger members with high aspirations were given a lot to think about, for the many disadvantages and pains of this type of climbing were recounted.

After this rather tense evening, we had a little light relief when D.D. (Dolomite Douglas) was persuaded to tell us about his complete change of heart. After years of his frightening his audience with pictures of scabrous and vertical rock, somebody apparently told him about snow; we were not surprised to find him just as successful, as he told and illustrated his story of three weeks at Argentière and Chamonix. His ascents of the Chardonnet and Whympfer Couloir on the Verte produced another fine set of slides. It had taken Chamonix 13 years to recover from his last visit; may we hope that he is allowed to go back again soon, and give us another talk about it.

It is not necessary to say much about Ladies' Evening since it is all to be seen in reports going back for nearly twenty years. All our old performers were in great form, particularly John Hirst, who made even the hardened John Wilding blush (from pleasure) with his latest improvement on Gilbert & Sullivan. But where are our younger members?

In May we were treated to an enormous show of slides taken by H. Pretty and other members of the newly-founded Oread Mountaineering Club whilst exploring the peaks in the most northerly parts of Norway. Particular interest was shown in a set taken on the way in the Lofoten Islands, well known to many



members. We were impressed by the enterprise and energy of this group of young men, although we sympathised deeply as they made their hungry route homewards ; a crust of bread might be sufficient under a palm tree but not for a three-days' sea voyage.

For the rest of the year the Club had apparently decided to amuse itself. Memories of fifty years of famous history were dug into to provide the June Club Night and under the sponsorship of the President we heard stories of the giants of the past—the men who really established our Club and gave it its unique place in British climbing. A number of slides were shown ; particular interest was one of a group at an early Easter Meet, in which we were glad to recognise many faces still with us. The second fifty years of our Club will produce many great walkers and climbers but it will be incredible if we can again produce personalities to rival those of the past.

September was as usual devoted to the active side of the Club. Stirring tales of immense distances and impossible heights in the Alps, in Norway, and on the longest pub-crawl. Finally, Dale told us about his historic ascent of the Matterhorn, famous because it was the last Zermatt peak to feel the tread of his distinguished companion, Graham Brown.

The Brains Trust in October differed slightly from its predecessors in that the audience were surprisingly mute and the members of the Trust were allowed to get a word in edgways. Learned discussion followed sparkling wit ; occasionally the subjects of the various questions were mentioned.

Partly in honour of the Club's Jubilee, it was decided to widen the scope of this year's Mountain Picture Exhibition. The M.A.P.S. Memorial Hall (Albert Square) was chartered for Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 11th-13th December, and members were invited to submit not only their latest pictures but also a selection of those previously exhibited. In all, 209 photographs and 19 paintings, submitted by 29 members, were displayed. A review of the pictures is given below.

Members of kindred clubs and societies in the district were invited to the first evening. During it a lecture entitled 'The Alps from End to End,' composed of slides contributed by the best photographers in the Club, was brilliantly presented by Douglas Milner. The attendance of about 200 must have included most of the active young climbers in the district. Even critical photographers were not unimpressed.

The second evening was the usual Club Night. Various short lectures were given by Ferguson, Berwick, Dillon, and Thomas, D., much assisted by the vagaries of a lantern which persisted in showing slides upside down.

To the Saturday evening we invited our personal guests, including ladies, to whom Solari showed his magnificent colour slides of climbing in the U.S.A. and at Zermatt. These were mostly taken on film which is not accessible to English photographers, but even if this is allowed for, the photographs showed evidence of great and painstaking skill with a miniature camera. Our guests were given a great treat.

J.E.B.

## MOUNTAIN PICTURE EXHIBITION

This year's Exhibition was undoubtedly much the best we have had. It was outstanding in both quality and quantity, partly because of the Committee's request that in this Jubilee Year members should submit for inclusion some of the best of their older pictures; but there was plenty of good new work too. The pictures filled all four walls of the exhibition room in the Memorial Hall, and we have never had our wall pictures better lit and better shown.

The exhibitor on whom we have longest depended for first-class mountain photographs, B. R. Goodfellow, did us proud this time with a substantial collection of superb prints. His climbing has been restricted, it seems, to an area bounded by a line running through the Arctic Circle, the Antipodes, the Atlantic, and the Far East, but within these limits he has done what he could. I liked particularly *Péteret*, *Mount Blanc*, which conveys grandeur and also an atmospheric depth often missing from the Alpine scene; *The Moine Arête* and *Les Courtes* (see 1951 *Journal*), with their hint of the old engraved illustrations of the perils of Alpine travel; and his arresting study of a Garhwal peasant family. His print of climbers on the Old Brenva route gave an unusually realistic impression of the hot glare of the sun high in a cloudless but strangely unilluminated sky, which can weigh heavily on the spirits at high altitudes when the waterbottle seems too small and one has not yet got one's second wind!

C. D. Milner, though long a printed and bound authority on mountain photography, is evidently not yet on the shelf, as he showed some masterly prints, including some very fine renderings of the textures of glaciers and steep snow. His *Zwölferkofel* (see 1951 *Journal*) is a superbly dramatic study of a dolomite fang. *Alpine Ridge, Sunrise* was another striking photograph. Prints of quality otherwise remarkable may be disappointing, however, if they lack brilliance, and his rather heavy exhibition print of the *Chardonnet East Ridge* would not have caught my eye but for a recollection of the illustration in our 1952 *Journal*: there a lighter rendering of the same subject gave us a frontispiece which I consider to be the finest photograph of its kind I have ever seen, and as a *Journal* frontispiece rivalled only by Edgar Pryor's climber on the *Südenspitze* (1928 *Journal*).

Outstanding amongst K. R. Davidson's very fine photographs was a winter picture of Snowdon over a dark llyn, and one showing bright rising mists beyond a snowy foreground with a standing figure. Another, *The Skater*, though a trespasser in a collection of mountain pictures, was no trespasser in the Rucksack Club: it was, I think, the most brilliant piece of camera work shown.

W. J. Brown's rather unusual treatment of *The Tower Ridge*, with a pleasing simplification of planes, and his stormy *Sunset Macugnaga*, were first class. So were H. P. Spilisbury's Lofoten and Alpine snow scenes: his *Hoar Frost, Lechtal* remains particularly in my memory, but all his work is distinguished by a perfection of printing which keeps a noteworthy balance between the conflicting claims of brilliance and gradation.

J. H. Hirst's photographs made effective use of foreground screen as a means of imparting depth to a landscape, one of Derwentwater being very successful. Another picture making good use of foreground facilities, to rather different purpose, was E. T. Roberts' robust *Marmolada*.

Two of the best climbing photographs were A. D. Ferguson's *Adang Kamin* and J. F. Burton's picture of a party on very steep snow on the *Blatière*, this last being unfortunately the only photograph of Burton's to be seen.





R. CRAY  
1845

A few of the many other photographs which appealed to me were E. Moss's near-silhouette of the old pack-horse bridge across the Kinder stream ; G. Robson's glimpse of Watwater glittering against the light ; A. T. Basford's quiet study of Llyn Idwal ; F. Collins' *Cul Mor* and *Loch Assynt* ; D. Berwick's Cairngorm pictures, particularly one of Braeriach summit and one below Loch Einich ; B. Nelstrop's record of a fine ' sea of cloud ' streaming over the ridge of Lliwedd.

P. Wild and B. Nelstrop showed between them a very fine series of caving photographs, but I am not a fit commentator for these, as my response to the subject is damp, dismal, and chilly.

The Matterhorn retains its supremacy unchallenged as the photographers' favourite.

Of the drawings and paintings I write with diffidence, hence their position at the tail-end of these notes. The first difficulty is to know by what standard we should judge them or enjoy them, for it has been said Art is like Heaven, a house of many mansions. It is also a place where one man's meat is another man's poison ; so we must compare meat with meat and poison with poison according to the rules of the mansion we are in at the moment, lest we be thrown homeless to the philistines. (None of the rules permit the hanging of a hand-coloured photograph amongst paintings, however). There was not as much to be seen in this section as one would have hoped. H. Taylor's water colour sketch of South Head and Mount Famine was attractive, but he has shown better. C. H. French showed several interesting Skye paintings of which one large one painted as on the Ridge was very pleasing.

R.G.

## MOUNTAIN RESCUE

The number of posts now established has reached 39, and with the massive reinforcement of the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Service available at call in most districts it is possible to say that a reasonable degree of cover has been achieved. There are still gaps, of course, particularly in Scotland, and additions and improvements will always need to be made as enterprise brings fresh districts to popularity, and the maintenance of so many posts—the replacement of breakages and of medical stores and so on—is a considerable task in itself, so that the committee seems to find an ever increasing amount of useful work to be done. Once again the painful fact of the woefully slow growth of our Reserve Fund must be forced on climbers, like castor oil, strictly for their own good.

During the year the Mountain Rescue Committee was strongly urged to extend its work widely in Lakeland, and to join in establishing posts in seven of the remoter dales, such as Martindale and Kentmere, in addition to the 10 which it already maintains in those parts frequented by climbers and walkers. The impatience of the sponsor of this proposal with the committee's first cautious enquiry about the value of specialised Mountain Rescue Posts in these gentler and more settled districts impelled him to take the initiative in forming a Lake District National Park Rescue Committee to hurry on with the task instead. The M.R.C. is manfully determined to be pleased at this sincerest of all flattery, and will of course assist in any way in which it can be of use.

The Carlisle Mountaineering Club and the Keswick Mountain Rescue Team acted with Eldridge of the F. & R.C.C. in preparing and erecting a large wooden box on the Sty Head Pass. It replaces the old St John Ambulance box and stretcher with a full Mountain Rescue Kit, prominently, but we hope not over-

conspicuously, positioned, and there is moderate optimism that, shining spick in its new coat of green paint, it will get enough respect to be spared the despoiling curiosity of itinerant Calibans and the sadly not ephemeral records of passing love. It is proposed to place a similar box outside the C.I.C. Hut in the Allt a' Mhuilinn to resolve the difficulty presented by the need for the kit to be available whenever wanted conflicting with the natural reluctance of the S.M.C. to see their hut revert to the condition of neighbouring bothies, and that club has come forward with a handsome donation towards the cost. Other new posts which should be noted are the placing of the Inverness Kit in the County Constabulary Office at Dingwall, the establishment of a post at Goldrill Youth Hostel, Patterdale, and the transfer of the Kit from Tunstead House to Reservoir House, Hayfield, and that of the Rhyd-ddu kit to the Quellyn Arms Hotel.

It will also have been noticed that Mountain Rescue Posts are marked on the new edition of the O.S. maps, a most valuable innovation. To go even further in not concealing from prospective beneficiaries where to look for help, the combined artistic resource of the committee and other advisers has designed a sign, clear but not blatant, neat but not gaudy, which we hope will shortly make its demure appearance to show where the posts are.

J.F.C.

### ACCIDENT REPORT

The fatal accident to our member John Harvey last Easter in the Cairngorms was investigated by the authorities\* at Glenmore Lodge training centre, from whose report the following information is obtained.

Harvey was acting at the time as a voluntary climbing instructor, having previously served as such on a Christmas course in 1949. His party on the present occasion consisted of Miss Weaving, who had attended two previous courses at the Lodge, and David Stead, whose previous experience had been limited to some scrambling on the Pennines.

The party set out at 9.30 a.m. on 25th April to climb in Coire Lochan. Conditions for snow climbing had been most unsuitable throughout these Easter courses owing to the soft and avalanchy state of the snow occasioned by the exceptionally mild and early spring. There had in fact been a fatal accident in the district due to that cause only a fortnight previously. Harvey was aware of these conditions and accordingly selected a rock climb in Coire Lochan—No. 4 (Western) Buttress—in preference to a snow climb. The party roped up with Harvey leading and Miss Weaving second. From the information given later by another party, who had seen Harvey's party about half way up the buttress just before 5 p.m., progress was very slow. Near the top of the climb they had to ascend a snow-filled gully. The report continues :

'It is understood that on the final pitch Mr Harvey slipped and fell. (It is not known whether the slip was caused by a crumbling snow cornice, but since Miss Weaving mentions that Mr Harvey was practically at the top, this seems the most reasonable explanation.) Miss Weaving, occupying the middleman position, had him belayed on her ice axe sunk up to the hilt in snow, but the snow had been too soft and she was pulled away when the strain came on her. On this point it might be mentioned that the middleman's knot when later inspected by the rescue party was found to be very tight, and the rope had to be cut before Miss Weaving could be moved. This suggests that the belay had not given just at once. The three climbers were lying very close to each other, still roped, when found.'

\*Central Council for Physical Recreation, Scottish Section.

Harvey was killed outright by the fall and Stead died of his injuries soon after midnight, by which time the rescue parties had arrived. Miss Weaving survived with severe leg injuries.

## LONDON SECTION

1952 has formed no exception to the general rule that the London Section holds most of its meets in the western half of London's country. Of ten meets, six were in the Chilterns or the Surrey-Hampshire heathlands, one in the dark heart of the town itself, and only three divided between Hertfordshire, Kent, and Sussex.

The first and second meets of the year were each among the pines and heather, Clark leading one in January from Farnham to Hindhead, and the next month Abraham taking a couple of guests but—it being a wet day—no R.C. members over Ranmore and Leith Hill. The third south-western walk was the Secretary's Dinner Meet, from Woking to Ascot, held jointly with the London Section of the F. & R.C.C. In the Chilterns we had two days out on the escarpment and one among the beechwoods where the hills flatten to the Thames. In May, Coates based a tour on Missenden and Ashton selected the Stokenchurch district for his meet in July. Solari's walk in Burnham Beeches suffered from bad weather, but we understand—not being present ourselves—that the subsequent Tea-and-Holiday-Notes party at his house was a Good Thing. Of the remaining meets, Rowntree's, in March, was among the Hertfordshire woods and rivers, Hardwick's, in June, on the chalk hills about Arundel, and in September—a month chosen for the apple harvest—Shuttleworth conducted a raid on the Kentish orchards. Having opened the year's activities in January, Clark closed them on a grey November day with an unusual expedition by canal towpath from Wapping to the western suburbs, revealing a secret world unseen of the London Perambulator on his ordinary occasions.

Besides the London Dinner in April, we held six indoor meets jointly with the M.S.C.C. and the M.A.M. London Section. Most of the speakers told of exploits in this district or that of the Alps, Goodfellow covering the widest field with a talk on 'Guideless Climbing since the War.' On two occasions, however, we went north instead of south, to Baffin Island with W. H. Ward and to the little known Lyngen Peninsula in Norway in company with H. Pretty of the Oread Mountaineering Club.

J.A.S.

## COMMITTEE'S REPORT\*

In presenting the Fiftieth Annual Report your Committee congratulates the Club upon its vigorous health and upon the maintenance of its enthusiasm and spirit of comradeship. As was to be expected the Jubilee year has been marked by a heightened interest in the various functions of the Club, and by great activity on the part of its members both at home and abroad. The varied and attractive programme of Club meets was fully appreciated and the meets were well attended.

A notable feature of the year's activities has been the increasing enthusiasm of our younger and tougher members for marathon walks over the homeland mountains and high moorlands, and it is not without significance that among

\*Passages referring to matters dealt with elsewhere in this issue have been omitted.—Ed.

those members are to be found some of our best or most promising Alpine recruits.

Matters relating to the Club Hut and to the improvements now being proceeded with will be dealt with in the Warden's report. It should be mentioned however that your Committee went into the question of the electrification of the hut. Estimates were obtained by Jennings and were fully considered, but the expense of installation and supply of current was considered too prohibitive to justify any action being taken; moreover any scheme for electrification could only be arranged by collaboration with the neighbouring farmers.

In the early part of the year on the suggestion of the Hon. Secretary your Committee considered it desirable that there should be an assistant secretary of the Club, and W. H. Pickstone as an elected member of Committee was delegated to fill the office. In order to give permanent effect to the change a proposal will be submitted to this meeting to make the necessary alteration in Rule 4, and thus to revert to the constitution under the original Rules of the Club.

Our members F. Shuttleworth and T. T. Hardwick have been appointed Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer respectively of the British Mountaineering Council. It should be mentioned also that our member A. J. J. Moulam has been responsible for the new guide to the Carneddau.

## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Jubilee year provided a not unexpected stimulus to the outdoor activities of the Club. Although there were more meets than ever before—32 in all—the average attendance at 14.9 was almost as high as it has ever been. The number of members who turned out on at least one meet increased from about 100 to 125 so that even in Jubilee year considerably less than half the members were active with the Club out-of-doors. That this is not entirely due to the accident of domicile is shown by the fact that only half of the members living within 20 miles of Manchester attended a meet. The greater activity was largely made up of more attendances by members who were already turning out frequently. Courtenay and Mather each supported 17 meets. Other high attendances were Pickstone 16, G. Pigott 13 and F. Williamson 12.

Nevertheless, towards the end of the year, even the Tan-Hill-to-Cat-and-Fiddlers were beginning to find the pace a bit too much for them and, after the Club record for the Marsden-Edale had been broken in November, those that were still fit failed to complete the Todmorden-Hayfield walk. Admittedly conditions were such that no sensible person would have attempted the walk at all, but we have learned not to apply any ordinary standards of behaviour or achievement to the Club's best walkers.

When the programme is overcrowded with meets the turn-out becomes more than usually unpredictable and this caused some difficulty at one or two meets where accommodation had to be spoken for in advance. In the current year the number of meets has been reduced to 26, which is still far more than most of the senior kindred clubs attempt.

We began the year with a triple crossing of Kinder Scout. The wily editor persuaded the leader to postpone the start from 10 to 11 a.m. and then started himself at 10.30 a.m. Two members completed the course in just over six hours. A fortnight later Mather introduced us to a new course—Garstang to Clitheroe (see below). The Three Peaks walk with the Gristone Club suffered by being held the week-end after the walk from Tan Hill to the Cat and Fiddle. A



Saturday walk was poorly attended, although many members had previously voted in favour of Saturday meets.

As usual there were half-a-dozen Gritstone meets, including a joint meet with the Oread Mountaineering Club at Birchens Edge—a recently developed crag near Baslow. An oread is a mountain nymph; perhaps that is why so many members of that club have found it necessary to grow beards.

A joint meet with the Derbyshire Pennine Club was held at Stanage. While we have never found it necessary to encourage our members to turn up at meets by offering free teas we are very grateful indeed to the D.P.C. for the spirited hospitality ably dispensed by Colley and for the tea provided by their member Sissons. Of course, as might be expected of the D.P.C., there was a catch—in the form of an underground excursion on shallow metal trays through a 200-yard tunnel. Though not very deep the water was very wet.

There were eight hut meets and two meets were held to give members opportunities of collecting twenty-fives—at Three Cocks for the nine in South Wales and at Dufton for the six in the Pennines (see below).

An innovation which has probably come to stay was the North Wales Dinner Meet held at the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel in February. It attracted 39 members, filling the hotel, with an overflow at Beudy Mawr.

The Jubilee Meet held at the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel at Whitsuntide was the biggest meet of the year with a total of 67 members in or round about, while the Alpine Meet at Zermatt will probably become a legend in the Club for the number of first-class expeditions achieved. Both these meets are described more fully elsewhere.

E. Moss

*GARSTANG—CLITHEROE. 20th January.*

Ingredients: Snow on the Bowland Fells; crisp air and bright sunshine; 28 miles to go (and a long walk home if the last train was missed); and the most abominable set of vibram-footed tigers in the R.C.-Y.M. Union.

It was 11.10 a.m. when we left the café at Garstang; yet by 11.30, despite the cool air, not a man of the eight participants had a dry shirt, or even a dry square inch of shirt. This is hardly surprising, for the pace was one which would have reduced Jesse Owens to a lather. Whenever I could spare time to dash the rivers from my eyes I could see that the valley up which we were travelling was pleasant and colourful; it bore the Lakelandish name of Grizedale.

We passed a party of normal people here. Joe and others shouted to ask them if this was the way to Clitheroe. I regret that half the tigers then burning so brightly never found out whether it was or not; but if I tried to tell you of their ignominious finish (Three of us by taxi from Slaidburn—P.E.B.) the Editor would cancel my revelations to avoid bringing the Club into squalid disrepute.

Soon we were strung out over Stake House Fell, with unfamiliar views for most of us. Down into wild Langdon Beck with its clean river stones, flaming bracken, and blue snow-shadows. Here the party gathered together for three or four minutes, rose as the last man approached, and was lashed on again to a lather by the merciless Mather.

Through the hamlet of Sykes on the Trough road; then a long contour across Calder Moor brought us to Brennand Fell and a steep descent to Brennand House and tea. Quite a long time elapsed here between the first and last arrivals and a weary and thoughtful party sat around on the stone floor throwing crumbs to John Harvey and doing mental sums. Fifteen miles behind us, thirteen in front, three big climbs to come, and the sun almost set.

Leaving here, the party had shrunk to seven; and at Whitendale to four, plus one gallant member still following over Dunsop Fell in the bitter wind and gathering darkness. His presence was unsuspected until the four were travelling down towards Slaidburn, but after waving a cheerful lamp casually in the direction of his despairing cries they left him to die in the snow and did not see him again—on that day at least.

After five minutes' halt for vitagluucose, orange, and icy water by the pump in the dark and deserted village of Slaidburn, the party moved off to tackle the intricacies of snowy Easington Fell. Stars shone and lamps were only used once or twice to help to surmount some obstacle in the shadows. At last we reached the far edge of the fell and saw the lights of Clitheroe and the hulk of Pendle. After some adventures and encounters with walls, fences, and a dung-heap, we arrived at Waddington in time for a magnificent pint shandy each, and at Clitheroe in time for the 8.56 p.m. train.

In my case—and this probably applies to most of the party—the walk was a splendid introduction to Bowland; it should become one of the Club's standard winter epics.

Over wide streams and mountains great we went,  
And save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,  
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants—

.....  
A three days' journey in a moment done.

V.J.D.

#### EASTER MEET, BALLACHULISH. 11th-14th April.

Although, according to Rule 2, the avowed interests of the Club are 'to bring into fellowship men who are interested in these pursuits' of walking, caving, and mountaineering, there cannot have been a previous Easter Meet when this definition was so widely interpreted and yet so obviously enjoyed. The weather was mixed. The poor weather was a godsend to the tigers: it permitted more attractive valley pursuits. The good weather was unexpectedly welcome to the more staid: it encouraged motor tours, photography, afternoon tea, naps, and other pleasing diversions. The senior Engineering Institutions have found it necessary to create specialist sections, an example the Club might well adopt with advantage. I commend the idea to the Committee in the knowledge that there would be adequate support. Some possibilities, free for adoption and without copyright, may be gleaned from the activities to which reference is made below.

Isaac Walton's pursuit, like bowls and golf, is supposedly for those in their decline. If this is so, then the Club is finished. Time was when a devotee of the piscatorial art kept his enthusiasm to himself as something not to be divulged to the Club at large; but now, not only is the evening punctuated by argument on the virtues of 'Bloody Butchers,' 'Derby Beetles' and other fearsome lures, the rods are put up in full view of the assembly even before a man has put on his boots after breakfast. Glencoe and Glen Etive suffered from the molestations of these enthusiastic members.

And then, as befits the Engineers' Club, there was the automobile section who found it necessary, after 330 good road miles from Manchester, to test out torsion bar, coil spring, and elliptical spring suspensions in Appin, Ardgour, Argyll and elsewhere. As observers, and in the interests of fair play, they were well supported by the photographers. It was refreshing to hear of one member





*W. J. Brown*

The Tower Ridge

who did have the grace to bring one boot and apologised for the omission of its complement. He made an excellent chauffeur.

In pre-war years it was the custom to gather after dinner to listen to the Club raconteurs and to enjoy the delights of post-prandial repartee. We even had a concert or a sing song. But now!—poker dice and bridge, carried on by secretive groups in an atmosphere worse than a morgue. Is it a coincidence that the medical members of the Club are closely identified with these activities?

There is an ever increasing body of supposed mountaineers who, complete with prodigious rucksacks, hitch-hike from place to place and usually seem to arrange their programmes so that no time is left for the less arduous pursuits of mountaineering. It was something of a surprise, however, to discover that the Club is becoming enthusiastic over this method of progression. One member, amongst many others, after thumbing a lift to the top of Glencoe still had sufficient shame left to do the Buachailles, only to finish far down Glen Etive. The usual tactics had the desired effect and a succession of three sympathetic drivers combined to complete his return.

There was evidence of other diversions . . . but enough. The President did Beinn Fhada in appalling conditions and was only with difficulty dissuaded from continuing the ridge on to Bidean Nam Bian. The Club is not yet moribund.

F.G.B.

#### SOUTH WALES TWENTY-FIVES. 16th-18th May.

In South Wales there are nine summits of 2,500 feet and over. They run approximately east and west across Brecknockshire and form three groups—the Black Mountains, Brecon Beacons, and Carmarthen Van, the last being named Fan Foel on the inch ordnance map. On the occasion of this meet three of us—Ted Courtenay, Bill Pickstone, and myself—attempted an east-to-west traverse of all nine summits in the day.

We were helped by perfect weather; perhaps it was too hot, for it proved to be almost the hottest day of the year. A short car ride from the meet's base at the Three Cocks, Glasbury, gave us an early start (6 a.m.) from the highest point on the Talgarth-Crickhowell road. Thence a steady climb in the first heat of the day brought us to Waun Fâch of the Black Mountains, our first twenty-five. A short distance beyond lies Pen y Gader, the next top. After crossing an intervening ridge we reached the Usk valley at Bwlch; here we took the road to Talybont, where a small inn supplied us with a much needed pot of tea.

It was after 11 a.m. when we left to follow the road round to the Newport reservoir and ascend, by the spur of Twyn Dû, our thirds ummit Waen Rydd, the first of the Brecon Beacon group. Before gaining the summit Bill had to drop out. He had only recently recovered from a septic finger and was on that account not in his usual form. To Ted and me this was a blow, for Bill had arranged the details of the route and had been over the ground before. The summits of this group are easy walking but both of us were by now crying out for shelter from that most persistent sun. From Duwynt, the last top of the group, we descended quickly to the Cardiff road, where we found refreshment at a café. The time was about 6 p.m.

The route now lay across very broken moorland, avoiding the high ground of the Fforest Fawr tops by contouring their northern slopes. After leaving the road from Swansea to Senny Bridge, which we crossed at about its highest point, I developed stomach trouble, thereby holding up progress; but I gained a little heart as our final top, the illusive Carmarthen Van, came into view. With the time growing so late, doubt came into our minds as to whether we should

find John Hirst at the spot on the bridle road east of the summit where he had agreed to pick us up ; a night under a wall would not have come easy to either of us. After several halts caused by my sickness we came to the final assault, and after a few more halts were on the top by about 10 p.m.

No time was wasted in descending and almost by a miracle John arrived at the picking-up spot as we were on our way down. The gods had been good once more.

The total distance came to about 40 miles and involved about 11,000 feet of ascent. We both wore boots throughout.

F.W.

LANGDALE : THE JUBILEE MEET. 31st May|1st June.

(See elsewhere in this issue.)

ZERMATT. 12th-27th July.

This year the party consisted of 15 Rucksackers and five guests. As usual they could be divided fairly accurately into the keen types, who had drawn up incredible programmes and intended to spend the time rushing up as many peaks as possible, and the hangers-on, who had come for a peaceful holiday and had in two cases even brought their wives to see that they got it. The first group had spent the last few months in sharpening ice-axes and crampons and walking incredible distances ; in fact the local mountains were due to have it in a big way. Naturally this enthusiasm spread, so that even the sluggards found themselves approaching the tops of more mountains than decency permits.

After the usual stoking-up process, Allsopp and Co disappeared down the valley, whilst most of the others went up to the Rothorn Hut and climbed the Wellenkuppe as a training climb. Snow fell in the evening ; but next day several parties climbed the Rothorn, some by the Triftgrat. Snow on the rocks delayed things, and the latter party, later christened the Foolish Virgins, having neither oil in their cans nor in their lamps, consequently spent a chilly night ten minutes above the hut, as recounted elsewhere in this issue. After a rest day they returned to Zermatt via the Wellenkuppe-Gabelhorn traverse.

In the meantime, the sluggards, having at length decided on the Dent Blanche, had crossed the Col de la Tête Blanche to the Rossier Hut ; but the weather was again bad and they only had one day's food supply. After two days of starvation they returned to Zermatt over the Col d'Hérens. Half the party then returned to the low-lying Schönbühl Hut ; joined by the ginger group, they finally climbed the Dent Blanche. In the meantime other parties had climbed the Weisshorn, Rimpfischhorn, and Breithorn.

We now got news of Allsopp and his party, who had been in action on the other side of the valley. His story is also one of those recounted elsewhere. Enough to say that during his holiday he climbed all told 23 peaks of over 4,000 metres in 20 days and didn't look one ounce lighter for it.

We were joined for a few days by Mather, en route for Courmayeur, and Graham Brown, who was anxious to climb the Matterhorn, which was the only Zermatt peak that had not yet been honoured by his footprints. The ascent was accomplished with Albert Dale—a very pleasant finish to the holiday and a fine feat for a man who will not see 70 again.

The meet was attended by the following : Allsopp ; Brown, T. G. ; Byrom ; Courtenay ; Dale ; Dance ; Davidson ; Desmond ; Dillon ; Hopkin ; Mather ; Robson ; Smalley ; Upton ; Walmsley ; and five guests.

The following peaks were climbed, in roughly date order: Dürrenhorn (traverse), Wellenkuppe, Rothorn (ordinary way and Grat), Obergabelhorn traverse, all Monte Rosa summits, Castor, Pollux, Swarzfloh, Felikhorn, Breithorn (traverse), Matterhorn (traverse), Dent Blanche, Weisshorn (traverse) Bieshorn, and Rimpfischhorn.

And still nobody has climbed the Dent d'Hérens.

J.E.B.

DUFTON. *13th/14th September.*

The last meet held here seems to have been the one in 1937. On that occasion the main event was a round from Dufton village of all the Pennine twenty-fives, from Mickle Fell to Cross Fell (28 miles and 4,800 ft). This was effected by a party of three, hindered much by mist but assisted by ruf bers, in 9½ hrs.

On the present occasion the circuit was repeated under almost identical conditions by two members (one of whom was in the 1937 trio) in 8 hrs. 8 mins.; four other members also completed the course. Route-finding between Mickle Fell and Knock Fell was again difficult; and again the line of least resistance from Cross Fell back to the village was sought in vain. The only novelty, apart from being fired at from Warcop range on the way up Mickle Fell, was the refreshment somewhat apprehensively provided by the guardians of the radar station on Great Dun Fell.

The others on the meet, including the President, made excursions of a more sensible character, such as ticking-off the Great Dun Fell twenty-five by car.

The accommodation organized by Frank Kiernan was comfortable and generous, the village itself as charming as ever, and our return visit altogether a great success.

P.E.B.

MARSDEN-EDALE, WITH THE K.M.C. *23rd November.*

A threat of competition from the K.M.C., who were said to possess several fast goers, darkened not a few Rucksack hearts during the weeks preceding this fixture. Fearful lest it should let the Club down on its Jubilee year, our own team boldly decided to use light footgear, despite the snow and ice that were known to be lying on the high ground. Some members went into training; others contented themselves by affixing heel laces to their rubbers and collecting stray fragments of vitagluose tablets from the recesses of their sacks.

The result was a metaphorical walk-over, the first six to reach Edale station being Rucksackers. Of these the foremost was Ted Dance, who, on this his first Marsden-Edale as a member, had the presumption to break the Club record with a time of 4 hrs. 29 mins. Next in were Desmond, Mather, and Courtenay, within the 5 hrs.; then Brockbank and Williamson in 5½ hrs. The first of the K.M.C., Wyche, arrived some 25 mins. later, and shortly after him came their members Taylor and Cockroft. As last year, the generosity of Fred and Mrs Heardman made both teams free of the Nag's Head for robing and refreshment.

Another gracious feature of the meet was the refreshment provided by its leader, Len Stubbs, and his helpers off his celebrated lorry. To be greeted on the highest point of the Holmfirth road by a fair member of the K.M.C. brandishing a cup of hot coffee was an experience as romantic as it was delightful.

Talking of fair members of the K.M.C., I must record, with some pride in the chivalry of our own Club, the solicitude displayed throughout the walk by some of our senior members over the welfare of the only feminine participant.

P.E.B.

## CLIMBS AND EXCURSIONS

### The Ogof Direct, Cwm Silin

It is good to sit before the fire while the mind chases elusive memories of summer days. They are happy memories, for the advances of unpleasant recollections are half-subconsciously ignored; the retrospective pictures are painted, as it were, with artistic licence and bear perhaps only a superficial resemblance to the starker reality of experience. Thus, recollections of a visit to Cwm Silin made three years ago had mellowed with time, and difficulties which had then forced us to retire had lost their significance, so that I returned to the present with a surprising abruptness as I found myself for the second time climbing up towards the shadow of the great cave on the face of the Ogof while the twin lakes below lay dappled in the brightness of a July morning. My attention was divided between the forbidding appearance of the serried overhangs of the cliff above in misty shadow, the glorious line of sunlight that was the left edge of the Great Slab, and the allurements of the lakes whose green depths were at that very moment being disturbed by the saner members of our party. This initial 200-ft. buttress on which Moulam, Bowman, and I were engaged is difficult enough to make a fitting introduction to the cliff above, but still easy enough to let anticipation play havoc with a delicate stomach.

Just to the left of the cave a groove, vertical to the apprehensive eye, ends above the level of the cave 40 ft higher at an overhang. From this point the only apparent line of escape lies to the right where a forbidding configuration of the rock suggests a mantelshelf. Happily nothing more is visible.

Moulam, with evident self-satisfaction, was tied to a piton at the foot of the groove and was fingering impatiently one half of the bight end of a doubled line; Bowman, tied to another piton, was tending its twin; our bathing confederates, who had now rejoined us, were disposed about the verdant ledge, expectant, in attitudes of studied ease. The stage, apparently, was set.

The intractable stubbornness of Moulam and the copious advice of my friends, occasionally audible through half-masticated sandwiches, prevailed, and a rusty piton at the top of the groove was reached, a newer mate for it found, and I was able to stand just out of balance but in comparative safety immediately below a large insecure block which capped the groove. I paused here, glad to rest, ruminating on the potential energy of the block, should the invisible bonds between it and its mother crag be severed. Impatient exhortations, out of keeping with the solitude of the cwm, echoed on the summer morning; however, a remark on the subject of my thoughts to the party 40 ft vertically below effectively silenced them.

The mantelshelf lay 6 ft to the right at head level. The wall below it was slightly overhanging and holdless; but inspiration from the ledge flowed up the nylon line, a piton and stirrup provided holds, and at last I stood, very bloody and only slightly bowed, in balance above the mantelshelf. Horizontally to the right a ledge perhaps nine inches deep ran over the cave, apparently leading to more promising ground, but the steepness of the rock above the ledge effectively prevented a traverse.

The enquiring eye rejected gladly the smooth wall above; but diagonally rightwards a tiny ledge promised access to a weakness in the face above it,



which was broken 25 ft higher by a huge overhang with indications of a resting place beneath. The little ledge was reached easily enough but even a piton and eventually the stirrup, rescued as an afterthought from the mantelshelf, were not enough to allow tired muscles to overcome a protuberance above it. It was obviously time for a change of leader; after arranging 300 ft of rope suitably for future operations, I abseiled to the cave and searched the grass for discarded crusts obligingly scattered there by the bathers, who had by now slipped away, having found the first act too slow for their sophisticated tastes.

The 200-ft length of line on which I had been climbing now ran to the uppermost piton, through the karabiners attached to the lower pitons, and back to Moulam. This rope from above, together with his natural graceful skill, enabled him to make short work of those 55 ft which had occupied me for a couple of hours. The rope was rearranged and doubled again.

Moulam was now of course out of sight, but from the shouted conversation, the scarcely perceptible movement of the rope, and the solid unmusical note of unsatisfactory pitons, it was abundantly clear that each one of those twenty exposed feet of rock was exactly a heavy tribute. Nearly two hours later a joyful shout told that the pitch had been conquered.

The bulge proved to be as difficult as it had seemed; the wall above it contained a tiny crack, so thin and shallow that the two pitons in it were held only by their tips. A sensational move right was followed by climbing of the highest order on the steep wall, which allowed no relaxation; it was a magnificent lead.

On Bowman the unique—the only man larger than David Thomas—fell the onerous task of removing as he climbed the evidence of our crimes. The crag rang as the pitons, each more obstinate than the last, in turn became his target. He announced that the mantelshelf need never again be defiled by the presence of a peg, for a particularly heavy blow, having missed its target, had shattered several cubic inches of bedrock, thus providing a new and adequate hold.

At last we were again together, on a long ledge roofed by the overhang. The cliff below, under the enormous overhang of the great cave, was of course invisible, so that there was a rare sense of detachment and a degree of exposure which, from my present fireside seat, can fairly be described as magnificent. Above us the overhangs which had been so obvious from below seemed to preclude any possibility of a continuance of our climb, until, in the absence of any more hopeful possibilities, we noticed that to our right there was a vertical step where our roof merged into its neighbouring overhang, which was perhaps 4 ft higher; leading to this meeting of overhangs was a little *arête* formed by the enclosing wall of our ledge and the main wall of the buttress. Moulam and the rounded bubble of loose quartz which he described as a belay had become inseparable friends; Bowman frowned heavily even as I turned to talk to him, and one cannot argue with sixteen determined stone; so I trotted off obediently to examine what only in such particularly repellent circumstances could be described as a weakness.

I was surprised to find a good handhold almost within reach, and even more surprised when others followed, appearing as if by magic in the most unlikely places; a traverse right beneath the upper overhang became more than a faint possibility; a few cautious exploratory moves, a long step right, and suddenly I was in sunshine on a beautiful slab with the way to the top of the crag clear ahead. The unexpectedness of it was breath-taking. The day was ours.

Geoffrey Pigott

## Moffat to Peebles : a Border Raid

These places are 24 miles apart as the crow flies. They are separated by an attractive group of hills of much renown in Scottish legend and literature. What is more to our purpose, the group contains all the twenty-fives in southern Scotland, except those in the Galloway district ; and the tops are nicely spaced along a line that diverges but little from the Moffat-Peebles bee-line ; and for some twenty miles without a break the bee-line is well clear of such civilized elements as roads and dwellings. The merits of a point-to-point walk are therefore fairly obvious—once one thinks of it. The first person to draw my attention to the matter was Frank Kiernan. Both of us used to talk of it every now and then in the days gone by—the good old days when one could plan a purely hypothetical expedition without risk of being stampeded into actually doing it. Then I talked of it once too often : the proposal reached Ted Courtenay's ears ; with the result that there was forthwith devised a complicated scheme for assaulting the course by train and motorcycle simultaneously at an ordinary week-end.

The fiery cross was sent round to rally the Tan Hill clan to the affray. But no-one else owned a motorcycle and the train journey would be costly and tedious. Eventually only Frank Williamson came with me by train, whilst for a motorcycling companion Ted enlisted Bob Pine of the Y.M.C.A., by the usual expedient of minimizing the difficulties to be encountered. The week-end chosen was that of 6th/7th September.

The motorcyclists set off independently of each other after work on the Friday. They were to camp the night 'near Moffat,' meet us at 6 next morning at Beattock station, and convey us by pillion to a breakfast place that they were to have found the previous evening. To reach Beattock ourselves, Frank Williamson and I caught the night Glasgow train, which conveniently stops there to enable a banking engine to tack on behind to assist it up Beattock bank. We had the distinction of being seen off at Exchange by the original suggester of the expedition, who we much regretted was too modest to take part in it himself.

The train was sufficiently uncrowded for me to have enjoyed a fair amount of sleep had I wanted to. But the route taken was for some reason the one through Settle, and the excitement of contemplating Ingleborough and the other Ribbleshead hills in brilliant moonlight kept me long awake. Not till the train was coursing down the Eden valley did I doze off. Frank was already asleep in the opposite corner. The next thing I remember was being roused by my companion to partake of a cup of tea, which he, noble fellow, had procured from the buffet at Carlisle. A fine dawn cheered us on our way north, and soon after 6 a.m. we had arrived.

At this time of the day Beattock station is a fascinating place for a railway fan. One after another, the last of the night expresses are plodding wearily in from the south, pausing for a breather and a banking engine, and then roaring forth, both engines in full gear, up the start of the ten-mile climb. I could have stayed there all day quite happily and forgotten about Peebles altogether had I not been tersely called to heel by my companion, who is too hard-boiled to be thrilled by trains.

There being no-one to meet us, we padded in our rubbers along the mile of road to Moffat, wondering what had happened. 'They've overslept themselves' was my sordid opinion ; but Frank, shocked at this aspersion on the





Loch Assynt

will-power of the champion of Tan Hill, preferred an explanation involving some drastic stroke of fate. For the next hour and a half, at Moffat, we divided our energies between looking for a place for breakfast and awaiting our companions. When 8 a.m. had come but not the motorcyclists, we decided to abandon them and concentrate on breakfast and Peebles: after all, the last train from Peebles was at 9.43 p.m., and nearly thirty miles (plus several thousands of feet) of country quite unknown to us had to be traversed first. But at that early hour breakfast was hard to come by; not till we had been nine times repulsed and had given up hope of getting anything at all did we thankfully find, at the last little farm on the first slope of our hills, the refreshment and feminine admiration that we yearned for. Then, replete with tea and bannocks, we put on our boots and got cracking.

The group of hills is bisected by the Megget pass (1,483 ft). On the Peebles side of the pass the watershed follows a smooth line. The tops here should be easy to find in poor visibility; they are dominated by Broad Law (2,754 ft) the highest of the whole group. On the Moffat side, however, the watershed, whilst never straying far from the bee-line, zig-zags about in random fashion; we were devoutly thankful that we had clear weather for its unravelment, for in a mist the finding of the right places to drop off for the cols would have been a pretty desperate task against time. The views were good and we would have welcomed the leisure to admire them. On the left, close at hand, lay the headwaters of the Tweed, with, beyond, range upon range of little hills leading to the far-off and bigger hills of Galloway; on the right, a fine full-length view of Yarrow Water from St Mary's Loch to the dainty triplet of the Eildon Hills beyond Selkirk.

Shortage of time gave us a good excuse for not visiting a couple of outlier twenty-fives. We halted for a late lunch at the Megget. There was still no sign of our motorcycling friends. And then, on our way up Broad Law, we met them, coming towards us.

Beyond the cardinal fact that they *had* overslept, I am to this day in doubt as to what had befallen them. Even if one admits that no camp-site might be discoverable near Moffat, one still cannot understand why it was necessary to prosecute the search for fully fourteen miles along the Selkirk road before a site was at length discovered near St Mary's Loch. And there was that strange and incoherent story, like that of Harris's struggle with the swans, of a hostile demonstration at Tibbie Shiel's Inn by the local roughs, with the affections of whose sweethearts our friends—so they told us—were accused of tampering. Anyhow, it was bad luck on both of them to miss the walk, after having made the long journey; especially was it hard on Ted Courtenay, without whose drive the walk would not have been tackled. They were now filling in the time with a round of the hills north of the Megget.

Having mournfully parted from them, Frank and I resumed our journey to Peebles. I found the last ascents tiring and could have made good use of one of the Beattock banking engines. On Dollar Law, our last top, Frank, always a refreshing companion in the hills, produced first aid in the shape of hot coffee liberally laced with brandy.

From here the direct line lies along the Manor Water valley. Honour, however, called for a fighting finish over the hills on one or other side. Being too lazy and tired to want more hill-work, I used the specious excuse of shortage of time to demand the valley route; for which weakness we were both severely punished by several miles of metalled road. In the light of a fine autumn evening the Tweed by Neidpath Castle looked very beautiful as we sped along the last mile into Peebles.

The return journey did not repeat the comfort of the outward one ; we had to change twice, and the trains were fairly full. Yet we were warm and comfy enough on the trains to enjoy some sleep. We finally regained Exchange station at about 8 on the Sunday morning, after an absence of 32 hours. After breakfast at our respective homes we repaired, by sheer force of habit, to Tunstead, whence we rounded off the week-end with an ascent of Kinder.

Our Moffat-Peebles route, measured on the map, comes to just about 30 miles, the height climbed being about 6,800 ft. Our time (including the break-fast halt) was exactly 12 hours. A fast pack, out for blood, could knock hours off this. The train fares cost each of us 54/-. As this was our only big expense, for we carried most of our food and bought only snacks, the overall cost came to £3 each ; which does not compare too badly with the cost of an average week-end away with two nights at an hotel.

A vivid and memorable excursion.

P. E. Brockbank.

### Winter Colne-Rowsley

Those who have walked with Philip Brockbank will realize the consternation caused when illness forced him to withdraw from the starters on this, the first winter Colne-Rowsley, when the team faced a fifteen-hour night. Instead of lazily leaving the route-finding donkey-work to Philip, we had to set about it ourselves.

The start from Colne at 11.30 a.m. on Saturday, 6th December, was in bright sunshine. An old boy in Colne asked us how far we were going and when we said only 70 miles he gave a derisive snigger. After a conversation devoted wholly to motor-bikes from our team of leather-necked throttle-twisters, we at last got on to the open moor, where opportunities for discussion became fewer. The peat was frozen hard ; which was to give us all sore feet by the time we got to Rowsley.

Tea was at Mankinholes Youth Hostel, Todmorden, and here we were joined by Ted Dance, who had missed our bus to Colne and so had had to catch the next.

When we left Mankinholes the night was dark and hazy ; but we struck a good line over Blackstone Edge, for it was just possible to make out vague hill outlines. We missed Philip before we reached the Nant Sarah road but from there got to Marsden without much trouble, though behind schedule.

Supper at Wessenden Lodge ; hot pot and apple pie ; left at 12.20 a.m. By now it was a brilliant moonlit night. Past Holme Moss mast and down the road, where most unfortunately Ted Courtenay's foot began to give him a lot of pain and he was forced to abandon the walk—a hard decision for a hard man, but the right one. We left him in a hay barn wrapped in seven sweaters, with a small spirit stove and a whisky bottle for company.

Up the old road, up Far Small Clough, and down the Derwent to Bull Stones Cabin, where Philip's Primus was soon roaring away and produced hot tea. We arrived here at 6.30 ; and about 6.45 the first light and the first rain came simultaneously, the first welcome but the second not.

Over Margery Hill, across Abbey Brook, and down Derwent Edge, walking fast. At 10.30 we were having second breakfast at the Yorkshire Bridge Inn. We were glad of the warmth here ; the food was good, too.

Up to now the walk had been enjoyable and full of interest. If the weather had been other than misty, wet, and depressing, the walk would have remained enjoyable. As it was the beauties of Stanage, Duke's Drive, and the Froggatt, Curbar, and Baslow Edges were quite invisible, whilst the battering our feet were receiving after so many miles of iron-hard going became more and more obvious. Frank Williamson led us in the misty darkness through Chatsworth Park, and by river paths to Rowsley, reached with thankfulness at 6.8 p.m.

Those completing the walk were Dance, Desmond, Dillon, Mather and F. Williamson.

V. J. Desmond.

## REVIEWS

### BRITISH CRAGS AND CLIMBERS

Edited by E. C. Pyatt and W. Noyce (Denis Dobson Ltd., 21/-)

This book is an anthology of writings about climbing in Britain and the selections are largely from the club journals. The book ranges from Tyndall to the latest exploits of the M.A.M., from the Surrey hills to Ben Nevis. It is pleasant to be able to compare and contrast the accounts of, say, a Collie and a Cox without the labour of searching the journals. All the classic ascents are there—Haskett Smith on the Needle and Archer Thompson on the Devil's Kitchen. Coming to more recent times, the conquering of the more forbidding Welsh cliffs is fully described. Scottish winter climbing receives its due with articles by Raeburn and Murray.

Despite these admirable pieces, something of the spirit of mountaineering in Britain appears to have escaped; perhaps there is too much emphasis on the determined assault successfully carried out. One cannot help showing, too, a little parochial prejudice; there is no account of gritstone climbing and not a word about the Peak or Pennine, though a large proportion of British climbers must have learned their trade on these hills.

Finally, one should say that there is an informative historical introduction by one of the editors and the notes to each article help greatly to connect the narrative.

A.G.W.

### THE ALPINE JOURNAL. VOL. LXIII

No. 283, November 1951.

No. 284, May, 1952.

No. 285, November, 1952.

The first of these is full of good things. A thrilling account of the French expedition to Annapurna—a notable addition to the literature of Himalayan mountaineering—is followed by a most interesting biography of Dr Hamel, described as *Impassive Scientist*, one of the pioneers of Mont Blanc. His approach was physiological rather than sporting, and left unsavoury memories among the

natives of Chamonix. Back to a recent ascent of the north face of the Dru, then to history in the shape of Alexander Burgener's Führerbuch. Two recent expeditions to Greenland, a paper on the Near East, articles on New Zealand, Norway, the Dauphiné, Onlake (The Sacred Peak, in Japan), and finally back to the Himalayas. A beautifully assorted feast of mountain literature.

No. 284 is less satisfying. Two accounts of ascents of *The Brenva Face*, and a charming biography of Maurice Cretetz, make good reading. Douglas Milner's article on colour photography is characterised by the thoroughness of the expert, and his photographs are always a delight. A brief note on the *Alpine Regions of Yugoslavia* has more facts than flavour, and a note on the *Snap-Link Pulley Belay* will surely draw a response from Tarbuck. But nearly half the publication comprises Part II of *A Hydrographic Approach to the Alps*, which surely has a limited appeal and is out of place in a club journal.

No. 285 comes nearer to the standard of No. 283. Murray's account of the 1951 *Everest Reconnaissance* is followed by a delightful article on the pioneers of the Dauphiné, and then by a happy biography of *John Auldjo, Fortunate Traveller*. Our ex-President describes his conquest of *The Weissborn Horseshoe* in his inimitable way, G. F. Dixon describes a first visit to Zermatt, which fills us with admiration for the toughness of modern youth. Then we are taken to Ruwenzori, the exploration of which is well described and with a wealth of detail. It is interesting to note that Joseph George Le Skieur, a guide beloved by many older Rucksackers, participated in one of several expeditions in 1932. *Observations on Early Ascents of the Wetterhorner* make good reading. *The Love of Mountains*, by C. R. P. Vandeleur, is among the best articles on this difficult subject. An article on *Fuels for Mountain Cooking* makes heavy reading.

All three numbers are rich in notes of expeditions, Club Notes and Reviews, and there are no less than twenty-one obituary notices, which pay tribute to colourful personalities who have graced our sport.

J.H.

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL, VOL. X, NO. 1, 1952.

CAMBRIDGE MOUNTAINEERING, 1952.

THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL, VOL. VII, 1952.

THE FELL AND ROCK JOURNAL, VOL. XVI, NO. 1, 1951.

THE JOURNAL OF THE LADIES' ALPINE CLUB, 1952.

THE AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL, VOL. VIII, NO. 2, 1952.

MOUNTAINEERING, VOL. II, NOS. 1 AND 2, 1952.

In reviewing the current journals one is impressed by the activities of the clubs in the more remote mountain ranges of the earth.

The *Climbers' Club Journal* devotes nearly half its pages to such articles. The first ascent of Abi Gamin, a 24,000 ft peak in Garhwal, by a small Anglo-Swiss expedition is described by Kenneth Berril, who also has a delightful article on travel in Badrinath along the ancient pilgrim route. Charles Evans gives a modest and amusing account of the Manang expedition's attempt on Annapurna IV and of its travels in Nepal, whilst Michael Ward writes of climbing and exploration around Gaurisankar. We then travel to Uganda, where it is interesting to learn that the Ruwenzori are becoming more easily accessible as the result of the erection of strategically placed huts by the recently formed Mountain



Club of Uganda. Travelling westwards again we read of Odell's exciting rock-climbs in the Canadian Rockies. Then, a little nearer home, but still somewhat remote, we return to Europe for Faulkner's account of the Lyngen mountains—an expedition carried out with the minimum expense and fuss by some very tough characters; it is good to read of the initiative, hardihood, and enthusiasm, shown by its members. Graham Brown should be pleased by the article *Moonlight on Brenva* describing a most exciting moonlight ascent of Route Major, largely inspired by his famous book. Lest it be thought that the C.C. has deserted Wales there is a short article on the history of climbing on Dinas Mot; and of course a comprehensive list of new ascents in the district, amongst which one notes the almost incredible performances of Joe Brown, on Clogwyn Du'r-ardu and the Llanberis Cliffs, several of which are classified as Excessively Severe. We would however plead for less gruesome names than Cemetery Gates, Hangman's Wall and the like; the standard now being attained is sufficiently frightening for most people without these macabre reminders.

*Cambridge Mountaineering* also travels far afield. The Hoggar, an ascent of which is described by Bernard Pierre, is in the Central Sahara; at the other extreme M. M. Miller writes of an attempt on Mt Vancouver, which, as is not unusual, was defeated by blizzard, heavy snow, and frost bite, and the difficulty of provisioning the party at the high camps. Then there are accounts of climbs in the Pyrenees, the Spanish mountains, and Spitsbergen. The high standard of climbing in the Cambridge Club is also shown by the records of ascents in the Alps, such as the Ryan-Lochmatter route on the Plan, the north ridge of the Weisshorn, a new route on the Fou, the traverse of the Diabls (without guides), and the Mummery by the south-west face. We liked best Cym Smith's *Bellissima Arrampicata*, a delightfully modest account of an ascent of the North Ridge of the Badile and of its consequences; it is sad to read of this fine climber's death in a motor-cycle accident.

In contrast the *Yorkshire Ramblers' Journal* is concerned with more domestic matters, although it does break out into Basutoland and Sicily. We are glad to learn that the Y.R.C. has acquired a hut in Little Langdale, the opening of which is wittily reviewed by the President, C. E. Burrows, whilst an interesting background by A. H. Griffin is provided in an account of the activities of a former occupier of the cottage, which included illicit whisky distilling, smuggling, and other nefarious ventures. It is of course to be expected that the Y.R.C.'s activities underground will form a conspicuous feature and we are not disappointed. The veteran E. E. Roberts, still going strong, writes of the club's caving meet in Ulster and there is a comprehensive list of its discoveries in other parts of Ireland and on its native heath.

The *Fell and Rock Journal* is likewise devoted to home affairs. Fergus Graham's reminiscences will appeal to climbers of the 1920s and those interested in the middle history of gritstone climbing. We should dearly like to have met the Roches' witch and the idiot son in the quaint setting of the cottage hewn from the living rock. *The Long Way up Mont Blanc* describes modestly and amusingly the adventures of a party of schoolboys and their two masters traversing the High Level route from Saas Fee to Mont Blanc, an undertaking which demanded much resource, patience, and good humour on the part of the author. Sutherland's account of his first mountaineering expedition, at the age of sixteen, in South Africa is of course delightful; how much better to come to the mountains this way than to start on the severes! The pains and pleasures, but mostly the latter, of converting a barn into a club hut are described by J. A. Kenyon, and

as one who has enjoyed the Fell & Rock hospitality we can compliment them on a job well done. Other matters dealt with are those which tell one how to build an igloo on Esk Hause, to find a way over the sands to the Lake District hills, and to be able to assess the suitability of the weather for mountaineering or painting. Colonel Westmorland has some sensible and pointed things to say on how to avoid accidents, which should be made known to a wider public.

*The Ladies' Alpine Journal* records some doughty climbs in the Alps by its stalwart members, and also travels through Nepal to Everest and in Peru.

*The American Alpine Journal* contains a fascinating account by Bradford Washburn of the first ascent and exploration of the West face of Mount McKinley, which should serve as a model of scientific organisation for further expeditions. Other ascents in the Alaskan mountains are also described in which the difficulties of approach to base camps were overcome by aerial travel. There is also an account under the heading of *Various Notes* of mechanical contrivances by means of which it is possible to ascend otherwise inaccessible rock walls and which causes one to wonder if we have not now reached the iron age of mountaineering. The journal is illustrated by numerous superb photographs.

The two issues of *Mountaineering* deal with matters of general interest with particular emphasis on accidents and their prevention, weather conditions, and the work of the Mountain Rescue Committee. New climbs in Wales and Cornwall are described by E. C. Pyatt and there is a very useful account of mountaineering in Ireland. It is good to know that *Mountaineering* is being regularly published again, now under the editorship of our member Herbert Coates.

H.K.H.

In addition to the book and journals reviewed, we acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the 1952 issue of the *Journal of the Craven Potbole Club*.



